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# Continental News

## Ethiopia activist appeals for calm after 16 killed in clashes

Prominent Ethiopian activist Jawar Mohammed called for calm on Thursday amid protests that have killed 16 people and are challenging Nobel Prize-winning Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed in his political heartland. Addressing hundreds of his supporters who have set up camp around his house in Addis Ababa, Jawar said: "Open the blocked roads, clean the towns of barricades, treat those who have been injured during the protests and reconcile with those you have quarrelled with." People have been killed in at least four cities since clashes broke out Wednesday, officials and a witness said, after police fired gunshots and teargas to break up demonstrations in support of Jawar.

A media entrepreneur and activist from the Oromo ethnic group, the country's largest, Jawar organised protests that propelled Abiy

to power last year. Abiy oversaw rapid political reforms after decades of repressive rule, winning international praise that culminated in last week's award of the Nobel Peace Prize for ending a decades-long conflict with

neighbouring Eritrea. But the greater freedoms have unleashed long-repressed tensions between Ethiopia's many ethnic groups as local politicians claim more resources, power and land for their own regions. This

week Abiy accused unnamed media figures of promoting ethnic interests over national unity.

Jawar, a one-time ally of the prime minister, has mobilised protesters from the Oromo ethnic group - the same group Abiy comes from. The showdown is a litmus test for Abiy: if he backs down, it could embolden Jawar and other regional powerbrokers. But widespread violence would tarnish his reformist credentials. A spokeswoman for the prime minister did not respond to requests for comment. Late on Tuesday night, police had surrounded Jawar's house and told his bodyguard to leave, he told Reuters. Hundreds of people quickly gathered in support. Protests spread to other parts of the capital and other cities, where police fired teargas and bullets to disperse them. On Thursday, Jawar supporters dug in, erecting tents outside his house and bringing mattresses. Some chanted: "We don't want Abiy, we don't want Abiy".

Half a dozen policemen stood at a distance from the protesters.

"One week, one month, we don't care," said a young protester, who asked for anonymity for fear of repercussion from the security forces. "We will stay here until the government tells us why they did this to Jawar." Jawar, an Ethiopian-born U.S. citizen, mobilized many thousands of young men all over the Oromiya

region to protest against the government from 2016 to 2018, finally forcing Abiy's predecessor Hailemariam Desalegn to step down - the first time a prime minister had resigned since independence.

Jawar and Abiy were photographed together frequently last year but remarks by the prime minister in a speech to parliament on Tuesday suggested frustration.

Abiy said, without naming anyone, "Media owners who don't have Ethiopian passports are playing both ways." "We tried to be patient. But if this is going to undermine the peace and existence of Ethiopia ... we will take measures."

Abiy must walk a delicate line between increasing political freedoms and reining in strongmen building ethnic powerbases. Some Ethiopians have criticised Jawar for using ethnically-tinged language, but many young Oromo men consider him a hero.

Ethiopia is due to hold elections next year. The four main ethnically-based parties in the ruling coalition, which has held power since 1991, will compete with new, more strident parties in their home regions.

Jawar could help mobilise support for the ruling coalition - or a rival. "The rise in tension and violence that ensued yesterday is driving wedges into the ever-widening fissures among political parties in the country," said Fisseha Tekle, Ethiopia researcher at Amnesty International. AFP



Oromo youth chant slogans during a protest in-front of Jawar Mohammed's house

## Race and resignations in South Africa's opposition

The resignation of the leader of South Africa's main opposition party has robbed it of a man who was viewed as a potential president and raised questions of whether it can tackle the country's ingrained racial injustice, as Andrew Harding reports from Johannesburg.

For many years, South Africa's biggest and most disciplined opposition party, the Democratic Alliance (DA), has had a relatively easy ride.

Its power and reach grew consistently in successive elections as it began to take control of important municipalities, led since 2015 by a charismatic young black man, Mmusi Maimane, the party started to position itself as a force that would soon sweep to power nationally.

The DA was helped in this project by the increasingly spectacular failings of the governing African National Congress (ANC) - particularly in the last decade - under what

many South Africans concluded was the overtly corrupt, tired, and incompetent leadership of former President Jacob Zuma. The DA wisely positioned itself as the anti-corruption party, and earned an impressive reputation for good governance in towns and communities across the country. Mr Maimane gave barnstorming speeches haranguing President Zuma as a "broken man". The DA had little incentive to resolve deep policy rifts within its own ranks. It believed that all it had to do was say "we're better than the ANC", and the voters would surely follow, ushering South Africa's young democracy towards electoral maturity in which a governing party appeared vulnerable. But then, in 2017, the ANC woke up.

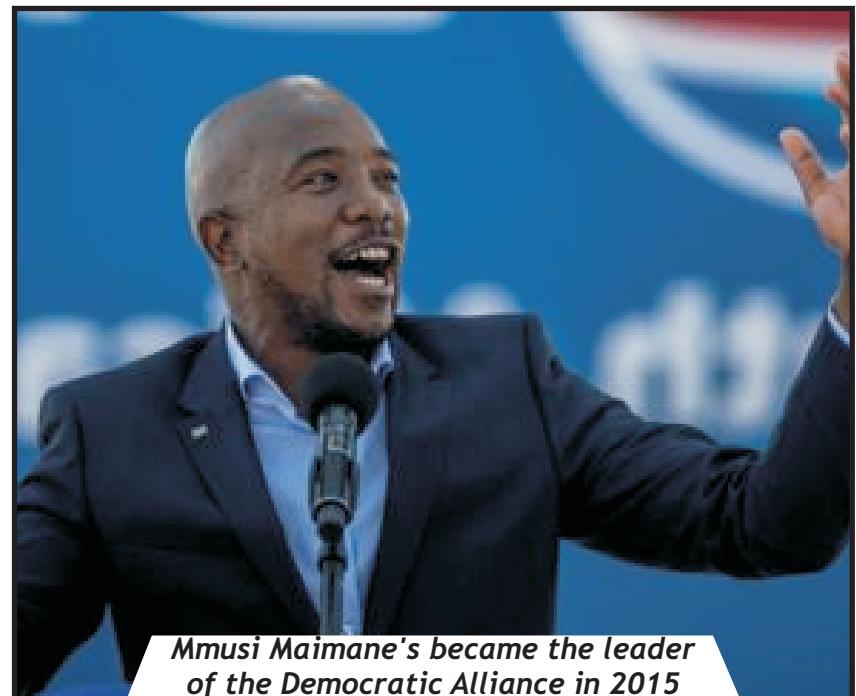
At the end of that year, it dumped the discredited Mr Zuma and brought in a new leader, Cyril Ramaphosa, who appeared genuine in his commitment to tackle corruption and fix a broken economy. At this year's elections, many black South Africans chose to give the ANC - the party that once liberated

them from racist white-minority rule - one more chance, while the DA's white support base also began to fracture.

For the first time, the DA's share of the national vote dropped, slipping down to 21%. Some soul-searching, and staff changes in the party, were inevitable. But in recent weeks the DA has gone much further than that. The election setback has triggered a vicious factional war inside the party - a war that now threatens to push it back to the margins of South Africa's political landscape. Some commentators are wondering if the party can even survive. A great deal is now at stake both for the DA, and for multi-party

democracy in South Africa. The DA's factionalism is complicated and often oversimplified, but it centres on South Africa's apartheid past, and how best to tackle the enduring racial inequality here.

The question is whether to focus be on non-racialism, on growing an economy that will benefit all communities, which is the preference of the party's older, more conservative core. Or whether the party should be more committed to transformation, backing pro-black empowerment schemes and generally looking to woo poorer black voters, which is the view of erstwhile leader Mr Maimane. BBC



Mmusi Maimane's became the leader of the Democratic Alliance in 2015

# EDITORIAL

## Governments should heed Ellen's call

**UNITED NATIONS GOODWILL** Ambassador for Health Workforce, former Liberian president Ellen Johnson Sirleaf has called on governments around the world and the international community to prioritize quality education for all citizens, with incentive programs for those seeking to become health workers. She notes that one of the most pressing issues in the developing world today is shortage of millions of health workers.

**SHE SAID ANY** position in health care, be it a surgeon, general practitioner or nurse, requires a high degree of skill, years of training and most importantly an education, but many who desire to become healthcare professionals lack access the education necessary to fulfill these roles.

**SHE STRESSES THAT** governments can and must do more to provide better training programs that will enable health care professionals to give the care their patients need, and that lack of adequate pay is another obstacle that keeps many potential healthcare professionals away from the field. "Governments should place a priority on increasing funding for the healthcare systems so that qualified workers can receive reasonable wages. While many healthcare workers are motivated by a sense of duty and a desire to help the sick, one cannot feed his or her family on good intentions alone", says the UN Goodwill Ambassador.

**WE AGREE WITH** Madam Sirleaf that adequate training and better incentives are critical to achieving effective healthcare delivery and should therefore, receive priority from governments, particularly in developing countries.

**LIBERIA, LIKE MANY** countries in Africa, has a very poor health system that leads to avoidable deaths due to lack of equipment and trained personnel.

**THIS HAS TO** change if the next generation of leaders and professionals would have the capacity and lifespan to deliver effective public services. For selfish reasons, current leaders in Third World countries continue to have their priorities upside down with primary issues placed at the bottom.

**THIS SHOULD NOT** be allowed to continue if the world, particularly Africa and specifically, Liberia, must have better healthcare services where infant and maternal mortalities would reduce.

**A HEALTHY POPULATION** is a great asset to any nation because it drives the wheels of economic development and human progress. But when lawmakers in our country are allowed to continuously allocate for themselves millions in salaries and incentives with little or no attention for critical areas such as health, education, agriculture, among others, we are not going anywhere as a people.

**GOVERNMENT SHOULD PROVIDE** more scholarships in the health sector, including better incentives for healthcare practitioners to ensuring effective healthcare delivery that would ensure a healthy population.

**RECENT NATIONWIDE PROTEST** by health workers here in demand of salary and improved conditions at the work place, sends a bad image that we in this part of the world are not ready to get on par with our colleagues in the global community.

**CONSEQUENTLY, WE JOIN** the former president and Goodwill Ambassador for Health Workforce in calling on governments around the world, particularly in Africa and specifically, the Government of Liberia, to recalibrate our health programs for effective healthcare delivery.

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# COMMENTARY

By Jeffrey D. Sachs

## Why Rich Cities Rebel

*Having lost touch with public sentiment, officials in Paris, Hong Kong, and Santiago failed to anticipate that a seemingly modest policy action (a fuel-tax increase, an extradition bill, and higher metro prices, respectively) would trigger a massive social explosion.*

**N**EW YORK - Three of the world's more affluent cities have erupted in protests and unrest this year. Paris has faced waves of protests and rioting since November 2018, soon after French President Emmanuel Macron raised fuel taxes. Hong Kong has been in upheaval since March, after Chief Executive Carrie Lam proposed a law to allow extradition to the Chinese mainland. And Santiago exploded in rioting this month after President Sebastian Piñera ordered an increase in metro prices. Each protest has its distinct local factors, but, taken together, they tell a larger story of what can happen when a sense of unfairness combines with a widespread perception of low social mobility.

By the traditional metric of GDP per capita, the three cities are paragons of economic success. Per capita income is around \$40,000 in Hong Kong, more than \$60,000 in Paris, and around \$18,000 in Santiago, one of the wealthiest cities in Latin America. In the 2019 Global Competitiveness Report issued by the World Economic Forum, Hong Kong ranks third, France 15th, and Chile 33rd (the best in Latin America by a wide margin).

Yet, while these countries are quite rich and competitive by conventional standards, their populations are dissatisfied with key aspects of their lives. According to the 2019 World Happiness Report, the citizens of Hong Kong, France, and Chile feel that their lives are stuck in important ways.

Each year, the Gallup Poll asks people all over the world, "Are you satisfied or dissatisfied with your freedom to choose what you do with your life?" While Hong Kong ranks ninth globally in GDP per capita, it ranks far lower, in 66th place, in terms of the public's perception of personal freedom to choose a life course. The same discrepancy is apparent in France (25th in GDP per capita but 69th in freedom to choose) and Chile (48th and 98th, respectively).

Ironically, both the Heritage Foundation and Simon Fraser University rank Hong Kong as having the most economic freedom in the entire world, yet Hong Kong residents despair of their freedom to choose what to do with their lives. In all three countries, urban young people not born into wealth despair of their chances of finding affordable housing and a decent job. In Hong Kong, property prices relative to average salaries are among the highest in the world. Chile has the highest income inequality in the OECD, the club of high-income countries. In France, children of elite families have vast advantages in their life course.

Because of very high housing prices, most people are pushed away from the central business districts and typically depend on personal vehicles or public transport to get to work. Much of the public may thus be especially sensitive to changes in transportation prices, as shown by the explosion of protests in Paris and Santiago.

Hong Kong, France, and Chile are hardly alone in facing a crisis of social mobility and grievances over inequality. The United States is

experiencing soaring suicide rates and other signs of social distress, such as mass shootings, at a time of unprecedented inequality and a collapse in public trust in government. The US will certainly see more social explosions ahead if we continue with politics and economics as usual.

If we are to head off that outcome, we must draw some lessons from the three recent cases. All three governments were blindsided by the protests. Having lost touch with public sentiment, they failed to anticipate that a seemingly modest policy action (Hong Kong's extradition bill, France's fuel-tax increase, and higher metro prices in Chile) would trigger a massive social explosion.

Perhaps most important, and least surprising, traditional economic measures of wellbeing are wholly insufficient to gauge the public's real sentiments. GDP per capita measures an economy's average income, but says nothing about its distribution, people's perceptions of fairness or injustice, the public's sense of financial vulnerability, or other conditions (such as trust in the government) that weigh heavily on the overall quality of life. And rankings like the World Economic Forum's Global Competitive Index, the Heritage Foundation's Index of Economic Freedom, and Simon Fraser University's measure of Economic Freedom of the World also capture far too little about the public's subjective sense of fairness, freedom to make life choices, the government's honesty, and the perceived trustworthiness of fellow citizens.

To learn about such sentiments, it is necessary to ask the public directly about their life satisfaction, sense of personal freedom, trust in government and compatriots, and about other dimensions of social life that bear heavily on life quality and therefore on the prospects of social upheaval. That's the approach taken by Gallup's annual surveys on wellbeing, which my colleagues and I report on each year in the World Happiness Report.

The idea of sustainable development, reflected in the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) adopted by the world's governments in 2015, is to move beyond traditional indicators such as GDP growth and per capita income, to a much richer set of objectives, including social fairness, trust, and environmental sustainability. The SDGs, for example, draw specific attention not only to income inequality (SDG 10), but also to broader measures of wellbeing (SDG 3).

It behooves every society to take the pulse of its population and heed well the sources of social unhappiness and distrust. Economic growth without fairness and environmental sustainability is a recipe for disorder, not for wellbeing. We will need far greater provision of public services, more redistribution of income from rich to poor, and more public investment to achieve environmental sustainability. Even apparently sensible policies such as ending fuel subsidies or raising metro prices to cover costs will lead to massive upheavals if carried out under conditions of low social trust, high inequality, and a widely shared sense of unfairness.



# Lord, it just starting

Dear Father;

Hmmm, they will stay long inside. Ehn that what we wanted, we inside good, good-in fact it just starting. The good news is nobody going anywhere, we will all be inside it till we see the end ahyaka.

Ay my son, which one people na get inside again that you want them to stay?

Father, who else will I be putting my lousy mouth on again if da na the people in my village. They are here winding let one old machine because I can't say complaining. Yor say da the man yor wanted so why are you people all over the place crying?

Wait oo, they are crying for something they were running up and down here for?

Can you imagine this Father, some of them fought tooth and nails to ensure that the man became King. Now that the man na become King, we can't hear our ears here. They just disturbing people peace we can't hear our ears.

Our old people can say the dog can trust his butt before it swallow the bone. But didn't they trust the man before? Da now they know the man na able the thing?

But Father, if you hear some of the things they saying around here na sef, you will wonder whether the people knew the man they were running around here for.

Um, so what are some of the things they are saying my son?

Father the thing sef too big for my lousy mouth. Can you imagine they say our man woman busnay na easy. They say goat pepe scent sef tell lie.

Tell me something!

Oh, da na small thing oo. They say the man went and impregnated his own brother woman he has brought down from Uncle Sam's village and all. They say our man na stop there oh. They say every night he use to sneak into Charlie Land until the Old Man of the village had to call him and gave him some warning da the way he has been secretly coming in his village is not good, and that he na want trouble because when something happen to him, that his village name will be all over.

But our Brabee sef ya, you behind your friend daughter you can't tell him, you have to be going to the man house secretly at night? You mean all the plenty thing then you gat around here, you still na satisfy-chey, yeah mehn the way the Brabee can do his owner woman busnay sef, like to say somebody swear him.

So, how the people in the village will na cry na? When the man will fini satisfying all the small, small girl them-from all over our neighboring villages and the ones that are here before he pay attention to our village na?

No, wonder the small, small children were on the streets the other day for their teacher them. The thing is what time the Brabee get for himself before he will think about some children who he will never see in the next hundred years. Instead, the Brabee gat to use the time to enjoy himself-after all, life too short for sorrow.

And come to think of it Father, I don't blame the man for taking is men them joule because what time, the man get to look for them? They gat to go out and bring it. It was just by mistake da other one got pregnant-oops, it's too late.

Wait ya my son, you know how many children da Brabee get around here?

Anyway, we did not learn from the children of Israel. The Pappy warned them over and over but they did not listen.

The Pappy told them, it is better for me to be leading yor and yor just depend on me for everything ay. They said no, we want our king.. He said if yor get king, he will take all yor young girl them oo. They said no problem-we want king, we want king.

The Pappy say, yor lay farm them he will come and take yor young men them to join security and be putting pepper spray in yor children them eyebolt oo, they said yeah no problem.

So, it's the same thing-da little boy asked us: kojolobo and poison which one yor want, we say we want poison-so poison it is. We inside and we rolling before this year end we will all balance.

## OPINION

By Venkatesh Mannar

# Improving Nutrition Can Save Lives – and the Planet

TORONTO - When world leaders, activists, campaigners, and chief executives gathered last month at the United Nations in New York City to discuss the world's most pressing challenges, the climate crisis dominated the headlines. By contrast, nutrition - one of the cornerstones of human, economic, and environmental progress - received surprisingly little attention.

True, world leaders began the week of UN General Assembly meetings by signing a landmark political declaration on universal health coverage. But although the declaration recognized nutrition as a contributing factor to good health, it did not single it out as a priority. That was not unusual: policymakers often cite inadequate diet as a key barrier to progress, but only rarely make better nutrition the focus of action. By taking this approach, the world is missing a huge opportunity.

World Food Day (October 16) and the International Day for the Eradication of Poverty (October 17) offer an opportunity to address some of the misconceptions regarding nutrition. This is a vitally important effort, because each of us can play a role in helping to end all forms of malnutrition by 2030 - one of the targets of UN Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 2.

Many people associate malnutrition exclusively with undernourishment in the world's poorest countries. But, as the Global Nutrition Report has repeatedly stated, malnutrition can take multiple forms and is a universal issue that no country can afford to overlook - including leading advanced economies such as the United States.

According to the 2018 Global Nutrition Report, the US is off track on all its nutrition targets except under-five stunting and wasting, and also is one of seven countries where more than one million children are overweight. Rates of obesity, diabetes, and cardiovascular disease in the US have reached alarming levels. Moreover, poor nutrition is not just harming people's health; it is also the most serious threat to the country's public health-care system.

Nutrition is one of the smartest investments a country can make. According to the World Bank, a stronger focus on nutrition within health services could save 3.7 million lives globally by 2025. Nutrition investments also make economic sense: every \$1 spent on basic nutrition programs results in an estimated \$16 returning to the local economy. Given these benefits, the world must push nutrition much higher up the agenda.

As with many global challenges, policymakers often take an outdated, silo-based approach to nutrition. Yet, at least 12 of the 17 SDGs contain targets and indicators that are relevant to nutrition. That means there is a clear, mutually reinforcing benefit in increasing collaboration across different areas of development - in particular between nutrition and climate change.

In that regard, I was pleased to hear food systems being mentioned during last month's UN Climate Summit. Furthermore, various expert reports, including by the UN's Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, have started to warn about the negative links between food systems, diets, and the climate crisis.

These connections are significant. A paper published by the Global Nutrition Report shows that food production uses 70% of the world's freshwater supply, agriculture produces 13% of all greenhouse-gas emissions, and livestock uses 77% of the world's agricultural land. And climate change, in turn, affects food systems and diets. The American Association for the Advancement of Science has found that increasingly frequent droughts and floods are reducing agricultural productivity, while rising levels of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere are robbing plants of the nutrients and vitamins we need to survive.

Given this knowledge, those of us tackling nutrition and climate challenges cannot simply keep fighting in our respective corners. Over the next few years, we have the chance to turn these two global crises into one great opportunity: to reshape the world's agriculture and food systems, while ensuring that everyone has access to nutritious food. But nutrition, agriculture, and climate experts must collaborate to seize that opportunity and build a future in which people consume the food they need while preserving the planet.

Finally, the private sector needs a bigger seat at the table. After all, a single global food company can reach over one billion people every day through its products. If such a firm chooses to make nutritious foods more accessible and affordable, the impact on consumers' diets and health could be huge.

Some businesses have already made positive moves, such as introducing more transparent content labeling or reducing the amount of sugar in their products. But, given the private sector's capacity and reach, progress is simply too slow.

Following pressure from civil-society organizations, governments have turned to regulations to compel businesses to do more. Denmark, for example, introduced a virtual ban on the sale of products containing trans fats, while South Africa was the first country to legislate maximum salt levels in processed foods.

Food companies must choose: they can either wait for governments to impose tougher regulations, or they can get ahead of the curve, work with the nutrition community, and show their consumers and stakeholders that they care about what people eat. Good nutrition can also be good business.

It would be easy simply to blame governments or the private sector for the lack of action so far. But if nutrition is simultaneously everywhere and nowhere, that is partly because we have failed to make the issue visible and relevant to those actors that can bring about change.

The nutrition community must therefore leave its comfort zone and engage with decision-makers focusing on health, agriculture, climate change, and other big global issues. At the 2020 Global Nutrition Summit in Japan, key players from around the world are expected to renew their commitments to end malnutrition. Part of our duty will be to ensure there is space for a wider range of stakeholders to help meet this goal.

Malnutrition is one of the greatest challenges facing the world, but it is solvable. We already know how to protect our planet while improving the diets and health of millions of people. Now we must start doing it.

## MORE HEADLINE NEWS

## MORE HEADLINE NEWS

## NEC ends consultations on Elections Law Reform

The final consultative workshop on the proposed elections law reforms with members of Political Parties, Civil Society Organisations, Women and Youth Groups has concluded in Buchanan, Grand Bassa County.

According to a press release, the three-day event held from 22 to 24 October 2019, was officiated by the Chairman of the National Elections Commission (NEC) Cllr. Jerome Korkoyah.

Cllr. Jerome Korkoyah assured participants of NEC's commitment to working with all electoral stakeholders to consolidate and mature Liberia's nascent democracy.

"The Commission is mandated under Section 2.9 of the new Elections Law of 1986 to propose to the National Legislature for enactment, amendment to, and repeal any provisions of the Elections law", he says.

The NEC Boss informs participants that the NEC executes this mandate through a three-segment electoral cycle, namely: pre-election period, election period and post-election



period.

He adds that after the NEC has concluded the consultative process, a validation will be conducted and subsequently, a thoroughly scrutinized comprehensive reform package will be submitted to the Liberian Legislature.

The consultation was also attended by various Development Partners including representatives from

UNDP, Irish Aid, UN Women and USAID.

In her address, the UNDP Deputy Resident Representative for Program, Violet Baffour informed participants that "UNDP and its partners- the European Union, the Governments of Canada, Ireland and Sweden have been supporting the government of Liberia and the NEC on its

journey towards credible, inclusive and transparent elections".

According to Ms. Baffour, the development partners have supported the NEC in compiling all recommendations from the various electoral stakeholders during the elections law reform process.

"We welcome the efforts of the NEC and the government of Liberia to follow up on these recommendations and seek ways of addressing shortcomings identified through inclusive and substantive consultations", she added.

Ms. Baffour further noted that the legal reform consultations are vital in strengthening public confidence and engagement in Liberia's electoral process.

Also making remarks, USAID Deputy Director, Ms. Rebekah Eubanks commended Liberia's commitment to conducting free, fair and competitive elections as path to genuine peace and reconciliation.

"For peace to be sustained, the people must have unwavering faith in the electoral system- that it will truly allow their voices to be heard no matter their gender, ethnicity, economic status or political affiliation," Ms. Eubanks continued.

She urged the NEC to expeditiously complete the consultative process in order to give the Legislature adequate time to make amendments in the law, before the next electoral cycle.

Other speakers included representatives of Political Parties, Civil Society Organisations and local leaders who thanked the NEC for consulting them in this process.

The Grand Bassa County workshop is one of initiatives conducted by the NEC with support from UNDP Elections Basket Fund, to improve the electoral laws and processes as the country prepares for the 2020 Special Senatorial and 2023 General elections. --Press release

## Lutheran Church invites all faiths to Reformation Day

By Winston W. Parley

The Lutheran Church in Liberia has called on the Christian community and all people of faith, regardless of the religion, to join the 20th celebration of the Joint Declaration of the Doctrine of Justification this Sunday, 27 October at St. Peter's Lutheran Church on 14th Street, Sinkor at 2pm.

The signing of the JDDJ by the Roman Catholic Church and the Lutheran Church in

October 1999 after years of intense dialogue, essentially resolved a 500 - year - old conflict over the nature of justification which was at the root of the Protestant Reformation.

Addressing journalists Thursday, 24 October at his 13th Street compound ahead of the celebration, Rev. Dr. D. Jensen Seyenkulo, Bishop of the Lutheran Church in Liberia says this joint declaration is a major document that shows how much progress the

Churches have made towards the achievement of Christian unity.

"The creation of this document demonstrates to us that no matter what differences we may have, that we are intentional in working together we can do the impossible," Bishop Seyenkulo asserts.

The press briefing was called to update the public on what will be happening this weekend, marking the 502nd years of Reformation Day celebration of the Lutheran Church, together with its Catholic counterpart and all the protestant Churches in the Republic of Liberia.

According to Bishop Seyenkulo, the most significant point of disagreement that led to the split [of the Church] - called the Reformation - was the Doctrine of Justification [on the question of] how they [human beings] are put right with God.

Bishop Seyenkulo, flanked by other Lutheran Church officials including Rev. Dr. Tolbert Thomas Jallah, Dean of the Monrovia District of the Lutheran Church of Liberia and Atty. Naomi Ford - Wilson,



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General Secretary of the Lutheran Church of Liberia, notes that the Reformers took the position that human beings are unable to make themselves right with God, arguing instead that only God can make people right with himself through their faith.

But he says the Roman Catholic Church at the time disagreed, leading to a stand off between those who followed Luther and those who believed in the traditional teaching of the Church at the time.

"That split led to distrust, abuses, violence and destruction of lives and properties for centuries," he adds.

Since the signing of the JDDJ in October 1999, the Lutheran Bishop indicates that other Church bodies have adopted it, including the World Methodist Council, the Episcopal Church and the World Communion of Reformed Churches which include the

Presbyterian Church.

He indicates that the very event that marked the split in the Church in the 16th century has become the rallying point for the Churches.

Bishop Seyenkulo details that 2019 marks the 20th Anniversary of the signing of the Joint Declaration on the Doctrine of Justification by the Lutheran World Federation and the Roman Catholic Church.

He recalls that in November 2017, the Christian community in Liberia assembled at the Antoinette Tubman Stadium (ATS) to commemorate the 500th Anniversary of the Reformation, bringing together Methodists, Episcopalians, Presbyterians, Baptists, Pentecostals and Lutherans, among others.

The gathering of these denominations according to the Lutheran Bishop was possible because the general climate in Christendom is changing more rapidly.

## MORE HEADLINE NEWS

## MORE HEADLINE NEWS

# Kouyateh wants Ellen's Nobel prize withdrawn

By Bridgett Milton

**A**s debate for the establishment of a war and economic crimes court for Liberia intensifies both at home and abroad, a stalwart of the governing Coalition for Democratic Change, Sheikh

that those pushing for the establishment of an international tribunal for Liberia should also demand the withdrawal Mrs. Sirleaf's peace prize for her role played in the Liberian Civil War by allegedly financing the destruction of lives and

Taylor, is enough reason to disqualify her for any international peace accolade such as the Nobel Peace Prize.

But Mrs Sirleaf told the TRC hearing she donated the money for humanitarian purpose.

He adds that the campaign for a war crimes court to prosecute those who bear greater responsibility for the 14 years of hostility in Liberia would be incomplete and tainted, if the global community fails to bring to book all of those culpable for the destruction of Liberia.

Kouyateh believes the status of former president Sirleaf as a Nobel Laureate is a slap in the face of justice for the more than 250,000 Liberians who lost their lives as a result of the brutal civil war.

Mrs Sirleaf in 2011, shared the prestigious Nobel Peace Prize with another Liberian peace advocate, Leymah Gbowee and a female Yemeni peace advocate.

The Nobel Peace Committee based their selection of Mrs. Sirleaf for the award on what the committee said was her role in working for peace and democratic freedom over the years, prior to her ascendance to the Liberian presidency.



Kouyateh, calls on the Norwegian-based Nobel Peace Committee to withdraw the Nobel Peace Prize awarded to former President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf in 2011.

Speaking to reporters in Monrovia, Kouyateh asserts

properties.

Mr. Kouyateh recalls the confession by former President Sirleaf before the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) in 2009 that she contributed US\$10,000 to the defunct NPFL rebels of jailed former President Charles

## Zealous Security links to fuel theft

By Emmanuel Mondaye

**Z**ealous Security Experts, a private security entity situated in Paynesville City outside Monrovia, is being investigated for alleged complacency in the reported disappearance of 420 gallons of fuel kept under its watch.

Two officers of the firm, Elijah Logan and Stephens Jones were posted on 3rd shift when the fuel disappeared from the storage tank.

Information gathered indicates the two alleged suspects had used their assignment at the storage tank as an opportunity to allegedly steal the fuel instead of protecting it.

An executive of Zealous, Mr. Patrick Harmon, notes the two security officers violated the professional code governing the entity, which prohibits act of criminality.

He discloses investigation is ongoing to identify to whom the fuel was sold.

Mr. Harmon continues that following their investigation,

the suspects would be turned over to the Liberia National Police (LNP) to be charged and sent to court.

He wonders how the officers got that huge consignment out of a fence where it was being kept by the owner.

Mr. Harmon warns personnel of the firm to desist from criminality and live by security ethics.

But when contacted, officers Logan and Jones denied their involvement into the stealing of the fuel. - *Editing by Jonathan Browne*



# ATAF wants tax authorities strengthened

**T**he African Tax Administration Forum (ATAF) alarms over Africa's limited progress in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by 2030.

According to a press release, ATAF believes building the necessary skills and capacity within tax administrations will have a more sustainable impact in sourcing funding to achieve the 17 Goals. Liberia is among the 38 countries making up ATAF, and has served on its leadership over the years.

It is the continent's main tax body, driven by the belief that strengthening tax systems in Africa could help generate the much needed revenues and put the continent back on track to achieving the SDGs by 2030.

Since the historic adoption of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in

sustainable development report warns that "mobilizing sufficient financing remains a major challenge in implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development". According to the report, existing multilateral funding mechanisms are under huge strain, which leaves much of the goals underfunded with a growing risk of not being achieved by 2030.

The developing world, and Sub-Saharan Africa in particular, where most countries' tax to GDP ratios falls below the 15% minimum required to be able to fund basic public services, are amongst the most exposed economies.

In clearer terms, it is estimated that Africa needs an additional \$500 billion to \$1.2 trillion annual financing to meet its SDG targets. With the declining official development



Mr. Logan Woot, the Executive Secretary of ATAF

2015 and in spite of the wide buy-in by governments worldwide, achieving the SDGs by 2030 continues to present serious challenges for Africa.

According to a report by the Sustainable Development Goals Centre for Africa (SDG/A), after nearly a decade of implementation, the continent has made minimal progress in most of the 17 goals, if any at all.

ATAF quotes the report as noting that the only notable signs of progress were on SGD 5, 13 and 15 which deal with gender issues and climate change and whose assessment focuses more on the adoption of key policies and not so much on empirical results. The main culprit for this state of affairs is the insufficiency of funds to finance the implementation of the goals.

The 2019 Financing for

assistance (ODA) and other decreasing external sources of funding, experts agree that these amounts must be generated internally.

Towards achieving this, ATAF has developed a multi-dimensional approach to boosting tax revenues in Africa, including tailored technical assistance programs, training and capacity building workshops, knowledge generation and dissemination and multilateral diplomacy.

"We are 11 and half years away from the SDGs deadline. Sadly, a good number of African countries still do not raise sufficient revenues to meet basic state functions. But this is not a death sentence. Large amounts of revenues can be unlocked by capacitating our tax administrations with the right skills, knowledge

## MORE HEADLINE NEWS

## MORE HEADLINE NEWS

## VP Taylor makes Liberia's case at Russia-Africa Summit

Vice President Jewel Howard-Taylor has made a strong case for Liberia at the First Russia-Africa Summit held in Sochi, Russian Federation, her first major international stage.

According to a dispatch, Madam Howard - Taylor was among 35 African Heads of States and Government in Sochi for the Summit that ran from October 23-24, 2019, representing President George Manneh Weah.

In her splendid presentation, the Vice President asserted that Africa remains the last economic frontier zone in the world and is opened for business, industrialization and international cooperation.

She opined that Africa cannot continue to do business as usual, and echoed the need to transform the continent's natural resources to finished products for the global market.

She applauded the leadership of President Vladimir Putin for his level of international engagements with the African continent and called for an international cooperation based on mutual interest.

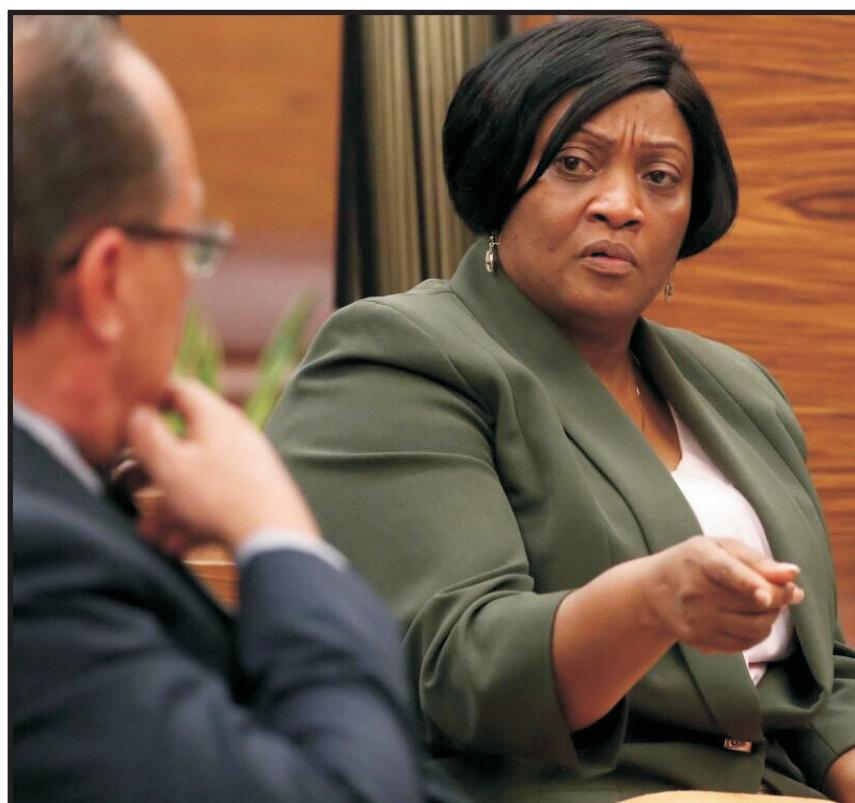
Madam Howard-Taylor also reiterated President Weah's pronouncement that Liberia is opened for business and will continue to create

the economic ambience to engender trade and investment.

She thanked the Russian Government for their support to Liberia in the fight against the Ebola Virus and the provision of training for Liberians in the mining sector.

release says President Putin announced an investment package of 5 billion United States Dollars for Africa, which will be managed by the Russian Development Council through the AFREXIM BANK.

The development package will be accessed by African



The Russia-Africa Summit is the first of its kind in the history of Russia and Africa relations.

The Summit featured the economic and political forums which centered on Russia's economic agenda for Africa.

At the economic forum, the

Nations for investment and development purposes to stimulate economic growth.

President Putin also announced a 20 billion United States Dollars debt waiver for African Nations indebted to Russia as a sign of renewed partnership with the African

continent.

He disclosed that there are 17, 000 African students studying in Russia and 4,000 of these students are sponsored by the Russian government.

The Russian President also recounted Russia's contribution of 60 million United States Dollars for the fight against the deadly Ebola Virus in 2014, in which Liberia, Sierra Leone and Guinea were

major beneficiaries.

Russia is the world's largest country and has 30% of the world's natural resources. The country is amongst the top 10 exporters of food to African markets. Russia has significant strength in human resource development, military, science and technology, energy and agriculture.--*Press release*

## ATAF wants tax

*Cont'd from page 6*

and expertise, and our Ministries of finance with the necessary data, sound policies and adequate regulatory and legislative frameworks", says Logan Wort, the Executive Secretary of ATAF, speaking at the World Bank Group's General Meetings last week.

ATAF signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the World Bank on the side line of the Meetings precisely in order to strengthen cooperation between the two organizations in building strong revenue administrations in Africa.

In its 10 years of existence, the organization has been the continent's champion on tax matters. To date, it has 20 ongoing country programs focusing on cross-border taxation, exchange of information, transfer pricing and VAT, amongst others. Such programs have proven instrumental in generating over \$300 million in additional tax revenues for ATAF members. New transfer pricing

rules have been introduced in 12 countries, allowing them to increase their revenues from large taxpayers.

The organization has therefore trained over 15,422 tax officials and policymakers on tax audit, tax treaties analysis, compliance risk management and fraud detection, transfer pricing, revenue forecasting and analysis and many others.

As a home-grown initiative, ATAF presents the characteristics of a winning formula for overcoming the development financing challenges currently faced by the continent. If Africa is indeed to mobilize sufficient revenues to meet the SDGs by 2030, improving its tax systems represents one of the key areas to focus on. Having an already established body such as ATAF to provide the expertise required for this, is a definite plus. *-Press Release*

## CHS launches operation clean school environment

By Emmanuel Mondaye

Operation Clean School Environment intended to continuously provide a clean learning environment for both students and administrative staffers at the Christian High School in Montserrado County has been

launched.

Speaking during the launch of the exercise on the school campus Monday, veteran Liberian educator and proprietor of the CHS, Rev. Dr. Roosevelt Z. Liberty, said though the institution observes tardiness, students should be reminded of their role in

ensuring the campus is always kept clean.

He encouraged students to make maximum use of trash buckets placed at various locations within the school premises to ensuring a safe and clean environment for all.

He said keeping the school environment clean should not only be left with caretakers on campus but requires involvement of everyone, including teachers, students, and administration, stressing that with a joint focus and cooperation, the school will at all times be tardy.

Rev. Dr. Liberty, widely considered as a disciplinary by many of the students, said people should wash their hands always after using the latrine to avoid contracting germs and diseases.

He urged his staff to assist whenever they came in contact with dirt on the campus, as a way of identifying with the student population.

Dr. Liberty called for full cooperation of the entire school family, adding that a clean school environment helps to fight creeping diseases that could spark out there.



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# Français

## Le maire Koijee se fait porte-parole des partisans de la création d'un tribunal des crimes de guerre

**L**e maire de la ville de Monrovia, Jefferson T. Koijee, a réaffirmé son soutien à la création d'un tribunal extraordinaire des crimes de guerre et crimes économiques au Libéria. C'est pour lui la seule chose qui permettra au Libéria de renouer avec la justice et permettra aux fils et filles de cette nation de se réconcilier véritablement.

Il a indiqué que l'établissement d'un tel tribunal obligera non seulement les gens qui ont commis des atrocités pendant les 14 années de guerre civile sanglante dans le pays à répondre de leurs crimes, mais aussi cela promouvra la paix et assurera la guérison sociale.

Selon une dépêche, le maire Koijee a dévoilé sa position par rapport à cette question lors d'une interview avec une radio aux États-Unis d'Amérique où il se trouve



actuellement.

Les propos du maire de Monrovia, qui préside également la Ligue des jeunes de la Coalition pour le changement démocratique au pouvoir, sont en porte-à-faux avec la position des législateurs du parti pouvoir

qui ont récemment refusé de signer une résolution de la Chambre des représentants qui avalisait la création d'un tribunal extraordinaire des crimes de guerre et crimes économiques.

Koijee veut que les auteurs présumés des crimes odieux

soient tenus de rendre compte de leurs actes devant un tribunal compétent. Il a affirmé que son plaidoyer en faveur de la création d'un tribunal pour le Libéria ne peut en aucun cas faire l'objet de compromis par sa position au sein du gouvernement, soulignant que le moyen ultime de maintenir la paix, une réconciliation véritable et le développement au Libéria est la création de ce tribunal.

« Nous devons chercher à mettre fin à la culture d'impunité au Libéria en appliquant la loi et en tenant les personnes pour responsables de leurs actes », a déclaré le maire de la ville de Monrovia.

Il a rendu hommage au président George Weah pour avoir pris des mesures qui pourraient conduire à la création dudit tribunal pour le Libéria.

Le Président Weah, qui a récemment soumis au Parlement des recommandations issues d'un dialogue économique national, tout en demandant conseil aux législateurs sur les violations des droits de l'homme, avait lui-même envoyé des signaux contradictoires lorsqu'il a comparu devant la 74ème Assemblée générale des Nations Unies. Il s'interrogeait pourquoi les appels à la création d'un tel tribunal se sont intensifiés maintenant alors que le régime sous lequel l'accord de paix global avait été signé à Accra, au Ghana, qui avait conduit à la formation de la Commission Vérité et Réconciliation (CVR), n'avait pas fait l'objet de pression pour mettre en œuvre les recommandations de la CVR.

Bien que la CVR ait recommandé la création d'un tribunal spécial en 2009,

l'ancien président Ellen Johnson Sirleaf a accordé moins d'attention à cet appel.

Des milliers de personnes ont été tuées, des femmes et des filles violées et des enfants utilisés comme soldats pendant la guerre.

Par ailleurs, le maire Koijee dit regretter les manifestations de rue qui sont devenues récurrentes au Libéria. Selon lui, cela a la capacité de ternir l'image du pays et de décourager les investisseurs.

« Nous comprenons que la situation économique de notre pays rend les choses difficiles, mais nous ne pouvons pas nous servir de cette situation pour marquer des points politiques en organisant en permanence des manifestations au détriment des personnes que nous prétendons aimer. »

Il a appelé les jeunes libériens à ne pas se laisser utiliser par les politiciens pour recourir à la violence, car ils ont une grande opportunité aujourd'hui sous le régime de Weah.

Il a également appelé les responsables du gouvernement actuel à ne pas passer tout leur temps à accuser le gouvernement précédent d'être responsable des défis auxquels le pays est actuellement confronté. Il incombe aux responsables de l'administration Weah de redoubler d'efforts pour que le programme en faveur des pauvres pour la prospérité et le développement profite vraiment aux pauvres.

« Nous ne sommes pas arrivés au pouvoir pour renvoyer la faute à d'autres personnes. Nous sommes venus au gouvernement avec le slogan du changement », a-t-il rappelé.

## Les travailleurs de la fonction publique menacent de manifester

**L**e Consortium des organisations des travailleurs du secteur public du Libéria, un groupe composé d'agents de santé, d'enseignants des écoles publiques et de tous les fonctionnaires, menace de faire grève si le gouvernement dirigé par la Coalition pour le changement démocratique (CDC) ne règle pas tous les arriérés de salaire des fonctionnaires avant le 31 octobre 2019.

« Sidans deux semaines, à partir de cette date, le gouvernement du Libéria ne répond pas à ces graves préoccupations qui entourent

les droits du travail et les conditions de vie des travailleurs du secteur public et de leurs familles, tous les travailleurs du secteur public de la République du Libéria rentreront en grève », a déclaré le groupe.

Le président de l'Association de la fonction publique du Libéria, M. Mulbah Johnson, après avoir lu la résolution des travailleurs du secteur public le mercredi 23 octobre, a demandé la cessation immédiate de toutes les réductions salariales non autorisées.

Les membres et les responsables du parti au

pouvoir, dont notamment le représentant du comté de Grand Kru, Jonathan Fonati Koffa, accusent l'opposition de manigancer les manifestations qui sont devenues récurrentes ces derniers mois.

A la suite de la manifestation des élèves des écoles publiques, il y a quelques semaines, le député Koffa a accusé l'opposition d'avoir exposé les enfants au danger en les envoyant dans la rue pour protester.

La protestation des élèves avait pourtant été déclenchée après que les enseignants des écoles publiques avaient abandonné les cours en signe de protestation pour réclamer le paiement de leurs salaires.

Il n'est pas clair si pour cette fois le pouvoir continuera d'accuser l'opposition d'être derrière la dernière menace des travailleurs du secteur public vu les dures réalités économiques auxquelles sont confrontés les libériens de toutes les couches sociales sous l'administration Weah.

Les fonctionnaires travaillent pendant des mois sans recevoir leurs salaires. Le gouvernement du CDC a mal à payer les arriérés de salaires des employés, ce qui a poussé certaines institutions à faire la



### Articles traduits

Par Valéry G. Guhéna

E-mail: valeryghn10@yahoo.com

Tel: 076 589 44

grève avant de recevoir quelque chose.

Revenons-en aux revendications des agents du secteur public. M. Mulbah Johnson demande au gouvernement d'employer immédiatement tous les enseignants bénévoles agréés et de payer tous les arriérés de salaire des employés du secteur public au plus tard le 31 octobre 2019.

Il veut aussi que la masse salariale soit retransmise à la CSA, qui, selon lui, a la responsabilité légale d'apprecier les salaires en fonction de son système.

En outre, l'organisation des travailleurs du secteur public souhaite que toutes les primes retenues sur les employés du secteur public soient remises aux compagnies d'assurance respectives.

# Français

## Editorial

### Les gouvernements devraient écouter Mme Sirleaf

L'Ambassadrice de bonne volonté des Nations Unies pour les personnels de la santé, Ellen Johnson Sirleaf, ex-présidente libérienne, a appelé les gouvernements du monde entier et la communauté internationale à donner la priorité à l'éducation de qualité, et à former de plus en plus d'agents de santé.

Selon elle, les pays en voie de développement sont confrontés à l'insuffisance des travailleurs de la santé, et cela est un problème très grave pour ces pays.

Elle a rappelé que tous les postes dans le secteur de la santé, qu'il s'agisse de celui de chirurgien, de médecin généraliste ou d'infirmier, exigent de longues années d'études universitaires et beaucoup d'argent. Beaucoup désirent devenir des professionnels de la santé, mais ils n'ont pas les moyens qu'il faut.

Elle a indiqué que les gouvernements peuvent et doivent faire davantage pour donner une meilleure formation qui permettra aux professionnels de la santé d'être mieux équipés afin de dispenser les soins dont leurs patients ont besoin.

Elle a aussi mis en exergue la petitesse des salaires que reçoivent les travailleurs de la santé. Cela constitue un autre obstacle qui empêche les gens de s'aventurer sur ce terrain.

« Il faut que les gouvernements accordent une priorité à la santé publique en augmentant le budget du secteur de la santé afin que les travailleurs qualifiés puissent recevoir des salaires raisonnables. La plupart des travailleurs de la santé sont motivés par le sens du devoir et désirent aider les malades, mais hélas, ils ne peuvent pas nourrir leurs familles rien qu'avec cette bonne intention », a déclaré l'Ambassadrice de bonne volonté des Nations Unies.

Nous sommes d'accord avec Mme Sirleaf. Il faut une formation adéquate et des salaires attrayants non seulement pour que cela attire beaucoup de personnes dans ce secteur, mais aussi pour que les professionnels de la santé aient les compétences qu'il faut et qu'ils soient assez motivés pour donner les meilleurs soins aux patients. C'est pourquoi il est indispensable que les gouvernements, en particulier les gouvernements des pays en voie de développement, donnent la priorité à ce secteur.

Le système sanitaire du Libéria, tout comme celui de la plupart des pays africains, est très médiocre, ce qui entraîne des décès évitables en raison du manque d'équipement et de personnel qualifié.

Il faut que cela change. Car ce n'est qu'à ce prix que la prochaine génération aura une expérience de vie assez longue, étant donné que les professionnels de la santé auront la capacité professionnelle et matérielle de sauver les vies.

Cependant, pour des raisons égoïstes, les dirigeants des pays du tiers monde continuent d'inverser les priorités en plaçant les questions les plus importantes au bas de l'échelle.

Si le monde, en particulier l'Afrique et plus particulièrement le Libéria, veut disposer d'un système sanitaire assez efficace où le taux de mortalité infantile et maternelle demeure de plus en plus négligeable, il va falloir que nous revoyions nos copies et accordions une importance à la santé.

Quand la population d'une nation est en bonne santé, cela constitue un atout majeur pour cette nation, car la population est le moteur du développement économique et du progrès humain.

Il est donc regrettable que les législateurs de notre pays s'octroient des salaires exorbitants et des primes fabuleuses au détriment des domaines critiques comme la santé, l'éducation, l'agriculture, etc, auxquelles ils n'accordent aucune attention.

Il est temps que le gouvernement mette à disposition des bourses d'étude dans le secteur de la santé afin que les praticiens approfondissent leurs connaissances en matière de santé publique et qu'ils soient à la hauteur de leur tâche, ce qui permettra par ricochet à la population de se porter bien.

La récente grève des travailleurs de la santé pour réclamer des arriérés de salaire et de meilleures conditions de travail envoie une mauvaise image du pays. C'est la preuve que nous sommes pas capables de nous mesurer à nos camarades de la communauté mondiale.

En conséquence, nous nous associons à l'ancienne présidente du Libéria qui est actuellement ambassadrice de bonne volonté pour appeler les gouvernements du monde entier, en particulier d'Afrique et plus précisément le gouvernement du Libéria, à réorienter nos programmes de santé pour rendre le système plus efficace.

## COMMENTAIRE

Par Jeffrey D. Sachs

### Pourquoi les villes riches se rebellent

**N**EW YORK - Trois des villes les plus riches du monde ont connu cette année d'importantes manifestations et des troubles. Paris a dû faire face, dès novembre 2018, à une vague de mécontentement et de désordres, consécutive à la hausse des taxes sur le carburant décidée par le président français Emmanuel Macron. Hong Kong est en ébullition depuis le mois de mars, suite à un projet de loi déposé par la cheffe de l'exécutif Carrie Lam qui aurait permis les extraditions vers la Chine continentale. Et des émeutes ont explosé à Santiago du Chili, ce mois-ci, après que le président Sebastian Piñera a tranché en faveur d'une augmentation du prix des tickets de métro. Chaque mouvement de protestation a ses propres facteurs locaux, mais, pris ensemble, ils racontent l'histoire de ce qui peut arriver lorsque le sentiment d'injustice se mêle à la perception répandue d'une faible mobilité sociale.

Au regard du traditionnel instrument de mesure que constitue le PIB par habitant, les trois villes sont des parangons de réussite économique. Le revenu par habitant est d'environ 40 000 dollars à Hong Kong, de plus de 60 000 dollars à Paris et se situe aux alentours de 18 000 dollars à Santiago, l'une des villes les plus riches d'Amérique latine. Le Rapport mondial 2019 sur la compétitivité publié par le Forum économique mondial classe Hong Kong au troisième rang, la France au quinzième et le Chili au trente-troisième (de loin le pays d'Amérique latine le mieux placé).

Mais si ces pays sont plutôt riches et compétitifs au vu des critères conventionnels, leur population n'est pas satisfaite de son quotidien et des aspects parmi les plus importants de celui-ci. Selon le Rapport mondial sur le bonheur 2019, publié par les Nations Unies, les habitants de Hong Kong, de la France et du Chili estiment que leurs vies sont, à bien des égards, bloquées.

Chaque année, l'institut de sondage Gallup demande aux gens, dans le monde entier : « Êtes-vous satisfait ou insatisfait de la liberté dont vous disposez pour choisir ce que vous faites de votre vie ? » Si Hong Kong occupe le neuvième rang mondial pour ce qui concerne le PIB par habitant, le territoire se classe beaucoup moins bien, au soixante-sixième rang, si l'on prend en compte le sentiment de chacun de pouvoir mener sa vie comme il l'entend. La même discordance est sensible en France (vingt-cinquième rang pour le PIB par habitant, soixante-neuvième pour la liberté de choisir sa vie) et le Chili (quarante-huitième et quatre-vingt-dix-huitième rangs respectivement).

Paradoxalement, la fondation Heritage et l'université Simon Fraser s'accordent toutes deux à classer Hong Kong comme la ville du monde où l'on jouit de la plus grande liberté économique ; les résidents de Hong Kong, en revanche, se morfondent du peu de liberté qui leur est laissé pour mener leur vie à leur guise. Dans chacune des trois économies, les jeunes urbains qui ne sont pas nés riches désespèrent de trouver un logement abordable et un emploi décent. À Hong Kong, les prix de l'immobilier en comparaison du salaire moyen sont parmi les plus élevés au monde. Le Chili présente les inégalités de revenu les plus profondes de toute l'OCDE, le club des pays à haut revenu. En France, les enfants des élites sont grandement avantagés dans leur parcours.

En raison des prix très élevés du logement, la plupart des personnes sont éloignées des quartiers centraux et actifs et dépendent généralement de leur véhicule personnel ou des transports en commun pour se rendre au travail. Elles sont donc particulièrement sensibles à l'évolution des prix des transports, comme l'ont montré les explosions de colère populaire à Paris et à Santiago.

Hong Kong, la France et le Chili ne sont pas les seuls à connaître une crise de la mobilité sociale et à devoir affronter le mécontentement suscité par le creusement des inégalités. Aux États-Unis, les taux de

suicides s'envolent et les autres signes de détresse sociale, comme les tueries de masse, se multiplient, à une époque où les inégalités sont plus profondes que jamais et où la confiance des citoyens dans les pouvoirs publics s'effondre. Les États-Unis doivent probablement s'attendre à des explosions sociales plus fréquentes si notre vie politique et notre économie continuent sur la même voie.

Pour éviter d'en arriver là, nous devons tirer des leçons des trois cas récents exposés plus haut. Les trois gouvernements en question ont été pris de court par les mouvements de protestation. Ayant perdu contact avec l'opinion publique, ils ne pouvaient prévoir qu'une initiative de portée apparemment modeste (le projet de loi sur les extraditions à Hong Kong, l'augmentation de la taxe sur les carburants en France et celle du ticket de métro au Chili) déclencherait une explosion sociale d'une telle ampleur.

Ce qui probablement est plus significatif et moins étonnant, les instruments économiques traditionnels, qui mesurent le bien-être, sont totalement insuffisants pour évaluer ce que ressentent réellement les citoyens. Le PIB par habitant détermine le revenu moyen d'une économie, mais ne dit rien de sa redistribution, du sentiment qu'ont les gens d'être traités justement ou injustement, de la perception de leur vulnérabilité financière et d'autres éléments de la situation sociale (comme la confiance dans les pouvoirs publics) qui pèsent lourdement sur la qualité de la vie en général. Et les classements comme l'indice mondial de compétitivité du Forum économique mondial, l'indice de liberté économique de la fondation Heritage et la mesure de la liberté économique dans le monde, mise au point par l'université Simon Fraser, parviennent mal à saisir si les populations ont le sentiment d'être traités justement, d'être libres de mener leur vie comme bon leur semble, si elles croient en l'honnêteté des pouvoirs publics et accordent leur confiance à leurs semblables.

Pour connaître ces sentiments, il est nécessaire de demander directement aux gens s'ils sont satisfaits de leur vie, s'ils se sentent personnellement libres, s'ils font confiance à leur gouvernement et à leurs compatriotes, et ce qu'ils pensent des autres dimensions de la vie sociale qui affectent lourdement la qualité de vie et peuvent par conséquent déclencher une révolte sociale. C'est l'approche choisie par les enquêtes annuelles de Gallup sur le bien-être, que mes collègues et moi-même reprenons chaque année dans Rapport mondial sur le bonheur.

L'idée de développement durable, telle qu'exprimée dans les 17 objectifs de développement durable (ODD) adoptés en 2015 par les gouvernements de la planète, consiste à dépasser les indicateurs traditionnels comme la croissance du PIB et le revenu par habitant, pour considérer un ensemble plus significatif d'instruments et de politiques prenant en compte la justice sociale, la confiance et la préservation de l'environnement. Ainsi les ODD portent-ils une attention particulière non seulement à la réduction des inégalités de revenus (ODD 10), mais aussi, plus généralement, à la promotion du bien-être (ODD 3).

Il appartient à chaque société de prendre le pouls de sa population et d'observer avec attention les racines de la détresse sociale et de la défiance. La croissance économique sans justice ni préservation de l'environnement porte en germe le désordre et non le bien-être. Nous avons besoin d'une offre beaucoup plus vaste de services publics, d'une redistribution plus conséquente des revenus des riches aux pauvres et d'investissements publics plus importants pour garantir un environnement durable. Même des mesures apparemment sensées comme la suppression des subventions sur les carburants ou la hausse des prix du métro pour en couvrir les coûts entraîneront des révoltes si elles sont prises dans un contexte de défiance sociale et de creusement des inégalités et que le sentiment d'injustice est largement partagé.

## MORE HEADLINE NEWS

## MORE HEADLINE NEWS

# Two Sub-Saharan African countries progress in easing doing business

Economies in Sub-Saharan Africa continue to improve their business climates, with the region's largest economy, Nigeria, earning a place among the year's top global improvers alongside Togo, according to the World Bank Group's Doing Business study.

Economies of the region enacted 73 reforms in the 12 months leading to May 1, down from a record high of 108, and the number of countries implementing at least one reform fell to 31 from 40. The regional average ease of doing business score was 51.8 on a scale of 0 to 100, below the OECD high-income average of 78.4 and the global average of 63.0.

There were several bright spots in the region. Togo is on the list of top improvers for the second year in a row thanks to reforms lowering fees for construction permits and streamlining property registration procedures, among other measures. Nigeria conducted reforms impacting six indicators, including making the enforcement of contracts easier, which placed the 200-million-person economy among the world's top improvers.

Kenya also carried out six



reforms, including improving the reliability of its electricity supply and introducing an online system for social security contributions, positioning it third highest in the regional rankings, behind Mauritius and Rwanda. With four reforms implemented this year, Mauritius remains the easiest place to do business in the region, ranking 13th globally. Among other reforms, the country made resolving insolvency easier and improved contract enforcement.

Elsewhere, Cabo Verde and Eswatini each carried out four reforms, a record for both. Zimbabwe improved in five areas measured by Doing Business while the Democratic Republic of Congo, Gabon and Rwanda advanced in three. Due to active reform efforts, Niger's and Senegal's scores improved significantly.

The region conducted the most reforms in the areas of starting a business, dealing with construction permits and getting credit, with twelve reforms in each. Thanks to

initiatives led by the Central African Economic and Monetary Community, getting credit became easier in several economies in the region.

The region's economies performed best in the areas of starting a business and getting credit, with three economies - Kenya, Rwanda and Zambia - ranking among the world's top 10 in the latter category. On average, it now takes around 20 days and costs 33.5% of income per capita to start a new business in the region, substantially faster and less expensive than the 62 days and 305% of income per capita it took in 2003.

"With reforms led by the Organization for the Harmonization of Business Law in Africa last year and the Central African Economic and Monetary Community this year, economies in Sub-Saharan Africa have demonstrated how regional cooperation can help to effectively improve the business climate," said Santiago Croci Downes, Program Manager of the Doing Business unit.

Despite advancements, the pace of reforms across the region has slowed overall, and there is scope to improve performance, reform impact,

and implementation. Only two Sub-Saharan African economies rank in the top 50 on the ease of doing business rankings while most of the bottom 20 economies in the global rankings are from the region. South Africa implemented a single reform this year and four in the past five years. Liberia has implemented only three reforms in the past five years, while Burundi, the Central African Republic and Namibia have implemented only four.

Compared to other parts of the world, Sub-Saharan Africa still underperforms in several areas. In getting electricity, for example, businesses must pay more than 3,100% percent of income per capita to connect to the grid, compared to just over 400% in the Middle East and North Africa or 272% percent in Europe and Central Asia. When it comes to trading across borders and paying taxes, businesses spend about 96 hours to comply with documentary requirements to import, versus 3.4 hours in OECD high-income economies, and small and medium-size businesses in their second year of operation need to pay taxes more than 36 times a year, compared to an average of 23 times globally.

## VP Taylor challenges entrepreneurs

Liberia's Vice President Jewel Howard-Taylor is challenging Liberian entrepreneurs to engage the market with love for country and forge a common front.

According to a press release, Vice President Taylor's comments were

contained in special remarks made Wednesday, 23 October on her behalf by her Acting Chief Staff T. Titus Charley at a seminar organized by the Liberian Enterprise Development Finance Company (LEDFC) in collaboration with other organizations.



VP Howard-Taylor, who has a background in finance, wants entrepreneurs to set the pace of an effective market while calling on them to collaborate with the government to set standards, prices and ensure a stable market.

The press release says Madam Howard - Taylor asserted that the government under President George M. Weah remains committed to ensuring a stable market and the protection of all entrepreneurs.

Speaking at a local hotel in Monrovia, Mr. Charley on behalf of the Vice President, hailed the organizers for the initiative while maintaining that the government will play its part to ensure a peaceful and fair business atmosphere in Liberia.

The seminar was held under the theme: "SME Entrepreneur, Challenges and the Way Forward".

Speaking earlier, the Chief Executive Officer and Country Coordinator of Groupe Ndoum Liberia Ambrose G. Hophouet

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said the objectives of the seminar is four-fold with the firstly being to re-orient business owners to understand that the business environment has changed and these changes demand changes in their way of thinking and approach of doing business.

According to Mr. Hophouet, encouraging customers and potential customers to be open and discuss with their lenders the challenges facing their businesses, comprised of the second phase while the Third is to encourage customers and potential customers to explore

innovative way of doing business through competitive pricing, product development and customer service.

The final phase of the seminar, he explained, is being organized to create the platform for businesses owners and key stakeholders to collaborate, network and build synergies for development.

Established in 2007, is the only development finance institution in Liberia with the vision to become a premier world class provider of loan capital and technical assistance to SMEs in Liberia.

# chaos predicted

By Winston W. Parley

Imprisoned former president Charles Ghankay Taylor's key ally, now Bomi County Sen. Sando Johnson, pleads with the planners of the 31 December "step down campaign" against President George Manneh Weah to abandon their quest to avoid a recurrence of killings, rape and destruction of properties here.

Sen. Johnson reminds Liberians through local broadcaster Prime FM Thursday that during Liberia's decade - long civil crisis, mothers and sisters were raped and killed in buses and cities, warning against a recurrence of the ugly past.

"We went through long civil crisis in this country. You know exactly what happened to us here; our mothers, our sisters were raped and killed in the bushes, even in the cities. Do we want recurrence of those ugly past? I will say no!" Mr. Johnson responds.



The Weah step down campaign is being planned by the Council of Patriots (COP), the same group that organized the June 7, 2019 protest against the regime to demand reforms in government.

Lead campaigner and talk show host Henry Costa, has bitterly intensified his criticism against the regime, amid a recent move by the Coalition for Democratic

Change (CDC) - led administration to shut down his radio station, Roots FM.

But the Bomi Senator, who took part in the June 7 protest, however distances himself from the call by the COP for the president to step down, based on his own calculation of the national security implications that are attached.

"I'm not condemning them; they are Liberians. They have

the right to peacefully assemble, but not to say the government must step aside. Because, then you don't have feeling for the people because it will be chaotic. People will die. People's properties will get destroyed. And no good leader will want that to happen," he argues.

"For the sake of peace, for the sake of Mama Liberia, they should abandon the December 31 step down campaign," Johnson pleads.

He further calls on Liberians not to turn out or support the step down campaign, warning that it is not good for the country.

Rather than staging protest for Mr. Weah to step down, Sen. Johnson stresses the need

for more dialogue with the government, appealing to his colleagues in the COP to do away with the campaign for the sake of the peace of the country.

He says he took part in the June 7 protest because it was not meant to call for anybody to step aside, noting that he will not take part in anything that is violent.

Sen. Johnson suggests the need to apply a different approach by engaging the CDC - led government and make recommendations to the administration on what the regime should do.

Where the government fails to listen to its people, he also recommends the need for protesters to wait until the 2020 senatorial election and the 2023 presidential election to use the ballot to change the government.

"So I'm calling on everybody, all Liberians from all walks of life to abandon December 31. It is not in the interest of the people who are protesting, it is not even in ... the interest of the country. So I'm not going to sit down and say the President must step aside," he adds.

He concludes that nobody should overlook President Weah, saying the President has popularity and fanatics and that asking him to step down would invite chaos. *-Editing by Jonathan Browne*

## LAA sensitizes persons with disabilities

The Liberia Land Authority (LLA) and the National Commission on Disability embark on public information and outreach campaigns on the Land Rights Act, focusing more on Persons with Disabilities, described as "forgotten" groups in the Liberian society.

According to a release, the LLA is mindful of the National Action Plan on PWDs and based on its core values of Transparency, Fairness, Accountability, and Integrity as contained in its five-year Strategic Plan (2018-2023), the regional sensitization programmes are critical in the use and management of land in the Country.

Funded by the United

Nations Development Programme (UNDP) access to information by vulnerable groups including PWDs, is imperative in fostering respect for their rights and inclusiveness in accessing land without discrimination.

At the sensitization programmes held in Tubmanburg, Bomi County and Buchanan, Grand Bassa County respectively, the Acting Chairman of LLA Adams Manobah stressed the need for more opportunities to be given to vulnerable groups across the country.

Mr. Manobah noted that equal access to information is key in ensuring that more attention be given to groups with disabilities as required by Law, to undertake meaningful

activities such as farming and business for income generation.

"See your disability as just a shortcoming; you have major roles to play in contributing meaningfully to the society," he told the participants.

Adam Manobah lauded the support from UNDP and underscored that the marginalization of people with disabilities in Liberia, including rights to land and its resources is intolerable.

The support provided by UNDP in this endeavor is aimed at creating a platform that will inform how to acquire, use and manage the various land tenure categories, as well as the functions and responsibilities of the Liberia Land Authority, the agency of Government with the regulatory mandate for land matters.

UNDP Programme Associate of the Governance and Public Institution portfolio, Boye Johnson, emphasized that the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) 2030 is clear on observing the rights of disabled groups to education, health, justice and empowerment.

Johnson, who proxy for Resident Representative Pa Lamin Beyai, committed UNDP to buttressing policy level efforts that are designed to strengthen the national Pro Poor Agenda of lifting people out of poverty.

At the same time, the Executive Director of the National Commission on

Disability Ricardia Dennis, urged beneficiaries to use the knowledge to spread the information regarding land issues, within their communities, saying, "Knowledge when used wisely, helps you to encounter power and enjoy life."

Despite the principle of equality, Persons with Disabilities (PWDs) may not enjoy the benefits of land ownership, particularly in communities with customary land.

This is due in large part, to negative attitude and stereotyping, and the widely held belief that PWDs are weak, incapable and unable to make decisions regarding land governance.

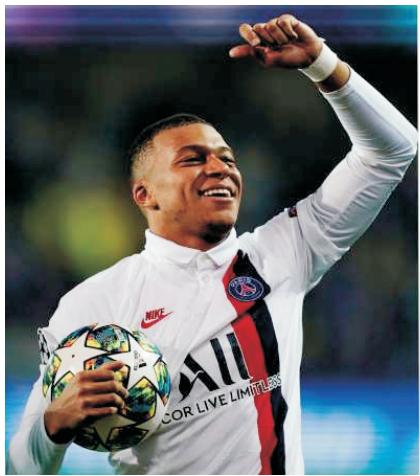
This is a situation which is abundantly evident in their marginal participation, if any, in consultations and decision making concerning land.

Indeed, they have issues, but have never featured prominently in programs and activities related to land neither have they been specifically targeted for

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## Mbappe breaks Messi's record



Paris Saint-Germain attacker Kylian Mbappe has broken Lionel Messi's record to become the youngest player to score 15 Champions League goals.

Only just back from injury, the 20-year-old was brought on in the second half of PSG's 5-0 away win against Club Brugge and proved instrumental in securing the comfortable victory as he bagged an impressive hat-trick.

Brought on in the 52nd minute, Mbappe headed home his first just nine minutes later and added an

assist not long after as he set up Mauro Icardi.

In the 80th minute, the Frenchman fired home his second after beating two defenders and completed his hat-trick four minutes later having been set up once again by Angel Di Maria.

Another magical performance from Mbappe in Europe's top competition means he's now scored 15 Champions League goals at the age of 20 years and 306 days.

That feat has seen him become the youngest player to bring up the milestone, smashing the record previously held by Messi, who achieved

the same aged 21 years and 288 days. Messi himself had beaten Real Madrid legend Raul's mark of 22 years and 163 days initially, making Mbappe's new record all the more impressive.

The PSG star's hat-trick also made him the first Champions League substitute to score three times since Joseba Llorente did the same for Villarreal in October 2008 against Aalborg.

Despite struggling with hamstring and thigh issues so far this season, Mbappe has still managed to make his mark in Ligue 1 with two goals and three assists to his name across just five appearances.

Only returning to action for PSG on Saturday against Nice, the 20-year-old starred in a seven-minute cameo, scoring after just five minutes before claiming an assist in injury-time as Thomas Tuchel's side claimed a 4-1 win.

Mbappe's strong form this season comes on the back of a very strong 2018-19 campaign where he struck 39 times across all competitions and chipped in with a further 17 assists.



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## Conor McGregor to make UFC return on January 18



since he was submitted in the fourth round of a lightweight title fight against Khabib

Nurmagomedov in October 2018.

The bout was overshadowed

by a brawl in the aftermath and both fighters were handed suspensions, with McGregor subsequently claiming he had retired from mixed martial arts. However, the Irishman will be back in action in three months and has his sights set on a rematch with Nurmagomedov and a trilogy fight with Nate Diaz, against whom he suffered his first UFC defeat in March 2016. "I wish to compete here in Moscow,

Russia. We know that, we know what belt I'm seeking in Mother Russia. The people of Russia deserve this inevitable rematch [against Nurmagomedov] to take place here in Moscow and it will happen," said McGregor. "However, I'm not waiting around for that man. That man is a known pull-out, a known fearer of risk. He does not take risk so I'm not waiting around."

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