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Hint...

"He that is greedy of gain troubleth his own house; but he that hateth gifts shall live."
-Proverbs 15:27

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Rep. Hassan Kiazolu



Mr. Benoni Urey

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Continental News

France gives back sword of anti-colonial fighter

France has restored to Senegal a sabre that belonged to a 19th Century Islamic scholar and ruler. It is part of a commitment to return to its former West African colonies key items of their cultural heritage. The artefact originally belonged to the revered west African leader Omar Saidou Tall, who led an anti-colonial struggle against the French. French Prime Minister Edouard Philippe handed the sword to Senegal's President Macky Sall in a ceremony in Dakar. "This is an historic day," the Senegalese leader said. Some of Omar Saidou Tall's descendants were present at the ceremony.

Mr Philippe said it was "the first step" in a project aimed at returning more Senegalese artefacts currently in French museums, which hold at least 90,000 artefacts from sub-Saharan Africa. Last year a group of experts commissioned by France's President Emmanuel Macron recommended that African treasures in French museums be returned to their countries of origin.

Their official report states that most of the Africa collection in Paris' Quai Branly museum - approximately 46,000 pieces - was acquired with some degree of duress. "It's symbolic. It had been lent to us before, but now it is being restored to us," the head of Dakar's Museum of Black Civilisations Hamady Bocoum told AFP news agency about the sabre.

The curved iron, brass and wood sword has been kept in its leather sheath in the museum in Senegal's capital on loan from France. But Sunday's ceremony saw the item formally returned for a period of five years.

The next stage will be for French MPs to vote on whether to permanently return this and other artefacts. El Hadj Omar Saidou Tall was a political

leader, military commander and Muslim scholar who led the Tidjane brotherhood, a Sufi order in West Africa.

He fought French troops from 1857 to 1859 before signing a peace treaty with them in 1860. According to Senegalese historians, he disappeared mysteriously from the cliffs of Bandiagara in Mali, an area known for its dramatic landscape, in 1864. His son Ahmadou (1836-1897) succeeded him and was defeated by the French in April

1893 in Bandiagara. It was here that the French seized the sword, which had a French-made blade and a handle shaped like a bird's beak.

French colonialists also looted books belonging to Tall, according to El Hajj Mamadou Mactar Thiam, a descendant of the Muslim scholar.

"They took everything, including his library, in Segou, and I hope that all our books that are now in France will be returned to us," Mr Thiam told BBC



Senegal's President Macky Sall
® called it an "historic day"

Nigeria bandits 'slit throats and kill children'

Nigerian police say at least 14 people have been killed and many others wounded in an attack by armed men on a village in Nigeria's north-western Zamfara state.

Residents say the death toll was much higher with dozens killed in the hours-long attack, which began late

women, children and the elderly, were either shot dead, burnt beyond recognition or had their throats slit, the resident said.

Dozens of homes were set ablaze and livestock was stolen.

Zamfara police spokesman Muhammad Shehu told the BBC it was believed to be a



on Sunday evening and continued into Monday morning.

One resident told the BBC that six of his children were killed after gunmen stormed the village of Karaye on motorbikes.

Another said his father and grandfather were killed.

The victims, including

retaliatory attack following a clash earlier this month between the bandits and vigilantes based in Karaye.

North-western Nigeria is facing multiple security challenges as armed groups regularly carry out attacks on villages as well as abducting people for ransom. BBC

own interests.

South African authorities raided the Guptas' family compound last year, and the family have been blacklisted by several South African banks and the US Treasury.

Mr Zuma has agreed to co-operate with the public inquiry, but has dismissed it as prejudiced. BBC

Banks 'facilitated South Africa corruption' under Zuma

Several international banks enabled corruption in South Africa under former President Jacob Zuma, British lawmaker Peter Hain has said.

At an inquiry hearing, he said HSBC, Standard Chartered and India's Bank of Baroda were "directly culpable".

The inquiry is investigating

claims of graft against Mr Zuma and the Gupta family. They deny any wrongdoing.

HSBC said it supported the inquiry while Standard Chartered said there was no evidence linking it to the Guptas. No-one from the Bank of Baroda was immediately available for comment. Speaking in

Johannesburg, Lord Hain alleged that the banks were helping the Guptas to hide the source of their illicit gains through a network of banks accounts and shell companies.

"They're all up to their neck in this," said Lord Hain, a former anti-apartheid activist. "They continued because of course the corporates concerned, including the banks, were making money out of it." He blasted the companies for not applying the same "stringent measures" to all customers, and called for more co-operation between corporations and national governments to help recover any stolen money.

Lord Hain's remarks are the latest to be given to the corruption inquiry, which was launched last year.

Mr Zuma resigned as president in February 2018 after numerous allegations of corruption during his nine-year administration.

Several allegations focus on his relationship with the Gupta family, who have been accused of influencing cabinet



Peter Hain has accused several firms of helping
with the theft of public money in South Africa

EDITORIAL

Hailing the Liberia Entrepreneurship Summit

THE CUMMINGS AFRICA Foundation over the weekend, hosted over 100 local entrepreneurs under the Liberia Entrepreneurship Summit, targeting selected Liberian-owned businesses as participants.

THE TWO DAYS Summit in Monrovia provided an avenue to expose young Liberian entrepreneurs to deeper business managerial skills and create empowerment opportunities, focusing on Small Medium Enterprises (SMEs) that look forward to moving to the next level.

OWNED BY FORMER corporate executive and opposition politician, Alexander B. Cummings, the Cummings Africa Foundation has initiated an endeavor that would enable Liberian entrepreneurs to have a say in their own economy thru nonstop education, inspiration and motivation.

WE BELIEVE THIS is where focus of the Liberian society should be - a strong desire for entrepreneurial skills and courage to venture into business. The timing for the Liberia Entrepreneurship Summit couldn't have been any better than now when the economy has nose-dived.

WE ENCOURAGE THE Cummings Africa Foundation to conduct more of such summits in the country to build and maintain in Liberians particularly, the youth an entrepreneurial spirit that would turn their attention away from seeking government jobs as the only hope for their future.

IF OUR ECONOMY should wake up from its current slumber, the private sector should take the lead thru SMEs, particularly Liberian-owned businesses. No economy has developed exclusively by government spending, though the public sector serves as a stimulus.

HOWEVER, IT IS the private sector that holds a very big chunk of the economy on which government heavily relies for taxes to run the affairs of state.

AS A FORMER executive of Coca Cola Africa, Mr. Cummings has wealth of experience and expertise that both ordinary Liberians and the government itself could tap from. And has made himself available, politics aside.

WE URGE EVERY well-meaning and business-conscious Liberians to take advantage of the opportunity brought about by the Cummings Foundation to emancipate ourselves from the shackles of poverty, dependency and lack. No outsider will do it for us.

ADDRESSING THE OPENING session, Mr. Cummings disclosed that contestants in a business ideas competition from the Summit stand a chance to win up to US\$10,000 and US\$5,000 investment capital thru grants, respectively.

THIS IS A once in a life time opportunity that no business-minded Liberian should afford to miss, as it could well be the start of a journey that could take you to the top, and the Liberia Entrepreneurship Summit, thru the Cummings Africa Foundation should be lauded for availing the opportunity.

The New Dawn
TRULY INDEPENDENT

COMMENTARY

By Leandro Mora Alfonsín

Can Fernández Fix Argentina?

By voting President Mauricio Macri out of office, Argentinians have signaled that they will no longer tolerate continued economic crisis, much less policies that appear to make matters worse. But, because solutions to Argentina's problems are not mutually compatible, the new government will likely face similar challenges.

BUENOS AIRES - The acute economic crisis that has been afflicting Argentina since 2018 has just produced a change in government. The newly elected president, Alberto Fernández, inherits from his predecessor, Mauricio Macri, a severely battered economy. Argentina is now being squeezed by a high debt burden, impaired social conditions, and soaring inflation and unemployment all at the same time.

Since 2012, the country has struggled to generate a sufficient inflow of dollars through exports. Between 2011 and 2015, then-President Cristina Fernández de Kirchner (now the incoming vice president) imposed severe currency controls that resulted in macroeconomic rigidities. But since eliminating capital controls in 2015, Macri's administration has since made the problem worse. Instead of simply rolling back the controls that had distorted the currency market, the government lifted all controls, including those preventing speculative investment, which were considered to be macroeconomic safeguards.

Macri also promoted unprecedented debt policies, resulting in additional borrowing of \$193 billion. This included a \$57 billion loan from the International Monetary Fund, which came on top of a previous \$44 billion loan (63% of the institution's credit lines are now extended to Argentina). By the end of this year, the country's debt-to-GDP ratio will have risen from 52% to 93%, according to IMF forecasts. Moreover, short-term debt deadlines have exerted additional pressure on Argentina's already-dire balance of payments.

Lastly, in order to curb inflation, Macri's government encouraged the central bank to push interest rates ever higher, to a peak of 70% in October 2018 (rates are currently still above 60%). And yet, this has given a further boost to speculative investment.

Under these conditions, Argentina's ship started sinking as soon as currents of the global economy shifted. When the US Federal Reserve raised its own benchmark rate in March 2018, the Argentinian economy's fundamental weaknesses were laid bare. Owing to a run on the currency, the peso has now fallen 210% against the US dollar, and inflation has increased at double its normal pace, reaching 48% in 2018, with a projected peak of 60% this year.

As if this were not bad enough, Macri failed even to meet his main goal of adjusting the fiscal balance. In 2019, Argentina will record a primary deficit (excluding interest payments) of 0.8% of GDP, and is on track to double that in 2020 (assuming a baseline scenario), owing to planned tax cuts from 2017 and reduced revenues from the recession.

But the crisis in Argentina's real economy is

even worse. GDP contracted in three of the four years that Macri was in office. By the time he leaves in December, the poverty rate is expected to have reached 40%; and, following the loss of 140,000 skilled industrial jobs in manufacturing and trade sectors, unemployment will be at 10%.

Argentina's challenge now is to address each of these separate dimensions of the crisis. In addition to bolstering growth and promoting consumption and genuine investment, policymakers also need to stabilize the exchange rate to restore certainty for investors and ensure debt repayment.

These goals are not necessarily compatible. Argentina must renegotiate debt-repayment deadlines with its private creditors and revise the current standby agreement with the IMF, whose aid has proved to be more political than technical. But while restructuring the debt will require an improved fiscal balance, the current deep recession makes achieving a primary surplus in 2020 exceedingly difficult. The severe economic adjustment that it would require could be too much for Argentinians to bear, given the extent to which the real economy has already deteriorated. As popular uprisings in Chile and Ecuador have shown, Latin American societies are increasingly disinclined to tolerate further painful adjustments.

For its part, the incoming government has signaled that it will try to stimulate domestic consumption to ease poverty. With limited fiscal resources, it will have to focus on improving conditions for impoverished social groups through cash-transfer programs such as the Universal Child Allowance (Asignación Universal por Hijo). Another major goal is to forge a new social pact by encouraging unions and companies to propose salary agreements in keeping with broader fiscal- and monetary-policy goals.

Fernández must show that he has the political clout to align the expectations of different stakeholders and follow through with policies that will prop up consumption and send the right signals to the market. There is little room for maneuver in an economy that is so fragile. Yet Fernández's victory shows that Argentinians are fed up with the current approach, and with Argentina's economic woes more generally.

Argentina is rich in many resources, including natural endowments such as metals, hydrocarbons, wood, and livestock. It has a diversified manufacturing industry, whose products range from steel and automobiles to biochemicals; and it is home to an educated, highly qualified workforce that is capable of providing top-quality services. The hope is that, once the crisis is over, the enormous potential of Argentina's 45 million people can be unleashed and directed toward renewed growth and development. That is the real challenge facing Argentina and its new government.

O-PED

By Richard N. Haass

The Coming Nuclear Crises

NEW YORK - Until just a few years ago, it looked as if the problem posed by nuclear weapons had been successfully managed, if not solved. American and Russian nuclear stockpiles had been reduced substantially from their Cold War highs, and arms-control agreements were in place that limited both intermediate- and long-range systems. But all of this now could come undone.

Progress over the last generation was not limited to the United States and Russia. Libya was persuaded to abandon its nuclear ambitions, Israel thwarted Iraqi and Syrian nuclear development, and South Africa relinquished its small nuclear arsenal. Iran signed the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), which constrained its ability to acquire many of the essential prerequisites of nuclear weapons. Most recently, the UN Security Council imposed tough sanctions aimed at persuading North Korea to give up its still modest and comparatively primitive nuclear weapons program, clearing the way for high-level talks between North Korean and US officials. And, of course, no nuclear weapon has been used in combat for three-quarters of a century, since the US dropped two nuclear bombs on Japan to hasten the end of World War II.

This past summer, however, the US withdrew from the 1987 Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty after it concluded Russia had violated the INF's terms. The treaty limiting longer-range US and Russian nuclear weapons will expire in 2021 unless it is extended, and it is not clear that it will be: both countries are committing substantial resources to modernize their existing arsenals.

Moreover, by exiting the JCPOA the US has heightened the risks stemming from Iran. The accord, concluded in 2015, was imperfect. In particular, many of its most significant constraints would last only 10-15 years, and the agreement did not limit Iran's ballistic-missile development. But it did place a ceiling on Iranian nuclear activity and allowed for international inspections. By all accounts, Iran was honoring its provisions.

Now, however, Iran has begun a slow but steady process of getting out from under many of the agreement's limits. It may be doing this to persuade the US and Europe to ease economic sanctions. It may also be calculating that these steps could dramatically reduce the time it would need to produce nuclear weapons without being attacked. But it is at least as likely that Iran's actions will lead the US, or more probably Israel, to undertake a preventive strike designed to destroy a significant part of its program.

Such a strike could lead several other regional powers, including Turkey, Saudi Arabia, and Egypt, to develop or acquire nuclear weapons of their own. Turkey, increasingly estranged from many of its allies, has suggested that it may choose to develop nuclear weapons regardless of what Iran does.

North Korea is far ahead of Iran: it already has several dozen nuclear weapons and missiles, has tested missiles that can reach the US, and is developing submarine-launched nuclear weapons. The notion that North Korea will agree to give up its weapons and "denuclearize" is fanciful. Its leader, Kim Jong-un, believes that only nuclear weapons can ensure his regime's survival, a belief understandably strengthened by the experience of Ukraine, which accepted security guarantees in exchange for giving up the nuclear weapons it inherited from the Soviet Union, only to be invaded by Russia 25 years later.

One risk is that North Korea will over the next few years come to possess a significant arsenal that will pose a meaningful threat to the US. Another is that North Korea's neighbors, including South Korea and Japan, will determine that they, too, need nuclear weapons given the North Korean threat and their diminished confidence in the reliability of the US and its guarantees to protect them with its nuclear forces.

The danger in both regions is that a race to acquire nuclear weapons could trigger a preventive war. Even if such a war were avoided, the presence of multiple nuclear arsenals would increase the temptation for one or more countries to strike first in a crisis. "Use them or lose them" has the potential to become a recipe for instability and conflict when capabilities are not sufficiently robust to absorb an attack and still be able to mete out the sort of devastating retaliation essential for effective deterrence.

As if all this were not enough, India and Pakistan, two countries with a long history of bilateral conflict, are both nuclear powers. Nuclear deterrence cannot be assumed. It is all too easy to imagine a Pakistani-supported terrorist attack leading to Indian retaliation, which in turn could prompt Pakistan to threaten using nuclear weapons, because its conventional military forces cannot compete with those of India. There is also the possibility that the command and control of weapons could break down and one or more devices could find their way into the hands of terrorists.

It is close to 60 years since a young presidential candidate named John F. Kennedy predicted that as many as 20 countries could achieve nuclear-weapons capability by the end of 1964. Fortunately, Kennedy was proven wrong, and the number of countries with nuclear weapons is still nine. The 1968 Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty has proven quite robust, in part because it is buttressed by efforts to prevent the export of critical technologies, arms control, sanctions, and the strength of alliances, which reduces the need for countries to become self-reliant.

But with nuclear technology increasingly available, arms control unraveling amid renewed great power rivalry, weakened alliances as the US pulls back from the world, and fading memories of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, we are entering a new and dangerous period. Nuclear competition or even use of nuclear weapons could again become the greatest threat to global stability. Less certain is whether today's leaders are up to meeting this emerging challenge.

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OPINION

By Ibrahim Elbadawi
& Jeffrey D. Sachs

An Appeal for Sudan's Future

KHARTOUM - On December 19, 2018, peaceful protests erupted spontaneously in cities across Sudan. Just four months later, the brave demonstrators succeeded in ousting the despotic regime of Omar al-Bashir, who had ruled the country for 30 years. Remarkably, it was Sudan's most oppressed social groups - women, young people, and ethnic minorities - who led the way.

In August, Sudanese civil-society and military leaders signed the Draft Constitutional Declaration. This power-sharing agreement paved the way for the formation of a transitional government that will serve for three years and three months, at which time Sudan will hold a democratic election.

The new government includes the country's first female chief justice, two female members of the Sovereignty Council, and its first female foreign minister (one of four women in the cabinet). It also includes several technocrats - most notably the prime minister - who have worked for international organizations.

The partnership between civilian leaders and the military has saved the country from a protracted and deadly civil war. The new government's three urgent priorities are to resolve Sudan's ongoing internal conflicts, resettle millions of internally displaced people, and rebuild the country's devastated economy.

Today, destitution is rampant after three decades of mismanagement, corruption, war, and internal division. According to the International Monetary Fund, Sudan's GDP per capita in US dollar terms has declined by half since 2013. Moreover, the IMF expects the economy to contract by 2.6% this year, with inflation exceeding 50%. Unemployment is above 20%, and Sudan's gross government debt is more than 200% of GDP.

Internal peace now depends on finding solutions to Sudan's huge challenges. Sudan has suffered a catastrophic loss of export earnings from oil since 2011, because the bulk of its oil production was located in what is now South Sudan, which became independent after a referendum backed by the Western powers. As a result, the country urgently needs to establish new industries and modernize its vast agricultural sector.

Sudan today is therefore on a knife-edge: it can evolve toward peace and democracy, or spiral into instability and violence. In our respective careers, we have seen both types of outcome. In Poland, one of us (Sachs) watched and participated in the consolidation of democracy and the restoration of economic growth after the country's communist regime collapsed 30 years ago. Yet both of us also have witnessed bad situations becoming even worse, as unfulfilled expectations, demagoguery, and ethnic strife led to years of violence, instability, and economic collapse.

We are therefore appealing to the world to show solidarity with Sudan following its recent triumph over despotism. We know, of course, that the global attention span for faraway countries is short. Most of the focus today is on uncertainties in global trade and finance, rising tensions among major powers, and important upcoming elections in several countries.

Nonetheless, we ask the world to give a moment's attention to an impoverished country of 43 million people, whose greatest natural resource today is renewed hope for the future. If Sudan succeeds, it will help to stabilize the Horn of Africa and the Middle East. Should it fail, the resulting instability could engulf many other countries. Vital and timely international assistance to Sudan can make the difference between the success and failure of the new government's reforms.

Most urgently, Sudan needs the United States government to remove regulatory barriers to commerce, finance, and the movement of people. In particular, the US should lift immediately its designation of Sudan as a state sponsor of terrorism, a holdover from the Bashir era, so that the Sudanese government can address some of the country's pressing needs.

The new government has quickly brought forward the Sudan Economic Revival Plan, a reform strategy for the years 2020-2030 that is based on the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals. Under the plan, the government intends to direct its scarce budget revenues toward education, health, and basic and sustainable infrastructure.

To succeed, Sudan's government must not only raise domestic revenue, but also shift spending away from servicing Bashir-era foreign debt and toward public services and infrastructure. For that reason, Sudan needs immediate debt relief and the ability to access new funding from the World Bank and other international financial institutions.

Since the mid-1990s, dozens of lower-income economies have benefited from debt relief under the IMF-World Bank Heavily Indebted Poor Country (HIPC) program. But with Bashir in power, Sudan was excluded from this initiative. Now that he is gone, the new government is appealing to the IMF, World Bank, and international creditors to permit Sudan to benefit from HIPC debt relief, and thus enable the country to make a fresh financial start.

Thirty years ago, Poland was granted deep relief on its communist-era debts, laying the foundation for subsequent growth. Sudan now has a similar need for debt relief.

The challenges facing Sudan seem insurmountable to many observers within and outside the country, and skeptics believe that grave economic and political turmoil is inevitable. But the Sudanese people remain hopeful. They, and we, believe that the country can become a democratic role model for the region, showing how a popularly backed government can restore stability, launch reforms, and achieve sustainable development.

Sudan's innovative, ethnically diverse, peaceful, and politically engaged people - and in particular its youth and women - are free from oppression as the result of their own brave efforts. Now, they ardently desire a better future. To quote the Tunisian poet Abu al-Qasim al-Shabbi, destiny must answer their call.

ARTICLE

ARTICLE

Russia, Africa and the Debts

By KesterKennKlomegah*

Long seen as a strategic partner, Russia has opened a new chapter and started building better relations with Africa, and most significantly made its move by writing off Africa's debts accumulated from Soviet era. After the Soviet collapse, Russia first attempted at collecting its debts. Indeed, these Soviet-leaning debt-trapped African countries were unable to pay them (these debts) back to Russia.

During the Soviet era, Moscow forged alliances with African countries, especially those that supported its communist ideology, and supplied them with military equipment and offered technical assistance on bilateral basis. In particular, supplied arms went to Angola, Algeria, Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Ethiopia, Namibia, Mozambique, Morocco and South Africa. That Soviet-era form of diplomatic engagement left many African countries indebted to an amount of US\$20 billion, according to official documents.

In an interview with TASS, Russian State News Agency, ahead of the first Russia-Africa Summit, Russian President Vladimir Putin explained Soviet's role in the liberation of the continent, support for the struggle of its peoples against colonialism, racism and apartheid. In addition, the enormous help offered Africans to protect their independence and sovereignty, gain statehood, support for national economies, and created capable armed forces for Africa.

"Our African agenda is positive and future-oriented. We do not ally with someone against someone else; and we strongly oppose any geo-political 'games' involving Africa," he said during the interview before referring the debts write-off to Africa. "Let me point out that in the post-Soviet period, at the end of the 20th century, Russia cancelled US\$20 billion of African countries' debts to the Soviet Union. This was both an act of generosity and a pragmatic step, because many of the African states were unable to service those debts. We, therefore, decided that it would be best for everyone to start our cooperation from scratch," said President Putin during that interview.

On October 23, 2019, President Vladimir Putin and President of the Arab Republic of Egypt, African Union Chairman and Co-Chairman of the Russia-Africa Summit Abdel Fattah el-Sisi took part in the Russia-Africa Economic Forum. During the plenary session held under the theme "Russia and Africa: Uncovering the Potential for Cooperation" and attended by top officials, politicians and business leaders, and almost 2,000 Russian and foreign companies, the debts write-off as a basis for economic growth and for developing long-term relations featured prominently.

"Economic issues are an integral part and a priority of Russia's relations with African countries. Developing close business ties serves our common interest, contributes to the sustainable growth, helps to improve quality of life and solve numerous social problems," President Putin said, and then added, "Russia provides systematic assistance to developing the African continent. Our country is participating in an initiative to ease the African countries' debt burden. To date, the total amount of write-offs stands at over US\$20 billion. Joint programmes have been

launched with a number of countries involving the use of debts to finance national economic growth projects."

On September 5, 2017, President Vladimir Putin attended a meeting of BRICS leaders with delegation heads from invited states, including the Heads of State and Government of Egypt, Tajikistan, Mexico, Guinea and Thailand. The meeting discussed the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and prospects for further developing their partner relations. Before the meeting, the BRICS leaders and delegation heads from invited states had a joint photo session, President Putin informed that "Russia has been working actively to implement the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. We have written off over US\$20 billion of African countries' debts through the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries Initiative."

On January 30, 2015, President Putin sent his greetings to the 24th Ordinary Session of the Assembly of the African Union Heads of State and Government. The message stated in part: The Russian Federation's relations with our African partners are developing positively. We have established a substantial political

financial and economic organizations.

On June 28, 2002, in Kananaskis, Canada, there was a media conference after the G8 Summit. There was one specific question regarding Africa. The G8 approached the plan submitted by African countries in a creative way. What can be Russia's role and place in addressing the global problem of combating poverty?

President Vladimir Putin answered: "As regards Russia, it has traditionally had very good relations with the African continent. We are very perceptive of the problems on the African continent. I must say that Russia has been making a very tangible contribution to solving Africa's problems. Suffice it to say Russia is making a big contribution to the initiative adopted here, a multi-lateral initiative, including the writing off part of African debts. Of all the African debts that are to be written-off, 20% are debts to the Russian Federation. That is US\$26 billion."

On May 21, 2007, The Kremlin made available Excerpts of the Transcript of the Cabinet Meeting Finance Minister Aleksei Kudrin on the meeting of G8 finance ministers. The issue about supporting and helping African countries. Minister Kudrin told the cabinet

meeting; "We discussed the implementation of a number of initiatives that should improve the management and transparency of public finances in those countries, including by better employing revenues from the extraction of mineral resources in Africa to fight against poverty."

"We discussed responsible lending and relations with countries that have benefited from debt relief. We are writing off debt, reducing these countries' debt burden, and meanwhile their opportunity to incur new debts is increasing simultaneously. And a number of countries are starting to make huge loans to these countries, taking advantage of the fact that they are no longer in debt and lending to them at such a rate that these countries will once again require help. These instances

exist. In fact, this practice is liable to be perceived in a negative way. A number of leading countries in the world are engaged in this practice," he said.

At Sochi summit, Putin's announcement about "debt write-off" was, therefore, nothing new. The Africa's debts write-off debt has been played for years. It featured in Foreign Minister Lavrov speeches, at least between 2007 and 2015, as indicated here from the official website of the Foreign Affairs Ministry.

Remarks by Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov at the UN Summit for the Adoption of the Post-2015 Development Agenda, New York, September 27, 2015 (1814-27-09-2015).

He said: "Russian development assistance is invariably aimed at solving the most pressing challenges faced by the countries in need. In these efforts, we are neither trying to lecture our partners on how they should build their lives, nor impose political models and values. Poverty eradication is the key objective of Russia's state policy in the area of international development assistance at the global level."

Cont'd on page 10



dialogue and work actively together in international affairs. Russia's decision to write off much of African countries' debt and the preferential conditions we offer the majority of Africa's traditional export goods open up new possibilities for trade, economic and investment cooperation.

On March 27, 2013, in Durban, South Africa, in a speech at meeting with Heads of African states, President Putin explicitly noted "Over the course of many decades, Russia has provided direct assistance to the African continent. I would like to note that we have written off over 20 billion dollars in debt; we have written off far more than any other G8 nation. We plan to take additional measures to ease the debt burden."

According to the Russian leader, the BRICS group's companies are working actively in the African market; there is a growing influx of investments into various sectors in Africa's economies, from traditional mineral extraction and farming to high technologies and banking. He added BRICS countries are championing the rights and interests of Africa and other nations with emerging economies, speaking out in favour of increasing their role and influence in the global governance system, particularly international

MORE HEADLINE NEWS

MORE HEADLINE NEWS

Judge recuses himself from Oliver Dillon's trial

By Winston W. Parley

Criminal Court "A" presiding Judge Roosevelt Z. Willie has recused himself from the alleged murder trial of Mr. Oliver Dillon, the brother of opposition Montserrado County Sen. Abraham Darius Dillon, insisting that the "court cannot change its view" that the elements for murder are not present [in the case].

Following his recusal Monday, 18 November, Judge Willie immediately ordered the clerk of court to transfer the case to Court "B" which has similar jurisdiction as the Criminal Court "A" to enable

the merit of the case and the court cannot change its view.

"(In) The case at bar, the defendant is charged for murder. This court says that the elements for murder are not present and therefore it granted bail. Did it touch on the merit of the case? It answers in the affirmative, therefore the court cannot change its view," he rules.

Judge Willie recalls that despite prosecution's resistance, he granted defendant Dillon bail "because in the mind of the court the critical elements of murder did not exist which are premeditation and malice afford thought."

the area in which the incident occurred is noted to be a crime breeding area, detailing further that victim Emmanuel was armed with scissors while defendant Oliver Dillon was armed with a knife when the deceased and two other men surrounded the accused in the darkness.

The police reported that the incident scene is infested with criminal gangs who rain terror on peaceful residents to take away their belongings, adding that "there is no history of quarrel or misunderstanding between the victim [Emmanuel] and accused [Dillon] and there was no arrangement for them to meet at the place of the incident."

In a murder case investigators seek to establish that the accused had planned with malice and criminal intent to take the life of another person prior to the killing of that person as a reason for levying a murder charge which carries maximum penalty of death or life time imprisonment upon conviction.

But when investigators determine that a death occurred under a circumstance like scuffle, tussle or fistfight that was not planned against the victim, they would consider charging the accused with manslaughter, which carries much less penalty when convicted.

Judge Willie says after he granted defendant Dillon bail due to his determination that the elements for murder did not exist in the case, the prosecution, however, took him on certiorari before Justice in Chambers Joseph N. Nagbe who subsequently reversed his (Willie's) decision of granting Dillon the bail.

The Justice in Chambers, Associate Justice Nagbe then ordered that the case be sent back to Court "A" for trial, following which the prosecution demanded Judge Willie's recusal.



the prosecution conduct a speedy trial of the case.

Judge Willie's decisions on Monday were in response to the prosecution's request for his recusal from the case on the basis of an earlier decision he rendered by granting defendant Dillon's motion to be placed on bail because the proof was not evident and presumption was not great" to hold the accused for murder.

Judge Willie grants the prosecution's request to recuse himself because according to him, his previous decision on the defendant's motion for bail did touch on

The government here charged Mr. Dillon, an employee of the Ministry of Transport's Coordinator for Decentralization for the alleged murder of one Emmanuel Koffa, Jr., which occurred on 12 April, 2019 in Gardnerville.

The police indicated in April that defendant Dillon had left his residence at midnight to collect some items from his vehicle parked at Supermarket in Gardnerville when he was engaged by victim Emmanuel and two other men in the darkness when the incident occurred.

Investigators revealed that

Liberia co-chairs FemWise Network

By Ben P. Wesee

The Coordinator of the Angie Brooks International Center (ABIC) for women's empowerment, leadership development, international peace and security, Cllr. Dr. Yvette Chesson Gibson, has been elected to Co-chair the FemWise Network of ECOWAS.

According to Cllr. Gibson, who made the disclosure in a news conference at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Monrovia Thursday, 14 November the ECOWAS FemWise is the regional dimension of the network of Africa women in conflict prevention and mediation established in July 2017, as an

including United Nations Women, and GIZ. The European Union also supported the launch," Cllr. Yvette Chesson Gibson explains.

She the meeting was moderated by Hajiya Raheemat Momodu, head of human security and civil society of ECOWAS, while Rev. Kesia Onam Bijou Togo Birch, Africa Union adviser to FemWise Africa spoke on the role of the AU.

"Remarks were made by the Representative of the Government of the Republic of La Cote D'Ivoire. Progress in implementing the United Nations Security Council



Cllr. Dr. Yvette Chesson Gibson

African Union or AU initiative FemWise Africa.

She says her election was held in Abidjan, La Cote D'Ivoire on November 7, 2019 at an ECOWAS meeting, adding a steering committee comprised of seven women was also elected, including two Co-chairs- herself from Liberia, and Ms. Alice Gibson of Togo, who represented young women of ECOWAS.

"The FemWise Network was officially launched by Dr. Siga Jagne, ECOWAS commissioner of social and gender. Other making remarks were ECOWAS representative to Guinea, and partners,

Resolution 1325 that urges the International community to improve women's participation in peace and security has been slow. UN Women noted that between 1992 and 2011, women globally made up only 2% of chief mediators, 4% of witnesses and signatories, and 9% of negotiators. The African Union has developed instruments and policies for gender equity, including mainstreaming gender into the African Peace and Security Architecture. FemWise Africa is a subsidiary mechanism of the AU Panel of the Wise," Cllr. / Dr. Chesson Gibson concludes.

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MOE, stakeholders begin education sector review

The Ministry of Education has embarked on a review of the education sector in partnership with various stakeholders.

The review being attended by donors, secretariats, National Parent-Teacher Association (NPTA), National Teachers Association of

Liberia (NTAL), National Principal Association (NPAL), Civil Society Groups, Federation of Liberian Youth

(FLY), Liberia National Student Union (LINSU), and Association of Universities and Coalition of Transparency & Accountability in Education in Liberia (COTAYE) among others is being held in Gompaa City,

Nimba County from November 18-22.

According to a release, this year's JESR will address achievements made by the

Ministry of Education since the inception of this government and challenges by finding amicable solutions that will help professionalize and standardize the education system for the upcoming generation.

This year's JESR theme is

"Restoring the Education Sector for Quality

Outcomes through Collective Efforts and Innovation" with Rev. Dr. Julius Julukon Sarwolo Nelson, Jr. President of the University of Liberia serving as keynote speaker.

The review exercise will focus on several thematic areas for the smooth implementation and operation of the Ministry, including: Financing education, Revised curriculum, Science,

Technology Engineering & Mathematics (STEM) Education, Teacher Education, Tertiary Education, Governance and management, Monitoring & Evaluation, Early Childhood Education (ECE), Basic & Secondary

Education, Vocational, Technical & Inclusive Education, Domestic and

International Expenditure on Education Instructions Supervision Framework and CEO presentations and Analysis. -Press Release

MORE HEADLINE NEWS MORE HEADLINE NEWS

Africa needs good IP regime to maximize youthful potential --Commerce Minister

By Lewis S. Teh

Liberia's Minister of Commerce and Industry, Prof. Wilson K. Tarpeh has underscored the need for African countries to create policy, and instate measures of good Intellectual Property (IP) in order for the continent's youthful populations to gain their potentials.

"Africa needs good IP regime that will maximize its youthful potential. You will agree that Africa is the leading continent in creativity," Minister Tarpeh stated Monday, 18 November at the opening of the 43rd Session of the Administrative Council of the Africa Regional Intellectual Property Organization (ARIPO) in Margibi County.

As a Guest of Honor at the ARIPO meeting, Minister Tarpeh rallies all government representatives - local and foreign - to develop policies and adopt laws that are IP

friendly.

He tells a cross section of participants that it is important for every member state's political actors to formulate policies that will provide the legal space for IP instruments to get commercial

recognition.

The Liberian Commerce Minister stresses that no creator in Africa must be requested to provide collateral of tangible assets before acquiring loans at their own African banks.

"Let create the incentive for our young brothers and sisters to stop the willing

migration to slavery back to where our parents fought for freedom," Minister Tarpeh continues.

He urges member states to act in the interest of IP now and provide the needed local resource mobilization.

Prof. Tarpeh suggests that IP is the only economic and financial issue that has not been affected by the price of international trade or global market.

"We must use it to our advantage as a major source of revenue for central government, and put more investment and faith in the process," he concludes.

Also speaker at the occasion, ARIPO Director General Mr. Fernando Dos Santos says Africa is still lacking behind in the use of intellectual property.

Dos Santos reveals that over the past 40 years, ARIPO has led efforts in Africa to expand intellectual property protection.

"As a partnership of governments, ARIPO finds solid ground to continually lay the foundation for higher levels of IP rights protection in Africa for global business," he explains.

Meanwhile the incoming Chairperson of ARIPO, and

Director General of Liberia Intellectual Property Atty. P. Adelyn Cooper says Liberia accepts the preferment to serve as chair of this august body for the next two years with humility and deep sense of reflection on the enormous task of ARIPO history.

Atty. Cooper reminds her colleagues that the objective of the Lusaka Agreement and its revised version is to pull together scared resources of member states for the promotion of human development in ARIPO member states by using the tools of intellectual property.

The 43rd Session of ARIPO will see Liberia take over as Chair of the Session, and the Ministerial Council that will steer the affairs of the organization for the next two years.

Participants of the meeting came from 19 member state countries. They are expected to deliberate on issues surrounding the improvement of the organization for the next five days here in Liberia.

The meeting is graced by observers from ARIPO, and Cooperative Partners including the World Intellectual Property (WIPO), among others.--

Edited by Winston W. Parley



Starts from back page

at demonstration sites and farmers' field schools (FFS) to apply BMPs on their own farms to get more yields.

Under the BMP, farmers are taught to apply five approaches which include field accessibility; the ground cover management or replacing unwanted trees; pruning which involves removing old palm fronts or parasitic crops from cocoa trees; and the bulk front stacking, among others.

Lack of these technical skills by local farmers denied them of harvesting enough fresh fruits on cocoa and oil palm farms prior to Solidaridad's intervention.

Local companies supported by Solidaridad in the sectors like EMFEED and Kpalama Agro-business Enterprise in Bong are working as partners with Solidaridad, providing services to smallholder farmers.

During a recent visit at a cocoa farm in Behyeepea village Nimba County, the community farm facilitator Mr. Tony Jones says every week participants are trained in cocoa improvement.

"And Solidaridad too, we appreciate them very highly because we were planting cocoa, we didn't know what really cocoa means. But they opened our eyes. They're making us to know that cocoa is very much important in our lives," he says.

Solidaridad Cocoa supervisor for Nimba, Mr. Amara Conneh says the farmers go for training in nursery establishment, rehabilitation,

Cocoa and oil-palm

replanting, pest and disease control to quality control.

"Before, some of the farmers had large farms, but they couldn't get up to one ton from there. But for now, after the training, you can see that some of the farmers have all started making good money from their farms through the intervention of Solidaridad," Conneh says.

One of the female local farmers in the village, Madam Victoria George says Solidaridad showed them some techniques to plant the cocoa.

"Firstly we went we brush the farm, they told us to plant corn and cassava and plantain before planting the cocoa. And we did all," Victoria says.

According to her, the sale from the corn, plantains and cassava on her farm has sustained she and her children while they await harvest of cocoa.

"And the cassava when I dig, I sell it. It's able to give our bag of rice because now bag of rice that's L\$3,000," she says.

"At first the farm couldn't bear, but now the idea the people [Solidaridad] bring to us when I apply it on that farm, now the farm [is] looking good. I can be happy," Mr. Alphonso Deway, a male farmer in Behyeepea village says.

"What I have to tell them is that the program is a good program," another cocoa farmer, Mr. Rufus Karyar says in appreciation to Solidaridad.

Also speaking, farmer Joseph Darwon says the first benefit he got was the corn yields during the hunger season which helped

he and children by selling the harvest to buy other needs.

The CEO of Kpalama Agro-business Enterprise in Bong County, Mr. Sylvester Kpai says his business was established 24 July 2014 to bring new technology when it comes to the hybrid oil palm seeding which is a commercial business in the oil palm sector.

He says Kpalama Agro-business is providing technical services to other farmers in Bong, Grand Bassa and Maryland Counties who do not have the technical know - how about pruning, layout, nursery establishment and other things.

"Solidaridad Liberia has improved our economy so much, has transformed our investment from 3,000 seeding to 10,000. We [are] very grateful. And to the people of the United Kingdom, because it is their taxpayers' money. It is their funding that's getting us to be where we are," Mr. Kpai says.

He expresses hope that the partnership with Solidaridad Liberia can continue to serve the country, improve and change the economy here.

"This is the only way that we can go forward. Agriculture as a business is the only way we can transform Liberia's economy," he adds.

He says Solidaridad is helping them through funding, pointing to a sprinkler irrigation system used by the Kpalama Agro-business on its oil palm nursery to water the seeding.

"It reduces labor significantly. We had already planned that without this

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system, we were going to be using 15 to 20 persons to do watering," he says, adding that only two persons are now needed to run the sprinkler irrigation system.

During an interview, Mr. Cyrus Saygbe, Solidaridad Oil Palm Program Manager says in observance of Solidaridad's 50th Anniversary, the group thinks it is important to allow Liberians who are not in areas that Solidaridad is focused to see the work it does.

Mr. Saygbe says presently "our" average yield for oil palm in Liberia stands around nine tons per hectares per year, which he says is smaller in comparison with other African countries.

"The standard yield should be around 15 to 18 metric tons per hectare per year. And so with the best management practices we increase yield, use the existing plot and increase yield," he says.

Cyrus notes that when yield increases, the farmer gets more fresh fruits branches and can also sell more of the fruits to

earn more money.

"So we're doing this in the five counties, 84 different communities and I think it's working well," he says.

Solidaridad Program Manager for Cocoa, BoimaBafaie says in Liberia, Solidaridad is implementing Cocoa and Oil Palm programs funded by the Kingdom of the Netherlands and the European Union.

He says the program is implemented in Bong, Nimba and Lofa Counties, targeting over 15,000 cocoa farmers.

According to Bafaie, the core of the program is the centers for cocoa development (CCDs) which are one stop shops that are co-funded by private sector companies to provide services to farmers.

He says Solidaridad is building 40 of these private companies, 10 of which are under the EU funded program Liberia Cocoa Sector Improvement Program (LICSIP) and 30 under the Dutch funded program - Cocoa Rehabilitation and Intensification Program (CORIP).

Français

Un faux programme de prêt divise le CDC

Le Congrès pour le changement démocratique du président George Manneh Weah s'offusque contre des individus non autorisés qui auraient créé un programme de prêt au nom du parti sans que les autorités du parti en soit en courant. Le parti qualifie cet acte de « provocation extrême et d'escalade d'anarchie »,

Le parti au pouvoir a révélé vendredi que certaines personnes auraient mis en place un programme de prêt au nom du parti, à deux pas de son siège national à Congo Town, collectant des frais illégaux d'inscription sans que la direction du parti en soit informée.

La direction du parti au pouvoir avertit donc ses militants et tous les libériens que ces individus agissent à l'insu de l'autorité du CDC. La direction appelle cependant tous ses militants à rester calmes, tout en promettant que les dirigeants du parti vont prendre des mesures draconiennes dans les règles de l'art.

Le Comité exécutif national du CDC a insisté que le parti n'a rien à voir avec ces activités non autorisées du groupe qui se fait appeler « Libériens favorables au changement démocratique (LSDC) », le qualifiant de faux.

Le président national, Mulbah Morlu, a déclaré que ce groupe, sans l'autorisation du parti, a lancé un "programme de

micro-prêts" au nom du CDC et s'est mis à collecter déjà des "frais d'inscription" auprès des citoyens qui sont déjà en difficulté compte tenu de la conjoncture économique qui prévaut actuellement dans le pays. Le paiement des frais d'inscription serait une condition qu'il faut remplir avant de bénéficier d'un prêt.

Le CDC dénonce un caprice personnel, un acte méprisable de la part des individus « égarés et insensibles aux dures réalités que le parti s'efforce de surmonter ».

Quoiqu'elle se félicite de tout effort d'assistance sous forme de prêt visant à habiliter les citoyens ordinaires, la direction du CDC a dit avoir horreur « des entreprises espieuses et illégales qui visent à se servir du nom du parti au pouvoir pour promouvoir des objectifs égoïstes et contraires à l'intérêt général du parti et de ses militants.

Le CDC, qui se veut un mouvement de rédemption des masses populaires, a dit ne pas être à court d'idée pour autonomiser les siens. C'est pourquoi il tient à rester constant dans ses activités et dans la promotion « de l'élévation socio-économique / éducative » de ses membres. Voilà une nécessité considérée comme une condition sine qua non qui caractérise la force et la robustesse du parti.

« Cette entreprise singulière est inspirée de la plate-forme de développement éducatif, économique et social récemment lancée par le CDC. Il s'agit d'un programme d'assistance sous forme de prêts. Il vise à aider notre population dans le cadre des initiatives d'investissement. Il s'agit aussi de mettre à leur disposition des moyens de subsistance durables, la santé, l'éducation et la sécurité alimentaire et nutritionnelle », a affirmé le président Morlu.

Selon lui, contrairement à l'approche non institutionnelle du groupe autoproclamé (LSDC) qui agit à l'insu de l'autorité du parti, le CDC n'attend rien d'autre de ses membres qui jouissent des emplois bien

rémunérés que l'engagement total et le soutien à son programme.

Le parti dit regretter que des individus (certains membres du gouvernement) et leurs cohortes, outre leur manque d'engagement et leur refus de soutenir les actions de ce régime, recherchent des artifices sophistiqués pour ternir l'image du parti au pouvoir en soutenant des positions contraires aux idéaux et aux valeurs du parti.

Morlu a annoncé que le CDC ouvrirait une enquête officielle sur le soi-disant programme de microcrédit du LSDC, qui serait présidé par la ministre adjointe du Commerce chargé des Petites Entreprises, Jemima Wolokollie.

Le CDC a dit disposer des preuves irréfutables de ce que la sous-ministre Wolokollie, assistée de Mme Jackie Capehart, M. Joshua Sackie, M. Budu Wilson, M. George Kailondo, M. Rodney Wilson et autres membres, a commencé à mettre en place des structures au nom du CDC et nommé des coordinateurs de district qui seraient chargés d'identifier des personnes désirant bénéficier d'un prêt.

Morlu a traité ces individus d'extorqueurs qui avaient fui le CDC pendant les moments difficiles, et qui sont maintenant revenus pour exploiter le parti. Il les a avertis de renoncer immédiatement, sinon ils feront face à des mesures disciplinaires allant de la suspension à l'expulsion dans le respect de la loi.

Ce quotidien a tenté de contacter Mme Jemima Wolokollie, sous-ministre du Commerce, par téléphone pour en savoir plus sur l'allégation, mais en vain, son téléphone ayant sonné sans cesse.



Pres. Weah



CDC Chairman Morlu

L'ALCOP secoué par une crise de leadership

Le Parti de la coalition libérienne (ALCOP), serait en proie à une crise de leadership interne sérieuse, à en juger par une plainte déposée par un groupe de militants désentêtés devant la Commission électorale nationale.

Un groupe de partisans désenchantés d'ALCOP a adressé une pétition au président de la Commission électorale nationale, Me Jerome Korkoya, lui demandant poliment d'invalidier et d'annuler les résultats d'un mini-congrès «

inconstitutionnel et inacceptable » tenu par le parti le 5 octobre 2019 à Monrovia.

La pétition, officiellement signée par Jerry Yarkpah, vice-président national des affaires politiques de l'ALCOP, indique que le congrès en question a été tenue en violation du statut et des règlements intérieurs du parti. Selon elle, le processus a été entièrement géré par le président par intérim du parti Ansu Dorley, pour « se maintenir à la tête du parti au grand dam des membres majoritaires du conseil exécutif national et des

partisans en général ».

Selon les pétitionnaires, l'acte présumé du président Dorley aurait tendance à jeter du discrédit sur le parti et créer un désarroi total, d'où l'importance de saisir la commission électorale pour demander au parti d'organiser un congrès national global et transparent reflétant le vœu des militants du parti rependus sur toute l'étendue du territoire national du Libéria, dans un délai de 60 jours.

Par conséquent, ils souhaitent que la NEC annule les résultats du mini-congrès qui a eu lieu le 5 octobre 2019 sous la houlette du président Dorley.

Ils demandent également à la commission électorale de superviser le congrès en question.

Selon les pétitionnaires, le mini-congrès national du 5 octobre 2019 n'a été autorisé par aucune réunion du conseil exécutif national disposant d'un quorum, d'où son caractère illégal et inacceptable.

Pire, à l'issue du mini-congrès « douteux », M. Dorley aurait nommé une certaine Mme Bandu Kromah à la présidence du parti sans l'accord du conseil exécutif national et sans l'aval du leader politique, conformément à la constitution. Les pétitionnaires accusent



National Vice Chairman Jerry Yarkpah

également le président Dorley de n'avoir soumis aucun rapport sur l'état du parti depuis son ascension en tant que président par intérim. Ils ont ajouté que depuis la suspension pour un temps indéfini du président du parti élu démocratiquement, Maogogo Fahnbulleh, la structure actuelle dirigée par M. Dorley a été incomplète et n'a reflété un leadership constitutionnel.

Parmi les partisans lésés qui ont signé la pétition, nous pouvons citer Jerry W. Yarkpah, vice-président national des affaires politiques ; Président du comté du Maryland, Richard W. Mappy ; Theresa Toh,

présidente nationale ; Milton Dwana, président du comté de Gbarpolu, et Sema FarCarthy, comté de Grand Kru, entre autres.

Contacté, Ansu Dorley, président national par intérim du parti de la coalition libérienne, a affirmé qu'il ne répondrait à aucune des allégations des requérants au motif qu'il n'est pas au courant de leur plainte.

Le parti de la coalition pour tout le Libéria est créé et dirigé par le professeur Alhaji G.V. Kromah. ALCOP a participé aux élections spéciales de 1997 avec M. Kromah candidat à la présidence et a obtenu 4,02% du total des voix.

Articles traduits
Par Valéry G. Guhéné
E-mail: valeryghn10@yahoo.com
Tel: 076 589 44 0881483394

Français

La Côte-d'Ivoire veut « mobiliser 616 milliards pour replanter 3 millions d'hectares de forêt » (ministère)

Les bons points d'Hamed Bakayoko à Alain Donwahi | Drogba et A'salfo dans le coup

Le ministère des Eaux et Forêts a choisi la journée de la paix le 15 novembre et le “grand carrefour de Koumassi” pour lancer l'opération “1 jour, 1 million d'arbres”. Une opération à laquelle des stars comme Didier Drogba (Football) et Magic System (Musique) ont associé leur image.

Alain Richard Donwahi, le ministre des Eaux et Forêts a saisi l'occasion pour décliner la nouvelle politique forestière de la Côte d'Ivoire qui a pour point d'ancrage, la réhabilitation de la forêt. Il y a quelques jours, le projet d'inventaire forestier et faunique a été présenté à la presse. Ce 15 novembre 2019, à Koumassi, M. Donwahi a communiqué sur l'ambition de son pays. Selon ses statistiques, 80 % du couvert forestier ivoirien est perdu depuis 2015. En termes de chiffres, a-t-il dévoilé, ce sont environ 3 millions d'hectares constitués de réserves naturelles qui restent sur les 16 millions d'hectares du début des indépendances. Ceci appelle selon lui, des actions vigoureuses dont le planting d'un million d'arbres. Plusieurs autorités, des collectivités décentralisées et des groupes organisés s'y sont mis. C'est le cas d'Assinie où une superficie a reçu des semences d'arbres forestiers. A Koumassi, le grand carrefour qui servait autrefois de gare routière a été réaménagé par la mairie. C'est là que les ministres Donwahi, Hamed Bakayoko, Moussa Sanogo, Didier Drogba et Asalfo de

Magic System ont planté leur arbre.

L'objectif, selon M. Donwahi est de replanter 20 % de la superficie forestière du pays. 616 milliards de FCFA seront nécessaires à cet effet et le ministre a annoncé une table ronde des bailleurs de fonds en janvier 2020 pour mobiliser ces fonds. « Nous voyons loin parce que la forêt nous concerne tous. Nous voyons loin parce que nous répondons au changement climatique... Nous plantons cette année un million d'arbres, l'an prochain ce sera 5 millions d'arbres. Nous traçons les contours d'un monde vivable et nous avons besoin de tous pour réussir », a déclaré M. Donwahi.

Le ministre d'Etat, Hamed Bakayoko qui a pris la parole à cette cérémonie en sa qualité de représentant du Premier ministre Amadou Gon, a fait valoir que la transition écologique est une question essentielle. « Chez nous, on ne comprend pas encore l'enjeu. Il faut le faire comprendre à nos concitoyens. Que ce que nous faisons aujourd'hui engage notre avenir. Entre nous-mêmes, il a fallu beaucoup de sensibilisation pour comprendre la transition écologique », dira Hamed Bakayoko qui a attribué de bons points à l'action de son collègue du gouvernement. « Vous êtes un homme engagé. A chaque fois qu'on vous confie une tâche, vous l'accomplissez avec le cœur », a affirmé Hamed Bakayoko, se souvenant ainsi du passage d'Alain Donwahi au ministère de la Défense où il a imprimé sa marque aux dires de M. Bakayoko.

COMMENTAIRE

Par Leandro Mora Alfonsín

Fernández peut-il réparer l'Argentine?

BUENOS AIRES - La crise économique aiguë qui afflige l'Argentine depuis 2018 vient de provoquer un changement de gouvernement. Le président nouvellement élu, Alberto Fernández, hérite de son prédécesseur, Mauricio Macri, une économie en très mauvais état. Aujourd'hui, l'Argentine est tout à la fois accablée par un lourd fardeau de dette, des conflits sociaux et une inflation galopante combinée à du chômage.

Depuis 2012, le pays a eu du mal à générer des entrées suffisantes de dollars grâce à ses exportations. Entre 2011 et 2015, la présidente de l'époque, Cristina Fernández de Kirchner (aujourd'hui la nouvelle vice-présidente), a imposé de lourds contrôles de change qui ont entraîné des rigidités macroéconomiques. Mais, suite à l'élimination des contrôles de capitaux en 2015, l'administration de Macri a depuis fait pire que mieux. Au lieu de simplement éliminer les contrôles qui avaient faussé le marché des changes, le gouvernement a levé tous les contrôles, y compris ceux qui empêchent les investissements spéculatifs, qui étaient considérés comme des garanties macro-économiques.

Macri a également favorisé des politiques d'endettement d'ampleur sans précédent, ce qui a entraîné des emprunts supplémentaires pour un montant de 193 milliards de dollars. Cela comprend un prêt de 57 milliards de dollars du Fonds monétaire international, qui est arrivé en addition d'un prêt précédent de 44 milliards de dollars (63% des lignes de crédit de l'institution sont maintenant à destination de l'Argentine). À la fin de cette année, le ratio de la dette sur le PIB du pays aura augmenté de 52% à 93%, selon les prévisions du FMI. De plus, les échéances de la dette à court terme ont exercé une pression supplémentaire sur la balance des paiements déjà désastreuse de l'Argentine.

Enfin, afin de freiner l'inflation, le gouvernement de Macri a encouragé la banque centrale à augmenter les taux d'intérêt toujours plus haut, jusqu'à un pic de 70% en octobre 2018 (les taux sont actuellement encore supérieurs à 60%). Et pourtant, cela a donné un nouvel élan aux investissements spéculatifs.

Dans ces conditions, le navire argentin s'est mis à couler dès que les courants de l'économie mondiale ont changé. Lorsque la Réserve fédérale américaine a relevé son taux de référence en mars 2018, les faiblesses fondamentales de l'économie argentine ont été mises à nu. En raison d'une attaque sur la devise, le peso a chuté de 210% par rapport au dollar des États-Unis et l'inflation a augmenté à un rythme deux fois plus rapide que normalement, pour atteindre 48% en 2018 et un pic prévu à 60% cette année.

Comme si cela ne suffisait pas, Macri n'a même pas atteint son objectif principal de régler le solde budgétaire. En 2019, l'Argentine a enregistré un déficit primaire (hors paiements d'intérêts) de 0,8% du PIB et est en voie de doubler ce dernier en 2020 (en supposant un scénario de référence), en raison des réductions d'impôt prévues en 2017 et la baisse des revenus à cause de la récession.

Mais la crise dans l'économie réelle de l'Argentine est encore pire. Le PIB s'est contracté durant trois des quatre années du gouvernement Macri. A la fin de son mandat en décembre, le taux de pauvreté devrait avoir atteint 40% ; et, après la perte de 140.000 emplois industriels qualifiés dans les secteurs manufacturier et du commerce, le chômage sera de 10%.

Le défi de l'Argentine est maintenant de répondre à chacune de ces dimensions distinctes de la crise. En plus de stimuler la croissance, la consommation et de véritables investissements, les décideurs doivent également stabiliser le taux de change afin de rétablir la sécurité pour les investisseurs et assurer le remboursement de la dette.

Ces objectifs ne sont pas nécessairement compatibles. L'Argentine doit renégocier les délais de remboursement de la dette avec ses créanciers privés et réviser l'accord en cours avec le FMI, dont l'aide s'est avérée davantage politique que technique. Or, alors que la restructuration de la dette exigera un meilleur équilibre budgétaire, la profonde récession actuelle rend la réalisation d'un excédent primaire en 2020 extrêmement difficile. L'ajustement économique profond qu'il demanderait pourrait être trop dur à supporter pour les Argentins, étant donné la mesure dans laquelle l'économie réelle s'est déjà détériorée. Comme les soulèvements populaires au Chili et en Equateur l'ont montré, les sociétés latino-américaines sont de moins en moins enclines à tolérer d'autres ajustements douloureux.

Pour sa part, le nouveau gouvernement a indiqué qu'il va essayer de stimuler la consommation intérieure de manière à réduire la pauvreté. Etant donné ses ressources financières limitées, il devra se concentrer sur l'amélioration des conditions de vie des groupes sociaux appauvris par le biais de programmes de transferts monétaires tels que l'allocation universelle pour enfant (Asignación Universal por Hijo). Un autre objectif majeur est de forger un nouveau pacte social en encourageant les syndicats et les entreprises à proposer des accords salariaux conformes aux objectifs de politiques fiscale et monétaire plus généraux.

Fernández doit montrer qu'il a le poids politique pour aligner les attentes des différentes parties prenantes et mener à bien des politiques capables de stimuler la consommation et d'envoyer les bons signaux au marché. Il y a peu de marge de manœuvre dans une économie qui est si fragile. Pourtant, la victoire de Fernández montre que les Argentins en ont marre de l'approche actuelle, et des difficultés économiques de l'Argentine de façon plus générale.

L'Argentine est riche en nombreuses ressources, y compris des richesses naturelles telles que les métaux, les hydrocarbures, le bois et le bétail. Elle a une industrie manufacturière diversifiée, dont les produits vont de l'acier et de l'automobile jusqu'à la biochimie; et elle abrite une main-d'œuvre instruite et hautement qualifiée, qui est capable de fournir des services de qualité. L'espoir est que, une fois la crise est terminée, le potentiel énorme des 45 millions d'habitants de l'Argentine se déchaînera et se dirigera vers une nouvelle croissance et un nouveau développement. C'est le véritable défi face à l'Argentine et son nouveau gouvernement.

Articles traduits

Par Valéry G. Guhéna

E-mail: valeryghn10@yahoo.com

Tel: 076 589 44 0881483394

Russia, Africa and the Debts

Cont'd from page 5

Debt relief is an effective tool in this regard. Under the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries Initiative (HIPC), our country has written off over 20 bn US dollars of the principal debt owed by African countries alone. Russia also contributes to reducing the debt burden of the poorest countries beyond the HIPC through debt-for-aid swaps. We also take other steps towards the settlement of debt owed to Russia, both within multilateral and bilateral formats, he added.

Speech by the Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov at the reception on the occasion of Africa Day, Moscow, 22 May 2014 (1243-22-05-2014). As it is known, Russia has written off over 20 billion US dollar debt of African states. We are undertaking steps to further ease the debt burden of Africans, including through conclusion of agreements based on the scheme "debt in exchange for development" according to the Foreign Minister.

In April, 2014, the President of the Russian Federation, Vladimir Putin, approved the new State policy concept

"The most important aspect of economic cooperation in our foreign policy is to encourage African countries to trade with us and to not only depend on development aid. Always looking for aid makes these countries less productive and funds for projects end up in foreign banks at the expense of the suffering population," Lavrov said.

In March 2019, President Vladimir Putin chaired a meeting of the Commission for Military-Technical Cooperation with Foreign States and Kremlin's website transcript pointed to the geographic reach of military-technical cooperation as constantly expanding, with the number of partners already in more than 100 countries worldwide.

Since then, President Putin has repeatedly called for renewed efforts, not only, in preserving, but also, in strengthening Russia's leading position on the global arms market, primarily in the high-tech sector, amid tough competition. He further called for reliance on the rich experience in this sphere and building up consistently military technology cooperation with

bases in Sudan along the Red Sea Coast, Somaliland, and Egypt. Another publication highlights Russia's military bases in Madagascar, Mozambique, and Guinea. Lately, the Central African Republic intends to host a Russian military base.

Last October, President of the Arab Republic of Egypt, African Union Chairman and Co-Chairman of the Russia-Africa Summit, Abdel Fattah el-Sisi, noted in his speech at the plenary session of the Russia-Africa Economic Forum: Africa welcomes the efforts to encourage an open door policy and cooperation with its partners with a view to making a breakthrough in developing its economy. Russia and other foreign countries as well as international financial organizations have to develop cooperation and invest in Africa.

Further, the Egyptian leader urged international and regional financial organizations to take part in funding Africa's economic growth and to give it financial guarantees on consolidating its economic potential. This would help promote trade and investment. Further urged foreign countries to grant African states generous terms for their projects and development programmes, which will help Africa reach its dream - to embark on the road of progress, modernization and sustainable development.

Before concluding his speech, President Abdel Fattah el-Sisi emphasized that cooperation with Africa must be based on common interests, on the protection of African property, which would allow Africa to promote comprehensive sustainable development by carrying out three major goals.

First, it is necessary to accelerate economic reforms and create a businesslike atmosphere by establishing close partnership with the private sector. Second, it is essential to implement social justice principles with the broad participation of society. Third, it is necessary to consolidate peace and stability in accordance with the African Union's Agenda 2063 and Sustainable Development Goals 2030.

Significantly noting that African Union officials have repeatedly urged African leaders to prioritize Africa's Agenda 2063 - a strategic framework for delivering on Africa's goal for inclusive and sustainable development - and the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The 15-member UN Security Council has unanimously adopted a resolution welcoming AU initiatives for infrastructure development and pledging support for "African solutions to African problems" in an attempt to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

*KesterKennKlomegh, an independent researcher on Russia, Africa and BRICS. He is the author of the Geopolitical Handbook titled "Putin's African Dream and The New Dawn: Challenges and Emerging Opportunities" devoted to the first Russia-Africa Summit 2019.



of the Russian Federation in the area of contribution to international development. Its practical implementation will contribute to the build-up of participation in the area of assistance to the development of states of the African continent, according to the report posted to the website.

Transcript of Remarks by Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation Sergey Lavrov at Reception on Occasion of Africa Day, Moscow, May 26, 2008 (751-26-05-2008). "Russia has done a great deal to alleviate the debt burden, particularly in the framework of the Enhanced Heavily Indebted Poor Countries Initiative, and in writing off multilateral debts to the IMF and the International Development Association. The overall amount of the African countries' indebtedness cancelled by us, including on a bilateral basis, exceeds 20 billion dollars, of which about one-half in the last two years," Lavrov told the gathering on Africa Day in 2008.

As far back as May 2007, the Foreign Ministry showed interest in Africa's debts. "We are helping our African partners reduce the burden of foreign debt. We have written off African debt within the framework of the initiative to reduce the indebtedness of the poorest nations," Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov said at May 25 gathering of a group of ambassadors, diplomats and ministry officials marking Africa Day.

The move signaled Russia's intention to fulfill its commitments made at that time Group of Eight (G8) meetings as well as paving the way to increased trade with the African continent. It was then, signed into law March 10 ratifying the agreement between Russia and African countries it aided during the Soviet era. Russia continued discussions on a full debt write-off on bilateral basis, African countries owed nearly US\$20 billion. The debt was primarily through weapon deliveries, according to the official transcript.

foreign states.

"We strictly observe international norms and principles in this area. We supply weapons and military equipment solely in the interests of security, defence and anti-terrorism efforts. In each case, we thoroughly assess the situation and try to predict the developments in the specific region. There are no bilateral contracts ever targeted against third countries, against their security interests," he explained.

According to the Kremlin website, Russia targeted global export contracts worth 50 billion dollars in 2018. Russia's export priority is to expand its scope and strengthen its position on the market.

Over the past years, strengthening military-technical cooperation has been a strong part of the foreign policy of the Russian Federation. Russia has signed bilateral military-technical cooperation agreements with many African countries. On the other hand, Moscow's post-Cold War relations with Africa, undoubtedly, lean toward military support and arms trade. Analysis by the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI) indicates that between 2014 and 2018, Russia accounted for 49% of arms imports to North Africa and 28% to Sub-Saharan Africa.

Africa has started accumulating fresh debts. For example, Johan Burger's article details crucial information in relation to Russia's military interests in Africa. Russia has established or intends to establish military



CBL suspends 25 percent on remittances

The Central Bank of Liberia announced Monday November 18, 2019 that it has suspended the 25 Percent Remittance Split Policy for December, 2019 to enable Liberians receive full remittances from relatives, loved ones and friends abroad during the Christmas and New Year holidays.

This means that those receiving remittances from relatives and friends abroad will no longer to take 25% of the said amount in Liberian Dollars.

A CBL release issued says the Board of Governors of the Central Bank took the decisions at the first monetary policy meeting since the adoption and approval of a new monetary policy framework for the economy.

The release notes the stipulated decisions are aimed at executing the CBL's core mandate of achieving and maintaining price stability, based on global, regional and domestic economic developments and



financial market conditions.

These measures come exactly a week after the Executive Mansion here named a new Executive Governor of the Central Bank of Liberia, Mr. Jolue Aloysius Tarlue to replace former Executive Governor Nathaniel R. Patray, who resigned in October.

Mr. Tarlue is expected to lead a team of other governors

in restructuring the Central Bank of Liberia to tackle Liberia's challenging economy, particularly price, exchange rate and financial stability. Prior to his preferment, he chaired the Board of Commissioners of the Liberia Electricity Renewable Commission.

This also comes amid plan to print new Liberian currency

notes and the announcement of several steps aimed at stabilizing prices and reviving the economy, including, increasing the Standing Deposit Facility to 30 percent, while setting the Standing Credit Facility at 500 basis points above the former.

The CBL issues shorter tenor instruments at 30 percent spanning (two weeks, one, three, six and twelve months) while lowering the Liberian Dollar Reserve Requirement from 25 to 15 percent, and increasing the United States Dollar Reserve Requirement from 10 to 15 percent, respectively.

The Government of Liberia presently seeks legislative approval to print new Liberian banknotes, totaling LRD34 Billion to replace two separate sets of banknotes currently in circulation.

The move comes at a time when property accountability is still lacking for the last banknotes printed and brought into the country, involving some LRD16 billion.

Many economists and financial experts, including ordinary Liberians are apprehensive about the plan to print an astronomical 34 billion, fearing uncontrollable inflation when the whereabouts of the previous 16 billion is still in question, coupled with serious integrity and confidence challenges at the CBL itself.

Two members of the House of Representatives - Larry Younquoio of Nimba County and Dixon Sebo of Montserrado County say the request to print new money is not expedient for now, warning of hyperinflation and other dire economic consequences.

But the Executive thru the Minister of Finance and Development Planning, recently said money should be printed to enable government pay civil servants, many of whom have taken pay for months due to extreme shortage of banknotes in the

market.

President George Manneh Weah had asked members of the 54th Legislature currently on annual break to return to the Capitol and endorse the request from the Executive for new banknotes.

Meanwhile, the CBL says output declined at a rate of 0.1 percent at the end of September 2019, compared with a decline of 0.8 percent at the end of June 2019, on the back of weak production and consumption activities, while growth for 2019 is projected to be 0.4 percent, from 1.2 percent in 2018.

"Inflationary pressures have heightened as the Liberian dollar weakened. Both consumer price inflation and the rate of depreciation of the Liberian Dollar are in double digits in the wake of worsening trade balance and growing inflation expectation. The current gross foreign reserves position is less than three months of import cover", the release issued by the Bank reads.

However, it assures the measures taken are expected to help contain inflation, control the level of the Liberian dollar in circulation and ease the pressure on the Liberian dollar exchange rate vis-à-vis the United States dollar as well as promote confidence in the Liberian dollar and provide investment opportunity for Liberian dollar with a higher rate of return, which would, in the medium-term, impact the savings rate and boost domestic capital mobilization for long-term investment.

"The CBL wishes to assure the public of its full commitment to moderating the current inflationary pressure to support stable macroeconomic environment in Liberia. These policy measures will be reviewed every three months as the Board meets to assess their effectiveness."

Opposition split on printing new money

By E. J. Nathaniel Daygbor

Law makers representing the four collaborating opposition political parties in the House of Representatives here have signed a resolution, approving the request from President George Manneh Weah to print new Liberian banknotes that should be in circulation before the end of the year despite rejection by their leaders.

Appearing OK Fm's live morning talk show in Monrovia Monday, November 18, Montserrado County Electoral District #17 Representative Hassan Kiazolu from the former ruling Unity Party said his colleague lawmakers from the opposition have already penned a resolution, calling for the printing of new

currency to replace the current Liberian banknotes.

Representative Kiazolu, also a former Comptroller General of the Republic of Liberia under former President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf, notes though they have urged for the printing, the resolution also calls for close working relationship between the House and the Ministry of Finance and Development Planning and the Central Bank of Liberia to ensure the right features, security measures and acceptable images as maybe required by statute.

Last week, the collaborating political parties including, the former ruling Unity Party, the Liberty Party, Alternative National Congress and the All Liberian Party in an emergency meeting presided

over by the ALP political leader Benoni Urey, asked opposition lawmakers not to approve the printing of new currency, but the lawmakers informed the executive committee members that they (lawmakers) had already given green light for the printing.

Executive committee members of the four collaborating political parties had demanded the government to account for the LRD16 billion that the authorities said were in the vaults of the Central Bank, the US\$25 million withdrawn from the national reserves to mop up excess liquidity, and a forensic audit to establish the actual story behind the scene before proceeding with the printing of new banknotes.

The collaborating opposition parties also requested their lawmakers to totally avoid participating in the printing of new banknotes, but the lawmakers insisted they have gone too far to abort the exercise.

However, the opposition leaders have resolved to continue engaging their lawmakers on grounds that the printing of new banknotes is not a best option to the current economic challenges facing the nation.

The Liberian government is in the process of printing new banknotes to replace the current notes that are reportedly in shortage here.

But to the dismay of the CPP leadership, opposition lawmakers are in jubilant



Rep. Hassan Kiazolu



Mr. Benoni Urey

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mood for the printing of new currency for the country ahead of Christmas.

Government employees, including lawmakers have not taken pay for three months due to the notes shortage.

Representative Kaizolu said their primary concern is to ensure printing of new banknotes, rather than additional printing of the banknotes currently in

circulation.

On the question of their return to the Capitol, Kaizolu said he had received SMS text from Speaker Bhofal Chambers that their resumption to work will be announced later.

According to him, Speaker Chambers did not state reason, but he (Kiazolu) surmised President Weah might have requested the delay. -Editing by Jonathan Browne

Bucky Raw, others win MTN Liberia music award



On November 16, Liberian music was celebrated at the 2019 MTN Liberia Music Awards (MLMA). Music superstars, Bucky Raw, Jaredo and Christoph The Change emerged as the night's biggest winners with two awards each in major categories.

Bucky Raw took home the Artist of the Year and Video of the Year ('Thank You') awards. Christoph The

Change won the awards for Hipco/Trapco Artist of the Year and Album of the Year ('Bonnie Dust') while Jaredo won Collaboration of the Year and Afro Pop Artist of the Year.

Other winners included, MrParbai, Ldrez, Spesh Da DJ, Jackie Russ, Stunna, Pillz, Scientific, Paul Harding, Davero, Fullest 4, and Barsee. The coveted MTN People's Choice award, as voted for by fans on social media, went to Kobazzie.

Yaw Ankoma Agyapong, Lonestar Cell MTN's Chief Marketing Officer said, "This year's MLMA was all about showcasing and celebrating Liberian music as a unifier and driver of youth empowerment. The awards ceremony was uniquely Liberian with stellar performances delivered solely by Liberian acts. We are extremely proud of every single artist and of the fans who voted. Recognizing and promoting talented musicians while giving them the platform to showcase their craft and connect with their fans is just one of the many ways we are #GoodTogether."

Lonestar Cell MTN is committed to supporting the rise of Liberian talent and the growth of the Liberian music industry. Lonestar Cell MTN will continue to partner with the Liberia Music Foundation to deliver a stellar MTN Liberia Music Awards and take Liberian music to the world. A big thank you to all nominees, winners, performers and the fans who voted and ensured that the awards event was a major success.

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Cocoa and oil-palm farmers hail Solidaridad's intervention

By Winston W. Parley

Smallholder cocoa and oil palm farmers in Bong and Nimba counties have hailed the intervention of global network organization Solidaridad Liberia in their farming activities which has enabled them to learn and adopt best management practices (BMPs) that enable improved crops yields and earnings.

Solidaridad launched a four - year cocoa and oil palm



agriculture programs in Liberia in May this year, aimed at equipping thousands of smallholder farmers - both men and women - with training and access to finance to explore the two lucrative sectors.

The cocoa rehabilitation and intensification program (CORIP) and the sustainable West Africa oil palm program (SWAPP) funded by the Kingdom of the Netherlands and the European Union are the extension of similar programs in the economies of neighboring Sierra

Leone, Ghana and Cote D'Ivoire.

The program is being implemented in five counties including Bong, Nimba and Lofa and in 84 different communities here.

Through the support of Solidaridad, local farm facilitators help farmers in villages with training and technical knowledge including pruning (trim a tree by cutting away its dead or overgrown branches), layout, nursery establishment and other things

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