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TRULY INDEPENDENT
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TRULY INDEPENDENT

Public Service Announcement

THIS IS TO INFORM THE GENERAL PUBLIC AND ALL OUR CLIENTS & READERS THAT THE BUSINESS AND NEWSPAPER OFFICES OF THE NEW DAWN NEWSPAPER HAVE BEEN RELOCATED ON UN DRIVE OPPOSITE THE NATIONAL INVESTMENT COMMISSION (NIC), BEHIND PUBLIC WORKS MINISTRY.

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I don't have to be president

-Urey



LPRA, NOCAL hold roundtable on oil



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Continental News

Libya ceasefire talks halted after port attack

Libya's UN-backed government has withdrawn from peace talks after the capital was hit by rocket fire. It said the port was one of the targets struck by forces loyal to renegade General Khalifa Haftar, prompting the evacuation of fuel tankers.

The city has been under siege for almost a year, and relies heavily on shipping to feed its population. Top negotiations to broker a lasting ceasefire between the two sides in the civil war have faltered several times. "There can be no peace under the bombing," the UN-backed

Government of National Accord (GNA) said.

"We are announcing the suspension of our participation in the military talks taking place in Geneva until firm positions are adopted against the aggressor [Gen Haftar]", it said. The conflict in the oil-rich nation has been complicated

by the role of foreign states.

Turkey passed a controversial law in January to help GNA forces in Tripoli. Qatar also backs the GNA, led by Prime Minister Fayeza al-Sarraj,

Gen Haftar's Libyan National Army (LNA), which controls much of eastern Libya, has the backing of Russia, Egypt, Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates (UAE) and Jordan.

UN chief António Guterres recently termed the conflict a "proxy war", adding in a recent

interview with the BBC, that it was "unacceptable". The fighting has left more than 1,000 people dead and forced some 140,000 from their homes, according to the UN.

Earlier this week, European foreign ministers meeting in the Belgian capital, Brussels, agreed to a new naval and air mission to stop more arms from reaching warring factions in Libya.

Libya has been torn by conflict since the 2011 uprising which ousted long-time strongman Muammar Gaddafi. BBC



The national oil company had to order all fuel tankers to be evacuated from the port

Malema and wife to sue MP over domestic abuse claim

South Africa's firebrand opposition politician Julius Malema and his wife Mantoa Matlala have threatened to sue a governing party MP for defamation if he fails to retract allegations that Mr Malema abused his wife.

African National Congress (ANC) MP Boy Mamabolo responded to the threat by tweeting: "Bring it on let's meet in court."

But he came under fire from the ANC Women's League, which accused him of launching a "misguided attack"

on an "innocent woman who is not even a politician".

Lawyers for the couple said that if Mr Mamabolo refused to apologise, Mr Malema and Ms Matlala would sue him for one million rand (\$66,000; £51,000) each.

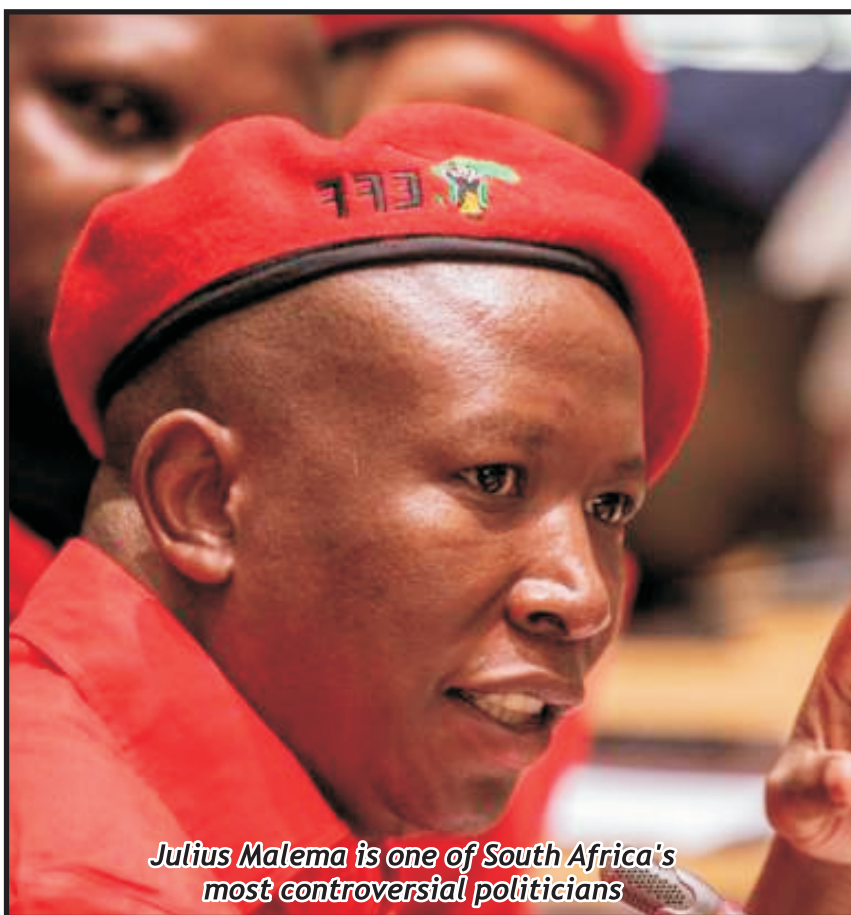
Mr Mamabolo made the allegation during a week of intense political acrimony between Mr Malema's Economic Freedom Fighters (EFF) and the ANC.

It also saw Mr Malema accuse President Cyril Ramaphosa in parliament of abusing his late wife, Nomazizi Mtshothisa. Mr Ramaphosa did not respond to the allegation.

The speaker, however, demanded that Mr Malema withdraw the remark. He refused and was ordered to leave the chamber.

The EFF tweeted a letter sent to Mr Mamabolo by Ms Matlala's lawyers that said: "Your false accusations have now cast a dark cloud over the entire family."

Mr Malema said he had "never laid a hand on any woman, my wife in particular, including all children". Mr Malema married Ms Matlala at a lavish ceremony in 2014. BBC



Julius Malema is one of South Africa's most controversial politicians

Uganda's first lady summoned amid education row



First Lady Janet Museveni heads Uganda's education ministry

Uganda's parliamentary speaker has issued a fresh summons for First Lady Janet Museveni, who is the education minister, following a row over the introduction of a new curriculum.

Mrs Museveni had failed to appear before parliament on Tuesday following a summons issued last week by Speaker Rebecca Kadaga.

She sent her apology through a colleague, Rosemary Seninde, who serves in the Ministry of State for

Primary Education, and asked to appear before the lawmakers on Thursday.

Speaker Kadaga issued a fresh summons and said the first lady had one last chance.

Ugandan MPs accuse the ministry of implementing a new curriculum for lower secondary education despite parliament ordering for its suspension.

The lawmakers were concerned about the scarcity of textbooks and the lack of training for teachers on the new curriculum. BBC

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EDITORIAL

Our hearts bleed for Journalist Miller

LIBERIAN JOURNALISTS CURRENTLY mourn the sudden passing of one of their very best, Kobo Zenu Miller of OK FM 99.5 on Saturday, 14 February after an cruel encounter with state security forces during a national county sports meet in January at the Samuel Kanyon Doe Sports Complex in Paynesville.

A PROFICIENT BROADCASTER, talk show host and sports commentator, the late Zenu had gone to commentate or cover the match between Grand Kru and Nimba counties when he reportedly encountered ruthless officers of the elite presidential guard, Executive Protective Service who beat him on 26 January 2020, leaving him to complain of chest pains up to his abrupt demise.

"I WAS ATTACKED tonight at the SKD ["Samuel Kanyon Doe" Stadium] by EPS [Executive Protective Service] officers in the full view of the EPS director. Gosh!!!", Zenu had posted subsequently on his Facebook page following the incident.

WHAT LEVEL OF investigation was conducted by the EPS following the alleged flogging is not clear but Zenu departed this world in pain, abandoning his loving family and relatives, friends and professional colleagues. He reportedly died at the ELWA Hospital in Paynesville.

THOUGH THE REAL cause of death may be established later, we demand a thorough investigation from the government, especially, authorities of the EPS to ascertain what transpired on 26 January that led to the brutal flogging of the deceased and his subsequent death.

NOTWITHSTANDING, THIS IS how much we know about security brutalities resulting to injuries and deaths under the Weah administration: On January 6, armed police dispersed peaceful protesters with teargas and water canisters, arresting at least 26 on the grounds of the Capitol where they had converged to demand answers from the government to earlier petitions, while on Tuesday, 15 October 2019 police teargassed protesting students in the streets of Monrovia, demanding their teachers to return to the classroom. Then on November 7, 2019 police shot and killed a teenager and wounded two others in Kingsville, Montserrado County while dispersing angry residents, who had erected a roadblock to demand the death of a juvenile. A year later, a police commander had chased a motorcyclist and shot him at point blank before shooting himself in his hand, portraying that he was attack. These are among some of the many excesses by state security forces against the civilian population over the period.

THAT THE LATE Journalist Miller wrote on his Facebook following his beating by EPS officers the incident happened in the presence of the director of the institution, Trokon Roberts, is of grave concern and should be investigated. How the EPS chief could allegedly allowed such inhumane behavior occurred in his presence without intervening?

EVEN AFTER THE incident, there was no official condemnation or comment because attacks against journalists in Liberia have become a norm. From time to time, journalists have been manhandled and their gadgets destroyed by state security officers without proper redress. This has to stop! These are patriotic citizens providing selfless contributions to the Motherland. They should be accorded due courtesies and respect.

ZENU DID NOT deserve to have died the way he departed - at the cruel hands of security officers protecting the President. This is why the authorities should conduct an investigation characterized by an autopsy to unearth nothing else but the whole truth.

THE JOURNALISM PROFESSION, the Press Union of Liberia and the entire country have lost one of the best species of ours while serving in the line of duty at the time he was needed more. Our hearts bleed for his early departure in a manner that is so despicable.

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COMMENTARY

By Shlomo Ben-Ami

The Paradigm Shift on Palestine

The Trump administration's Israel-Palestine peace plan has undermined the belief that internationally agreed principles, such as the need to adhere to the pre-1967 borders, are unassailable. Given how willing the rest of the world seems to be to abandon the Palestinians, these losses will not be easy to reverse.

TELAVIV - Nobody should be surprised that US President Donald Trump's Middle East peace proposal is heavily tilted toward the Israelis. What is surprising is that, rather than rejecting Trump's proposal, the world has left the Palestinians largely on their own.

While dismissing the Palestinians' national yearnings with the patronizing promise to "improve their lives," the Trump peace plan embraces Israel's national narrative that it alone has valid historical claims to Judea and Samaria, the Jews' biblical homeland. So, while it would give the Palestinians their own state, it would be a fragmented territory covering Gaza and 70% of a West Bank dotted with Israeli settlements and surrounded on all sides by Israeli-annexed territory. Its capital would be located in a suburb of East Jerusalem, which would remain Israel's undivided capital.

The plan ignores Palestinian demands for the right of return to homes left when Israel was established in 1948 - a right that was recognized at the time by United Nations General Assembly Resolution 194. Moreover, in line with Israel's far-right ethnocentric ambitions, the border would be drawn in a way that strips 300,000 Israeli Arabs of their citizenship, making them citizens of the Palestinian state.

The Palestinian territories would be connected by a maze of tunnels and bridges, and much like the Bantustans of apartheid South Africa, they would be subject to overwhelming Israeli military control. Anyone entering the new Palestine - by air, sea, or land - would have to go through Israel.

Meanwhile, Palestinians would be prohibited from creating their own armed forces or engaging in any activities "that adversely affect the State of Israel's security" - as determined by Israel's government. Likewise, the Palestinians would have to earn the right to this sham state by disarming Hamas and proving - not to any international body, but to Israel and the United States - that they have created a democratic system governed by the rule of law.

In presenting such a deeply unfair plan, Trump has destroyed any credibility that the US may have still had as an honest mediator. Moreover, he has undermined the belief - crucial for progress toward a fair deal - that internationally agreed principles of the Israeli-Palestinian peace process, from the need to adhere to the pre-1967 borders to the illegality of Israeli settlements, are unassailable.

Given how willing the rest of the world seems to be to abandon the Palestinians, these losses will not be easy to reverse, even if Trump loses the November presidential election and his successor abandons the plan, as candidates like Bernie Sanders and Elizabeth Warren seem prepared to do. The fact that anyone is taking Trump's skewed plan seriously is a testament, first and foremost, to the radical transformation that the Middle East has undergone in recent years. Solidarity with the Palestinians used to be the glue that held together an otherwise fragmented Arab world; now, their plight is a nuisance, a burden, and above all an obstacle to rapprochement with Israel.

Yes, the Arab League repudiated the US plan at a meeting of its foreign ministers in Cairo. But the truth, as Lebanon's Hezbollah movement put it, is

that Trump's "deal of shame" would not have happened without the "complicity and betrayal" of several Arab states.

The ambassadors of Bahrain, Oman, and the United Arab Emirates participated in the White House unveiling ceremony, implying these countries' approval. Moreover, despite "renewing its assertion" of support for the Palestinian people, Saudi Arabia noted that it "values the efforts" of the Trump administration in "developing a comprehensive peace deal between the Israeli and Palestinian sides." Given Trump's apparent loyalty to Saudi Arabia - based, not least, on lucrative arms deals - the Kingdom's crown prince, Mohammed bin Salman, was probably privy to the plan's contents before it was released.

In Jordan, King Abdullah initially warned that Israel's annexation of the Jordan Valley would have serious security consequences. But he subsequently advised other countries to "look at the glass half full." Judging by its ambiguous attitude toward Palestinian statehood, one must wonder whether Jordan would prefer having as its neighbor Israel, with which it has historically colluded to rein in Palestinian aspirations, rather than a Palestinian state.

Similarly, Egypt's foreign ministry called upon both sides "to carefully consider" the peace plan, and even claimed that creating an independent and sovereign state in the occupied territories would restore all the "legitimate rights" of Palestinians. And though Tunisia's president condemned the peace plan as "the injustice of the century," the country's ambassador to the UN was soon sacked for leading the challenge against it in the Security Council.

But it is not only the Arab world that is letting down the Palestinians. The European Union's high representative for foreign affairs and security policy, Josep Borrell, strongly condemned the plan. But his unilateral statement was needed precisely because some EU countries - including the Czech Republic, Hungary, and Italy - blocked a shared resolution. France, for its part, gave the plan a cautious welcome.

Beyond the EU, the United Kingdom's government hailed the Trump peace plan as "a serious proposal" and "a positive step forward." And despite officially condemning the plan for "contradicting UN resolutions," Russia stands to gain from what a Moscow Times editorial called the "unilaterally imposed humiliating terms" of the deal. This "provides a precedent for major powers dictating terms to weaker ones" and vindicates Russia's occupation of Crimea, "Russia's West Bank." In fact, "limited sovereignty" was exactly what the Kremlin wanted to give the former Soviet republics.

If, with the probable connivance of the Trump administration, Israel annexes its West Bank settlements, the paradigm shift in the Israeli-Palestinian peace process would be complete. Israel's status as an apartheid state would be officially confirmed. And the Palestinians will face a stark choice: submit or struggle. If they choose the latter, it had better be a diplomatic struggle: a third Intifada would be calamitous for their cause. Boycotting America, still an indispensable power for an equitable regional solution, proved to be a wrongheaded Palestinian policy.

O-PED

By J. Bradford Delong

Shelton the Charlatan

Like most of US President Donald Trump's earlier picks for the US Federal Reserve Board, Judy Shelton has no business even being considered for the job, let alone winning the support of self-respecting conservatives. But in the Trump era, up is down, and quackery is the new expertise.

BERKELEY - Back in September 1994, the Nobel laureate economist Milton Friedman actually wrote about one of US President Donald Trump's current nominees to serve on the Federal Reserve's seven-member Board of Governors. "In a recent Wall Street Journal op-ed piece," Friedman observed, "Judy Shelton started her concluding paragraph: 'Until the US begins standing up once more for stable exchange rates as the starting point for free trade ...'" Stopping there, Friedman noted that, "It would be hard to pack more error into so few words."

"A system of pegged exchange rates, such as the original [International Monetary Fund] system or the European Monetary System," Friedman went on to explain, "is an enemy to free trade. It is no accident that the 1992 collapse of the EMS coincided with the agreement to remove controls on the movement of capital." In Friedman's view, the idea that monetary policymakers should turn away from the internal balance and focus instead on preventing market-driven exchange-rate movements was a recipe for disaster. Such an approach would require all economies to abandon free trade and return to managed trade, thereby begging not just their neighbors but also themselves.

More than two decades later, Shelton's views are no less erroneous or incoherent. Her arguments about monetary policy do not follow any consistent thread, because she is merely a political weathervane, pointing in whatever direction is most convenient for securing her next job.

Last year, she warned that the Fed should be careful not to do anything to curb stock prices, telling CNBC, "More than half of American households are invested through mutual funds or pension funds in this market. I don't want the Fed to pull the rug out from under them." And yet, in 2016, when unemployment was higher and the case for easy money stronger, she chastised the Fed for "appeasing financial markets" with loose monetary policies. Given this volte-face, it is not unreasonable to conclude that Shelton's support for monetary-policy easing depends not on economic fundamentals but on who is in the White House.

Similarly, back in 2011, when there were lots of unemployed Americans who could be put to work producing exports, Shelton argued against policies that would weaken the dollar. "Let's not compromise our currency in a misguided attempt to boost US job growth," she advised in a commentary for the Wall Street Journal. "America's best future is forged through sound finances and sound money."

But nowadays, the same person who wrote those words sees compromising the currency as an added bonus from the interest-rate cuts she wants the Fed to pursue in response to monetary-policy loosening by the European Central Bank. In fact, she now believes that US monetary policy should be eased "as expeditiously as possible." Never mind her warning in 2009 that "loose monetary policy ... leads to internal bankruptcy ... whole nations have foundered on this path."

Given this history of flimflam, Catherine Rampell of the Washington Post was absolutely correct earlier this month when she called Shelton "an opportunist and a quack." Rampell also notes that, "Senate Republicans seem to know this," even if they "still may be too craven to oppose her nomination, for fear of crossing Trump."

For example, Kevin Cramer of North Dakota has said that while he likes the idea of having someone on the Fed Board who will challenge the status quo, he "wouldn't want five members like [Shelton]." More worryingly, Thom Tillis of North Carolina apparently does not think that Shelton's bizarre advocacy of the gold standard matters, because that issue is already off the table. Tim Scott of South Carolina agrees, arguing that Shelton's past "controversial statements" are "not relevant."

Putting on a slightly braver face, Pat Toomey of Pennsylvania told Shelton at her confirmation hearing that he is worried about her recent statements in support of devaluing the dollar. "We don't get to control other countries' monetary behavior," Toomey warned. "I think that is a very, very dangerous path to go down." Likewise, Richard Shelby of Alabama has indicated that he is "troubled by some of [Shelton's] writings," and John Kennedy of Louisiana admits that, "Nobody wants anybody on the Federal Reserve that has a fatal attraction to nutty ideas."

Nonetheless, the Wall Street Journal editorial board has decided to defend Shelton's nomination, particularly her belief that "monetary policies that ignore exchange-rate stability wreak political and economic havoc." In effect, it is choosing her error-packed words over Friedman's commonsense arguments about the proper goals of monetary policymaking.

Trump, of course, wants Shelton on the Fed Board so that he can threaten Fed Chair Jerome Powell by holding her out as a ready replacement. If we have learned anything over the past three years, it is that congressional Republicans' furrowed brows and rhetoric of "concern" are worthless. Kennedy, after expressing his reservations about "nutty ideas," went on to stipulate that, "I'm not saying that's the case here." And Mike Crapo of Idaho has gone so far as to praise Shelton for her "deep knowledge of democracy, economic theory, and monetary policy."

If Republican senators are going to save the country from yet another Trump misstep, they will need to find their long-lost spines. I'm not holding my breath.

OPINION

By Michael J. Boskin

Is a Strong Economy Enough to Re-Elect Trump?

The odds of an economic downturn in the US this year remain low, which means that US President Donald Trump's prospects for re-election in November are strong. But with an approval rating still below 50%, Trump will have to navigate a difficult field of swing states and cross his fingers that the Democrats are hobbled by infighting.

STANFORD - With the US presidential primaries underway, everyone is wondering whether President Donald Trump will be re-elected in November. Opinion polls show that the ability to beat Trump ranks high among Democratic primary voters' top priorities. Following Trump's acquittal in the Senate on impeachment charges and a State of the Union address in which he could tout America's strengths - first and foremost, the economy - the president's approval rating, at 49%, is the highest since he took office.

But Trump has reason for concern. The acquittal may offer merely a transitory bump, and his approval rating should be much higher than it is, given the state of the economy.

Consider the precedent of President George H.W. Bush, whose approval rating rose to 91% following the first Gulf War, which had received congressional approval, succeeded in expelling Saddam Hussein's Iraqi forces from Kuwait, and was partly paid for by America's allies (including Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, Germany, and Japan). In an Oval Office meeting at the time, I tried to persuade the president's political team that, despite his recent successes, he needed a better strategy for responding to a mild recession that had begun in the latter part of 1990. I reminded them that even Britain's victory in World War II had not spared Winston Churchill defeat in an election held less than three months later.

In the event, Bush, anticipating that massive Democratic majorities in both houses of Congress would block any legislation he proposed, decided to postpone a bolder economic agenda until after the election. He hoped that a Republican revival would improve its chances in Congress. But, owing to a slow recovery and Ross Perot's third-party candidacy, Bush was defeated by Bill Clinton.

For his part, Trump has escaped most of the blame for presiding over large budget deficits. But that is because the Democrats' proposals would blow up the deficit even more. At the same time, Trump can tout an historically low unemployment rate, including among minorities, as well as solid wage gains, which have been strongest at lower income levels.

Trump can also point to trade deals like the US-Mexico-Canada Agreement, which will offset some of the damage from his tariffs. He has secured funding to rebuild the military, and appointed two conservative Supreme Court justices and many more federal district and appeals court judges. And he has signed bipartisan criminal justice reform legislation and a major tax-reform package, as well as rolled back some of the excessive regulations of the Obama era.

Political prediction models, based largely on economic conditions, suggest that Trump should win easily in November, as do betting markets, which give him a 60% chance - an increase since the pre-impeachment period. Trump's problem, of course, is that he consistently steps on his own good news with his daily Twitter attacks, which have turned off some of the voters he needs.

Meanwhile, the leading Democratic contenders to have emerged are US Senator Bernie Sanders of Vermont and former New York City Mayor Michael Bloomberg. National polls suggest that any of the Democrats currently running would beat Trump. But those predictions could be misleading, because they do not account for Trump's outperformance among actual voters in the states that he needs to win the Electoral College.

The biggest threat to Trump, then, is an economic downturn that reverses the recent job and wage gains and triggers a stock-market selloff; but forecasters see low odds for this scenario. Another issue will be the mood among voters in 8-10 swing states. Trump remains a sharply polarizing figure, and a re-election bid is a referendum on the incumbent.

Some of the states that carried Trump in 2016 swung to the Democrats in the 2018 midterm congressional elections. Trump narrowly won Pennsylvania, Michigan, Wisconsin, and Arizona in 2016, but he just narrowly lost in Minnesota and New Hampshire. Florida and Ohio, usually the most important swing states, are currently leaning his way, and a few other states that he previously won or lost by 3-5 points could conceivably come in to play.

Meanwhile, Bloomberg has already spent hundreds of millions of dollars on advertising - more than all the other candidates combined - and is willing to spend \$1 billion to defeat Trump, even if he does not secure the Democratic nomination. If the Democrats are united and encourage strong turnout, especially among minorities and younger voters, they could win.

After complaints from the Sanders campaign that party rules unfairly favored Hillary Clinton in the 2016 primary contest, Democratic convention delegates will now be awarded proportionally to all candidates who receive at least 15% of the vote in a given state. Ironically, this means that Sanders may reach the summer convention in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, with a plurality but not the majority needed for nomination.

In that case, party officials, chosen without regard to primary results, will vote on a second ballot. Overall, more Democrats associate with the center-left than with the far-left. But if they come together to nominate a more moderate candidate, they risk alienating Sanders's base, whose failure to turn out in November would tip the scales to Trump. Republicans, meanwhile, remain united behind Trump following his impeachment, which enraged his base and which most moderates viewed as unnecessary overreach.

As of now, Bloomberg is untested, Sanders's odds are lower than they would be in the event of widespread economic distress, and Trump remains both his own best advocate and worst enemy. The outcome might come down to whether the 10-15% of persuadable voters in swing states - most of whom are satisfied with the condition of the country, the economy, and their personal finances - decide that they can tolerate another four years of Trump's tweet storms. Or, they might not "vote their pocketbooks." They could decide that enough is enough, and accept a leftward policy lurch in exchange for a leader who foregoes the Twitter attacks.



SOLICITATION NUMBER: VA-669-20-00004

ISSUANCE DATE: 02/19/2020
 CLOSING DATE/TIME: 03/09/2020 (17:30 local time)

SUBJECT: Solicitation for the AID Financial Management/Budget Analyst, Cooperating Country National Personal Service Contractor (CCNPSC)

Dear Prospective Offerors:

The United States Government, represented by the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), is seeking offers from qualified persons to provide personal services under contract as described in this solicitation.

Offers must be in accordance with Attachment 1, Sections I through III of this solicitation. Incomplete or unsigned offers will not be considered. Offerors should retain copies of all offer materials for their records.

This solicitation in no way obligates USAID to award a PSC contract, nor does it commit USAID to pay any cost incurred in the preparation and submission of the offers.

Any questions must be directed in writing to the Point of Contact specified in the attached information.

Sincerely,

/s/

Robert W. Appiah
 Supervisory Executive Officer

ATTACHMENT 1**I. GENERAL INFORMATION****SOLICITATION NO: VA-669-20-00004**

1. **ISSUANCE DATE:** 02/19/2020
2. **CLOSING DATE/TIME FOR RECEIPT OF OFFERS:** 03/09/2020 at 17:30 Monrovia time
3. **POSITION TITLE:** Financial Management/Budget Analyst
4. **MARKET VALUE:** 35,104.00 to USD 56,160.00 equivalent to CCN-10 in accordance with AIDAR Appendix J and the Local Compensation Plan of the US Embassy in Monrovia, Liberia. Final compensation will be negotiated within the listed market value.
5. **PERIOD OF PERFORMANCE:** Initial two years with possibility of extension depending on need, performance, and availability of funding. This is considered a permanent position.

Employment under any contract issued under this solicitation is of a continuing nature. Its duration is expected to be part of series of sequential contract; all contract clauses, provisions, and regulatory requirements concerning availability of funds and the specific duration of the contract shall apply.
6. **PLACE OF PERFORMANCE:** Monrovia, Liberia with possible travel as stated in the statement of duties.
7. **SECURITY LEVEL REQUIRED:** Facility and computer access
8. **STATEMENT OF DUTIES**

A. BASIC FUNCTION OF THE POSITION

This Health Program Management Specialist (HPMS) will provide operational support to ensure that the Health Team is responsive to all Agency programming/budgeting requirements by maintaining oversight of programming cycles, initiating data gathering, analysis and preparing Health Office fiscal/financial reports in a timely manner. The Health Program Management Specialist, (HPMS) will be in charge of coordinating all health program procurements working closely with the Office of Acquisition and Assistance (OAA) office. The HPMS will additionally provide advisory support by staying abreast of Agency and Office of Financial Management (OFM) programming/budgeting protocols, and alerting/assisting the Health Team (including AORs/CORs) in the operational budget planning process, GLAAS actions, and preparation of all budgetary reporting. In an advisory capacity, the HPMS will additionally take the lead in periodically monitoring Health Office and GOL compliance with the fiscal terms and conditions of Implementation Letters (ILs), and assist the Health Team in mitigating any corrective actions that should be addressed, particularly related to public financial management. The HPMS will be specifically responsible for periodic monitoring of implementation instruments and performance to ensure that health portfolio activities adhere to Agency environmental compliance requirements.

DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT, PROCUREMENT and BUDGETING (85%)**

- Liaises with the Office of Financial Management and Democracy, Rights and Governance Office on topics related to public financial management within GOL systems, particularly related to USAID's government-to-government activities, for the purposes of ensuring accountability for USAID funding as well as building capacity within the Liberian system.
- As the Health Team's budget specialist, s/he in close coordination with the Program Office helps assure effective budget management operations in the Health team. S/he coordinates and maintains health annual budgets, prepares and maintains accurate and up-to-date health procurement/financial plans, and prepares various health budget reports. S/he is responsible for the tracking of health program budget, procurement actions (log-book), financial plan (current obligations, reservations, sub-obligations, pipeline accruals, and future funding/program actions). S/he serves as focal point for all procurement requests/GLAAS for the technical office. S/he works with Health Team members to address any adverse pipeline issues.
- Assists program management staff in setting up meetings with host government counterparts, and in negotiating the clearance of project documents through host government channels.
- Works closely with AORs, CORs, and other requestors to ensure that GLAAS actions are correctly executed.
- In conjunction with Phoenix, maintains financial spreadsheets on Health Office activities for each grant/contract, including obligations, earmarks, commitments, disbursements, pipelines, etc., and produces reports on the financial status of activities as required by the Health Team Leader and/or Mission management. Provides inputs for the Congressional Presentation and Annual Budget submissions.
- Assists AORs/CORs in monitoring financial performance of contractors/grantees and maintains a financial report tracking system. Reviews and clear invoices/vouchers to assure compliance with the terms of contract/grants agreements. Recommends administrative approvals or brings to the notice of the AOR/CORs any discrepancy which does not appear appropriate. Prepares reports on funding availability and recommends funding utilization by budget code.
- Coordinates budget, reporting and other needed implementation documentation tasks with the Program Office and provides financial quality control for the Health Team.
- Takes the initiative to coordinate with the OAA, AOR/CORs to process all procurement functions.

ENVIRONMENTAL COMPLIANCE (15%)

- Advises the Health Office on environmental compliance issues and the impact of programmatic decisions as they pertain to USAID environmental regulatory compliance.
- Ensures that all activities in the health portfolio, particularly G2G activities, comply with USAID compliance rules.
- Provides support to USAID partners on environmental mitigation and monitoring, implementation of the Environmental Mitigation and Monitoring Plan, and environmental monitoring and reporting.
- Represents the Health Office on the Environmental Compliance Team and builds capacity in the Mission for environmental compliance. Improves environmental compliance monitoring throughout the Mission, and ensures best environmental practices are being followed.
- Works closely with Health Office AORs/CORs to ensure that all health portfolio activities have required and proper environmental compliance documents in place.

9. POSITION ELEMENTS:

- a. **Supervision Received:** This position reports directly to the Health Office Director.
- b. **Supervision Exercised:** None.
- c. **Available Guidelines:** The incumbent is provided with programmatic guidance on overall objectives, priorities, and deadlines; relevant operational guidance from AFR/SD and USAID/Liberia; and USAID regulations and policies. The incumbent must interpret the guidance for application to specific situations
- d. **Exercise of Judgment:** The use of good judgment as well as the financial and environmental compliance advice offered by the incumbent has a significant impact on successful implementation of project activities and achievement of program results. The incumbent must be able to exercise independent judgment in prioritizing assigned tasks and implementation issues.
- e. **Authority to Make Commitments:** The employee will have no independent authority to make resource commitments on behalf of the US Government, USAID, or the Mission's Health Office.
- f. **Nature, Level, and Purpose of Contacts:** Contacts will primarily be within the USG, and predominately within the USAID Health Office, but will include Mission leadership as it relates to financial management and oversight.
- g. **Time Expected to Reach Full Performance Level:** One year.

10. AREA OF CONSIDERATION: Open to All Interested CCNs (Cooperating Country Nationals).

AIDAR, Appendix J.1 (b) Definitions:

- (6) "Cooperating country" means the country in which the employing USAID Mission is located.
- (7) "Cooperating country national" ("CCN") means an individual who is a cooperating country citizen, or a non-cooperating country citizen lawfully admitted for permanent residence in the cooperating country.

11. PHYSICAL DEMANDS

The work requested does not involve undue physical demands.

12. POINT OF CONTACT:

All application packages are to be submitted:

Financial Management/Budget Analyst

USAID/Liberia, C/O American Embassy Service Entrance,
 Gibson Street, Mamba Point, Monrovia

Or by email to: Agatha W. Mangou, Human Resources Assistant, email: amangou@usaid.gov and Sylvester Browne, Human Resources Specialist, email: sbrowne@usaid.gov

II. MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS REQUIRED FOR THIS POSITION

- a. **Education:** A university degree in finance & budgeting, sociology/social sciences, economics, business, accounting or another management-related field.
- b. **Prior Work Experience:** A minimum of five years of progressively responsible positions in public financial management, accounting and or budget management required.
- c. **Post Entry Training:** The incumbent will receive 1-3 weeks of training in USAID procedures and systems as required during the first year in the position. This will include GLAAS training, financial management training and training in internal controls.
- d. **Language Proficiency** (List both English and host country language(s) proficiency requirements by level (I, II, III) and specialization (sp/read): Level IV, fluent written and oral proficiency in English is required.
- e. **Job Knowledge:** A thorough knowledge and understanding of professional accounting principles, theories, practices and terminology as well as the principles and accepted practices of governmental and business financial accounting budgeting and reporting are required. S/he must have a good understanding and knowledge of environmental compliance and its impact on project implementation. Must be a self-starter with little or no supervision required in the areas specified above.
- f. **Skills and Abilities:** S/he must possess practical and analytical skills necessary to translate data or information into concrete actions for sustained development impact and results, excellent command of computer skills including knowledge on major software.

III. EVALUATION AND SELECTION FACTORS**A. Education—10 points**

USAID will assess educational qualifications that increase the candidate's competitiveness for the position.

B. Relevant Work Experience – 20 Points

USAID will assess relevant work experience that increases the candidate's competitiveness for the position.

C. Knowledge, Skills and Abilities – 50 Points

Must possess strong analytical, communication and interpersonal skills. H/she must have strong command of the English language as well as strong computer, writing and speaking skills, typing skills. Incumbent must possess highly developed organizational and task prioritization/tracking skills.

D. Communication and Computer Skills – 20 Points

Applicant skills in oral and written communication in the English language, including the ability to obtain, evaluate, and interpret reports, and to effectively communicate organizational mission and policies to staff and partners will be evaluated. USAID will evaluate the applicant's computer skills, including ease and skill in using MS-Office, and in using the internet to solve problems.

Total possible points = 100**ADDITIONAL SELECTION CRITERIA**

Management will consider potential nepotism/conflict of interest, and visa status when determining successful candidacy.

SELECTION PROCESS

After initial screening of applications, only short-listed applicants will be contacted and invited for an interview and a written exercise. Applicants selected for interview will also be evaluated on their reference checks.

HOW TO APPLY

Applications shall be submitted no later than the closing date specified, and should include the following:

1. A clearly typed application cover letter that briefly summarizes why you believe you are qualified for this position.
2. Resume or CV.
3. The names and contact details of three references that can attest to your financial management experience.
4. Documentation (e.g. copies of certificates or degrees) that address the minimum requirements of the position.
5. One to two-page writing sample broadly related to financial management in Liberia.

EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY: The U.S. Mission provides equal opportunity and fair and equitable treatment in employment to all people without regard to race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, political affiliation, marital status, or sexual orientation.



USAID | LIBERIA
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

REQUEST FOR INFORMATION

The United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and her donor partners procure and supply more than 60% of program drugs for Liberia and support the warehousing and distribution of the drugs and other medical commodities to public health facilities all over Liberia, in support of the Ministry of Health. To optimize the commodity supply chain and enhance the Government of Liberia's ability to efficiently store and distribute health commodities to thirty six (36) hospitals, thirteen county(13) depots and nearly two hundred (200) health facilities in Montserrado and Margibi Counties around the country where they are most needed, this Request for Information (RFI) is published to enable USAID access the market for companies capable and interested in providing sundry logistics services defined in the "Description of Services," enclosed.

DISCLAIMER

This is a request For Information Only. It is not a Request for Proposal, Request for Quotation, an Invitation for Bids, a Solicitation or an indication that USAID/Liberia will contract for the services. The RFI is an attempt to reach out to the market to determine the scope of industry capabilities and interest and will be treated as information only. In accordance with FAR 15.201 (e), responses to this notice are not offers and cannot be accepted by the Government of the United States to form a binding contract. Responses are strictly voluntary, and USAID will not pay respondents for information provided. Responses will not be returned, and respondents will not be notified of the result of the review. If request for proposal (RFP) is issued, it will be sent to a selective set of companies at a later date, and all interested parties must respond to that solicitation separately from any response to this notice. The RFI does not restrict the Government's acquisition approach on a future solicitation.

INSTRUCTIONS

To respond to this RFI, interested sources must provide not more than ten (10) pages in Microsoft Word or PDF format by Friday, March 6, 2020, 12:00 PM, Liberian time. USAID will host a market event at a date, time, and place to be provided to qualified firms who respond to this RFI. The purpose of this market day event is to provide more details about the RFI and answer questions from interested parties. Interested parties wishing to attend the market day event should send their request and business registration documents to Edward S. Lamin at elamin@usaid.gov with copy to Thomatta Cooper at tcooper@usaid.gov no later than Tuesday, February 25, 2020 at the precise hour of 5:00 PM. **Please note that only parties responded to by USAID will be allowed to attend the market day event.** Interested parties may also send questions prior to the market event by email. Please submit questions for the market Event and response to the RFI to Edward Lamin at elamin@usaid.gov and Thomatta Cooper at tcooper@usaid.gov. Interested sources must provide a capability statement expressing interest and documenting ability to meet the requirements in the Description of Services enclosed. They must also provide Full Name, Address, Contact Person and their Title.

Sincerely

Judy J. Webb
Supervisory Contracting Officer

DESCRIPTION OF SERVICES

The purpose of the Description of Services is to provide concise details of each service area for which USAID wishes to identify relevant private sector actors. It is also intended to inform parties who may be interested in the RFI as to what quality of capability the RFI seeks to identify in the Supply Chain Industry.

- 1. Warehouse Co-Management** – The RFI seeks to identify firms capable of providing modern warehouse mentoring service to existing warehouse management team while co-managing the Central Medicine Store (CMS) for at least two years, after which they should have trained and enabled the current management team to independently and efficiently manage the Central Medicine Store(CMS). The CMS, located in Caldwell, Montserrado County is a 55M X 68M, 12M high government owned fully equipped multi-million-dollar modern health commodity warehouse manned by a staff of fifty(50). It has at least eight (8) management and operations offices, three (3) cold rooms and storage racks totaling two thousand five hundred and fifty-three (2553) units. It is fitted with two forklifts (2019 Cat 14 1.4tons and 2018 Jungeinrich 1.2 tons). Commodities are managed through an electronic data management system, mSupply.
- 2. Equipment Maintenance Services** – The RFI seeks to identify firms capable of providing regular maintenance for a fleets of nine (9) trucks, five (5) Toyota Land Cruiser, two Toyota Hilux, one (1) 36-seated bus and two(2) 250KVA generators under a one year, renewable, service contract. Interested firms must show evidence of similar services performed and client reference.
- 3. Health Commodity Distribution/haulage** – The RFI seeks to identify logistics firms capable of providing transportation services with at least 5% cold chain to thirty-six (36) public and faith base hospitals around the country, thirteen (13) county depots and more than two hundred health facilities in Montserrado and Margibi counties, four times a year. Firms must proffer innovative approaches for getting health commodities to hard-to-reach areas in the South Eastern and Northern flanks of the country where difficult geography and bad terrains constrain movement of commodities, especially during the rainy season. The RFI seeks firms that have their own fleet, can show evidence of previous or on-going large distribution activities with references; and willing to enter a two year, renewable, commitment.

OGP Steering Committee lauds Senate

The Steering Committee of Liberia's Open Government Partnership (OGP) lauds the Liberian Senate for its "landmark discussion" in reinstating the Automated Voting Machines during deliberations.

OGP is an international initiative that creates dialogue between government and civil society to promote openness, transparency, accountability, citizens' participation, government responsiveness and innovation as well as technology thereby, empowering citizens to fight corruption. It is hosted by the Ministry of Information, Culture Affairs and Tourism (MICAT).

Automated Voting Machines are used for a faster, easier and more accurate election.

The deliberations on the reinstatement of the Automated Voting Machines were held by Plenary during the 10th day sitting of the third session of the Liberian Senate, otherwise known as the Upper House of the Liberian Legislature.

Following the tense deliberation on the matter, which was supported by majority members of the Senate, a motion was made by Bomi County Senator, Sando Johnson, for the communication to be sent to the committees on Ways, Means and Finance, Rules, Orders and Administration to report to Plenary within two weeks.

The motion was then overwhelmingly voted upon through unanimous votes by members of that august body.

Accordingly, the OGP Steering Committee in a release issued on Wednesday, February 19, stated that the use of the machine will allow for open and transparent voting processes.

A press release signed by the Head of Secretariat, J. G. Ralph Jimmeh, Jr., and Chairman of the Steering



Head of Secretariat Ralph Jimmeh

Committee, and the Point of Contact of OGP-Liberia, Atty. Daniel C. Gayedyu, Jr., note that the modernized system of capturing legislative votes will also enable lawmakers' constituencies to know in real time voting records and habits of their elected officials.

The OGP Committee also points out that the new system, when reinstated, will also enhance issue-based politicking, as Senators carry out their responsibilities of representation, lawmaking and oversight.

"The Steering Committee calls on the House of Representatives to follow the exemplary action of the Senate in an effort to demonstrate the commitment of the entire National Legislature to openness and transparency. This move will be in conformity with international protocols and government's Pro-poor Agenda for Prosperity & Development (PAPD)," says the Committee.

"Senator Cooper's decision to be a champion of the OGP at the National Legislature is worthy of commendation. We call on other members of the Legislature to emulate his good example for the benefit of not just their individual constituencies, but the entire country," Ralph adds. *-Press Release*

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MORE HEADLINE NEWS

MORE HEADLINE NEWS

Weah breaks ground today for 4-Lane RIA highway

By Bridgett Milton

The Government of Liberia is expected to break ground today, for a four-lane road along the Robert International Airport highway

have been called to action by President George Weah.

He says details of the lifespan and cost of the project will be disclosed during the groundbreaking ceremony

arrive at 12:00 noon for the ceremony inside the RIA.

The Minister of Public Works Mobutu Nyenpan had said, funding for the project is a combination of both domestic resources from government and financial assistance from international partners through the Liberia Reconstruction Trust Fund.

Improving the highway has been one endeavor citizens have longed for, owing to the value of that road which primarily links the country to the rest of the world via the international airport.

As a result of its deplorable condition, the RIA Highway has experienced motor accidents, leading to many casualties.

President Weah had since instructed Minister Nyenpan to oversee a light demolition which is like being discrete so as not just to save government money, but to bring relief to folks whose structures may fall within the constructional demarcation.

The 44-kilometer highway currently has two opposite lanes, which drivers, commuters and pedestrians lament pose risk to lives due to its busy nature. **-Editing by**



in Margibi County.

Presidential Press Secretary, I. Solo Kelgbeh, says expansion and construction works on the ELWA Junction-RIA route,

today.

Speaking to reporters, he says President Weah and Vice President Jewel Howard Taylor, together with other officials of government are expected to

Petro Trade warns against gas reserve strategy

The Chief Coordinating Officer of Petro Trade Group warns the Government of Liberia to abandon plan to instituting a reserve strategy for petroleum brought into the country saying, "the idea is not necessary for now."

Speaking to reporters Tuesday at the Capitol Building shortly after a meeting of legislators and some key petroleum importers, Petro Trade chief coordinator, Abraham Kaydea noted the major problem for the excruciating shortage of gasoline here is gross abuse of provisional lifting at the Liberia Petroleum Refinery Company on Bushrod Island, instead.

According to him, provisional lifting is a practice under which the LPRC allows one petroleum importer to take the product of another importer with an understanding that the borrower would make replacement in time enough upon arrival of his own

product, a strategy which was designed with good intent to keep the market open and running but has backfired due to either inability or callous refusal of some seemingly reckless companies to replace petroleum products they took and sold under the provisional lifting program.

Mr. Kaydea explained dredging of the Freeport of Monrovia and few other technicalities account for only a small portion of the shortage, but the abuse of the provisional lifting exercise by delinquent companies or individuals is the major cause of the problem.



Court quashes

Starts from page 6

Temple of Justice dropped all charges against Ms. Corkrum on Monday, 9 December 2019 by the presiding Judge at the time, Judge Nancy F. Sammy.

The First International Bank was indicted for allegedly conspiring with co-defendants of 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.

During the ruling Wednesday, 19 February, Magistrate Jallah recalled that on 6 February 2020, prosecutors through the Liberia Anti - Corruption Commission petitioned the court for the issuance of the writ of Ne ExeatRepublica to be issued against Bility, Davis and Menjor.

He notes that the prosecutors requested that the defendants be prevented from leaving the bailiwick of Liberia due to investigation into allegation of economic sabotage, criminal conspiracy, theft of property and misapplication of entrusted property.

Magistrate Jallah continues that the writ as requested was issued on 13 February against the defendants, who

subsequently filed their resistances through separate lawyers with contention that there is no matter pending before the court of which they (defendants) are a party.

Further, the accused informed the court that there is no ongoing investigation being conducted by the LACC involving Bility, Davis and Menjor.

In agreement with the defendants' argument, Magistrate Jallah rules that there must be a matter pending before the court before the writ of Ne ExeatRepublica is issued, further noting that an investigation being conducted by a law enforcement institution is not a sufficient ground for Ne ExeatRepublica.

He adds that consistent with the opinion of the Supreme Court of Liberia, it is the mind of the Court that before a Writ of Ne ExeatRepublica is issued on defendant, there must be a pending matter before court.

Magistrate Jallah therefore quashed and dismissed the writ of Ne ExeatRepublica and orders the clerk to prepare the necessary precepts and forward them to the necessary institutions, informing them that the court's decision restoring the rights of the defendants.

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He calls for suspension and revocation of licenses as well as prosecution of those whose willful actions or inactions led to the gasoline shortage which seriously affected the business of others and nearly push the economic to collapse and chaos.

The Petro Trade boss called on President Weah to attach serious importance to the matter and personally ensure the LPRC and other relevant state authorities review and/or cancel the provisional lifting exercise, while those who have deliberately defaulted be prosecuted for causing huge financial losses to other importers, the government and putting the country on the edge of economic instability.

He disclosed that prior to the incident sales at his company were between 3,000 to 5,000 gallons a day but due to the shortage, they are now between 1,000 and 1,500 gallons daily.

The reduction, according to him, was a strategy to remain on the market while efforts are exerted to remedy the situation.

"We do that to manage the product and keep serving our people amidst the crisis caused by the shortage".

Mr. Kaydea further reveals that the abuse of the provisional lifting framework did not start with the Weah administration, but previous regimes. **-Editing by Jonathan Browne**

Français

Un ressortissant Nigérian interpellé pour enlèvement et séquestration

Un ressortissant Nigérian, dont l'identité n'a pas été révélée, est mis en examen par la police libérienne pour avoir prétendument kidnappé une fillette de trois ans. La fillette qui n'a que trois ans a été retrouvée vivante dans un tonneau en plastique dans la communauté de Slipway en face de Water Street, Monrovia. Le tonneau en question appartiendrait au suspect. L'incident s'est produit dimanche 16 février.

Des témoins ont confié à ce quotidien que l'enfant, dont l'identité n'a pas non plus été révélée, avait été portée disparue. La dernière fois qu'elle avait été vue, elle jouait avec ses camarades dans le quartier.

Selon les témoins, des enfants avaient alerté la mère de l'enfant, comme quoi leur camarade aurait été mise dans un tonneau vide par un ressortissant nigérian qui habite également le quartier. Les parents de l'enfant, dont le père, qui est agent de sécurité, se sont précipités sur les lieux, en compagnie d'autres agents de sécurité. Ils auraient ainsi demandé au suspect d'ouvrir le tonneau,

mais ce dernier aurait refusé, sous le prétexte qu'il contenait de l'eau. C'est ainsi, selon le témoin Noah Richardson, que les agents de sécurité ont ouvert de force le conteneur. L'enfant y a été retrouvée, transpirant abondamment et étouffait.

Le ressortissant Nigérian a été immédiatement arrêté et fait actuellement l'objet d'une enquête au siège de la police nationale à Capitol Hill.

Des sources policières ont informé ce journal que l'accusé

a avoué lors de l'enquête préliminaire qu'il avait commis l'acte. Le suspect aurait dit avoir agi ainsi parce que les enfants avaient l'habitude de jouer sur les escaliers de sa maison en dépit du fait qu'il a maintes fois tenté en vain de les en empêcher. Mais pour les habitants du quartier, c'est tout simplement une tentative d'enlèvement.

Quelques jours avant la

▶ CONT'D ON PAGE 9



Procès des dignitaires de l'ancien régime : Les procureurs sont de mauvaise foi, estime le Judge

Les avocats de l'accusation dans le procès de l'ancien ministre de la Défense Brownie Samukai et d'autres co-accusés continuent de défier le tribunal de première instance avec des excuses si pauvres que le juge Yamie Quiqui

Gbeisay a menacé de faire arrêter le procureur du comté de Montserrado, si ce dernier continue de faire fi de l'injonction du tribunal.

Lors de l'audience de mardi, le juge Gbeisay a semblé irrité par la demande des procureurs de suspendre l'audience afin de

préparer leurs témoins qui comparaitraient le lendemain devant le tribunal.

Le Mardi 17 février, le tribunal avait condamné le ministère public à une amende de 150 dollars américains dans les 24 heures pour outrage, sous peine de l'arrestation du procureur du comté de Montserrado, Me Edwin Kla Martin.

« Dans l'esprit de la cour », a déclaré mardi le juge Gbeisay, « la demande de l'accusation est faite de mauvaise foi et vise à perdre le temps de la cour et à entraver la justice ».

« La Cour considère également l'action des avocats de l'accusation et du ministère public comme une violation manifeste de leur obligation pour laquelle ils sont été payés. Le temps est essentiel dans cette cour tant pour le bien de l'accusation et des accusés mis en examen que pour les avocats des accusés », a expliqué le juge Gbeisay.

Il les a mis en garde contre

▶ CONT'D ON PAGE 9



Guinée : Craintes d'une répression accrue à l'approche du référendum constitutionnel

L'impunité persistante attise le risque d'abus commis par des policiers et des gendarmes

Le gouvernement guinéen devrait respecter la liberté de réunion et s'assurer de la discipline des forces de sécurité à l'approche du référendum constitutionnel du 1er mars 2020, a déclaré Human Rights Watch aujourd'hui. Ce référendum pourrait notamment ouvrir la voie au président Alpha Condé pour briguer un troisième mandat.

Depuis que des manifestations généralisées contre cette nouvelle constitution ont commencé en octobre 2019, les forces de sécurité ont eu recours au gaz lacrymogène, à de l'équipement anti-émeutes et, parfois, aux armes à feu contre les manifestants qui, de leur côté, ont lancé des pierres et d'autres projectiles sur les policiers et les gendarmes. Dans des vidéos circulant sur les réseaux sociaux et dont l'authenticité a été vérifiée par des journalistes internationaux, on voit des membres des forces de sécurité tirer sur des manifestants, passer à tabac un homme âgé et se servir d'une femme comme bouclier humain contre les pierres lancées par les manifestants. Plus de 30 personnes ont été tuées et des dizaines d'autres ont été blessées.

« Alors que la tension monte à l'approche du référendum du 1er mars, le risque de nouveaux actes de répression de la part des forces de sécurité augmente », a déclaré Corinne Dufka, directrice pour l'Afrique de l'ouest à Human Rights Watch. « Le gouvernement guinéen doit faire en sorte que les policiers et les gendarmes fassent preuve de retenue et de discipline lorsqu'ils contrôleront les manifestations de l'opposition. »

Selon la constitution, Condé, qui a été élu pour la première fois en 2010, est dans l'impossibilité de présenter sa candidature pour un troisième mandat à la tête du pays, mais ses partisans affirment qu'une nouvelle constitution lui permettrait d'être de nouveau en lice. Condé a annoncé le 4 février que le référendum aurait lieu le 1er mars, en même temps que les élections législatives, qui étaient initialement prévues pour le 16 février. Le

10 février, il a déclaré que si une nouvelle constitution est adoptée, « [son] parti déciderait » s'il sera candidat à sa propre réélection.

Depuis le 14 octobre, une coalition de groupes non gouvernementaux et de partis d'opposition - le Front national de défense de la Constitution (FNDC) - a organisé des manifestations de grande ampleur à Conakry, la capitale, et dans des villes du centre de la Guinée.

Quoique le gouvernement ait parfois autorisé des manifestations anti-constitution, dans la plupart des cas les forces de sécurité se sont efforcées de disperser ces marches de protestation et d'arrêter les participants. Le FNDC affirme que depuis octobre, les forces de sécurité ont tué par balles au moins 36 manifestants. De leur côté, les manifestants auraient tué au moins un gendarme.

Le gouvernement guinéen a cherché à faire porter aux manifestants la responsabilité de ces décès et Condé a affirmé le 24 octobre: « On sait que ce sont eux-mêmes [les organisateurs des manifestations] qui tirent sur les gens. » Cependant, au cours de la dernière décennie, Human Rights Watch a abondamment documenté le recours par la police et les gendarmes aux armes à feu et à une force létale excessive, ainsi que des passages à tabac de manifestants, des actes de corruption et d'autres formes de criminalité.

Le 16 janvier, après que des vidéos eurent circulé montrant prétendument les forces de sécurité tirant au fusil d'assaut sur des manifestants, le ministre de la Sécurité et de la Protection civile, Damantang Albert Camara, a déclaré que lorsque les manifestations ne sont plus pacifiques, « cela devient difficile de faire le discernement entre quelqu'un qui manifeste pacifiquement et quelqu'un qui a des intentions délictuelles ou criminelles... Ce n'est pas exclu qu'il y ait des bavures. » Il a toutefois démenti qu'il y ait « systématiquement un plan... où [le gouvernement] envoie des gendarmes ou des policiers tirer sur les populations. »

Français

Un ressortissant Nigérien

disparition de l'enfant, l'accusé aurait apporté plusieurs barils dans le quartier, et fait croire aux voisins qu'ils étaient à vendre. Les habitants demandent que justice soit faite et que le suspect réponde de ses actes dans un tribunal compétent.

Ce journal n'a pas été en mesure de parler aux parents de l'enfant car ils s'étaient rendus au commissariat de police.

Le trafic des êtres humains,

les enlèvements et les activités rituelles sont courants au Libéria. Bon nombre de personnes innocentes, dont des femmes et des enfants, ont été assassinées et des parties de leur corps extraites par des inconnus.

Lorsque le département des affaires publiques de la Police nationale du Libéria a été contacté par téléphone portable, il n'y a eu aucune réponse jusqu'à l'heure d'aller sous presse.

Procès des dignitaires

toute autre tentative de tactiques dilatoires dans ce procès, avertissant qu'en cas d'une autre « excuse frivole », l'accusation sera sérieusement sanctionnée, des sanctions qui iront jusqu'à l'amende maximale que ce tribunal peut imposer avec l'emprisonnement. « Ceci est mon dernier avertissement », a-t-il martelé.

Le tribunal semble mécontent de la façon dont les procureurs procèdent, d'autant plus que sur 163 dossiers en attente, s'ils ont demandé que des audiences aient lieu dans cette affaire, cela devrait signifier qu'ils étaient entièrement prêts à juger les accusés.

Plusieurs responsables du régime précédent dont l'ancien ministre de la défense M. Samukai, Joseph P. Johnson et J. Nyumah Dorbor, ont été inculpés par le régime du président George M a n n e h W e a h de détournement de fonds générés dans le cadre d'un plan d'épargne obligatoire établi en juillet 2009 pour le personnel des Forces armées du Libéria (AFL) pendant le règne de l'ancienne présidente Ellen Johnson - Sirleaf.

A cause du système d'épargne obligatoire, selon les procureurs, les autorités du ministère de la Défense, dont Samukai, ancien ministre de la défense, Joseph Johnson et Nyumah Dorbor, respectivement ancien Ministre adjoint et ancien directeur financier, ont déduit des montants sur les salaires des officiers et des sous-officiers des Forces Armées du Libéria. Il s'agissait selon les autorités

du ministère de la défense d'un système qui permettrait aux soldats de bénéficier des prestations de retraite supplémentaires et d'assister les militaires en cas de blessure et leurs familles en cas de décès.

Plus de 1,2 million de dollars sur les 1,9 million de dollars déposés auraient été détournés par M. Samukai et ses co-accusés, qui étaient les seuls signataires du compte, ce, à l'insu du chef d'état-major des Forces Armées du Libéria de l'époque et d'autres officiers supérieurs, à en croire l'accusation.

Les accusés font face à plusieurs charges, dont sabotage économique, vol de biens et détournement de derniers publics, entre autres.

Lors de l'audience lundi, le juge Gbeisay a réservé sa décision sur la contestation de l'accusation du cautionnement des accusés.

Selon le juge, la défense a fait valoir qu'en ce qui les concerne, ils ont obtenu un certificat de la LRA (Liberia Revenue Authority) qui présuppose que l'autorité des revenus est satisfaite de l'évaluation.

Le juge a indiqué qu'il est maintenant important que les autorités de la LRA soient invitées à comparaître devant le tribunal pour dire si l'institution a évalué le bien en question ou si elle a accepté le montant indiqué comme valeur du bien.

Selon le juge Gbeisay, cette information placera le tribunal dans une position appropriée pour déterminer si la caution déposée par les accusés est suffisante ou non.

Le juge a donc réservé sa décision sur la requête pour le 24 février.

COMMENTAIRE

Par Shlomo Ben-Ami

Changement de paradigme vis-à-vis de la Palestine

TEL AVIV - Il n'est pas surprenant que le plan de paix proposé par le président américain Donald Trump au Moyen-Orient s'inscrive largement en faveur des Israéliens. Ce qui est en revanche étonnant, c'est le manque de soutien du reste du monde à l'égard des Palestiniens, en lieu et place d'un rejet de la proposition de Trump.

En balayant les aspirations nationales des Palestiniens à travers la promesse condescendante consistant à « améliorer leur existence », le plan de paix de Trump adhère au discours national d'Israël selon lequel l'État juif serait le seul à pouvoir revendiquer historiquement et légitimement la Judée-Samarie, terre natale biblique des juifs. Ainsi le plan consisterait-il à conférer aux Palestiniens leur propre État, mais sur un territoire fragmenté couvrant Gaza et 70 % d'une Cisjordanie parsemée de colonies israéliennes, et entouré de tous les côtés par un territoire annexé par Israël. Sa capitale serait située dans la banlieue de Jérusalem-Est, qui resterait pour sa part la capitale indivisible d'Israël.

Ce plan ignore le droit que revendiquent les Palestiniens de retrouver les foyers qu'ils ont quittés à la création d'Israël en 1948 - un droit reconnu à l'époque par la Résolution 194 de l'Assemblée générale des Nations Unies. Par ailleurs, en phase avec les ambitions ethnocratiques d'extrême droite d'Israël, la frontière serait tracée d'une manière qui priverait 300 000 Arabes israéliens de leur citoyenneté, faisant d'eux des citoyens de l'État palestinien.

Les territoires palestiniens seraient reliés par un labyrinthe de tunnels, de ponts, et à l'instar des bantoustans de l'Afrique du Sud sous l'apartheid, ils seraient soumis à des contrôles militaires israéliens très stricts. Quiconque souhaiterait se rendre dans cette nouvelle Palestine - par les airs, par bateau, ou par la route - devrait transiter par Israël.

Dans le même temps, les Palestiniens seraient dans l'interdiction de créer leur propre armée, ou de prendre part à quelque activité « susceptible d'impacter négativement la sécurité de l'État d'Israël » - conformément à la volonté du gouvernement israélien. De même, les Palestiniens ne pourraient obtenir ce simulacre d'État qu'après avoir désarmé le Hamas, et après avoir prouvé - non pas devant un organe international, mais devant Israël et les États-Unis - la création en Palestine d'un système démocratique régi par le droit.

En présentant un plan aussi profondément injuste, Trump a anéanti ce qu'il restait de crédibilité des États-Unis en tant que médiateur honnête. Il a par ailleurs mis à mal la conviction - indispensable à toute avancée vers un accord juste - selon laquelle les principes internationalement reconnus du processus de paix israélo-palestinien étaient incontestables, qu'il s'agisse de la nécessité d'adhérer aux frontières d'avant 1967, ou de l'illégalité des colonies israéliennes.

Compte tenu du silence de la communauté internationale vis-à-vis des Palestiniens, la dégradation de ces principes ne sera pas facile à inverser, et cela même si Trump perd l'élection présidentielle de novembre, et que son successeur abandonne le plan, comme semblent prêts à le faire plusieurs candidats tels que Bernie Sanders et Elizabeth Warren. Le fait que puisse être prise au sérieux un plan aussi inacceptable que celui de Trump témoigne d'abord et avant tout de la transformation radicale qui s'opère au Moyen-Orient depuis quelques années : la solidarité à l'égard des Palestiniens constituait hier le ciment du monde arabe ; leur situation désespérée est aujourd'hui considérée comme une nuisance, un fardeau, et surtout comme un obstacle à d'éventuels rapprochements avec Israël.

Certes, la Ligue des États arabes a rejeté le plan américain lors du rassemblement de ses ministres des Affaires étrangères au Caire. Mais la vérité, comme

l'explique le Hezbollah libanais, c'est que cet « accord de la honte » n'aurait jamais été proposé sans une « complicité et trahison » de la part de plusieurs pays arabes.

Les ambassadeurs du Bahreïn, d'Oman et des Émirats arabes ont en effet participé à la cérémonie de présentation du plan à la Maison-Blanche, ce qui semble être synonyme d'approbation de leur part. De même, tout en « réaffirmant » son soutien au peuple palestinien, l'Arabie saoudite a expliqué « saluer les efforts » de l'administration Trump dans « l'élaboration d'un accord de paix global entre les camps israélien et palestinien ». Compte tenu de l'apparente loyauté de Trump à l'égard de l'Arabie saoudite - fondée notamment sur des ventes d'armes très lucratives - le prince couronné du Royaume, Mohammed ben Salman, était probablement au courant du contenu du plan avant même son dévoilement.

Du côté de la Jordanie, le roi Abdallah avait dans un premier temps mis en garde sur le risque de voir l'annexion par Israël de la vallée du Jourdain entraîner des conséquences sérieuses en termes de sécurité. Il a cependant invité par la suite les autres pays à « voir le verre à moitié plein ». Compte tenu de son attitude ambiguë concernant la perspective d'un État palestinien, on peut se demander si la Jordanie ne préférerait pas avoir pour voisin Israël, avec lequel les Jordaniens ont historiquement coopéré pour maîtriser les aspirations de la Palestine, plutôt qu'un État palestinien.

De même, le ministre égyptien des Affaires étrangères a appelé les deux camps à « examiner avec soin » le plan de paix, et a même affirmé que la création d'un État indépendant et souverain dans les territoires occupés permettrait de rétablir tous les « droits légitimes » des Palestiniens. Et si le président tunisien a condamné le plan de paix comme « l'injustice du siècle », l'ambassadeur du pays aux Nations Unies a été rapidement limogé pour avoir mené l'assaut contre ce plan devant le Conseil de sécurité.

Mais le monde arabe n'est pas le seul à laisser tomber les Palestiniens. Le haut représentant de l'Union européenne pour les Affaires étrangères, Josep Borrell, a fermement condamné le plan. Pour autant, sa déclaration unilatérale était précisément nécessaire dans la mesure où certains États de l'UE - République tchèque, Hongrie et Italie - faisaient obstacle à une résolution commune. La France a pour sa part accueilli le plan avec prudence.

Au-delà de l'UE, le gouvernement britannique a salué le plan de paix de Trump comme une « proposition sérieuse », comme un « pas positif vers l'avant ». Et bien que Moscou ait officiellement condamné un plan qui « contredit les résolutions de l'ONU », la Russie a tout à gagner dans ce qu'un éditorial du Moscow Times a appelé les « modalités humiliantes et unilatéralement imposées » de l'accord. Ces conditions « fournissent un précédent aux grandes puissances susceptibles de dicter des modalités à des puissances moindres », et appuient en un sens l'occupation russe de la Crimée, sorte de « Cisjordanie de la Russie ». D'ailleurs, cette forme de « souveraineté limitée » a toujours été ce que le Kremlin souhaitait pour les anciennes républiques soviétiques.

Il ne resterait plus pour Israël qu'à annexer ses colonies de Cisjordanie, avec l'appui probable de l'administration Trump, pour que ce changement de paradigme dans le processus de paix israélo-palestinien soit complet. Le statut d'Israël en tant qu'État d'apartheid serait officiellement confirmé. Et les Palestiniens se retrouveraient confrontés à un choix difficile : se soumettre ou lutter. Si le choix était celui de la lutte, espérons qu'elle soit menée sur le front diplomatique, tant une troisième Intifada serait catastrophique pour la cause palestinienne. Boycoter l'Amérique, puissance encore aujourd'hui indispensable à une solution régionale équitable, s'est toujours révélé une politique malavisée pour les Palestiniens.

Articles traduits

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FROM OUR FILES

FROM OUR FILES

Is First Lady Clar Weah a Philanthropist or an Opportunist?

- A Patriotic Call To Audit Her Office for US\$2.2 Million

Martin K. N. Kollie
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About 2 weeks ago, First Lady Clar M. Weah toured her privately-owned 'City of Hope Project' which sits on 15 acres of land in Marshall City, Margibi County. The First Lady has been priding herself as a 'philanthropist' even though she is overly dependent on public funding to implement her projects and programs.

It was shocking but not surprising when Sheroes Forum in Ghana gave First Lady Clar Marie Weah a humanitarian award in May 2019. A few pro-regime establishments, seeking financial assistance and presidential approbation, have deceivingly bejeweled and gowned Madam Weah with similar honor as well.

Is First Lady Clar Marie Weah really a Philanthropist or an Opportunist?

Generally, a Philanthropist or a Humanitarian is a generous person who uses his/her own resources (mainly to donate money) on charitable causes/initiatives.

No philanthropist or humanitarian uses public office and public resources (mainly money) to render assistance and/or donate to charitable causes. It is about time that Mrs. Clar Weah immediately disengages from violating Section 9.6 of the 2014 Code of Conduct Law (Ref. The Use of Public Office for Private Interest).

In fact, when did Clar Weah become a Philanthropist or when did she even become so generous or good to Liberia and unprivileged Liberians? No one knew this overnight 'humanitarian' before ex-Soccer Star George M. Weah could ascend as President of Liberia. Liberians only began to encounter her "generosity" and "hospitality" after she became First Lady.

All programs and activities, including donations to charitable causes, under First Lady Clar M. Weah since January 22, 2018 have been and are being fully funded by public monies (our tax-dollars) and/or monies raised through public office (The Office of The First Lady). She is using her office and budgetary appropriations allotted to it to fund her private foundation named and styled "Clar Hope Foundation". Is she really a philanthropist or an opportunist?

The First Lady is even violating our Laws (The Code of Conduct of 2014 and The 2009 Public Financial Management Law). The Clar Hope Foundation is not a public agency or entity but is being fully funded with public money. What does our Law say about Clar's egregious action? Let us shift a bit to legality and reasoning.

Part IX Section 9.6 which encompasses the 'Use of Public Office for Private Interest' states, "No Public Official or Employee of Government should use an official position to pursue private interests that may result in conflict of interest."

The blatant action of First Lady Clar M. Weah is even in sharp contrast to Liberia's Public Financial Management Law of 2009. Since 1847, this is the first time for a First Lady to have a special budget in our Fiscal Envelope which current custodians of our National Budget have described as "Humanitarian Outreach for First Lady". Wow...Isn't this mind-boggling and chilling especially when Clar Weah has already received a whopping US\$2.2 million in just 24 months amidst increased infant and maternal mortality?

Here is a breakdown of Madam ClarWeah's budget in just 24 months:

- 1) 2017 - 2018 Recast Budget: US\$500,000
- 2) 2018 - 2019: US\$1,000,000
- 3) 2019 - 2020: US\$700,000
- 4) Total: US\$2,200,000

A few questions to ponder over:

- 1) What was Clar's occupation before becoming First Lady?
- 2) What justifies her receiving a whopping US\$2.2m of our money?
- 3) Is there any form of system and control to ensure full accountability of such huge amount? Who is really checking on this First Lady?
- 4) Who does Clar Weah report to after expending such huge amount? Has she ever made public any financial report in order to guarantee openness and transparency?
- 5) Is her City of Hope School Project in Marshall private or public?
- 6) After all, why is she even violating our Laws all in the name of being a humanitarian?
- 7) So far, what are her "key projects or achievements"?
- 8) Why is it important and urgent to audit First



Lady Clar M. Weah?

As I endeavor to answer these eight (8) critical questions, it pricks my heart every day to see thousands of our young sisters out of school while Madam Clar Weah is receiving US\$2.2m (L\$433.4m).

Before becoming First Lady, Madam Clar Weah could barely generate US\$100,000 all year round. She could not even manage her 2 restaurants in Queens, New York. Realistically, this Jamaican-American First Lady was only managing a small restaurant in Queens, New York which was rarely known in terms of brand, prestige, and productivity. The real fact is that the Weahs actually ran into insolvency. They become so BROKE! The Liberian Presidency rescued them. Both Clar and George have become more of a burden to Liberia than a relief.

It appears like a miracle to Clar for her to be managing an astronomical budget of US\$2.2 million - money she has no reason to sweat for. While rape, GBV, teenage pregnancy, girls' illiteracy, early and child marriage, FGM, infant and maternal mortality are alarmingly increasing, First Lady Clar Weah is swimming in luxury. It was vexing for her to have even called for a budgetary increment of US\$10m for her Private Foundation in October 2018 according to reports from FrontPage Africa Newspaper. Nothing even justifies her receiving this whopping US\$2.2m. It seems like Liberia

has become Clar's Plantation or the Weahs' Private Enterprise.

There appears to be no system and control. No one seems to be checking on Madam Clar Weah to ensure full compliance to basic financial principles which are hinged to accountability and due diligence. The First Lady is yet to publicly display any financial report in order to fully account for what she has received so far (US\$2.2m et al).

Her ongoing City of Hope School Project in Marshall is private and the 15 acres of land she is even building such property on belong to her even though she is using public money to carry out this project. She is going at every length to even violate our Laws (2014 COC and 2009 PFM Law) all in the name of being a 'humanitarian'. Is she really a philanthropist or an opportunist?

Since June 2018, these are her 'landmark achievements':

- 1) The Launching of the She's You Movement;
- 2) The Renovation of 'Love A Child' Orphanage (a small orphanage);
- 3) The monthly Feeding Program for a few elderlies and the infrequent distribution of food supplies to a few orphanages;
- 4) The Construction of a 3-bedroom house for an elderly woman (Doris Johnson) in VOA Community, Paynesville;

5) The Sponsoring of 30 girls to a 4-week industrial hair production training in China; This assistance through the First Lady's Office was made possible by the Henan Ruimei Hair Production Company of China and its Chairman Zhang Xihe;

6) The French Government-sponsored Bilateral Scholarship for 21 students to study in Cote D'Ivoire through the "advocacy" of the First Lady.

Since the last two (2) achievements are mostly bilateral (Country to Country), I am left to wonder about the total amount that First Lady Clar M. Weah actually spent or has been spending on the remaining four (4) projects out of the US\$2.2 million? Has she even spent US\$200,000 on all of her projects and programs combined? In fact, credible information in our possession indicates that Madam Clar Weah has been using her office as the First Lady of Liberia to solicit foreign and local assistance both in cash and kind.

The name Clar Weah only became known as a "humanitarian" when she founded and launched her Private Foundation "The Clar Hope Foundation" on June 4, 2018. This 'humanitarian' was nowhere around during Liberia's brutal civil war. Where was this 'humanitarian' when the Ebola Virus Disease was raging? What did this 'humanitarian' personally do for underprivileged Liberians when her husband (President George Weah) made millions from football in Europe and Asia? Let Madam Clar Weah spare us this 'humanitarian' gimmick.

Why Audit is a MUST:

In my opinion, there are four (4) major reasons why the Office of the First Lady should and must be audited without any delay. These reasons are contained herein:

a) To ensure full accountability of the US\$2.2 million her office has received so far;

b) To ensure full accountability of monies/donations her office has solicited and continues to solicit from foreign and local donors;

I don't have to be president

The political leader of the All Liberian Party or ALP Businessman turned politician Benoni Urey has been talking. He says he doesn't have to be president to give back to his country, but maintains that former Vice President Joseph Boakai is older, more experienced and well-qualified to lead the four parties against President George Weah in 2023.

Speaking at what he describes as his annual press conference on Wednesday February 19, Mr. Urey said he is prepared at this point in his life to do anything to help his people and that is why he had opted to run for the presidency-but he was quick to add that he doesn't tie the condition of helping his compatriots to the Liberian presidency.

He says there are other things people can do to help the country rather than just going for the presidency.

"I don't have to be president," Urey said as he gave an upbeat appraisal of developments within the Collaborating Political Parties or CPP to be known as the



Alliance of Political Parties or APP.

Mr. Urey opined that unlike the past where political parties will come together to form a marriage and divorce few days to the election, the newly found love between his party, the Liberty Party (LP), former ruling Unity Party (UP) and the Alternative National Congress

(ANC) has come to stay.

The admitted thought that there have been some differences but that they manage to stay together united despite reports of competing interests.

Mr. Urey, who is the current Chairman of the CPP said the collaborating parties have reached a critical stage in

their efforts to form this much trumpeted alliance which is the draft document or constitution that will spell out the guiding principles of the union.

"Everyone will be bound by this agreement," he said during the press conference Wednesday.

Urey explained that the main objective of the four parties coming together initially was to institute political reforms as they lay aside their individual political ambitions.

Although Mr. Urey believe that former VP Boakai is more qualified to lead the CPP, he narrated that the parties have agreed that a congress will be held to elect the political leader of the party.

To this end, Mr. Urey expressed his objection to the voters' prospective survey which has been suggested to

be used to elect a standard bearer of the CPP.

"I Benoni Urey will not accept anything less than going to the primaries," he said.

"I will never subject myself to that," he emphasized, adding such a survey could be used in another instance but it should not be used to take the rights of members of the collaborating parties in electing their political leaders.

He said most of his colleagues agreed with him on that and that issue has been resolved and that the parties have moved forward to conclude the draft framework.

Meanwhile, Mr. Urey was quick to add that he will accept whosoever is elected at the primaries to lead the CPP.

He revealed that the committee selected to put the framework together will be completing the CPP document soon and after which it will be given to the individual parties for their perusal. **-By Othello B. Garblah**

LPRA, NOCAL hold roundtable on oil

By Ethel A. Tweh

The Liberia Petroleum Regulatory Authority or LPRA and the National Oil Company of Liberia kickoff a three-day roundtable here on pre-bid and Gas Regulations and Strategies. The consultative meeting brings together government officials, non-stakeholders and the National Legislature.

LPRA Director-General Archie N. Donmoe, says the next bid-round will be launched in April 2020. He says they are passionate about ensuring that Liberia benefits from its potential oil

and gas resources, but this is only possible when government grants licenses to intentional and local companies to explore for oil.

Director Donmoe further explains when a country has 33 blocks unencumbered and unlicensed as in the case of Liberia, chances of finding oil is impossible, noting the country's entire offshore acreage has been predominantly vacant for over five (5) years.

According to him, all institutional, regulatory and policy frameworks have been designed, so it is only prudent as a country to begin to utilize

this opportunity of licensing blocks for oil and gas exploration, an imperative to making any commercial or geological discovery.

"Let me assure you that the LPRA will operate within the confines of the law and under the principle of expediency to promote Liberia's undiscovered assets. These consultations demonstrate our willingness to operate in an inclusive, transparent and accountable manner as required by law. It's my hope that at the consultations, your valuable contributions will enrich these documents in anticipation of successfully delivering the bid rounds", he underscores.

A statement read on behalf of the President of NOCAL, Atty. Siafuah M. Gray, notes in the past months, institution has worked closely with the Regulator to establish all data requirements and technical components for getting this process started, saying they are at the point of establishing clear rules and regulations for the process to begin. Attorney Gray notes the ongoing occasion is in fulfillment of the New Petroleum Law of 2014.

She discloses government has identified a working petroleum system which is a good sign that there is hydrocarbon present offshore Liberia, and says with the

I speak better

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Mr. Urey believe that there is no pure tribe in the country. "We are all interconnected," he said.

"I have uncles and aunties who don't speak English. We must not allow people to divide us; whether you went as slave and came back-we all paid the prize.

He argues that most of the politicians who play the

Country Congo cards don't even have a house in their villages.

Mr. Urey further argues that there is a need for Liberians to emulate Ghana where the chiefs came together to apologize for their roles in the slavery and then reconcile rather than continuing to play the country Congo Card. **-By Othello B. Garblah**

right amount of work put into this process, they will eventually make a commercial find, adding, that's the reason all is being done to change country's exploratory story.

The Deputy Minister for Energy at the Ministry of Lands, Mines and Energy George L. Gontor stresses citizens' participation as key in the process, and the meeting should prioritize interest of the people and country at large. He urges both the LPRA and NOCAL to continue such meetings especially, in rural areas that are concerned with these matters.

The Vice President for Technical Services at NOCAL, Dr. Lester Tenny, explains the oil image had been destroyed by series of controversies in the past, adding the oil sector is very sensitive, and management of information is as important as the outcome. "Liberia does have oil; the fingerprints are there, we just need to discover the oil."

He vows NOCAL will continue to provide financial assistance where possible to the Regulators, but also calls on the Ministry of Finance to financially support the process, underscoring, to realize the outcome of a bid

round, the regulator must be sufficiently, financially supported, and that in the absence of finance, all the activities that will give rise to the bid-round will be delayed.

Dr. Teeny continues regulators are generating money for the country, so they need to be financially supported. "Oil money is not thousands of dollars; they are millions."

Representative Vicent Willie of District #4 Grand Bassa County, who chairs the Committee on Natural Resources says the Legislature is willing to help the process in any way, but regulators should follow the law especially, the new amended petroleum law, without which support would withheld.

He says Regulators should focus on local content, emphasizing that Liberians should not be spectators in their own economy and Regulators should also focus on the environment, which is key in the process.

Monsterrado County District #15 Representative Abu Bana Kamara, Chair on the Committee on Hydrocarbon, says lawmakers are prepared to support these sectors by ensuring the right thing is done. **Editing by Jonathan Browne**





Court quashes travel ban

-Musa Bility, John B.S. Davis, other set free



By **Winston W. Parley**

The Monrovia City Court at the Temple of Justice has quashed and dismissed a writ of Ne Exeat Republica earlier issued against former government and business officials Musa Bility, John B.S. Davis and Gloria Menjor, which had intended restraining them from traveling out of Liberia.

Handing the ruling Wednesday, 19 February, Magistrate Jomah Jallah said there is no matter pending before the court to sustain the writ of Ne Exeat Republica.

Ne Exeat Republica is a Latin phrase for a court order banning a suspect from leaving the jurisdiction of the court or the state.

Mr. Bility, former Board Chair of the Liberia Airport Authority

(LAA), Liberia Bank for Development and Investment (LBDI) president John B.S. Davis and Madam Gloria Menjor were among several against whom prosecutors here have asked the court to issue the writ of ne exeat republica.

Along with former LAA Managing Director Ellen Corkrum, Mr. Bility, the Monrovia Diaspora Consulting, LLC, through MomarDieng, a U.S. citizen; the First International Bank (FIB, now GN Bank); and the Liberia Bank for Development and Investment (LBDI) were indicted in 2013 on charges of economic sabotage, criminal facilitation, conspiracy to defraud the government, and making unauthorized transfers of funds from government accounts.

But through prosecution's request filed on 3 December 2019 to Nolle Prosequi, the Criminal Court 'C' at the

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I speak better Kpelleh than Weah speaks Kru

Businessman turned politician Benoni Urey has told local journalists here that he speaks better Kpelleh (one of the local vernaculars) than President George Weah would speak his native Kru.

Mr. Urey, who is the political leader of the All Liberian Party made this comment, while responding to a question on the Country /Congo divide which continue to undermine the unity of the country.

Urey who is of Americo-Liberian descent said nobody is more indigenous than the other in Liberia.

In retrospect to the Liberian history dating back before 1822, Mr. Urey narrated that there were powerful chiefs who captured their brothers and sold them in to slavery.

He said he doesn't see why after these decedents have returned they should be treated differently.

He acknowledged though that when the freed slaves were



repatriated they also enslaved those they met here.

However, he opined that both the Congo and Country peoples have one way or the other paid their respective prices and there is no need to divide the population based on that.

He blamed the likes of Dr. Togba Nah Tipoteh, Dr. Amos Sawyer who are all of Congo origins of pushing such divisive politics.

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