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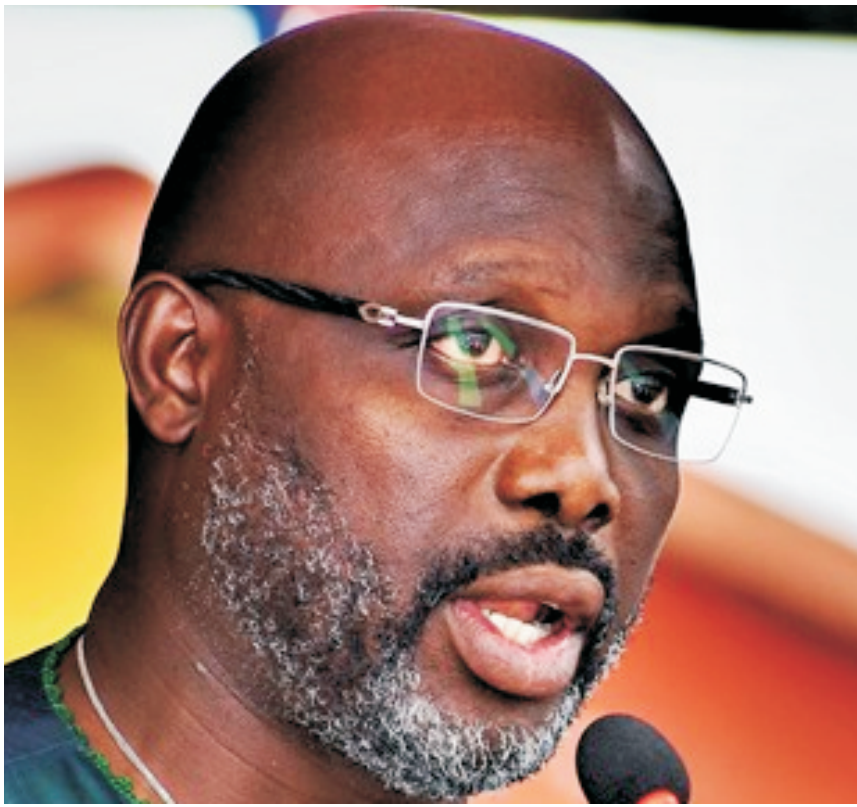
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-ANC lashes out, says Liberians are going thru hell

CDC reschedules retreat

-amid gasoline shortage



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Continental News

Sudan agrees Bashir must face international court

Sudan's rulers have agreed to hand over ex-President Omar al-Bashir to the International Criminal Court (ICC) to face genocide and war crimes charges.

Bashir is accused of serious crimes in a conflict that broke out in Darfur in 2003 and led to the deaths of 300,000.

Authorities said the former president, and others charged by the ICC, should appear before the court. The commitment came at peace talks between Sudan's government and rebel groups from the Darfur region. "Justice cannot be achieved if we don't heal the wounds," said Mohammed Hassan al-Taishi, a spokesman for the Sudanese government. He told BBC Focus on Africa radio that Bashir and three others would be handed over to the ICC.

Asked if supporters of the ousted president would accept this decision, Mr Taishi replied that no-one was above justice.

"We are doing what the

Sudanese people asked us to do," he added. Mr Taishi stressed that he was expressing the view of the government, which includes powerful generals in the military, and not his personal view.

Mr Taishi is a civilian member of Sudan's sovereign council, the body overseeing

the country's transition to democracy. The Sudanese delegation negotiating with rebels in Darfur has made a key concession to victims of the Darfur conflict by agreeing that all those wanted by the ICC should be handed over to the court to stand trial.

The surrender of former President Bashir is, in fact,

something that Sudan's top military general Abdel Fattah al-Burhan alluded to at a meeting in December with victims of the conflict. But there is no guarantee that it will happen - the generals may renege on the deal.

If it does happen, it is unlikely to be anytime soon, as talks to end the conflict still have a long way to go and the transfer of the wanted men - from both sides of the conflict - would have to be part of a broader peace deal. Bashir, who refused to recognise the authority of the court when he was charged for crimes in the region in 2009, was ousted as president in April last year. On Tuesday, one of his lawyers

told Reuters news agency that Bashir would continue to refuse to deal with the ICC, describing it as a "political court". ICC prosecutors in The Hague requested that the former leader stand trial over the Darfur killings and issued an arrest warrant for him on charges of genocide, war crimes and crimes against humanity. The UN says that in addition to those killed in fighting between local armed groups, and Bashir's forces and government-backed militia - such as the infamous Janjaweed - around 2.5 million people were displaced in the war. Warrants for Bashir's arrest were issued in 2009 and 2010 by the ICC. BBC



Omar al-Bashir (left) was convicted of corruption in December

Liberian women 'too unfit to join army'

Most women who applied to join Liberia's army failed because they were physically unfit, army officials say.

Eighty per cent of female candidates were not able to be enrolled by army recruiters.

A candidate must "meet certain [a] number of push-ups, sit-ups and to be able run

like two miles", said army chief of staff, Maj Gen Prince C Johnson.

Women in rural places achieved high scores when it came to physical fitness, but when it comes to the aptitude tests they did not do as well as those in urban areas, he added. "I am not degrading any region, but this is what our survey has proven," the general said.

In the post-war Liberian army, a candidate must have at least a high school education.

He said the army had decided to do pre-recruitment training for women wanting to join the army. After the women had passed a medical they would undergo what sounds like a boot camp.

The army chief of staff said: "We will take four weeks to prepare you." BBC



Very few women have joined Liberia's army

Portugal freezes Isabel dos Santos' bank accounts



Isabel dos Santos says the allegations against her are entirely false

Dozens of bank accounts belonging to the Angolan businesswoman Isabel dos Santos have been frozen in Portugal at the request of the authorities in Angola, Portuguese media, including the newspaper Expresso, are reporting.

Ms Dos Santos has denied allegations that she enriched herself through corrupt deals

when her father, José Eduardo dos Santos, was Angola's president.

She has been accused of embezzling money from Angola's state oil company Sonangol by Angolan prosecutors - and is also accused of a variety of tax offences.

The 46-year-old says the accusations are a politically motivated witch hunt. BBC

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EDITORIAL

The gasoline blame-game

AUTHORITIES AT THE Liberia Petroleum Refining Company say Liberians and the general public have 10 more days to bear the psychologically excreting pain associated with the current gasoline scarcity in the country that has led to long queues and hours at filling stations.

THIS IS NOT just highly regrettable, but a serious disservice to drivers, commuters, students, public workers and the entire economy.

THE AUTHORITIES' HANDLING of the gasoline shortage that is running into nearly one month now, is found wanting. It raises question of leadership by officials of specific government institutions that are responsible for such fluid commodity that drives the economy of any nation around the world.

AS A RESULT of the current situation, the once bursting and congested streets of Monrovia are virtually deserted because drivers cannot find gasoline to put their cars in the streets. They spend hours, if not days at various TOTAL filling stations, the only provider presently here, waiting to get served.

THE MINISTER OF Commerce and Industry, Professor Wilson Tarpeh has persistently assured the public of adequate gasoline being in the country, but the next day, he comes with excuses and blames why the shortage continues.

EVEN MEMBERS OF the Liberian Senate are not mincing their words about the authorities' handling of the situation with Senator J. Milton Teahjay of Sinoe County pointing to 'gross incompetence' by the managements of the Liberia Petroleum Refining Company (LPRC), and the National Port Authority (NPA) respectively.

SPEAKING DURING PUBLIC hearing by the Senate last week when the managements of both institutions and the Minister of Commerce and Industry, Professor Wilson Tarpeh appeared before that body to provide information about the status of the shortage, Senator Teahjay noted it is a disgrace for group of educated people to preside over such crucial sector of the economy and allow shortage of petroleum.

HE DESCRIBES THE prevailing nightmare as a national security threat that has the propensity to put thousands of people in the streets to protest.

LIBERIA'S MINISTER OF Information Lenn Eugene Nagbe attributes the problem to lack of adequate information from the agencies concern or responsible to addressing such matter.

MEANWHILE, AS THE blame-game continues, the economy is highly affected by the less movement of goods and services, characterized by strangulation of commuters and call from the LPRC for the public to wait additional 10 days to have enough gas to meet public demands.

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COMMENTARY

By George Soros

Europe Must Recognize China for What It Is

Chinese President Xi Jinping will meet the heads of state and government of the 27 EU member states at the EU-China summit in Leipzig in September. Europeans need to understand that they will hand him a much-needed political victory unless he is held accountable for his failure to uphold human rights, particularly in Tibet, Xinjiang, and Hong Kong.

MUNICH - Neither the European public nor European political and business leaders fully understand the threat presented by Xi Jinping's China. Although Xi is a dictator who is using cutting-edge technology in an effort to impose total control on Chinese society, Europeans regard China primarily as an important business partner. They fail to appreciate that since Xi became president and General Secretary of the Communist Party of China (CPC), he has established a regime whose guiding principles are diametrically opposed to the values on which the European Union was founded.

The rush to embrace Xi is greater in Britain, which is in the process of separating itself from the EU, than in the EU itself. Prime Minister Boris Johnson wants to distance the United Kingdom from the EU as much as possible and to build a free-market economy that is unconstrained by EU regulations. He is unlikely to succeed, because the EU is prepared to take countermeasures against the type of deregulation that Johnson's government seems to have in mind. But in the meantime, Britain is eyeing China as a potential partner, in the hope of reestablishing the partnership that former Chancellor of the Exchequer George Osborne was building between 2010 and 2016.

The Trump administration, as distinct from US President Donald Trump personally, has done much better in managing its ties with China. It developed a bipartisan policy that declared China to be a strategic rival and put tech giant Huawei and several other Chinese companies on the so-called Entity List, which forbids US companies to trade with them without government permission.

Only one person can violate this rule with impunity: Trump himself. Unfortunately, he appears to be doing just that by putting Huawei on the bargaining table with Xi. Since May 2019, when the United States placed it on the Entity List, the Department of Commerce has granted Huawei several three-month exemptions in order to prevent undue hardship for the company's US components suppliers.

Huawei is a very unusual - and in some ways unique - company. Its founder, Ren Zhengfei, received his technical education in part as a member of the People's Liberation Army engineering corps, and the PLA became one of his first major customers. At the time of Huawei's founding in 1987, all of China's technology was imported from abroad, and Ren's goal was to reverse engineer foreign technologies with local researchers. He has succeeded beyond his wildest dreams.

By 1993, Huawei launched the most powerful telephone switch available in China.

Subsequently, it received a key contract from the PLA to build the first national telecommunications network. It then benefited from the government's policy, adopted in 1996, for nurturing domestic telecommunications manufacturers, which also meant keeping foreign competitors out. By 2005 Huawei's exports exceeded its domestic sales. In 2010, Huawei was included in Fortune magazine's global list of the 500 largest companies.

After Xi came to power, Huawei lost whatever autonomy it may have enjoyed. Like every other Chinese company, it must follow the CPC's orders. Until 2017, this remained an implicit understanding; with the adoption of the National Intelligence Law that year, it became a formal obligation.

Soon after that, a Huawei employee was involved in a spying scandal in Poland, and the company has also been accused of other cases of espionage. But spying is not the greatest danger for Europe. Making Europe's most critical infrastructure dependent on Chinese technology means opening the door to blackmail and sabotage.

It is clear to me that under Xi, China poses a threat to the values on which the EU was founded. Apparently, this is not clear to the leaders of EU member states, nor to the leaders of industry, particularly in Germany.

The EU faces a tremendous challenge: the silent pro-European majority has spoken, saying that their primary concern is climate change, but the member states are fighting with one another over the budget and are more focused on appeasing Xi than with maintaining the transatlantic relationship.

Instead of fighting a losing battle against Huawei's dominance in the 5G market, the US and the EU, or the EU alone, ought to cooperate in building up Ericsson and Nokia as viable competitors.¹

Xi will meet the heads of state and government of the 27 EU member states at the EU-China summit in Leipzig in September. Europeans need to understand that this will hand him a much-needed political victory unless he is held accountable for, and questioned about, his failure to uphold human rights, particularly in Tibet, Xinjiang, and Hong Kong.

Only the Chinese political leadership can decide Xi's future. The harm caused by his mishandling of the coronavirus outbreak has become so visible that the Chinese public, and even the Politburo, must recognize it. The EU should not knowingly facilitate his political survival.¹

O-PED

By Carolin Roth

Germany's Crisis of the Right

The resignation of Annegret Kramp-Karrenbauer, the leader of Germany's Christian Democratic Union and Chancellor Angela Merkel's designated successor, has plunged the party into crisis and raised fresh doubts about the survival of the country's ruling coalition. The biggest beneficiaries of the current chaos may well be the Greens.

LONDON - An earthquake is shaking Germany's normally placid political scene, after elections last October in the eastern state of Thuringia produced a stalemate that remained unresolved until early this month, when a liberal underdog was elected minister-president with help from the far-right Alternative für Deutschland and local Christian Democratic Union politicians. The CDU's cooperation with the AfD constituted a major breach of the post-war German consensus ruling out mainstream parties' cooperation with the far right, and generated bitterness across the political spectrum.

Several state-level officials subsequently resigned, but the biggest shock came on February 10, when Annegret Kramp-Karrenbauer, the CDU's national leader and Chancellor Angela Merkel's designated successor, abruptly quit. AKK, as Kramp-Karrenbauer is widely known, fell because she had failed to stop Thuringia's CDU politicians. But she already had made several blunders since becoming party leader in 2018 (including commenting about the need to censor the Internet) and as Merkel's defense minister (proposing a solution to the Syrian-Turkish conflict without consulting the foreign minister). As a result, her approval rating in the polls had plummeted long before the Thuringia vote.

AKK's resignation has reopened the search for Merkel's potential successor. Those who already sense an opportunity include Health Minister Jens Spahn, politician-turned-financier Friedrich Merz, and Armin Laschet, the premier of North Rhine-Westphalia, Germany's most populous state. With a parliamentary election due in 2021, the CDU will need to elect a new leader by the end of this year - and AKK has made it clear that this person also should be the party's top candidate for chancellor.

But an even more pressing question is whether Merkel's ruling coalition with the Social Democratic Party (SPD) will now collapse, plunging Germany into a serious political crisis. The CDU-SPD alliance is at best an uneasy and uncomfortable marriage, and was necessitated by the surge in support for the AfD in the September 2017 general election. Apart from agreeing on a package of climate policies last autumn, the government has chalked up few successes.

Moreover, the crisis in the CDU comes on the heels of the SPD's own implosion. Olaf Scholz, the finance minister and vice chancellor, suffered an ignominious defeat in his bid late last year to become the SPD's co-leader. That result seems to have ended Scholz's ambitious plan for a eurozone banking union. Making matters worse, support for the SPD has fallen to a post-war low of 13% - leaving the party with little to no chance of being in the next government.

The SPD will likely be replaced by the resurgent Greens, who have enjoyed a remarkable rally in the polls since the May 2019 European Parliament elections. Over the last year, the duo at the party's helm - Annalena Baerbock and Robert Habeck - have increasingly been mooted as potential future leaders of Germany. Habeck currently is the country's second most popular politician, just behind Merkel.

If the CDU's current crisis persists and the party fails to win the largest share of the vote in the next general election, then the coveted right to nominate the chancellor will most likely fall to the Greens. A green-black coalition government in which the CDU was the junior partner would be a political first in Germany, and highly unpalatable for the party.

Given that prospect, leading CDU figures have warned against internal wrangling, and emphasized the need for steady leadership and continued collaboration with the SPD until the 2021 election. Forming the CDU-SPD government took unnecessarily long in the first place, annoying the electorate and fueling a sense of political paralysis in Germany. A breakdown of the coalition would seriously harm both parties and alienate voters even more.

Other European governments are watching these developments with concern. Hopes were high that Germany, which holds the European Union's rotating presidency in the second half of 2020, would be a guiding light for other member states, especially on climate change, migration, and the bloc's future trading relationship with the United Kingdom. But if German political leaders are preoccupied with internal power reshuffles, they probably will devote very little energy to EU-level issues.

Finally, the political debacle triggered in Thuringia has implications for Merkel's legacy. With her 16-year reign as chancellor set to come to an end in 2021, there were already fears that Germany was politically rudderless, lacking vision, and no longer the voice of reason within the EU that it used to be. Merkel still enjoys high popularity ratings and respect both at home and abroad, notwithstanding her controversial 2015 decision to admit more than one million mainly Syrian refugees to Germany. Recently, however, she had noticeably stepped back from domestic politics with the intention of pushing AKK into the limelight. That decision has now obviously backfired. By backing the wrong candidate to succeed her as chancellor, Merkel has lost some of her hard-earned clout.

Germany is thus at a crossroads. Its economy is sputtering - GDP grew by only 0.6% last year - and desperately needs new impetus. Indeed, for all its engineering prowess and reputation for efficiency, Germany has fallen behind on digitalization and electrification, as well as on its climate goals. The next government will face the task of kick-starting the economy and accelerating digitalization and application of artificial intelligence, while also keeping the country on track to meet its goal of achieving carbon neutrality by 2050.

With both of Germany's ruling parties now in turmoil, a quick resolution to the CDU's leadership crisis is essential. Prolonged paralysis could be highly damaging for both Germany and Europe.

OPINION

Par Dani Rodrik

New Firms for a New Era

In recent years, large corporations have become increasingly aware that they must be sensitive not only to the financial bottom line, but also to the social and environmental effects of their activities. But societies should not allow firms' owners and their agents to drive the discussion about reforming corporate governance.

CAMBRIDGE - Firms are the cornerstone of the modern economy. The bulk of production, investment, innovation, and job creation takes place within them. Their decisions determine not only economic performance, but also the health and wellbeing of a society. But who should govern firms, and on whose behalf should those decisions be made?

The conventional theory under which our contemporary economies operate is that firms are governed by - or on behalf of - investors. This theory posits a clear separation between owners and employees - between capital and labor. Investors own the firm and they must make all the relevant decisions. Even where this is impractical, as in larger firms with multiple investors, the presumption is that managers are "agents" of the investors - and of investors alone.

This theory of the firm rests on two fictions. First, investors are the only ones "invested" in the firm, and hence the only ones taking risks. Second, markets are competitive and frictionless, so that workers (and others closely affected by firms' decisions, such as suppliers) can leave and go elsewhere if they do not like how a particular firm treats them.

In reality, a job is much more than a source of income. It is a crucial part of an adult's personal and social identity. The relationships workers build and the community they acquire on the job give them purpose and help define who they are. Jobs provide workers with not just material utility, but also expressive utility. The terms of employment determine not just how much we can afford to buy, but our sense of ourselves and the extent to which our aspirations and potential are fulfilled. This is why losing a job often delivers a severe shock to our overall life satisfaction.

If markets were hyper-competitive and frictionless, and if information were perfect, none of this would matter much. Workers would enter complete contracts with investors (or their agents), taking all these considerations into account. Workers would sort themselves among firms, choosing to work for firms that give them the best combination of material benefits and expressive value. But in the real world, such complete contracts are not possible and imperfect competition is the norm, giving firms inordinate power to shape the lives of their workers.

In her fascinating book *Firms as Political Entities*, the legal scholar Isabelle Ferreras has taken these ideas one step further to challenge the traditional conception of investor-governed firms. The problem, she argues, arises from a failure to distinguish the "corporation" from the "firm." The corporation is a state-sanctioned legal form that sets out the legal privileges and responsibilities of investors and the relationship among them. The firm is not a legal construct as such; it is a social organization. It embeds the corporation in a network of relationships with workers, suppliers, and other stakeholders.

The question of how firms should be governed has no determinate answer, both in the law and as a matter of economic logic. Ferreras proposes an analogy with national governments. As national politics became more democratic, a second, more representative assembly was created to complement an upper chamber dominated by the aristocracy. Similarly, firms could be governed in a bicameral fashion, with a workers' chamber having equal say to an investors' chamber. The German system of codetermination comes close to Ferreras' proposal, though still falls short insofar as workers' representatives never have equal power on German corporate boards.

Worker control is important to counterbalance investors' incentives to disregard their employees' wellbeing. But two other social externalities require further attention. First, contemporary innovation takes place within ecosystems where firms heavily depend on other firms and suppliers for standard setting, knowledge flows, and skills. There are many opportunities for coordination failure. For example, viable technologies may fail to take off in the absence of complementary upstream and downstream investments.

Second, there are what Charles Sabel and I have called "good jobs" externalities. Communities where good, middle-class jobs become scarce develop a wide range of social and political ills - broken families, addiction, crime, decline in social capital, xenophobia, and growing attraction to authoritarian values. The "insiders" with good jobs cannot always be expected to have the interests of "outsiders" at heart. So even if workers are empowered within firms, we need mechanisms to ensure that the interests of the wider community are internalized.

For both reasons, government action remains indispensable. Governments have to provide the nudge needed to solve local coordination failures. And they need to provide the carrots and sticks needed for firms to internalize good jobs externalities. Firms should not regard such government interventions as restrictions on what they can do, but rather as an expansion of their technological and employment possibilities.

In recent years, large corporations have become increasingly aware that they must be sensitive not only to the financial bottom line, but also to the social and environmental effects of their activities. Discussions about corporate governance nowadays are rife with talk about social responsibility, the stakeholder model, and environmental, social, and governance (ESG) criteria. A growing number of companies define themselves as "hybrid," pursuing profit and social purpose at the same time. Some have figured out that treating workers better can be good for profits.

All of these are welcome developments. But societies should not allow investors and their agents to drive the discussion about reforming corporate governance. If firms, as social and political actors, are to serve the public good, workers and local communities in particular should have a much bigger say in their decisions.

ARTICLE

ARTICLE

From Up To Down After 24 Months – Does Vice President Jewel Howard-Taylor Have A Future In CDC?

By Martin K. N. Kollie

Activist and Columnist, martinkerkula1989@yahoo.com

Two high-ranking officials of CDC, Bong County Superintendent Esther Walker and CDC Chairman MulbahMorlu, are on record for narrating through leaked audios about a hardcore conspiracy or sinister plot to remove H.E. Jewel Howard-Taylor as Vice Standard Bearer of CDC and Vice President of Liberia. Does this billboard of an impending CDC Retreat substantiate or validate such startling revelation?

The Congress for Democratic Change (CDC) was birthed in 2004 and certificated by NEC as a political party in July 2005. Ambassador George M. Weah agreed to lead CDC as its political leader while pronouncing his candidature for 2005 presidential election at Monrovia City Hall in Sinkor on November 24, 2004.

After losing two (2) successive democratic elections in 2005 and 2011, CDC knew it could not come to power if it stood alone in 2017 general and presidential elections. Conceiving a convenient political marriage with NPP and LPDP was its last option and best strategy to guarantee victory. And it worked so perfectly for them under a grand coalition (CDC, NPP, and LPDP). After 11 years in opposition, a tripartite coalition dubbed and styled “Coalition for Democratic Change - CDC” was born on November 2, 2016 and accredited by NEC on December 19, 2016.

On December 28, 2016, Senator George M. Weah of Montserrado County was elected as Standard Bearer of this grand Coalition and he picked Senator Jewel Howard-Taylor of Bong County as his running mate. The Coalition (CDC, NPP, and LPDP) had three (3) major objectives for coming together, namely:

- 1) To deliver Liberia and Liberians from a failed Unity Party (UP) led Government;
- 2) To respond to the cries of Liberians by reducing the number of political parties;
- 3) To merge shared values and similar political philosophies or ideologies.

In order to ensure a more cordial collaboration and guarantee a glorious future for this new Coalition, a Governing Council was formed by LAW. According to “The Article of Collaboration”, the Governing Council is the highest decision-making body in the absence of Convention whilst an Executive Committee runs the day to day affairs of the Coalition:

- A) Structure of the Governing Council:
 - 1) CDC - Standard Bearer George M. Weah (1st in command)
 - 2) NPP - Vice Standard Bearer Jewel Howard-Taylor (2nd in command)
 - 3) LPDP - Political Leader Alex Tyler (3rd in command)
 - 4) Three Chairmen of CDC, NPP, and LPDP
 - 5) Three Secretary Generals of CDC, NPP, and LPDP
 - 6) Three Eminent Members from each Collaborating Party

Even though VP Howard-Taylor sits #2 at the level of the Governing Council, but the photos of LPDP Political Leader Alex Tyler and CDC Chairman MulbahMorlu are bigger and placed or positioned above her on this Retreat Billboard.

Before 2017 elections, VP Jewel Howard-Taylor’s photo was placed neck-to-neck with President George M. Weah on almost all campaign billboards. What has changed in 24 months? It seems like the Congress for Democratic Change (CDC) of Pres. George Weah has forgotten so soon that it took the Jewel’s factor to secure victory in 2017 elections.

The new billboard for CDC Retreat has further confirmed public speculation of a prolonged impasse between Weah and Howard-Taylor. It has somehow validated past revelations of a grand conspiracy to axe JHT as VSB of



CDC and VP of Liberia. The latest revelation from MulbahMorlu via a leaked audio coupled with this new billboard says a lot. I wonder why Morlu is not being called in for investigation or why an impeachment proceeding has not even begun for President Weah up to now? But this is what happens when a nation has a rubber-stamped and compromised Legislature.

A few questions to ponder over:

a. Even though NPP is second in command of this Coalition, why place LPDP Political Leader Alex Tyler and Chairman MulbahMorlu’s photos above Vice Standard Bearer and Vice President Jewel Howard-Taylor’s photo?

b. Why make CDC Political Leader George M. Weah, LPDP Political Leader Alex Tyler and CDC Chairman MulbahMorlu’s photos far bigger than NPP Political Leader Jewel Howard-Taylor’s photo this time around when this was never the case in 2017?

c. During 2017 Campaign, Jewel was up, neck-to-neck with Weah on almost all campaign billboards, banners, flyers, stickers, etc. What has brought her down especially below Tyler and Morlu on CDC’s new billboard? Isn’t this an affront or a disdain to VP Howard-Taylor?

d. The theme of this impending retreat is “Celebrating the President for sustaining the peace for 2 years while undertaking massive developmental initiatives”. Why celebrate only the president and not the vice president too or even the entire government since it is teamwork? Why not choose this theme “Celebrating the CDC-led Government...” which covers everybody?

The theme suggests that everything and all things evolve with and revolve around ex-Soccer Star George M. Weah. This is a glaring semblance of FASCISM. Is President Weah a black fascist? The theme of this retreat coupled with his statues built or being built has made us to believe so. How can President Weah even be celebrated for 2 years of peace when hardship, corruption, and bad governance remain increasingly prevalent under his administration?

Thousands of Liberians recently protested against these vices on September 24, 2018, June 7, 2019, and January 6, 2020. In 2014, UN officials said, “Peace means dignity, well-being for all, and not just absence of war”. Former UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon said, “Peace means access to education, healthcare and essential services for all.” What kind of PEACE will CDC be ‘celebrating’ President Weah for sustaining’ when over 70,000 civil servants are yet to be paid for months and US\$25m cannot be accounted for?

President Weah cannot be a champion of peace when he has hypocritically refused to guarantee JUSTICE for over 250,000 innocent Liberians who lost their lives during Liberia’s brutal civil carnage. How can President Weah be an Ambassador of Peace when he is playing politics with the establishment of a War and Economic Crimes Court? The entire CDC Retreat slated for February 14-15, 2020 is just another political gimmick and fiasco. I think CDC should be celebrating Weah for increased hip

hardship - high inflation - high unemployment - zero foreign direct investment - liquidity crisis - drop in enrollment as a result of hike in tuition and fees - food insecurity - depreciation of local currency - high tariffs on imports - lack of donors’ confidence - violation of our constitution - abuse of women, girls, children and minorities - mysterious deaths - police brutality - crackdown on critics through thuggish groups - patronage and partisanship - lack of basic social services - plan to remove VP Taylor - etc.

The crises confronting CDC and George Weah are just too far from ending. Key among those is how Pres. Weah and his closest confidants, including Min. Samuel D. Tweah, Min. Nathaniel McGill and NPA Boss Bill Tweahway, have hatched a plot to oust VP Taylor. JHT has become a major target of repression, ostracization and censorship. Credible information says she has even been denied a huge portion of her budgetary appropriation and other incentives since last fiscal year (2018/2019). The Executive Committee, the Diaspora Chapter, and the Bong County Chapter of NPP have all raised alarm against such mistreatment.

Inside sources privy to information confided in me and said, “H. E. Chief ‘Ponofalo’ Dr. Jewel Cianeh Howard-Taylor has not been going to work and attending major governmental functions for 3 weeks now due to due to high threat levels and inadequate support such as: No official armored vehicle for almost a year - Default or non-payment of leased property - Delay in processing checks and non-remittance of budgetary appropriation - Refusal to consult her before critical decisions are made or taken - and Lack of respect and courtesy to her office from especially from fanatics of CDC and pro-Weah protégés.

VP Jewel Howard-Taylor has really been playing her cool in past times. She has not even been attending CDC political rallies (e.g. campaign rallies of 2019 Montserrado Senatorial and Representative By-elections). The feud in CDC seems to be deepening as Liberia’s economic crisis worsens. Is NPP’s Jewel a packed car or more than a packed car? The latter would suffice.

Beyond this end, does Chief ‘Ponofalo’ Dr. Jewel Howard-Taylor really have a future in CDC ahead of 2023 elections? It is likely that the Coalition for Democratic Change may severely crack if she is ousted. History is not too far from documenting this CRACK which puts the Liberian people in a better position of reclaiming their socio-economic and political destiny. It will be more advantageous for Liberia and Liberians if CDC crumbles under its own weight ahead of 2020 and 2023 elections. The struggle to redeem Liberia and Liberians remain unabated.

About The Author: Martin K. N. Kollie is a Liberian activist, columnist, and an emerging economist who hails from Bong County. He is a former student leader at UL and former standard bearer of SUP. He currently lives in exile and can be reached via martinkerkula1989@yahoo.com

MORE HEADLINE NEWS

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Liberia signs Free Roaming Accession Act

Liberia has signed the Accession Act to Free Roaming in the West African Sub-Region in line with the Abidjan Protocol.

The Abidjan Protocol is to make Free Roaming a reality across all countries of West Africa.

According to a release from the Liberia Telecommunications

February 7, 2020 between the Liberia Telecommunication Authority represented by its Chairperson Ivan Brown and AntigouCherif, Director General of the Postal and Telecommunications Regulatory Authority (ARPT) of the Republic of Guinea in Conakry, Guinea.

Speaking minutes after the signing of the Accession Act, LTA

throughout the Mano River Union region”, Mr. Brown remarked. The LTA Chairperson also stated Liberia was excited at making the promise of the Mano River Union and ECOWAS a reality.

He disclosed along with Free Roaming, Liberia is committed to making progress together with its neighbors in the Region on other telecommunications issues of great concern, including coordinating and resolving cross-border frequency interference and spill-over.

Mr. Brown assured Liberia’s commitment to the initiatives of Smart Africa which intends to bring into being a One Africa Network in line with ECOWAS and African Union objectives.

“Once we can talk easily and affordably with one another across borders, we can trade and connect more easily with one another...and when we can do that, we can lift all our countries onto the path of sustainable growth and development”, the LTA Commissioner stated.

Mr. Brown praised the leadership of Director General AntigouCherif of the Republic of Guinea that brought together the telecommunications regulators of the Mano River Union to cooperate for the benefit of the peoples of their respective countries.

Chairperson Ivan Brown revealed it is that same leadership, encouragement and support that carried them to Conakry to join Guinea,

▶ CONT'D ON PAGE 7



Authority, Liberia becomes the ninth member of the Abidjan Protocol group, and by so doing, has paved the way for the remaining countries of ECOWAS to take the next step to bring down the telecommunications barriers in the region.

The free roaming /accession act agreement was signed on Friday,

Chairperson Ivan Brown said Liberia was happy and excited to be in Conakry, “Excited at the prospect of regional integration...excited at the prospect of free movement of its peoples... excited at the prospect of increasing cross border trade and commerce... excited at the prospect of bringing down the cost of communications for consumers

Dismissed security chief resurfaces at Public Works

By Emmanuel Mondaye

Cogent information reaching this paper reveals the dismissed chief of security of the Ministry of Public Works (MPW) Pulson Garteh has been reinstated amid mixed reactions in the ministry.

Mr. Garteh was dismissed by former Public Works Minister Samuel Kofi Woods, allegedly for stealing the ministry’s vehicle for security operations.

the right direction.

Several employees, who begged for anonymity, for fear of reprisal, disclose that Mr. Garteh has not restituted the vehicle in question therefore; reinstating him to his post violates the Civil Service Agency’s regulations governing government employees.

The CSA’s regulations, among others, states that any Civil Servant who commits an act of theft while in the



Ministry of Public Works

But, there are strong indications within the Ministry of Public Works that has been reinstated by current Minister Mobutu VlahNyenpan.

Sources within the ministry note the reinstatement of Mr. Garteh has sparked serious concern amongst employees with some terming it as a dangerous precedent being practiced by the Nyenpan-led administration; while others think the reinstatement was in

employed of government, shall be dismissed and turned over to the Ministry of Justice (MOJ).

The regulations also stipulate that in the case where an accused employee is tried in keeping with law and not found guilty, he shall be reinstated and all benefits previously enjoyed restored.

But according to one source,

▶ CONT'D ON PAGE 7

MFA denies abandoning remains of fallen ambassador

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs says all modalities have been worked out to repatriate the remains of Former Liberia’s Ambassador to Senegal, Her Excellency, Madam Mary-Ann Fossung.

According to a Foreign Ministry release, former Ambassador Fossung died on February 3, 2020 in Tunis, Tunisia, where she had gone to seek medical treatment.

The late Ambassador Mary-Ann Fossung was a dedicated public servant who served her country and people with distinction in several capacities including, First Secretary, Liberian Embassy near Dakar, Senegal; Charge d’ Affairs, Liberian Embassy, Senegal; and Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Republic of Liberia, to the

Republic of Senegal, with Concurrent accreditations to the Gambia, the Republic of Cape Verde/ Cabo Verde and

the Republic of Mauritania, respectively.

Meanwhile, the Ministry notes it was recently reported in one of the local dailies that the remains of the fallen Ambassador were reportedly



The late Madam Mary-Ann Fossung

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being withheld, for lack of payment of medical bills at the Carthagene Hospital in Tunis, where the Former Ambassador sought medical treatment prior to her demise.

The Ministry in the strongest term debunks such publication and wishes to clarify that at no time was the remains of the fallen Ambassador seized and that everything is on course for the body to be repatriated for interment. Contrary to the paper’s assertion that the former Ambassador was

abandoned during her period of ailment, the Ministry wishes to also clarify that it was fully involved with underwriting the cost of the treatment of the former Ambassador and has also been in constant talks with the family.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs says it constrained to reveal that a total amount of US\$45,000.00 which has been expended so far covering both the medical bills and to facilitate the return of the remains of the late Ambassador from Tunisia. *Press Release*

MORE HEADLINE NEWS

MORE HEADLINE NEWS

LRA dedicates studio to promote tax messages

The Liberia Revenue Authority (LRA) dedicates a production studio at its headquarters in Paynesville to promote tax messages.

According to a press release, the studio is built to produce tax messages to educate the public on tax payment.

The intent of these messages is to encourage tax compliance and boost revenue collection, Commissioner General

train and empower our staff to inform the public about tax payment," CG Nah adds.

He thanks LRA staff for their hard work and calls for collective efforts in expanding the tax base. CG Nah challenges both the Communications Section and the Taxpayer Service Division of the LRA to make maximum use of the State-of-the-Art Studio.

He notes that the LRA is making efforts to raise the revenue beyond the usual

The Minister of Information thanks the LRA for creating new measures to ease tax payment and stresses the importance of providing more tax information and awareness on these measures.

"Communications is an indispensable tool for good governance, and because of that, it is also an indispensable tool for tax collection," says the minister.

For his part, the Director General of the Liberia

Liberia signs Free

Starts from page 6

Cote D'Ivoire, Burkina Faso, Mali, Senegal, Togo, Benin and Sierra Leone in breaking down the communications barriers among the various countries.

For his part, Director General Antigou Cherif of Guinea congratulated Liberia for the efforts devoted to the success of the joint project and thanked other member countries for the warm welcome and support they provided the LTA.

Director General Cherif reminded the countries, that as stipulated in point 8 of resolution No. 3 on the implementation of Free Roaming, comes into force upon signature by at least five

(5) Authorities/Agencies of regulatory members of the Abidjan protocol.

He disclosed that to date it has already received the signature of six Authorities / Agencies pending those of the ARPT of Senegal and NATCOM of Sierra Leone and is calling on member countries to take all the necessary and urgent measures for the effective application of the resolution.

The LTA delegation to the Republic of Guinea also included Mr. Israel Akinsanya, Commissioner on Government and Consumer Affairs and Mr. Blidi Elliot, Director of Administration. **-Press release**



Information Minister Lenn Eugene Nagbe cutting ribbon to the studio at the LRA headquarters as CG Nah and other invited officials look on

Thomas Doe Nah said during the dedication on Monday.

The Commissioner General notes that in order for revenue to increase, the LRA needs to engage the public with more tax messages that will inspire them to pay taxes.

"There is need to publicize the work we do; in fact, we need to do more to educate our people because the Act creating the LRA mandates us not only to collect revenue but to proactively educate,

500m, and massive tax awareness is part of the many initiatives required to do so.

Information Minister Lenn Eugene Nagbe describes the idea of the studio as an innovation that supports growth and development.

Minister Nagbe says the LRA plays a crucial role in the growth and development of the country, adding that an efficient tax administration will lead revenue growth and foster development.

Broadcasting System, Ledgerhood Julius Rennie applauds the initiative by the LRA and hopes the studio will serve the rightful purposes by providing quality tax information to the Liberian people.

Mr. Rennie is optimistic the provision of adequate tax information will create a positive mindset and make citizens more responsible in meeting their tax obligations. **- Press Release**

Dismissed security

Starts from page 6

this did not happen in Mr. Garteh's situation, and as such, his reinstatement was completely illegal, contravening all standing procedures covering government employees.

Further information gathered indicates that Mr. Garteh also violated the government procedures that give the General Services Agency (GSA) the authority to buy and sell government properties which was not the

case as the vehicle in question, was allegedly sold without knowledge of the GSA.

When this writer contacted the Communications and Documentations Office at the Public Works Ministry to seek clarification, staffers in the office said their boss, Prince Nagbe, did not report to work, and his deputy was also out of the building. **-Editing by Jonathan Browne**

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Methodist Women identify with physically challenged in Bong

The United Methodist Women in Liberia Saturday February 8, 2020 identified with people living with disabilities in Bong County with over 50 Mobility Carts.

Speaking during the distribution of the mobility carts (or wheel chair) at the United Methodist compound in Gbarnga, the President of the UMW in Liberia Dr. Muriel V. Nelson and the Directress of Women's work, Pastor Rose Farhat told journalists that the process was intended to identify with physically challenged residents of the

County irrespective of their conditions.

The duo explained that the distribution of the Mobility Carts is part of a five year strategy plan of the United Methodist Women in Liberia.

They named Health and Empowerment of physically challenged Liberians

The UMW President and Directress of Women's work narrated that the distribution targeted youth, women, men and children who are living with disabilities in Gbarnga.

According to Dr. Muriel V. Nelson and Pastor Rose R. Farhat the initiative by the

United Methodist Women is in partnership with Mobility International Inc. that was launched in the Country to carter to needed Liberians.

Mobility carts is a moving object with three wheeled, operated by a hand crank.

They are important to people without legs.

Both Dr. Nelson and Pastor Farhat during the ceremony cautioned the recipients to use the Mobility Carts for the purpose intended; something they believe will motivate the United Methodist Women and partners to continue.

Taking delivery of the carts

at the Methodist Compound in Gbarnga the recipients lauded the UMW and Mobility International for recognizing them as people living with disabilities in Gbarnga.

Winston Varwolu, Anthony Tokpah and KortoKollie termed the event as rewarding and promised to use the Mobility Carts for the reason donated.

"We use to walk long distances with our sticks because of the lack of carts, many time we tried stopping bike but the bike riders will pass by us because of our conditions" Korto, Winston and Anthony told journalists in Gbarnga.

Samuel Forkpah a 19 year old six grade student joyfully explained that the mobility cart received will help he in reduce transportation on his parents.

In a related development, the United Methodist Women headed by its President Dr. Muriel V. Nelson will on the 17th of February break grounds at the United Methodist compound in Gbarnga for the construction of a multipurpose manufacture center.

The center according to Dr. Nelson will be used to produce and repair mobility carts.

She said when the center is built; vulnerable youths commonly known as zogos at the Methodist bush and other parts of the County will also undergo skill training at the center.

The UMW narrated that during the ground broking ceremony additional mobility carts will be distributed to addition physically challenged residents of the county.

The United Methodist Women comprises of a conglomeration of several astute women of the United Methodist church of Liberia.

The group is partnering with Mobility International in other to provide humanitarian assistance to Liberians who are in need.

Besides the provision of mobility carts, the UMW is also providing scholarships to students of United Methodist churches in Liberia. The group is mostly targeting rural parts of Liberia with their initiatives. **By: Joseph Titus Yekeryan in Bong County**

Français

Le fichier salarial se verra bientôt débarrassé des noms fantômes

L'Agence d'audit interne (IAA), avec le soutien du Ministère des finances et de la planification du développement, entreprendra prochainement une opération de vérification vigoureuse et de nettoyage de la masse salariale du Libéria. Il sera question d'éliminer les noms des fonctionnaires fantômes et fictifs du fichier de paie de l'Etat.

Le directeur général de l'AAI, Emmanuel B. Nyeswa, a indiqué que cette opération est conforme à l'une des principales priorités de l'Agence pour l'exercice financier en matière de vérification du fichier. L'opération, selon lui, vise à accroître la probité fiscale dans la gouvernance publique.

« Nous sommes heureux d'annoncer aujourd'hui que l'IAA a conclu la mobilisation des ressources avec le ministère des Finances et de la Planification du développement pour signer un contrat avec un cabinet d'expertise comptable agréé pour mener l'audit des livres de l'Agence d'audit interne du

Libéria afin d'inclure sa masse salariale pour la période sous notre intendance », a-t-il déclaré lundi lors d'une conférence de presse.

Selon lui, cela est requis en vertu de la loi IAA de 2013, section 8.2 « Livres comptables » et de son règlement d'application.

A M. Nyeswa d'expliquer que l'objectif de cette opération est de présenter une analyse rigoureuse des opérations de l'Agence d'audit

interne, tout en se portant garant de ses systèmes de contrôle interne afin de dissiper tout doute quant aux irrégularités à venir.

« Dans les jours qui suivent, nous procéderons, conformément aux procédures de passation des marchés publics, à la publication des Expressions of (EOI) dans les quotidiens locaux [et] les sites Web officiels, en demandant aux institutions comptables

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Manifestations du FNDC : Des femmes promettent de répondre à appel les 12 et 13 février prochains

A 24 heures des manifestations annoncées par le Front national pour la défense de la Constitution (FNDC), les femmes de cette plateforme n'entendent pas rester en marge.

Dans une déclaration faite ce mardi à la Maison de la Presse à Conakry, ces opposantes au 3ème mandat, ont à nouveau appelé leurs concitoyennes de toute la Guinée à manifester selon le

programme établi.

« Nous les femmes de Guinée, nous ne serons jamais fatiguées quand il s'agit de dénoncer les pertes en vies humaines que les forces de défense et de sécurité sont en train d'infliger à notre peuple.

En effet, au fil de manifestations politiques et sociales, des centaines de morts s'accumulent sans enquêtes ni jugement. Face à cette banalisation de la vie

humaine, nous ne cesserons de protester et d'exiger que justice soit faite, afin que les parents des victimes puissent observer leur deuil. », a indiqué la porte-parole du mouvement, Hadja Maimouna Diallo.

Ayant vu la dernière fois une femme utilisée comme un bouclier par des policiers, les femmes du FNDC estiment que ce sont des exactions de trop, d'où l'importance de leur appel à la mobilisation.

« Nous avons assisté ces derniers temps à une nouvelle forme d'exactions, touchant de manière violente la dignité humaine. C'est la prise d'otage d'une femme innocente, utilisée comme bouclier. Une autre forme de barbarie que nous dénonçons est l'attaque contre des blessés et des morts dans les cliniques privées. C'est pour toutes ces raisons que nous appelons toutes les femmes de rester mobilisées pour continuer le combat. Nous demandons à toutes les femmes de sortir massivement pour participer aux manifestations appelées par le FNDC les mercredi et jeudi

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Éditorial

Pénurie de l'essence : pendant que les responsables serenvoient la faute

Les autorités de la Compagnie de Raffinerie du Liberia ont annoncé que les Libériens et le grand public doivent encore attendre 10 jours pour espérer la fin de la douleur psychologique exécrable suscitée par la pénurie d'essence et qui a provoqué depuis près d'un mois de longues files d'attente dans les stations-service.

Attendre encore dix jours est très regrettable car cela met à mal les moyens de survie des conducteurs du transport public, constitue un sérieux embarras pour les populations dans l'ensemble et un coup dur pour l'économie qui est déjà si fragile.

La gestion de la crise par les autorités laisse à désirer. Elle suscite des interrogations quant à la capacité des responsables des institutions gouvernementales en charge de la gestion des produits pétroliers d'être à la hauteur de leurs responsabilités en ce qui concerne la gestion de ce secteur duquel dépend l'économie de n'importe quelle nation dans le monde.

A cause de cette situation regrettable, les rues de Monrovia qui, jadis, grouillaient de monde et de véhicules, sont pratiquement désertes parce que les conducteurs ont du mal à carburer leurs véhicules. Ils passent des heures, voire des jours dans les différentes stations-service de TOTAL, le seul fournisseur qui dispose actuellement d'essence.

Le ministre du Commerce et de l'Industrie, le professeur Wilson Tarpeh avait maintes fois fait croire qu'il y avait suffisamment d'essence dans le pays, accusant certains opérateurs économiques d'avoir créé une pénurie artificielle.

Même les membres du Sénat libérien ne mâchent pas leurs mots sur la manière dont les autorités ont géré la situation, le sénateur J. Milton Teahjay du comté de Sinoe, dénonçant une « incompétence flagrante » de la part des directions de la Compagnie Libérienne de Raffinerie (LPRC) et de l'Autorité Nationale du Port.

S'exprimant lors d'une audience publique organisée par le Sénat à laquelle les autorités des directions des deux institutions et le ministre du Commerce et de l'Industrie, le professeur Wilson Tarpeh, ont été invités à comparaître pour donner des informations sur l'état de la pénurie, le sénateur Teahjay n'est pas passé par quatre chemins, déclarant que c'est une honte pour des gens qui se disent éduqués et à qui l'on a confié l'immense responsabilité de gérer un secteur aussi crucial de l'économie de permettre qu'il ait une pénurie d'une telle envergure.

Selon lui, ce qui se passe est une menace de la sécurité nationale. Il a dit craindre que cette situation ne pousse des milliers de personnes dans les rues pour protester. Le ministre libérien de l'Information, Lenn Eugene Nagbe, quant à lui, a attribué la cause de la crise « au manque d'informations adéquates de la part des agences concernées ou chargées de traiter cette question ».

Pendant ce temps, pendant que les gens continuent de se renvoyer la faute, l'économie est sévèrement affectée par le fait qu'il n'y a que peu de véhicules qui circulent, provoquant une stagnation des biens et des services.

Français

Manifestations du FNDC :

prochains. », a lancé Mme Diallo.

Il faut noter que depuis des mois ces femmes appellent les autorités à l'arrêt des

tueries de jeunes manifestants pendant les manifestations. Mais ces démarches restent encore sans résultat.

Le fichier salarial

indépendantes qualifiées de participer à cette opération professionnelle », a-t-il ajouté.

Cette démarche, à en croire le patron de l'IAA, justifie davantage l'engagement sans entrave de l'Agence et sa volonté déterminée, en tant qu'institution anti-corruption, d'assurer la bonne gouvernance dans le secteur public en instituant des systèmes et un contrôle afin de garantir la probité fiscale dans la dépense des ressources publiques.

Il a indiqué qu'en fait, l'Agence d'audit interne pour la période considérée a entrepris un exercice national de nettoyage de la masse salariale, impliquant notamment les ministères de la santé, de l'éducation, des affaires intérieures et de la sécurité.

« Les audits mentionnés, dont certains sont toujours en cours, ont grandement aidé le gouvernement du Libéria à économiser des millions de dollars américains et réduit l'effet néfaste de la présence des noms fantôme sur la masse salariale de l'Etat pendant des années. Des opérations similaires seront, d'après lui, élargies aux d'autres secteurs productifs. »

Il a fait savoir que des

UEMOA: le marché des capitaux veut financer « durablement » les économies des pays membres

Le marché financier régional de l'Union économique et monétaire ouest-africaine (UEMOA) veut financer « durablement » les économies des huit pays-membres de cette institution, a appris APA mardi de source officielle dans la capitale économique ivoirienne. L'information a été donnée mardi par Mamadou N'Diaye, le président du Conseil régional de l'épargne publique et des marchés financiers (CREPMF).

« Pour résumer, les conclusions de cette conférence vont permettre d'accélérer le processus de réforme et permettre au marché financier de jouer pleinement son rôle qui est

efforts importants sont en cours dans le but de renforcer la responsabilité dans la dépense des ressources publiques.

« Nous sommes d'avis que l'ouverture des livres financiers de l'AAI à un examen indépendant des comptes publics servira le plus grand bien de durcir notre détermination à améliorer l'environnement global de contrôle interne ainsi que les performances opérationnelles du gouvernement du Libéria », a-t-il maintenu.

Il a appelé à l'appui et à la coopération de toutes les parties concernées dans la réalisation de cette mission utile pour permettre à l'institution de remplir en permanence son mandat de garantir que les activités financières et opérationnelles du gouvernement sont conformes aux lois, politiques, normes et procédures applicables.

Par ailleurs, le directeur Nyeswa a révélé que le gouvernement libérien annoncera, dans les prochaines semaines, la constitution d'un groupe de travail national sur le nettoyage du fichier salarial, y compris son mandat et sa composition avant le déploiement.

Il a indiqué que l'audit des activités de l'Agence d'audit interne doit durer 60 jours.

d'accompagner le financement durable des économies des huit pays de l'UEMOA », a dit M. N'Diaye à la presse au terme de la conférence internationale sur le marché des capitaux en Afrique de l'ouest.

« Aujourd'hui nos pays sont engagés dans une dynamique de croissance depuis plusieurs années, a-t-il ajouté, estimant que « l'idée c'est de faire en sorte que les marchés financiers puissent apporter une contribution significative au financement des économies ».

Par ailleurs, M. N'Diaye a fait savoir qu'au cours de ces assises, les acteurs du marché financier ouest-africain ont évoqué la nécessité du financement des PME.

COMMENTAIRE

Par George Soros

L'Europe doit reconnaître la Chine comme ce qu'elle est

MUNICH - Ni l'opinion publique européenne, ni les responsables politiques et dirigeants d'affaires européens ne semblent pleinement comprendre la menace que représente la Chine de Xi Jinping. Le président chinois est un dictateur, qui utilise les technologies de pointe pour imposer un contrôle total sur la société chinoise. Or, les Européens considèrent principalement la Chine comme un partenaire commercial majeur. Ils ne saisissent pas que depuis l'accession de Xi aux fonctions de président et de secrétaire général du Parti communiste chinois (PCC), celui-ci a établi un régime dont les principes directeurs sont diamétralement opposés aux valeurs fondatrices de l'Union européenne.

Cette plongée dans les bras de Xi est plus prononcée de la part du Royaume-Uni que de l'UE elle-même, le pays étant en phase de séparation par rapport au bloc. Le Premier ministre Boris Johnson entend éloigner au maximum le Royaume-Uni de l'UE, et bâtir une économie de marché libérée des réglementations de l'UE. Il lui sera difficile d'y parvenir, dans la mesure où l'UE est prête à prendre des mesures contre cette forme de dérégulation que le gouvernement Johnson semble envisager. Seulement voilà, dans le même temps, la Royaume-Uni considère la Chine comme un partenaire potentiel, avec pour espoir de rétablir le partenariat bâti par l'ancien chancelier de l'Échiquier George Osborne entre 2010 et 2016.

L'administration Trump, distincte du président américain Donald Trump lui-même, gère beaucoup mieux ses relations avec la Chine. Les États-Unis sont parvenus à élaborer une politique bipartisane qui considère la Chine comme un rival stratégique, et ont inscrit le géant technologique Huawei ainsi que d'autres sociétés chinoises sur la fameuse « Entity List », qui interdit aux entreprises américaines de commercer avec ces entités sans l'autorisation du gouvernement.

Une seule personne est capable d'enfreindre cette règle en toute impunité : Trump lui-même. Et il semble malheureusement le faire, en plaçant Huawei sur la table des négociations avec Xi. Depuis le mois de mai 2019, lorsque les États-Unis ont placé l'entreprise chinoise sur l'Entity List, le Département du Commerce a octroyé à Huawei plusieurs exemptions de trois mois, afin d'empêcher certaines difficultés excessives pour les fournisseurs de composants électroniques américains auprès de l'entreprise chinoise.

Huawei est une entreprise très inhabituelle, unique à certains égards. Son fondateur Ren Zhengfei a suivi une formation technique en tant que membre du corps des ingénieurs de l'Armée populaire de libération, laquelle est devenue l'un de ses premiers grands clients. À l'époque de la création de Huawei, en 1987, toutes les technologies chinoises étaient importées depuis l'étranger, et l'objectif de Ren consistait à rétroconcevoir les technologies grâce aux chercheurs locaux. Il y est parvenu au-delà de ses rêves les plus fous.

En 1993, Huawei lançait le plus puissant

commutateur téléphonique disponible en Chine. Par la suite, l'entreprise obtenait un contrat majeur auprès de l'APL, pour la construction du premier réseau national de télécommunications. Huawei a ensuite bénéficié des politiques du gouvernement adoptées en 1996 et consistant à alimenter les fabricants nationaux de télécommunications, qui signifiaient également refuser l'entrée aux concurrents étrangers. En 2005, les exportations de Huawei dépassaient ses ventes intérieures. En 2010, l'entreprise figuraient sur la liste du magazine Fortune incluant les 500 plus grandes sociétés au niveau mondial.

Après l'arrivée de Xi au pouvoir, Huawei a perdu le peu d'autonomie dont elle avait pu disposer auparavant. Comme toutes les autres entreprises chinoises, elle a dû se plier aux ordres du PCC. Jusqu'en 2017, cette obligation demeurait informelle ; après l'adoption de la loi chinoise sur le renseignement national, elle est devenue officielle.

Peu de temps après, un employé de Huawei a été impliqué dans un scandale d'espionnage en Pologne, et la société également accusée d'autres faits d'espionnage. Mais ce n'est pas l'espionnage qui constitue la plus grande menace pour l'Europe. Le fait de rendre les infrastructures les plus critiques de l'Europe dépendantes des technologies chinoises ouvre en effet la porte aux chantages et sabotages.

Il est pour moi évident que la Chine de Xi représente une menace pour les valeurs sur la base desquelles l'UE a été fondée. Cela ne semble pas le cas dans l'esprit des dirigeants des États membres de l'UE, ainsi que des chefs d'industrie, notamment en Allemagne.

L'UE est confrontée à un défi immense : la majorité silencieuse pro-européenne a parlé, disant considérer le changement climatique comme la priorité majeure, pendant que les États membres se querellent autour du budget, et s'efforcent davantage d'apaiser Xi que de maintenir la relation transatlantique.

Plutôt que de livrer une bataille perdue d'avance contre la position dominante de Huawei sur le marché de la 5G, les États-Unis et l'UE, ou l'UE seule, doivent coopérer pour faire d'Ericsson et de Nokia des concurrents viables.

Xi rencontrera au mois de septembre les chefs d'État et de gouvernement des 27 pays membres de l'UE, lors du sommet UE-Chine de Leipzig. Les Européens doivent comprendre qu'il en repartira avec une victoire politique fort nécessaire pour lui, si personne ne lui demande de rendre des comptes, ou l'interroge, sur ses manquements dans le respect des droits de l'homme, notamment au Tibet, dans le Xinjiang, ainsi qu'à Hong Kong.

Seuls les hauts dirigeants politiques chinois peuvent décider de l'avenir de Xi. Le mal engendré par sa mauvaise gestion de l'épidémie de coronavirus devient si visible que l'opinion chinoise, voire le Politburo, doivent le reconnaître. Quant à l'UE, elle ne doit pas faciliter sciemment sa survie politique.

CDC reschedules retreat

By E. J. Nathaniel Daygbor

In recognition of the two years tremendous achievements of the CDC-led government, being ably steered by His Excellency President George M. Weah, the leadership of

The governing Coalition for Democratic Change (CDC) postpones its National Celebratory, Policy, Legacy and Prosperity Retreat earlier scheduled for 14 February to March 07, this year in the wake of serious scarcity of gasoline that has hit the nation, paralyzing economic activities.

Liberia has been seriously affected by nearly a month-long scarcity of the commodity, crippling the transport sector and the entire economy, already plummeted by lack of cash, inflation, high exchange rate and prices.

Addressing a press conference in Monrovia on Wednesday, February 12, CDC national chairman, Mulbah Morlu said irrespective of the fact that these monstrous events are Coalition-led programs, it has nonetheless, perhaps for the first time in a unique way, breached political party barriers, attracting mass support from all sides, discounting party, religious,



gender or ethnic identities.

Morlu explains the momentous enthusiasm amongst Coalition members, inspired by the thriving success of two-year rule of President Weah, made it easier to mobilize the constituencies.

According to him, in a unique way, thousands upon thousands of women and youths have been dominating these meetings daily, demonstrating unprecedented partisan intensity, energy and vehemence toward February 14-15 National Retreat. Even more so is the record support from non-political groupings,

marketers, student groups and Petty-Traders, etc.

He says hence, not only is the CDC base maximally mobilized and is ready for the 14th and 15th events forecast to coalesce hundreds of thousands of participants, but is also hugely impacted by unprecedented and astounding international support as Stalwarts and members of the CDC-USA Chapter, CDC-Canada, an CDC-Europe continue to arrive in record numbers.

Morlu intimates that despite the undoubted preparedness and the huge

energy, sacrifice and efforts the CDC has invested into the organizing process, the party as the most powerful political establishment of the ordinary people, must never forget the source of its strength and the fundamental essence for its existence.

The CDC's creation as a robust political infrastructure was legitimized by a century of egregious insensitivity to the plight of the ordinary people by a select and privileged few. As a party of hope and redemption for millions of Liberians, he adds, saying the CDC cannot even countenance

to thread the path of errant flaws, oftentimes, dehumanizing the people.

"Subsequently, in reference to the current fuel shortage, while we support government's efforts to alleviate the fuel shortage, we also urge the GOL to double efforts in ways that make the transaction of business and movement of our people easier. As such, in solidarity with the people, the true custodians of the Coalition for Democratic Change, the National Executive Committee has hereby rescheduled the CDC National Retreat to now take place on Saturday, March 7, 2020 at the Antoinette Tubman Stadium, ATS. In furtherance, the party's Reconciliation Roundtable will now take place on 6 March 2020 at the National Headquarters of the CDC in Congo Town," Morlu announces.

Chairman Morlu continues that in light of the adjustment, which he describes as an expedient leadership action in the interest of the people, all District Coordinators across Montserrado County's 17 districts and adjoining counties are asked to conduct mass meetings in their respective constituencies on Saturday, February 15, 2020 to pass on the message. *-Editing by Jonathan Browne*

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As at the time of the case, Cllr. Cephus served as legal counsel for the Liberia Bank for Development and Investment or LBDI, at which time he was privy to clients' information and even led a campaign in favor of his client LBDI for the government to drop charges against the Bank.

Last week, while responding to questions about his February 3, 2020 letter to the Liberia Anti-Corruption Commission or LACC in which he sought the re-indictment of Ms. Corkrum, days after dismissing charges against her, said the justice department was going to file a rate at the criminal court "A" to place Ms. Corkrum and 28 others including his former clients -management of LBDI on travel ban.

True to his words, three days later, on Thursday February 6, Cllr. Cephus filed a write of Ne exeatrepublica at Criminal Court 'A' for Ms. Corkrum and the 28 individual-including businessman Musa Bility, LBDI president John B. S. Davies, Ms. Gloria Manjor, Justin Oguagua of the defund FIB, Jeremi Tegli, MomarDieng among others.

Currently, the

S.G Cephus goes

whereabouts of Ms. Corkrum is unknown. But Cllr. Cephus who is now stirring in the face of a possible conflict of interest is expected to face members of the Senate today. It is expected that a possible conflict of interest issue will be raised at the Senate hearing today.

This paper on Sunday gathered that LBDI president John B. S. Davies is considering filing a former complaint before the legal grievance and ethics committee. Similar threat was made on Thursday February 6 by former Solicitor General Betty LaminBlamo who threatens to go a step further by filing a defamation suit against Cllr. Cephus.

Excerpts of her letter to Cllr. Cephus: Cllr. Betty LaminBlamo wrote:

"... your numerous allegations against me are totally baseless and that you are aware of their falsity. Making false statement against another constitutes defamation as a matter of law where it damages the other. There is no doubt that your allegations are defamatory as a matter of law," Cllr. Betty Lamin-Blamo warned.

"I am thus mystified by your plainly false and misleading assertions, categorically deny them, and hereby demand that

you retract same." She fumed.

"There is no basis for the false statements you have made because the Office of the Solicitor General in the Ministry of Justice is the custodian of the records in this matter. These efforts are clearly designed to evade your own responsibility to divert the attention of the public from responsibility for the decision just made to drop charges against Ms. Cockrum even though as Solicitor General you had responsibility for such matters. You have instead intentionally elected to unjustly injure my reputation.

"In view of the above, I request that you do the honorable thing to retract the allegations," she told Cllr. Cephus in a much detail letter that explains the circumstances surrounding most of the cases he now pursues and the ones in which he served as defense counsel.

"I request that you kindly have this done upon receipt of this my letter, otherwise I will be constrained to take such actions and measures as would be necessary including the filing of an ethics complaint against you, to protect my hard-earned reputation," she added.

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Is Weah insensitive?

By Othello B. Garblah

The political leader of the opposition Alternative National Congress or ANC, Mr. Alexander B. Cummings has described President George Weah's silence over the ongoing gasoline shortage in the country as a "tacit approval of the level of incompetence exhibited by officials of his government".

"This callous silence in the face of serious difficulty confronting the general populace, is tantamount to his tacit approval of the level of incompetence exhibited by officials of his government," Mr. Cummings said in a statement issued Wednesday February 12.

Mr. Cummings indicated that his party notes with grave concern the undue hardship imposed on all Liberians by this crisis, but especially students, workers and business men and women.

There has been an acute shortage of gasoline across the country for nearly a month now forcing citizens and foreign residents to trek long distances as some spend countless hours in queues for



gasoline for their cars, businesses, and homes.

President Weah has deliberately refused to comment on the crisis in public. Barely three weeks ago, Weah failed to mention the crisis in his annual address before the 54th Legislature.

As if it wasn't as serious then and now, on Tuesday February 11, 2020, while addressing men and women in arms during the Armed Forces Day celebrations

here, Mr. Weah again failed to mention the crisis and what his government is doing to remedy it.

Until recently, the Coalition for Democratic Change or CDC led government has denied that there was a shortage of gasoline in the country. It rather chose to blame some unnamed individuals of trying to undermine Mr. Weah's annual address-no wonder the president made no mention of

the crisis in that address.

But as the crisis deepens, officials have resorted to blaming shifting-the Commerce Ministry headed Mr. Wilson Tarpeh has blamed wrong inventory and shallow harbor for the shortage, while the Liberia Petroleum Refining Company or LPRC, which has been reduced to a storage farm, blamed the restrictions of bigger vessels by APM Terminals for the shortage.

AMP Terminal is the company with a management consultancy contract to manage the Free Port of Monrovia, it has restricted the berthing of bigger vessels due to the port not being dredged.

The government last week announced that it has begun the dredging of the port. LPRC says the process will take 10-14 working days at which time it would be able to land gasoline products in the country, but experts say it would take about three weeks to complete.

But to Mr. Cummings, the government appears to be overlooking the level of threats this crisis poses.

"So far, the actions of the GoL does not reflect concerns for the level of threat that this crisis pose to the country and its people at large. It goes without saying that the rising cost of gasoline, and the ripple effects it is already having on the lives of the citizenry are multiple," Cummings opined.

"It beats our imaginations that the Weah-led government has not felt the need to demonstrate the least form of accountability for the hardship imposed on our people. This level of carelessness, is however, not surprising since

most government officials ride vehicles that use diesel and as such do not have to be subjected to the gas shortage and inconveniences with which the general populace is confronted," he added.

And further argues that "No serious government would elect to prioritize politics over the general well-being of its people, to the point of ignoring their pains and leaving them to trek long distances, and or spend considerable portions of their days and night struggling to acquire gas, while officials drive by in their cozy government cars under the comfort of air condition."

Meanwhile, the ANC in its statement proposes temporary measures it feels the government can now adopt, while it awaits the completion of the dredging of the port berth.

"We therefore, call on the Weah-led government to consider the following immediate steps in addressing the situation:

1. Reach out to neighboring Sierra Leone and Ivory Coast to explore the possibility of getting supplies of gasoline using road-tankers until a vessel is able to dock at the port. The LPRC in its recently released statement has estimated a period of two weeks before this situation can be brought under control. We do not have 2 weeks.

2. Immediately begin a stock-taking of the quantity of rice in country to determine our preparedness to prevent a shortage of rice for the next 3 weeks.

3. Provide a timeline for the completion of the dredging of the port and estimated time of arrival of emergency fuel supply.

4. Close all schools for a period of one week as it has become nearly impossible for students to get to and from school.

5. Institute an essential-staff policy in the public sector to reduce the workforce and have employees work from home as applicable.

6. Dismiss the heads of all government agencies responsible for this sector to include NPA, LPRC and Commerce and replace them with competent technicians.

7. Address the nation immediately, speak to your people.

8. Stop taking Liberians for granted."

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AFL mobilizes

of all lands belonging to the Armed Forces of Liberia that are arable and feasible for agriculture productivity.

And Gen. Johnson's comments to President Weah's mandate come at a very important time of meeting with military officials of Liberia's traditional ally, specifically the Michigan National Guard from the U.S. who have been assisting the Armed Forces of Liberia (AFL) for more than a decade through a partnership.

Welcoming the delegation from the Michigan National Guard led by Brigadier General Katherine White at the Defense Ministry here, Gen. Johnson tells his counterparts that "This is a wonderful time for the Armed Forces of Liberia and the Ministry of Defense."

He notes that the AFL has been in partnership with the Michigan National Guard for close to 10 plus years, since 2009.

"It shows how much our support from our traditional ally, our most important traditional ally the U.S. has supported this new Armed Forces of Liberia," he continues.

Gen. Johnson says he always tells the Michigan National Guard whenever he sees its personnel that it is because of their taxpayers'

money that today the Armed Forces of Liberia is what it is.

He also recognizes the leadership of regional bloc ECOWAS and other international partners that have supported the new AFL.

Responding, Brigadier General Katherine White of the Michigan National Guard, thanks the Liberian military and defense officials for the invitation, saying she is honored to be representing the Michigan National Guard.

She says she is so impressed by the AFL, commending the force for its strong sense of professionalism.

Gen. White recalls that the partnership between Liberia and Michigan started in 2009 with a simple exchange of ideas and experiences.

According to her, they advise the AFL on basic military tasks and procedures such as how to organize basic military instructions.

Initially, she says AFL leaders did a lot of observing and asking questions, adding that the AFL and the Michigan National Guard have come a long way, building strong relationships which intend to grow.

As partners, Gen. White says the Michigan National Guard has moved from observing and advising to conducting about 11 separate trainings.

Further, she says she is excited that the AFL recognizes the need to utilize every human

capital in the nation, in response to plans here by the AFL to encourage more female participation in the army.

Also speaking, Deputy Defense Minister for Administration Olandrus Dixon notes that Liberia has been beneficiary of the assistance provided by the Michigan National Guard, including the training opportunities given the men and women of the AFL, among others.

He notes that Liberia has an enduring relationship with the people of the United States and the Michigan National Guard, adding that the AFL will not be where it is without the support of the United States government.

"So again we are here on this day, it's just to reaffirm that partnership," he says, thanking the military delegation for all the support provided to Liberia.

Concerning President Weah's instruction to reactivate the Agriculture Company of the AFL, Minister Dixon says the onus is now on the Ministry of Defense to initiate the process to leverage the partnership.

He notes that when the Commander-in-Chief gives a directive like that, the Ministry of Defense takes the initiative right away, including developing the necessary requirements and plans.

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S.G Cephus goes after former clients in same case

--As Ellen Corkrum's whereabouts is unknown



Solicitor General Cllr. Saymah Cyrenius Cephus

Solicitor General Cllr. Saymah Cyrenius Cephus appears adamant closing his eyes on ethical issues as he pursues former clients in a case he once served as their legal defense during the Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf regime.

The case involve former Liberia Airport Authority or LAA Managing Director Ellen

Corkrum and several other institutions and individuals.

In 2013, Ellen Corkrum, then Managing Director of the LAA was indicted along with businessman Musa Bility then Board Chair of the LAA by the Grand Jury of Montserrado County on charges of economic sabotage, criminal facilitation, conspiracy to defraud the government, and making

unauthorized transfers of funds from government accounts.

Others indicted were the Monrovia Diaspora Consulting, LLC, through MomarDieng, a U.S. citizen; LBDI and the First International Bank; and all authorized representatives of the authority.

The First International Bank was indicted for allegedly conspiring with co-defendants Corkrum, Melvin Johnson & Associates, to make an unauthorized transfer of funds in the amount of US\$56,750 from the account of the Liberia Airport Authority when Corkrum was the Managing Director.

Corkrum was also accused of transferring US\$269,000 to a fictitious company, Diaspora Consulting, LLC and its CEO, MomarDieng, through whom she reportedly attended the Kennedy Business School, Harvard University.

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AFL mobilizes response effort

By **Winston W. Parley**

Liberia's Army Chief of Staff Brigadier General Prince C. Johnson says the military here is trying to come up with ways and means of getting partners' support to achieve President George MannehWeah's mandate for defense authorities to immediately develop a policy framework to reactivate the Armed Forces' Agriculture Company.

"And then by that, we will

be able to ask our partners to see how they can assist, like the Minister rightly said. So, sooner or later you will start to hear where [that support will] start to come from," Gen. Johnson told a press conference Wednesday, 12 February in Monrovia.

"But we have already written down that strategic objective of our president, and sooner or later you will see the Armed Forces of Liberia moving forward concerning that," he adds.



During the celebration of the 63rd Armed Forces Day, President Weah on Tuesday, 11 February instructed the Minister of National Defense and the Chief of Staff of the AFL to begin the immediate development of a policy framework for the reactivation of the Armed Forces Agriculture Company.

He also ordered that this should include the identification and assessment

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PUBLIC SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENT

The **General Services Agency (GSA)** is pleased to inform the general public that it will be disposing scrapped vehicles from the Ministry of Agriculture.

Interested persons are encouraged to contact the Bureau of National Fleet Management of the GSA from **February 6, 2020 to February 12, 2020** at the hour of **8am to 4pm** for all the details.

Meanwhile, the process will be concluded on **February 17, 2020 @ 10:00am**. The public is encouraged to take advantage of this information.

Approved: GSA Administration