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# The New Dawn

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TRULY INDEPENDENT

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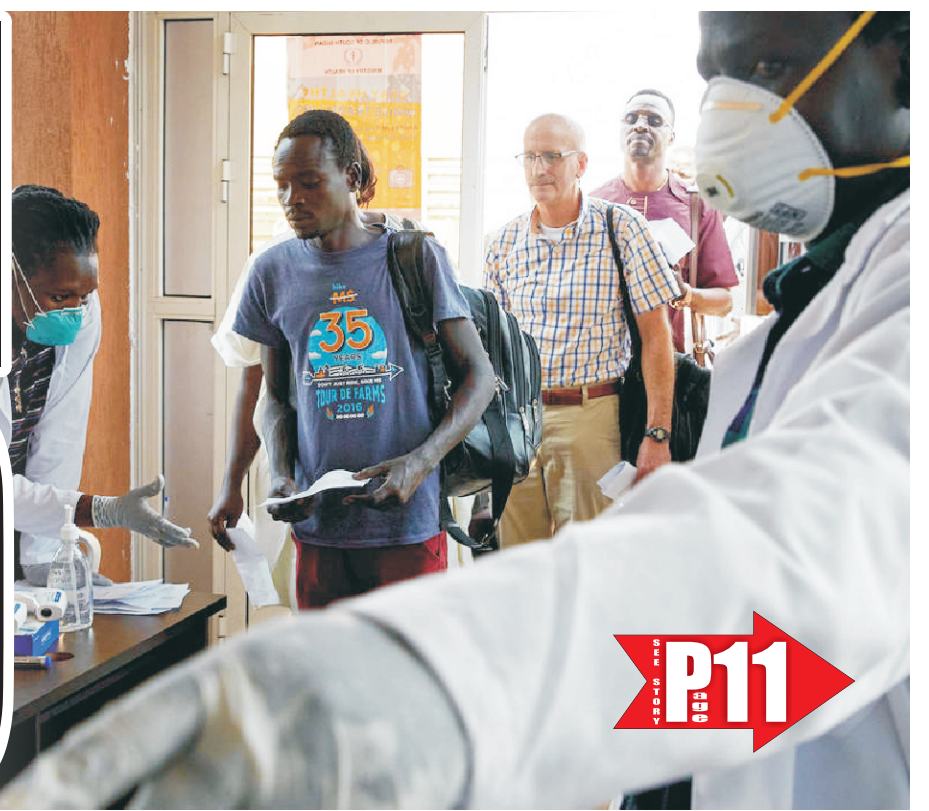
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# Use the power of the pulpit

**-Weah tells pastors**

# Liberia's travel advisory on COVID-19



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# Continental News

## War of words as Nigerian English recognised by OED

**N**igerian English words have recently been added to the Oxford English Dictionary (OED), but there is still a debate in the country about what constitutes proper English, as the BBC's Nduka Orjinmo writes from Lagos.

"Come to an all-night prayer vigil to welcome the ember months," read a text from my mother.

It was an August ritual she had reminded me about severally.

"I have something to do next tomorrow," I texted back from the barbing salon.

"You sef," came her instant reply, half-irritated, half-rebuking.

What I considered to be a conversation in perfect English between my mother and me would have been regarded as wrong by the self-appointed language police here.

But now I have something with which I can defend myself, thanks to the OED,

which calls itself "the definitive record of the English language".

The Oxford lexicographers have updated the dictionary with 29 Nigerian words, recognising the "unique and distinctive contribution to English as a global language" of Africa's most populous country. I wish I could show the list of new entries to my former boss.

Once, when I was a radio presenter, he came rushing into the studio after I had used "severally" on air, which I had always thought was "proper English".

He saw himself a stickler for what was correct and gave me an earful about my education that left me flummoxed. But it is unlikely

that he, and others like him, will be satisfied with the OED's intervention. The OED's move has divided opinion in the former British colony of 200 million people, who between them speak more than 250 languages.

English is the official language in this polyglot nation and the one used in schools.

There are those who think the idea that an expert sitting in Oxford can define how it is spoken is outmoded.

"I don't care what the Brits think of Nigerian English," one writer curtly replied when I asked his opinion. He declined to be interviewed, as did two other writers. But there are the fundamentalists befuddled by what they consider "street words" having made it into the dictionary. "What we expected was a formalisation of Pidgin," said Uzoh Nwamara, chairman of a local authors' organisation. Pidgin, a mix of local languages and English,

has become the lingua franca here and is gaining respectability, not least from the BBC, which has its own Pidgin service. "But to leave Pidgin and go tamper with the [colonial] master's language... well," Nwamara hissed as we spoke over the phone.

I imagined he shrugged his shoulders in that typical Nigerian way that means "What nonsense!". 'Last word on words'

Some of the words now included in the OED, for example "sef", "chop-chop" and "gist", have derived their meaning from the way that Pidgin speakers use them.

The OED has described most of the 29 new entries as "either borrowings from Nigerian languages or unique Nigerian coinages".

The publishers say its dictionary has been the "last word on words for over a century" and entries are considered on the basis of widespread use and published evidence. BBC



## Congo probes death of army military spy chief

**T**he army in the Democratic Republic of Congo is investigating the death of its head of intelligence. Delphin Kahimbi was found dead at his home in the capital, Kinshasa, on Friday, the day he was meant to appear before the country's security council.

He was to answer charges that he was involved in a plot to destabilise President Félix Tshisekedi. Gen Kahimbi was on an EU sanctions list for

alleged human rights violations and hindering the democratic process. Mr Tshisekedi took over from Joseph Kabila in January last year, the first peaceful transfer of power in the country in nearly 60 years - though many disputed the election result.

Mr Kabila remains politically powerful and his party is in a coalition government with Mr Tshisekedi's party. 'Impressive strategist'

Gen Kahimbi was undoubtedly one of the most

powerful figures during Mr Kabila's time in power, reports the BBC's Gaius Kowene from Kinshasa.

To some the military intelligence chief was an impressive strategist, who helped defeat rebels in the east of DR Congo, our reporter says. But to others he was a symbol of the torture and oppression of opponents of the former president, he says.

It is not clear yet what exactly killed him. Some sources say he took his own life; his wife has been quoted as saying he had a heart attack. The army released a statement saying his death was a great loss.

Earlier in the week, several sources said the general had been suspended because of the allegations he was facing.

The US ambassador to DR Congo tweeted on Thursday: "As we have consistently said, those who are corrupt, commit violations of human rights, or disrupt the democratic process should be held accountable."

A senior army commander has said the allegations were baseless and intended to tarnish Gen Kahimbi's image. BBC

## Guinea's leader postpones controversial referendum



**G**uinea's president has delayed Sunday's controversial referendum on changing the constitution that if passed could allow him to seek a third term.

Alpha Condé, 81, said the "slight postponement" was because the opposition say officials have tampered with the electoral register.

The announcement comes amid mounting international concern about the fairness of the poll.

There have been months of often violent demonstrations against the vote.

At least 30 people have been killed in the protests since October. The African Union and the regional bloc, Ecowas, said they were not sending election observers to the mineral-rich West African nation.

An estimated 7.7 million registered votes were also due

to elect members of parliament on Sunday. Earlier this week, the International Organisation of La Francophonie (OIF), a grouping of French-speaking nations, said there were problems identifying around 2.5 million names listed on the electoral roll. According to the president, yes. And a letter sent by Mr Condé to Ecowas about the postponement, seen by the AFP news agency, says it should take place within two weeks. "This is not a capitulation or a step backwards. The people of Guinea will express their choice freely at the referendum," President Condé told state TV on Friday evening.

An opposition alliance opposed to the new constitution, the FNDC, has called for a boycott, which would make it likely that a "yes" vote would win. BBC



Delphin Kahimbi was one of the most powerful figures during Joseph Kabila's 18 years in power

# EDITORIAL

## Avert another gasoline shortage

**LIBERIA RISKS SLIPPING** back to the recent nightmare of gasoline shortage that nearly brought the entire economy to its knees characterized by hike in prices and protests by commercial cyclists, including trekking by students, marketers and public workers.

**THE MANAGING DIRECTOR** of the Liberia Petroleum Refining Company (LPRC) Marie-Urey Coleman told the Liberian Senate last week that current stock of gas in the country will last for 48 days, with the risk of a return of the recent gasoline crisis this nation experienced.

**SHE HOWEVER DISCLOSED** a vessel of 15,000 metric tons of gasoline is expected to arrive by 10th March.

**MADAM COLEMAN ALSO** told senators the LPRC lacks money to import its petroleum into Liberia, so it relies on private importers to bring in the commodity for the public.

**SHE SAID, PRIOR** to the recent petroleum crisis, she tried to obtain credit from commercial banks to import the product in order to be able to store reserve that would address crisis like the recent shortage that nearly paralyzed the economy.

**THE LPRC HAS** not brought in its own products for about 15-20 years, managing director Coleman disclosed, and stressed that by law, the entity should be the importer of petroleum products for the country other than leaving the business at the hands of private importers.

**THIS IS WHERE** we draw the attention of the senate. If there were laws on the book, why aren't they being implemented? Government should not perpetually treat the LPRC as a "glorified gas station" to borrow the word from the late former managing director, Harry Greaves.

**GOVERNMENT SHOULD NOT** create public entities and abandon them by the wayside, because that's what the LPRC is truly is: a storage center for petroleum products brought in by private importers.

**NOW IS TIME** for our policymakers to rethink the issue and take actions on such an issue that is so critical for the smooth running of the economy.

**THE LPRC MANAGEMENT,** thru managing director Coleman, has identified some of the problems the entity faces, including lack of finances. How could government run such institution with great potentials to generate revenue and allow it to struggle; we don't understand.

**NOW THAT THE** senate has been thoroughly briefed, it should communicate to the executive with necessary recommendations to avoid another gas shortage or else, the authorities could be shooting themselves in the leg.

# COMMENTARY

By John B. Taylor

## The New-Old Threat to Economic Freedom

*With politicians proposing policies that would vastly expand the size of the government and its involvement in the economy, it is clear that too many Americans have forgotten the lessons of the twentieth century. As Friedrich Hayek and Milton Friedman pointed out long ago, deviating from market principles is a recipe for disaster.*

**S**TANFORD - In our new book, Choose Economic Freedom, George P. Shultz and I point to clear historical evidence - and words of wisdom from Nobel laureate economist Milton Friedman - to show why good economics leads to good policy and good outcomes, while bad economics leads to bad policy and bad outcomes. But we also recognize that achieving economic freedom is difficult: one always must watch for new obstacles.

Many such obstacles are simply arguments rejecting the ideas that underpin economic freedom - the rule of law, predictable policies, reliance on markets, attention to incentives, and limitations on government. If an idea appears not to work, it must be replaced. Thus, it is argued that the rule of law should be replaced by arbitrary government actions, that policy predictability is overrated, that administrative decrees can replace market prices, that incentives don't really matter, and that government does not need to be restrained.

These obstacles were common in the 1950s and 1960s, when socialism was creeping up everywhere. Many tried to stop the trend, and many were successful. But the same obstacles are now reappearing. For example, there are renewed calls for such things as occupational licensing, restrictions on wage and price setting, or government interventions in both domestic and international trade and finance.

Even the Business Roundtable is weighing in, announcing last August that US corporations share "a fundamental commitment to all of our stakeholders," including customers, employees, suppliers, communities, and, last on the list, shareholders. That is a significant departure from the group's 1997 statement, which held that, "the paramount duty of management and of boards of directors is to the corporation's stockholders; the interests of other stakeholders are relevant as a derivative of the duty to stockholders." Moreover, as that earlier statement was right to point out, the idea that a corporate board "must somehow balance the interests of stockholders against the interests of other stakeholders" is simply "unworkable."

Following the demise of the Soviet Union, real-world case studies that showed the harms of excessive government intervention and central planning were forgotten. There are no longer discussions about how centrally imposed plans might lead a Soviet production plant to complete its objective by producing one 500-pound nail instead of 500 one-pound nails. Three decades after the fall of the Berlin Wall, it is understandable that today's undergraduate students are unfamiliar with the risks of deviating from market principles.

That is why we need to teach history. What was said in the past is often the best reply to renewed claims in favor of socialism. In his introduction to the Fiftieth Anniversary Edition of Friedrich Hayek's *The Road to Serfdom*, Friedman pointed out that the book was "essential reading for everyone seriously interested in politics in the broadest and least partisan sense, a book whose central message is timeless, applicable to a wide variety of concrete situations. In some ways, it is even more relevant to the United States today than it was when it created a sensation on its

original publication in 1944."

In 2020, the book is more relevant still. Its key message is that the benefits of market-determined prices and the incentives they provide far exceed anything that could come from central planning and government-administered prices. In his 1945 essay "The Use of Knowledge in Society," Hayek explained that the problem of optimizing the use of available resources in an economy "can be stated best in mathematical form: ... the marginal rates of substitution between any two commodities or factors must be the same in all their different uses." But, he hastened to add, "This ... is emphatically not the economic problem which society faces," because "the 'data' from which the economic calculus starts are never for the whole society 'given' to a single mind which could work out the implications and can never be so given."

Nowadays, students sometimes ask me why they need to study market economics at all. With artificial intelligence and machine learning, won't governments soon be able to allocate people to the best jobs and make sure everyone gets what they want? Hayek's old answer to that kind of question is still the best.

This is hardly the first time that the American political system has lurched toward massive expansions of government power and spending. In 1994, Friedman, in a *New York Times* article titled "Once Again: Why Socialism Won't Work," lamented that, "the bulk of the intellectual community almost automatically favors any expansion of government power so long as it is advertised as a way to protect individuals from big bad corporations, relieve poverty, protect the environment or promote 'equality.' ... The intellectuals may have learned the words but they do not yet have the tune."

Fortunately, there are still many ways to expand economic freedom and protect it from renewed encroachments. The point to remember is that government programs have costs as well as benefits. There is not just market failure but also government failure. And there are indeed private remedies to economic externalities. But if markets are to work, and if economic efficiency and liberty are to be achieved, the rule of law needs to be front and center, with clear monetary- and fiscal-policy rules in place.

Moreover, a wealth of new data can now help us demonstrate the benefits of economic freedom more widely. The Heritage Foundation's Index of Economic Freedom, the Fraser Institute's Economic Freedom of the World, and the World Bank's Doing Business rankings are each published annually. Taken together, these reports show that good and bad economic outcomes in countries correlate strongly with good and bad policies. The stories behind the data are fascinating, and they can tell us what works and what does not.

But even if we shoot down all the arguments against economic freedom, there will still be obstacles to its realization. Moving forward requires that we put the ideas of economic freedom into practice. Otherwise, as Friedman put it in his 1994 introduction to Hayek's book, "it is only a little overstated to say that we preach individualism and competitive capitalism, and practice socialism." To get the job done, people must be clear about the principles, explain them, fight for them, and decide when and how much to compromise on them.



## O-PED

By Paola Subacchi

## Italy's New Affliction

*Having long been saddled with a sluggish economy, Italy is now faced with a recession. Along with Germany's economic slowdown and the uncertainty of Brexit, the country's COVID-19 affliction is further grim news for Europe.*

**B**OLOGNA - Northern Italy currently is the center of the COVID-19 outbreak in Europe. So far, 17 Italians have died as a result of the new coronavirus, and 650 have been infected. Schools in the region have been shut, universities have suspended lessons, companies have asked their staff to work from home, and many theaters, cinemas, and bars are closed. The virus caused the cancellation of the last two days of the Venice Carnival, which attracts thousands of visitors every year. And the area south of Milan, where Italy's first COVID-19 cases were reported, is under quarantine.

Epidemics are not new in Northern Italy, which was at the center of trade routes throughout the Middle Ages and the Renaissance. In fact, Venice was the first city to develop methods to contain and treat virulently contagious diseases. Back then, the authorities isolated people with symptoms in lazarets (ships permanently at anchor and used for quarantine) on islands outside the city, and restricted the movements and interactions of healthy Venetians during a 40-day quarantine period.

Evidence is mixed as to whether these measures were effective. Milan lost almost half its population to the plague in 1630, and Venice lost approximately 30%. But the mortality rate could have been much higher had the authorities not fought the contagion the way they did.

Modern medicine and healthier living standards have greatly reduced the frequency of epidemics, significantly slowed the pace of contagion, and slashed mortality rates. The overall mortality rate from COVID-19 currently is around 34 per thousand, with elderly people and those with health problems being most at risk. Epidemics in early modern Northern Italy, by comparison, had mortality rates of 300-400 per thousand.

The big question now is whether the Italian authorities' COVID-19 containment measures are commensurate with the scale of the problem, or too draconian. Moreover, are these steps dictated by genuine public-policy goals, or mainly by political considerations?

Managing critical risks and strengthening resilience are key public-policy objectives. An outbreak of a highly contagious flu in a densely populated area needs to be contained even if the mortality rate is negligible, because an epidemic will cause hospitals and health-care systems in many areas to collapse. And, as with financial crises, it is always better to prevent a crisis than to confront one, because the latter entails huge economic, social, and political costs.

Ex post measures aimed at containing the spread of COVID-19, such as quarantines and travel bans, don't seem to work in our age of mobility and economic integration. After the United States government announced at the end of January that it would temporarily refuse entry to foreign nationals who had recently traveled within China, Italy's government banned direct flights to and from China. But this measure - adopted in response to pressure from the populist right-wing League party - will create tensions with China, a major trading partner that buys about \$16 billion worth of Italian exports each year. Nor does the flight ban solve the problem of monitoring indirect arrivals to Italy from China.

The ban may rebound on Italy in other ways, too. Its European neighbors, for example, may be tempted to impose entry bans on Italians in order to appease popular anxiety and anti-foreign sentiment. Already, the French far-right leader Marine Le Pen has urged France's government to suspend the Schengen Agreement and introduce border controls with Italy. And earlier in February, the Austrian authorities briefly blocked trains entering the country from Italy.

Epidemics affect different countries in different ways, and national policymakers must tailor their responses accordingly. At the same time, governments should coordinate measures aimed at protecting health-care workers and vulnerable individuals and countries. The lesson from Italy so far is that a lack of coordination among local governments, coupled with political fragmentation, puts all containment measures at risk by encouraging more people to leave the worst-affected areas. Many university students, for example, have already returned home from Northern Italy. So, containment measures in one place may succeed only in shifting the problem elsewhere.

The current expectation is that the COVID-19 virus will continue to spread within Italy and throughout the rest of Europe. Although the numbers remain tiny - there currently are only 41 confirmed cases in France, for example - the panic level is high enough to open the door to potentially restrictive measures.

Given today's poisonous political climate, can we be sure that governments will not introduce measures that override existing legislation and restrict individual rights and freedoms? Might people infected with the COVID-19 virus lose their right to health treatment when abroad, for example? Or might they be prevented from returning to their own country, as US President Donald Trump announced would be the case for infected Americans overseas? In that respect, the COVID-19 outbreak has highlighted the absence of an international legal framework to deal with pandemics.

Meanwhile, the outbreak will have a significant impact on the Italian economy, and likely tip it into recession. Northern Italy is the country's economic engine, with per capita GDP of approximately €35,000 (\$38,000) - compared to the national figure of €28,000 - and a 67% employment rate (against 59% nationwide). But major trade events such as the Milan Furniture Fair have been canceled or postponed, business trips have been scrapped, and uncertainty is rife. Furthermore, virus-related cancellations are already hitting the country's tourism industry, which accounts for 14% of GDP.

Having long been saddled with a sluggish economy - real GDP grew by just 0.2% in 2019 - Italy is now faced with a recession. Along with Germany's economic slowdown and the uncertainty of Brexit, the country's COVID-19 affliction is further grim news for Europe.

## OPINION

By Chris Patten

## Liberal Democracy and Its Enemies

**T**he challenges facing Western liberal democracies today are serious enough to recall Europe's descent into tyranny in the 1930s, and should inspire sensible Americans and Europeans to mobilize to prevent any recurrence. While crying wolf is rarely recommended, sometimes there really is a wolf skulking through the wood.

**L**ONDON - When the German playwright Bertolt Brecht wrote that, "All power comes from the people," he went on to ask the rather important question, "But where does it go?"

Liberal democracy's signal achievement in the half-century after World War II was to answer that question in a way that promoted social consensus and solidarity. Although governments were chosen by majorities of equal citizens, they worked within a constitutional order based on the rule of law, democratic institutions, and accepted values and rights. And they governed with the consent of a minority that they respected.

By the end of the 1980s, some believed that this system of governance, which engendered economic success and political stability, had won the day against any alternative. Communist and fascist authoritarianism were discredited. A mood of triumphalism set in, breeding complacency. But things look a lot less rosy for liberal democrats today.

For starters, the boom and bust of the first decade of this century took its toll. So, too, did the encouragement of an unrestrained form of globalization that took little account of the social consequences of lower comparative labor costs in developing countries for workers in developed countries. Freer trade and more open exchange were not accompanied by labor-market and social-security policies to mitigate their negative effects. Moreover, China, now the world's largest economy in purchasing-power-parity terms, distorted international market rules to its own advantage.<sup>1</sup>

Two other issues further discredited democratic governments. First, social inequity grew alarmingly in many countries, most notably the United States, leading citizens to question whether they lived in fair societies. Second, migration from poorer to richer countries, fueled by poverty and demographic factors, created tensions in developed economies. Living standards were squeezed, and people postponed their hopes for a better quality of life.

Some now see a clash between illiberal democracy and undemocratic liberalism. Elites are thought to want to curb what they see as the irrational and undeliverable hopes of the majority, while the majority fights to overturn the checks and balances that moderate the popular will.

The growing disillusion with democratic government is evident in the rise of leaders such as Brazilian President Jair Bolsonaro, Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor Orbán, Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan, and, of course, Donald Trump. The US president appears reckless in his attitude to the Constitution, the rule of law, freedom of the press, and civil political debate. America used to be the standard bearer for liberal democracy and human rights. But the Trump administration prefers tough-guy authoritarians to democrats, and even attacks democratic US allies.

Others indulge in their own forms of populism. In Britain, the Conservative Party's rejection of close ties with Europe is accompanied by threats to assault institutions that have hitherto restrained executive power. These include Britain's independent courts and judges, its world-class public-service broadcaster, the BBC, and any civil-society organization likely to disagree with the executive.

There is no need to exaggerate; we have not written the last act in the history of liberal democracy. But there are enough signs of trouble to make sensible Americans and Europeans recall Europe's slide into tyranny in the 1930s, and to resolve to act now to prevent anything like that from happening again. While crying wolf is rarely recommended, sometimes there really is a wolf skulking through the wood.

As if the West's apparent connivance in the destabilization of its own system of governance were not bad enough, liberal democracies also must cope with external threats.

For example, Russian President Vladimir Putin finds it difficult to resist trying to stir up trouble in European democracies, and - despite Trump's disavowal of the evidence - in America, too. By funding nationalist and populist political parties, trying to dissolve the glue of the values that hold the European Union together, and employing dark and devious high-tech banditry, Putin relentlessly continues his efforts to alter Europe's political map.

Putin wants to return Europe to being a continent dominated by spheres of influence rather than self-determination. But Russia, a ramshackle state with hydrocarbons and rockets, lacks the economic clout to mount a fundamental assault on liberal-democratic values. So, although the Kremlin's menacing behavior must be watched and firmly repulsed, the threat it poses seems unlikely to become existential.

China is a different matter. The country's remarkable and mostly welcome rejuvenation as a major economic power has given it considerable global and regional influence. But the intrinsic weaknesses of China's flawed system of authoritarian government mean that its communist leaders worry about how to maintain absolute control in the face of technological, demographic, and economic change.

The ruling Communist Party, government, and armed forces therefore have been instructed (for example, in the leaked "Communiqué on the Current State of the Ideological Sphere") to attack the promotion of Western constitutional democracy, universal values, civil society, and independent journalism. This offensive also targets any historical scholarship that tries to discover what actually happened in the past, rather than simply accepting the party's version of events. Every means is to be used to try to destroy these dangerous tendencies, whether mobilizing the Chinese diaspora through the United Front, influencing overseas universities, or using commercial pressure in order to "create dependencies and induce self-censorship."

The toughest variant of this approach is known as "wolf diplomacy," featuring often-bogus promises of trade deals or investment for countries that toe the line. Indeed, China's efforts have produced the sort of pre-emptive cringing in the West that itself erodes liberal-democratic values.

Some apologists for China's behavior counsel caution, arguing that past Western failings offset those of the communist regime in Beijing. And their advice that we must both engage with China and deter its worst behavior may sound balanced and wise.

But engagement must be on terms that are fair to both sides. And deterrence needs to be real when necessary - at which point the wise apostles of engagement tend to make their excuses and leave. If liberals continue to be so weak-minded, it will be at our own peril.

## ARTICLE

## ARTICLE

# Russia-Africa Relations: Highlights of Valentina Matviyenko's Trip to Namibia and Zambia

On February 18 - 20, Chairperson of the Federation Council (the Upper House or the Senate), Valentina Matviyenko, headed a Russian delegation on a three-day working visit aimed at strengthening parliamentary diplomacy with Namibia and Zambia. This visit showed Russia's overwhelming commitment to pursuing its strategic interests and supporting its African allies. According to an official release from the Federation Council, the visit was within the broad framework mechanism of parliamentary consultations between Russia and African countries. The key focus are on political dialogue, economic partnership and humanitarian spheres with Namibia and Zambia.

Political dialogue: Russian delegation held talks

new stage. "In this way, a permanent, ongoing dialogue format has been created, which parliamentarians should also join in," reiterated Matviyenko.

**Economic cooperation:** The Heads of State and Speakers of parliaments in Namibia and Zambia together with the Russian delegation exchanged views on ways to invigorate bilateral economic cooperation and other areas. The parties reaffirmed their mutual intent to continue close interaction on regular basis. In Zambia, they stressed the potential to boost trade and cooperation in health, heavy-duty industry, agriculture and defence, and security sectors. There was an in-depth discussion construction of nuclear plant.

nuclear science and technology in the African country, Chairperson of Federation Council Matviyenko said at a meeting with Zambian President Edgar Chagwa Lungu. "Now the start of the construction of a center for nuclear science and technology has been suspended due to financial issues. I would like to say that the request submitted to the Russian president is being carefully considered by the ministries and departments. I'm confident that we will jointly find options to promote funding to roll out the construction of a center for nuclear science and technology," she said.

According to the Russian official, there are necessary conditions for the development of cooperation on high technology between Russia and Zambia. She called the construction of a center for nuclear science and technology a priority bilateral project. "We know that Zambia considers the construction of a center for nuclear science and technology as the first step in the development of the peaceful use of the atom and plans to consider the construction of a nuclear power plant in the future. Of course, this will qualitatively change the economy of Zambia: not only it will be able to fully meet its electricity needs, but also to export it to other countries," Matviyenko continued.

In Namibia, they also held series of talks with government officials. "Inter-parliamentary relations are an integral part of the Russian-Namibian political dialogue. We expect that the visit of the delegation of Russian parliamentarians will give an additional impetus to providing more effective support from the legislators for joint economic projects that can be developed both at the interstate level and between the business structures of the two countries," said Valentina Matviyenko.

**Conclusion:** While the significance cannot be under-estimated, it is also not worrisome that the trip, full of diplomatic symbolism, overwhelming enthusiasm and renewed promises, concluded without any new major policy announcement. On the other hand, it signals another bid by Moscow to boost relations with these southern African countries.

Namibians were full of respect and praise for the delegation. State House of Zambia issued an official statement that said the high-level visits between Zambia and the Russian Federation "is a demonstration of the warm relations that exist between the two countries." Without doubt, both Namibia and Zambia still have full-fledged hope to scaling up traditionally diplomatic ties with the Russian Federation.



with held talks with Zambia's President Edgar Lungu at State House in Lusaka, Zambia. The delegation referred to their visit "as a reciprocal visit" and emphasized commitment to strengthen political dialogue, and reaffirmed interests in broadening economic cooperation during their discussions separately with Zambian President Edgar Lungu and Namibian President Hage Geingob. The Russian delegation also interacted with Speakers of National Assembly in both countries.

Zambia's Speaker of the National Assembly, Dr Patrick Matibini, visited Moscow in April 2018. Zambia had also sent a delegation to the inaugural Russia-Africa Summit last October.

Valentina Matviyenko recalled that during the first Russia-Africa summit held in Sochi, a number of mutually beneficial contracts were signed. She further noted the previous meeting between Namibian President Hage Geingob and his Russian counterpart Vladimir Putin in Sochi, where the two exchanged views, particularly on energy, gave new impetus for further broadening cooperation.

According to its results, a political declaration was adopted, which enshrined an agreement on the regular holding of the summit every three years. This signals the fact that relations have entered a

The Zambian Government hopes that upon commissioning of this project, excess power generated from this plant could be made available for export to neighbouring countries under the Southern African Development Community Power Pool framework arrangement.

Under the agreement that was concluded in December 2016 on the construction of the nuclear plant estimated at US\$10 billion. The processes of design, feasibility study and approvals regarding the project concluded. Russia was unprepared to make financial commitment, and Zambia lacks adequate funds to finance the project.

Russia and Zambia will find options for financing

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# Campaign against Wilmot Paye intensifies

By Our Contributor

The embattled chairman of the ex-ruling Unity Party Wilmot Paye appears to be under increased pressure to quite the post despite his suspension by UP executives for alleged constitutional

leadership within the UP should only be effected at a national convention in line with the party's constitution.

But a former deputy foreign minister, B. Elias Shoniyyin, says it's time for Paye to step down as chairman.

determination to restructure and reconciling the party.

"I acknowledge with great appreciation, the recent action of the National Executive Committee (NEC) of the party, under the guidance of Ambassador Boakai, for the first major step of restructuring and reconciling the party", he says.

According to him, the suspension is not sufficient; he joins the Montserrado Youth Caucus call for the immediate removal of Paye as national chairman.

Mr. Shoniyyin asserts that the party's interest is bigger than any individual's interest, adding this should be recognized in the party.

Admitting that the UP is at a crossroads, he suggests that the party makes an urgent decision by effecting the restructuring process the soonest.

Speaking further, Mr. Shoniyyin urges members of the youth congress to be proactive and oppose anyone in the party that lacks political vision.

"I urge the youth congress to invoke a deep sense [of] thinking and objectivity in your action, and oppose any form of political manipulation by people with narrow

▶ CONT'D ON PAGE 7



Ex-minister B. Elias Shoniyyin

breach.

Mr. Paye challenges his suspension and has run to the Supreme Court of Liberia despite immense pressure within the party to leave.

He argues a change of

Addressing the Montserrado County Youth Wing of the UP at its first annual congress recently, he noted the decision to suspend Paye from the chairmanship, is in line with the national executive committee's

# Teachers go-slow at Pleebo High School

By Gareyson Neufville, Maryland

At least 10 volunteer teachers are on a go-slow at the Pleebo High School in Maryland County, demanding to be included on the government payroll.

The volunteer teachers include parents, community dwellers and the school's faculty, currently preparing students for the upcoming West African Senior Secondary Certificate Examination (WASSCE) for 12th graders, expected to kickoff across Liberia in May.

Mr. Edward T. Freeman, a Mathematics teacher and spokesman for the volunteer teachers, said he has been teaching as a volunteer since 2016 and is yet to be employed.

"I became volunteer at Pleebo high school since 2016 up to present. I have been filling in Ministry of Education PANs [Personnel Action Notice] but each time I fill in PAN, there is no

outcome. And looking at the subjects we're teaching, we are overloaded. But we are working tirelessly for the growth and development of the institution and we are not benefiting from the government". Mr. Freeman lamented.

He noted that due to the prompt intervention of the county authority and the county education officer, they might suspend the go-slow for now, but warned that if nothing is being done to address their employment this semester, they would at once abandon the school in the upcoming academic year 2020/2021.

"If the educational authority of Maryland County does not fulfill her promise made to us yesterday, in seeking our employment this semester, then, that proves to us that the education authority in Maryland does not prioritize the education sector in Maryland. They don't want to see the quality of teachers the school deserves, so if they

will apply no effort to place us on payroll, we will have no option, but to hundred percent abandon the school"

The boycott of classes by teachers especially, volunteers, is becoming rampant in public schools in Maryland, as educational authorities are reneging in addressing the situation.

Some volunteer teachers are now shifting their focus from the teaching career and venturing into different fields in search of greener pastures. As a result of this, students are always lingering in the streets, demanding for teachers to return to the classroom.

For his part, the vice principal for instruction at the Pleebo High School, Mr. Samuel A. Odebode, pitied the incident and disclosed that due to the current economic crisis in Liberia, and the vulnerability of the volunteer teachers, the administration in

▶ CONT'D ON PAGE 7

# CSNUHC wants health budget up by 15 percent

Civil Society Network for Universal Health Coverage (CSNUHC) a local group, calls on government to progressively increase investment in health by moving towards allocating at least 15 percent of the national budget to health as agreed by African leaders in the Abuja Declaration of 2001, and 5 percent of the annual GDP to health care expenditure.

National chairman David Flomo, in a statement, urges government to prioritize primary healthcare linked to essential care packages that are defined by Liberia's needs and priorities required to meeting Sustainable Development Goals' target on health.

Speaking at the launch of CSNUHC Friday, February 28, Flomo stressed that donors

the health budget and adherence to commitments.

"This includes involvement in health systems strengthening efforts at district, county and national levels, and the provision of expanded health coverage to the poorest and most marginalized groups. Strengthening social-led accountability is necessary to maintain the integrity of Liberia's health system, prevent corruption-related resource drain, and ensure more appropriate, acceptable and sustainable health programs." He notes.

Flomo continues that achieving Universal Health Coverage depends on availability, accessibility, and capacity of trained health workers coupled with appropriate numeration and



National Chairman Mr. David Flomo

and governments should provide funding in alignment with Liberia's plans, in line with the aid effectiveness principles and WHO's recommendation of funding levels.

He wants donors to support low-income countries like Liberia, to bridge significant financial gaps, saying, "The international community should support Liberia to grow its fiscal space by tackling undermining practices like tax evasion and avoidance, among others."

According to him, civil society should must be included in decision-making processes at all levels, to facilitate citizen-led monitoring of progress and outcomes towards universal health coverage, including

benefits, especially at the primary care level, to deliver quality, people-centered health services.

He underscores that it is critical to ensure adequate health care financing and investment are earmarked for training and capacity building of community and frontline health workers so they can support provision of inclusive, holistic and equitable health services for everyone everywhere in Liberia.

"If we must ensure universal health coverage and health system strengthening, reducing out of pocket expenses and achieving the aims of the SDGs, national government, influential individuals, relevant stakeholders and donors should take the following

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**MORE HEADLINE NEWS MORE HEADLINE NEWS**

**LMDI, Internews end regional campaign against Human Trafficking**

By *Gareyson Neufville, Maryland*

The Liberia Media for Democratic Initiative (LMDI) in partnership with Internews has concluded a regional awareness campaign on Trafficking in Persons (TIP) in southeastern Liberia.

The awareness conducted through community media forums, according to Internews regional community radio advisor, Sonnie Morris, is intended to inform community members about the danger and effect Trafficking In Persons has on communities and lives of ordinary Liberians.

She stressed the importance for such exercise in rural communities because rural dwellers have been victimized over the years due to the level of confidence they have built in family members and friends, entrusted their children to them in urban areas for school purposes.

Some parents, she noted, did not care to know the status and whereabouts of people they entrusted their children with in the past because of low financial income, as a result of which children were kept out of school and eventually become breadwinners for the homes of their guardians.

She noted that Trafficking In Persons also affects adults, who are being deceived by foreign residents, who expressing interest in young Liberian men and women purportedly for marriage, employment opportunities and foreign studies as means of taking them to locations

and destinations each time they give them out.

She believes that government and partners' recent action to lead awareness against human trafficking, will help reduce forced labor, sexual slavery, exploitation and ritualistic killings, among others.

Morris has called on



unknown to their family members here, only to use them either for ritual or as sex slaves.

Morris said incidents of such cases easily take place mainly in rural communities because of parents' delinquency to follow up their children's status

citizens to report any form of human trafficking to the requisite authorities for legal action, adding that compromising cases of such will not help the society.

Leading these public

**▶ CONT'D ON PAGE 7**

**Group identifies with school of the blind in Maryland**

By *Gareyson Neufville, Maryland*

A local group, Family Movement Club identifies with a social for visually impaired people in Maryland County,

donating assorted food items, including four bags of (25kgs) rice, six gallons of oil, slippers and salt, among others.

The items were presented to the institution by a representative of the Club,

Frances Colman.

Madam Colman disclosed that family movement for the past three years, has been making similar gesture to several learning institutions, as a key objective of its existence.

Receiving the items on behalf of the school, a female student Cecelia Griffiths, lauded family movement and described the donation as timely.

She also used the occasion to call on humanitarian organizations and other Marylanders to emulate the example of family movement by identifying with the school for the blind to enable it operate smoothly.

Meanwhile, the Club has vowed to keep identifying with the disabled community and other organizations in the county. **-Editing by Jonathan Browne**



**Campaign against Wilmot**

Cont'd from page 6

political objectives."

Mr. Paye seems to have fell out with UP executive members when he called on partisans to stay away from the January 7 protest in Monrovia after the party leader, Ambassador Joseph Nyumah Boakia said citizens' right to assemble is guaranteed under the constitution. The protest was organized by the group, Council of Patriots to seek answers to petition presented earlier to the Weah administration.

Besides, Mr. Boakai had embarked on an effort to reconcile with former standard bearer, Ellen Johnson Sirleaf specifically, and UP partisans both at home and abroad before the next elections, which he might likely contest.

The reconciliation initiative followed after the party, under Paye's chairmanship expelled Madam Sirleaf and other executive committee members, a move that was similarly challenged in court. **-Editing by Jonathan Browne**

**Teachers go-slow**

Cont'd from page 6

collaboration with the Parent Teacher Association leadership, has drafted a student-oriented fund drive to raise money in order to compensate the affected teachers at the end of every month, saying "We are in

sympathy with our ten volunteer teachers."

Getting volunteer teachers on payroll has been a serious challenge for the Ministry of Education in Monrovia, due to financial constraints. **-Editing by Jonathan Browne**

**CSNUHC wants health**

Cont'd from page 6

actions", he says.

He says the objective of the Network is to ensure Liberia gets a strong primary health care system through sustained health advocacy, while noting that primary health care system Liberia is weak, budget allocation to the health sector is low and monitoring mechanisms on accountability is almost non-existent.

Flomo explains Universal Health Coverage is an inherently political agenda, and political will is essential to secure and sustain investment in health and drive appropriate health system reforms.

He adds the project which brought into being the Network, is a health advocacy project geared towards increased health financing and investment in Liberia, and that Partnership for Sustainable Development (PaSD) and SUN Civil Society Alliance of Liberia (SUNCSAL) are currently implementing program funded by a UK-based pharmaceutical company, Glaxo Smith Kline (GSK) through Save the Children International.

"To succeed in this advocacy, we will engage all stakeholders and relevant government officials in the Executive and Legislative Branches, to live up to global,

as well as regional and national commitments by demanding that policies are reformed, funds invested are tracked, and health outcomes are measured and published."

Flomo laments, too many children still suffer or die from largely preventable causes, too many women still die in childbirth, too many people die from treatable chronic conditions, and too many people lack access to quality and affordable health care, a situation which needs to be addressed with urgency.

For his part, the Chairmen of the House Standing Committee on Health, Joseph N. Somwarbi lauds the CSNUHC members for their farsightedness, which he observes, will help in the fight and ensure universal health coverage and health system strengthening.

He promises his doors are open to CSNUHC and pledges support of the National Legislature towards the endeavor.

Serving as chief launcher, assistant health minister for policy and planning, George P. Jacobs, pledges the Minister of Health, Doctor Jallah's fullest support to the organization. **-Editing by Jonathan Browne**

# Français

## La Banque mondiale veut mettre fin à l'extrême pauvreté dans les pays fragiles

Il faut une action urgente dans les pays fragilisés par les conflits armés et la violence pour mettre fin à l'extrême pauvreté dans le monde, a indiqué la Banque Mondiale, dans un contexte où les crises deviennent récurrentes de plus en plus - avec des effets désastreux sur les populations et les économies.

Le Groupe de la Banque mondiale a publié jeudi une stratégie qui, pour la première fois, apporte systématiquement une gamme complète de financement et d'expertise pour relever ces défis dans les pays en voie de développement.

A l'allure actuelle, d'ici 2030, jusqu'à deux tiers des personnes extrêmement pauvres dans le monde vivront dans des pays fragilisés par des conflits, selon un rapport de la Banque mondiale. Contredisant la tendance générale à une diminution mondiale de l'extrême

pauvreté, ces pays connaissent une forte augmentation, menaçant des décennies de progrès dans la lutte contre la pauvreté. La fragilité de ces pays pèselourde sur le capital humain, créant des cycles vicieux qui réduisent la productivité et les revenus des personnes et réduisent la mobilité socioéconomique. Une personne sur cinq dans ces

pays est privée d'argent, d'éducation et d'infrastructures de base simultanément. Et le nombre de personnes vivant à proximité immédiate d'un conflit a presque doublé au cours des 10 dernières années.

«La résolution des crises

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## Liberia : Antoinette Sayeh bientôt directrice générale adjointe du FMI

La libérienne Antoinette Sayeh, va devenir directrice générale adjointe du Fonds monétaire international (FMI) à compter du 16 mars.

Elle a été ministre des finances du Libéria de 2006 à 2008, avant son entrée au FMI comme directrice du département Afrique. En tant que ministre des Finances au lendemain du conflit que le Libéria avait connu, Mme Sayeh avait piloté l'apurement des arriérés,

accumulés de longue date, de la dette multilatérale du pays.

«Antoinette est très connue et très respectée pour avoir occupé (au FMI) le poste de directrice du département Afrique entre 2008 et 2016 où elle a mené une transformation importante des relations du Fonds avec nos pays membres africains». Avant d'entrer au gouvernement de la Présidente Ellen Johnson Sirleaf, Mme Sayeh avait travaillé à la Banque mondiale pendant 17

ans, notamment en qualité de directrice des opérations pour le Bénin, le Niger et le Togo et comme économiste pour le Pakistan et l'Afghanistan.

Elle est titulaire d'une licence en économie de Swarthmore College en Pennsylvanie (Etats-Unis) et d'un doctorat en relations économiques internationales de la Fletcher School de l'université Tufts dans le Massachussets.



## Sénégal: Imbroglie autour d'un 3ème mandat de Macky Sall

Alors qu'en Guinée le pays est presque en crise avec la volonté du Président Alpha Condé de briger un troisième mandat. Au Sénégal, des hommes proches du Chef de l'Etat ont relancé le débat cette semaine, créant un véritable imbroglie

Le président Sénégalais, Macky Sall, a célébré en février l'an 1 de sa réélection après un mandat de sept ans qui avait pollué ce paisible pays connu pour sa tradition démocratique avec deux alternances réussies. En effet, lors de la campagne électorale en 2012, face à Me Abdoulaye Wade, Sall avait fait la promesse de réduire son mandat de sept ans à cinq ans. La suite, on la connaît...

Deux poids, deux mesures

A peine réélu pour un second mandat, l'idée d'un troisième mandat avait été agitée par quelques éléments de son parti. «Je pense que la Constitution est assez claire. En principe, c'est le deuxième et dernier mandat du chef de l'Etat». C'était la réponse servie par l'ancien ministre de la Justice, Ismael Madior Fall à une question sur un éventuel troisième mandat de Macky Sall. Une question à laquelle la réponse apportée par le ministre de la Justice avait fini d'installer le doute dans la tête de certains Sénégalais. Une volonté vite noyée par les différentes déclarations antérieures du président Sall qui disait ouvertement être contre l'idée d'un troisième mandat. Le temps selon lui était au travail, invitant les éléments de son parti à ne plus se prononcer sur ce sujet. Le premier à subir le sabre du président Sall fut l'ancien Directeur des Sénégalais de l'Extérieur Sory Kaba qui avait clairement indiqué que le président Macky Sall entamait son dernier mandat puisque la Constitution lui interdisait d'en briguer un autre. Il fut démis dans les minutes qui ont suivi sa déclaration avant que l'ancien ministre - conseiller, Moustapha Diakhaté, subisse le même sort. Depuis lors, les éléments du parti au pouvoir faisaient dans la prudence, fuyant les questions des journalistes sur cette brûlante question qui semble indisposer le président sénégalais. Interrogé par la presse après son discours du nouvel. Sa réponse du ni oui ni non ne dissipa pas les doutes et le débat sur cette question ne cessa point. «Si je dis que je ne serais pas candidat, les membres du gouvernement ne vont plus travailler, chacun va essayer de se positionner. Si je dis que je serai candidat, une vive polémique va s'ensuivre »,

avait d'ailleurs assuré Macky Sall devant les médias, rappelant qu'il n'avait pas de dauphin désigné.

La semaine dernière, l'ancien Premier ministre et actuel Secrétaire général de la présidence de la République, Mahammad Boun Abdallah Dionne, s'interrogeait sur la pertinence de la limitation du mandat présidentiel. Un ballon de sonde ? Nul ne sait. Toujours est-il que, invité par une télévision de la place dans un débat en wolof (une des langues usitées du pays) son ancien ministre de l'Intérieur et actuel ministre d'Etat et Directeur des structures du parti au pouvoir, M. Mbaye Ndiaye, se fit plus précis que l'ancien Premier ministre. Il déclara péremptoire que Sall a le droit de se représenter en 2024, puisqu'en vertu de la révision constitutionnelle de 2016, il est à son premier mandat de cinq ans et il a la possibilité de briguer un autre de cinq ans.

Poignées de mains Macky Sall et Idrissa Seck

Et plutôt que d'être sanctionnés comme ceux qui avaient émis l'idée que le président Sall était à son dernier mandat, les deux hommes sont toujours en fonction.

En plus de ce front autour d'un troisième mandat, un autre est ouvert à l'intérieur même du parti au pouvoir où des hommes proches de la Première Dame, Marième Faye Sall, accusent certains éléments d'avoir des ambitions cachées. Et cette semaine, ils ont été plus précis en désignant l'ancien Premier ministre et actuelle Présidente du Conseil Economique Social et Environnemental, Mme Mimi Touré, et l'ancien patron du ministère des Finances et actuel ministre des Affaires étrangères, Amadou Ba. Dans ce jeu de relance pour un troisième mandat, il est bizarre que l'opposition ne se soit pas prononcée, laissant le débat en cours dans les réseaux sociaux.

La semaine dernière, la poignée de mains entre le Président Sall et Idrissa Seck, considéré comme le chef de l'opposition, avait alimenté les débats traçant les lignes d'une éventuelle réconciliation entre les deux hommes. Mais en politique, ce ne sont pas des poignées de mains qui créent des rapprochements. Alors donc que ça bruit l'idée d'un troisième mandat, la rue gronde et hurle pour la libération de Guy Marius, le leader du groupuscule France



# Français

## La Banque mondiale

humanitaires nécessite un soutien immédiat et des approches de développement à long terme », a déclaré le président du Groupe de la Banque mondiale, David Malpass. « Pour mettre fin à l'extrême pauvreté et briser le cycle de la fragilité, des conflits et de la violence, les pays doivent garantir l'accès aux services de base, des institutions gouvernementales transparentes et responsables et l'inclusion économique et sociale des communautés les plus marginalisées. Ce type d'investissements va de pair avec l'aide humanitaire. »

Le Groupe de la Banque mondiale met désormais l'accent sur la lutte contre la pauvreté avant, pendant et après les situations de crise. Il met l'accent sur la prévention en s'attaquant de manière proactive aux causes profondes des conflits - telles que l'exclusion sociale et économique, le changement climatique et les chocs démographiques - avant que les tensions ne se transforment en crises à part entière. Pendant les conflits actifs, il se concentre sur le renforcement de la résilience institutionnelle et la préservation des services essentiels comme la santé et l'éducation pour les communautés les plus vulnérables.

La stratégie met également l'accent sur le soutien à long terme pour aider les pays à sortir de la fragilité, y compris les solutions du secteur privé, telles que l'intensification des investissements dans les petites et moyennes entreprises qui sont essentiels pour créer des emplois et stimuler la croissance économique. Elle aborde les impacts transfrontaliers des conflits, par exemple en se concentrant sur les besoins de développement des réfugiés et des communautés d'accueil.

En Afrique subsaharienne, la majorité des personnes extrêmement pauvres vivent dans des pays fragiles et touchés par des conflits, et la fragilité et les conflits ont un effet déstabilisateur au-delà des frontières. En réponse, la

Banque mondiale a intensifié son soutien à ces pays par le biais de l'Association internationale de développement (IDA). Au cours des trois dernières années, les engagements de l'IDA envers les pays fragiles en Afrique ont presque doublé, passant d'environ 6 milliards de dollars en IDA17 à 11 milliards de dollars jusqu'à présent en IDA18. Au cours des trois prochaines années, la Banque mondiale investira plus de 7 milliards de dollars au Sahel.

Vue la fragilité de la région, l'accent a été mis sur la prestation de services et l'amélioration du bien-être des plus vulnérables, en particulier les femmes dans les zones d'insécurité, et la lutte contre les facteurs de fragilité. En Somalie, l'argent mobile a permis de verser des paiements en espèces aux familles touchées par la sécheresse et a fourni au gouvernement des solutions de paiement électronique pour étendre la prestation de services. En République centrafricaine, le programme LONDO (« stand-up » à Sango) fournit des emplois temporaires aux familles les plus vulnérables et augmente les revenus et le bien-être. Au Burundi, en République démocratique du Congo, au Soudan du Sud et dans d'autres pays, la géo-habilitation pour le suivi et la supervision contribue à améliorer le suivi et l'impact des projets.

Ce virage institutionnel est soutenu par des augmentations de financement, à la fois par l'augmentation générale du capital de la Banque mondiale et par la reconstitution récemment approuvée de l'IDA, le fonds de la Banque mondiale pour les pays les plus pauvres, qui comprenait plus de 20 milliards de dollars. La Banque et la SFI apporteront également des changements opérationnels clés, tels que le déploiement de plus de personnel et de ressources dans les pays fragiles et le partenariat avec un éventail d'acteurs internationaux et locaux. La SFI et la MIGA se sont également engagées à accroître considérablement leur soutien aux investissements du secteur privé dans les économies touchées par des crises armées.

## COMMENTAIRE

Par John B. Taylor

## La liberté économique entravée aujourd'hui comme hier

**S**TANFORD - Dans notre nouveau livre intitulé *Choose Economic Freedom*, George P. Shultz et moi-même nous fondons sur des éléments historiques clairs - ainsi que sur les paroles de sagesse du prix Nobel d'économie Milton Friedman - pour démontrer pourquoi une bonne démarche économique conduit à des politiques et résultats favorables, tandis qu'une mauvaise démarche économique produit les conséquences inverses. Mais nous reconnaissons également que la liberté économique est difficilement atteignable, de nouveaux obstacles se dressant systématiquement sur son chemin.

Nombre de ces obstacles résident simplement dans des arguments de rejet des idées qui sous-tendent la liberté économique - primauté du droit, prévisibilité des politiques, recours aux marchés, attention axée sur les incitatifs, et limitation du rôle de l'État. Lorsqu'une idée ne semble pas fonctionner, elle doit être remplacée. Certains considèrent ainsi que la règle de droit devrait être remplacée par des mesures publiques arbitraires, que la prévisibilité des politiques serait surfaite, que les décrets administratifs pourraient se substituer aux prix des marchés, que les incitatifs n'importeraient pas réellement, et que la limitation de l'État ne serait pas nécessaire.

Ces obstacles étaient courants dans les années 1950 et 1960, époque d'essor du socialisme. Beaucoup tentèrent de stopper la tendance, bien souvent avec succès. Ces mêmes obstacles réapparaissent toutefois aujourd'hui. Certains en appellent en effet à nouveau à des mesures de type certification professionnelle, restrictions sur la fixation des salaires et des prix, ou encore interventions de l'État dans le commerce et la finance au niveau national et international.

La Business Roundtable elle-même intervient, ayant annoncé en août dernier que les sociétés américaines partageaient « un engagement fondamental auprès de toutes les parties prenantes », à savoir clients, employés, fournisseurs, communautés et, en fin de liste, actionnaires. C'est un virage important par rapport à la déclaration formulée en 1997 par l'organisation : « Le devoir primordial des directions et conseils d'administration concerne les actionnaires des entreprises ; les intérêts des autres parties prenantes n'ont de pertinence qu'en tant que dérivés du devoir auprès des actionnaires ». Par ailleurs, comme le souligne à juste titre la déclaration initiale, l'idée selon laquelle un conseil d'administration devrait « faire en sorte d'équilibrer intérêts des actionnaires et intérêts des autres acteurs » est tout simplement « impraticable ».

Après l'effondrement de l'Union soviétique, plusieurs études autour de cas réels, qui avaient démontré les dangers de la planification centrale et d'une intervention excessive de l'État, ont été oubliées. Les discussions n'existent plus aujourd'hui autour de la manière dont des plans centralement imposés sont susceptibles de permettre à une usine de production soviétique d'atteindre son objectif en produisant un clou de 200 kg plutôt que 200 clous de 500 g. Trente ans après la chute du mur de Berlin, il est compréhensible que nombre de jeunes étudiants actuels connaissent peu les risques d'une déviation par rapport aux principes du marché.

C'est pourquoi l'histoire doit être enseignée. Ce qui a été dit autrefois constitue souvent la meilleure réponse aux retours des revendications socialistes. Dans son introduction de l'édition du cinquantenaire de l'ouvrage *La Route de la servitude* de Friedrich Hayek, Friedman parle du livre en ces termes : « une lecture essentielle pour quiconque s'intéresse à la politique au sens le plus large et le moins partisan, un ouvrage dont le message central est intemporel, applicable à une multitude de situations concrètes. À certains égards, il est même plus pertinent pour les États-Unis aujourd'hui qu'à l'époque du succès de sa publication initiale en 1944 ».

En 2020, cet ouvrage est encore plus pertinent. Son

message clé consiste à affirmer que les bienfaits de prix déterminés par le marché, ainsi que des incitatifs qu'ils engendrent, l'emportent de loin sur tout ce qui peut résulter d'une planification centrale et de prix gérés par l'État. Dans son essai de 1945 intitulé « L'Utilisation de la connaissance dans la société », Hayek explique que le problème d'optimisation de l'utilisation des ressources disponibles dans une économie « peut être exposé idéalement sous forme mathématique : [...] les taux marginaux de substitution entre deux biens ou facteurs doivent être les mêmes quelle que soit leur utilisation ». Il s'empresse d'ajouter que « ceci [...] ne constitue pas catégoriquement le problème auquel la société est confrontée », dans la mesure où « les 'données' sur la base desquelles débute le calcul économique, et qui concernent l'ensemble de la société, ne sont jamais 'données' pour un seul individu susceptible d'en déterminer les implications, les fins n'étant donc jamais données ».

Aujourd'hui, mes étudiants me demandent parfois pourquoi ils devraient tout simplement étudier l'économie de marché. À l'heure de l'intelligence artificielle et du machine learning, les États ne seront-ils pas bientôt en mesure d'attribuer aux individus les meilleurs emplois, et de faire en sorte que chacun obtienne ce qu'il souhaite ? La réponse qu'apportait hier Hayek à ce type de question est encore aujourd'hui la meilleure.

Ce n'est pas la première fois que le système politique américain s'oriente vers une expansion massive du pouvoir et des dépenses de l'État. En 1994, dans un article paru dans le *New York Times* et intitulé « Once Again: Why Socialism Won't Work », Friedman déplorait que « l'essentiel de la communauté intellectuelle soit quasi-systématiquement favorable à tout renforcement du pouvoir de l'État, dès lors que cette démarche est présentée comme un moyen de protéger les individus contre les grands méchants groupes d'affaires, de réduire la pauvreté, de préserver l'environnement, ou de promouvoir l'égalité ». [...] Les intellectuels ont beau avoir appris le texte, ils n'en saisissent pas encore la musique ».

Il existe encore heureusement de nombreux moyens de renforcer la liberté économique, et de la protéger contre les entraves qui réapparaissent. Ce qu'il faut retenir, c'est que les programmes publics présentent des coûts et des avantages. L'échec du marché existe, mais l'échec de l'État également, tout comme effectivement les remèdes privés à des externalités économiques. Mais pour que les marchés fonctionnent, pour que l'efficacité et la liberté économique soit atteinte, la règle de droit doit intervenir en première ligne, et des règles de politique monétaire et budgétaire claires être mises en place.

Par ailleurs, une richesse de nouvelles données peut aujourd'hui nous aider à démontrer plus largement les bienfaits de la liberté économique. L'indice de liberté économique de l'Heritage Foundation, le classement mondial de liberté économique du Fraser Institute, et les classements Doing Business de la Banque mondiale, sont tous publiés annuellement. Ensemble, tous ces rapports démontrent les résultats économiques bons ou mauvais des États, en étroite corrélation avec les pratiques politiques bonnes ou mauvaises. La réalité derrière ces données est fascinante, et peut nous éclairer sur ce qui fonctionne et ce qui ne fonctionne pas.

Seulement voilà, même si nous anéantissons tous les arguments opposés à la liberté économique, de nouveaux obstacles à la réalisation de cette liberté continueront d'apparaître. Une démarche d'avenir exige que nous mettions en pratique les idées de la liberté économique, sans quoi, comme le formule Friedman dans son introduction du livre de Hayek de 1994, il sera « seulement un peu exagéré d'affirmer que nous prêchons l'individualisme et le capitalisme concurrentiel, tout en pratiquant le socialisme ». Pour y parvenir, nous devons être clairs s'agissant des principes, les expliquer, les défendre, et décider quand et dans quelle mesure accepter des compromis autour de ces principes.

Articles traduits

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## INTERVIEW

## INTERVIEW

# Impact Of African Policies On Development Of Infrastructure Projects, Emergence Of Debt-Trap And Neo-Colonialism

By Kester Kenn Klomegah

In this interview taken by Kester Kenn Klomegah for Eurasia Review, Dr. Frangton Chiyemura, a lecturer in International Development at the School of Social Sciences and Global Studies, The Open University in the United Kingdom, discusses the impact of African policies on development and realization of infrastructure projects, the possible of running into “debt-traps” and the emergence of “neo-colonialism” in Africa. Here are the interview excerpts:

**Q:** Early December, you held discussions and shared your research on how African leaders influence the modality of engagement and negotiation process with China. What were the key points you discussed with the audience and participants who attended?

**FC:** First of all, I was invited to share my research findings with Oxford University China-Africa Network (OUCAN). OUCAN engages with researchers, think tanks, policy makers involved in Africa-China relations. My talk was part of this initiative to share research and evidence-based findings and conclusions on Africa-China relations.

My talk was based on my completed PhD research project where I investigated how the Ethiopian government exercised agency - defined as the ability to shape, control and influence, when engaging with the Chinese in the context of wind energy infrastructure. The key point was that the Ethiopian government was able to broker, negotiate, structure, implement and manage Chinese involvement in Adama 1 and Adama 2 wind farms.

The audience was quite engaging and wondered how the Ethiopian government was able to exercise agency as compared to other African governments dealing with the Chinese. There are several factors which make Ethiopia to have such clout when dealing with the Chinese as compared to other African countries. Such factors are not only limited to the governance and leadership model of the government especially under Meles Zenawi and Hailmariam.

Secondly, it relates to the geographic location of Ethiopia, which makes it a stabilising force in volatile East African region. Ethiopia, has a unique advantage, as it is the diplomatic hub of Africa - hosting the African Union (AU) and other international organizations. This adds weight to Ethiopia when negotiating with external powers.

**Q:** What are the general perceptions and attitudes toward this kind of relations? How do the political and business elites, interpret the benefits of determining concrete directions of investment in Africa?

**FC:** Both Ethiopian and Chinese governments see the relations as win-win. This comes at the backdrop of strong relations at the political party to party level. In the case of my research I conducted, I can confirm that the Chinese Communist Party has very strong relations with the then Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front. In fact, during my research, I found out that the corporate deals are informally negotiated at the party to party level before they are transferred to the government level for formalization. There seems to be a seamless connection between the ruling party and the government, and any decisions reached at the party level are by extension seamlessly binding on the government.

**Q:** How would you explain neo-colonialism by foreign players in Africa? What is it and what foreign (external) countries are referred to as neo-colonisers, in your view?

**FC:** Neocolonialism argument is present in Africa-China relations especially proposed so by scholars who come from a neo-Marxian epistemological grounding. Neocolonialism can be seen as a new form of domination, plunder and exploitation using clandestine and economic statecraft. Of course, there could be



some hints or pointers to suggest neocolonial tendencies, but I believe such claims should be levelled on case by case basis, and there has to be concrete evidence to suggest that way. That said, I think we have to be careful to scrutinize where such claims of neocolonialism are coming from, and potentially scrap beyond the surface to establish the motivations and interests for spreading or proposing such claims.

In my opinion, I believe there is no free lunch in the world, African countries should enter into partnerships based on their strategic interests and an understanding of what the partners can provide or deliver. Secondly, every African country should do a comprehensive evaluation of the structure and, the terms and conditions of their engagements with foreign powers. By so doing, this will eliminate the chances for the emergence of claims of neocolonialism. Instead of extending the blame to someone elsewhere, Africa needs to do its homework especially on the implementation and monitoring aspects of the deals. Africa has some of the best regulations and standards, but the problem lies in implementation and monitoring.

**Q:** Without doubt, Africa needs investment in infrastructure, agriculture and industry, and in many other sectors. Despite negative criticisms, what admirable roles is China playing here, we are talking about working towards the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in Africa?

**FC:** China is playing a huge role in infrastructure financing and development. For example, available evidence suggests that between 2000 and 2017, China provided about US\$143 billion worthy of loans to African governments. This has come quite handy especially given the shortage of finance to build the much-needed infrastructure targeting the SDGs.

In terms of trade, China became Africa's trading partner in 2009, and two-way trade volume reached its peak in 2014 at the value of US\$215 billion. Further, in 2017, it was estimated to have reached about US\$148 billion. Of course, trade transactions still remain unbalanced in favour of China. In addition, between 2000 and 2017, transport (US\$38.1 billion), power (US\$30.1 billion) and mining (US\$19.1 billion) ranked respectively as top three sectors that have received the lion's share of Chinese loans in Africa.

**Q:** What is your interpretation of debt-trap most often discussed in various platforms and leveled accusations on China? But, tangible infrastructure have been built with these loans in many African countries

**FC:** Interestingly, I don't believe in this debt-trap diplomacy. First of all, it does not make any business sense that the Chinese will design a project targeting 'failure' so

that they can control or pull the strings of a particular country. Second, most of the so-called assets that the Chinese are poised to be targeting to run are very complicated, messy and at times quite straining for the Chinese to dirty their hands. Therefore, it doesn't make any sense for me.

That said, I would not refer to it as 'trap' but as merely debt and the consequences associated with that. What that implies is that, for example, in the power sector, Africa requires on average more than 5 billion worth of investment per year for the next 10 years to address this challenge. Inevitably, part of the money will come from debt financing. For me, I am not really worried about 'productive debt' - defined as any money borrowed to invest in a project that has the ability to boost economic growth and at the same time, generate a revenue stream that will pay back the loan. I would be worried about countries that borrow to build, say, a presidential palace, a stadium, or to pay salaries. That type of borrowing for me is bad - its destructive and unproductive borrowing, and that must necessarily stop.

I have to disagree with the assertion that China is debt-trapping Africa. Of course, there are some African countries that are in debt distress situation, others have high risk of being in distress, but the contributions of Chinese finances towards that leave much to be desired. For example, countries such as Chad, Sao Tome and Principe, South Sudan are in high debt distress but the contributions of the Chinese towards that is very insignificant.

We also have some countries like Ethiopia, Cameroon and Ghana where the Chinese hold a substantial share of the debt, but those countries are not in debt distress, although they are high risk of debt distress. You will be surprised that according to World Bank, Africa's debt to China is less than 23%, compared to what Africa owes to private lenders (32%), and multilateral institutions such as World Bank, IMF etc. (35%). Sometimes, I see the hypocrisy of the West - with whom Africa has substantial debt, demonizing the Chinese on debt-trap diplomacy.

**Q:** In your expert view, what are the key challenges and problems facing Chinese investors in Africa, what are your suggestions how some aspects of the relations be improved between Africa and China?

**FC:** Of course, like any other relations, Africa-China engagements have their own challenges which need to be worked on to ensure there is mutual benefit and win-win situation. Some of the challenges relate implementation of regulations and standards by African governments when dealing with the Chinese. The issues lie not in regulations, but for me in the implementation and enforcement. This is the first aspect that needs to be addressed by African governments, especially in the infrastructure sector.

The second challenge relates to peace and security. Some of the African countries are in conflict situation or are, at least, under terrorist threat. This threatens some of the Chinese businesses and enterprises.

Third, the unbalanced nature of trade between China and Africa create room for emergence of neo-colonial arguments and such needs to be addressed immediately. Some of the challenges are minor, these include language barriers, differences in culture and work ethics. These can easily be resolved.

The fourth and final is about in some African countries lack policy certainty and stability which negatively impact on Chinese long-term business planning. Such countries include Zimbabwe where there has been of note currency uncertainty, policy uncertainty and even regulatory uncertainty. This impacts on long-term Chinese business interest.

# Use the power of the pulpit

At the time Liberians are faced with tough economic challenges, President George Weah Sunday March 1, turned to the clergy here to use the “power of the pulpit” to quiet down the growing discontent among the general public, while his government focuses on the preservation of law and order.

“It is often said that Liberia is all we have, I could not agree more. And that is why we depend on the religious community to bring about social cohesion and harmony,” Mr Weah told worshippers at a special service at the Providence Baptist Church to mark the planning of the events to commemorate the bicentennial of the founding of the church.

He observed that while Liberia’s ethnic, religious or political diversity can serve to strengthen the country’s democracy, some have attempted to exploit these divides for selfish political motives. The church, he opined, “cannot sit by



supinely or become a willing and complicit participant while these things happen”.

“Let me now call on the church to shine its light on the Liberian society. While we as Government play our part in the preservation of law and order, we expect the clergy to use the “Power of the Pulpit” for the good of the country,” Mr Weah added.

Liberia is a nation founded by freed American slaves based

on what is widely believed here as Christian principles with followers of the Christian faith tending to trust what their pastors tell them more than what the government says.

Providence Baptist Church was founded on Providence Island in Monrovia in 1822 by its first pastor, Rev. Lot Carey. Providence was the first Christian church established and founded in Liberia and

one of the oldest on the continent of Africa.

Referred to as the cornerstone of the nation, the Providence Baptist Church, on Broad Street, central Monrovia was where the nation declares its independence in 1847. The first batch of Legislators attended their first sessions in the historic building.

Thus Mr. Weah told

worshippers that the history of Liberia cannot be told without also recounting the numerous contributions of the country’s first church, The Providence Baptist Church. He noted that the church is an embodiment of the history of “our great country”.

The president having recognized the rich history of Liberia bemoaned the fact that sometimes these histories are cited as the basis for the many upheavals Liberia has witnessed over the past several decades.

“Our religious community has always played a pivotal role in bringing about resolutions to some of these intractable crises. We urge you to continue to play that role. For it is often said that the church is the hope of the world,” Mr. Weah said as he quotes Matthew 5:16.

In Matthew 5:16, Jesus instructed us, saying: “In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven.”

## Liberia issues travel advisory on COVID-19

Authorities at the National Public Health Institute of Liberia or NPHIL, have released a travel advisory here, mandating every traveler from a country which has reported 200 cases of Coronavirus to a compulsory 14 day quarantine.

In a statement issued Friday, the health authorities said, consultation with the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention in Liberia and the World Health Organization in Liberia, NPHIL and the Ministry of Health have instituted the following guidelines as criteria necessitating transfer of arriving passengers to Star Base, the Government of Liberia’s (G(OL) approved

Precautionary Observation Center (POC):

Any person who, within 14 days before arriving in Liberia, has resided in a country that has reported 200 or more confirmed cases will be taken to the Star Base POC for 14 days of monitoring. As of February 26, those countries are the following: China (78,190 cases), Japan (835 cases) and South Korea (113 cases) and Italy (310 cases)

Visitors who have been in countries with 50 to 100 confirmed cases (with widespread transmission in specific geographic areas, such as regions, states, provinces, cities, etc.) in the last 14 days, will be evaluated based on the specific geographical areas they visited. If visitors are

coming from specific geographical areas in countries with 100 or more confirmed cases experiencing widespread transmission, they will undergo precautionary observation at the approved POC

Visitors from countries with 15 to less than 50 cases will be documented and asked to do self-monitoring and report immediately to emergency toll-free phone number (4435). If they experience any one of these symptoms: fever, cough and/or respiratory distress. Such countries include Thailand (15), Singapore (37) and Bahrain (23).

Additionally, given the fact that there are reported attempts by some visitors to circumvent enhanced airport screening procedures by obtaining a laissez-passer or new passport. We have also instituted the following measures:

All persons who arrive with a laissez-passer will be immediately taken to the POC for secondary screening. If there is any suspicion of illegal attempts to circumvent the process, such a visitor will be kept in the POC for 14 days.

2. The above is also applicable to new arrivals with a brand-new passport.

This advisory will be continuously modified as the epidemiology of the disease evolves over time.



### KEBBEH KONAH KOLLIE'S OBITUARY

The Kollie family wishes to announce to the general public that home going services for their late mother, OldmaKebbeKonahKollie of Chugbor, Old Road, Monrovia, are as follow:

**WAKE KEEPING:**  
Date: Friday, February 28th, 2020  
Venue: Deceased’s residence, Chugbor, Old Road  
Time: 8:00pm

**REMOVAL OF BODY:**  
Date: Saturday, February 29th, 2020 at 8:00am  
Venue: Samuel Stryker Funeral Service

**FUNERAL SERVICE:**  
Date: Saturday, February 29th, 2020 at 10:00am  
Venue: St. Peter’s Lutheran Church, 14th Street, Tubman Boulevard, Sinkor  
Time: 10:00am

**INTERMENT:**  
Brewerville cemetery, Brewerville, outside Monrovia

**REPAST:**  
Venue: The Lutheran Compound Hall, 13th Street, Payne Avenue, Sinkor (Beach side) and the Deceased’s residence in Chugbor, Old Road simultaneously.

Note: In lieu of floral designs & wreaths, the Kollie family is kindly urging all sympathizers, with the exception of the Family and the Church, to make voluntarily cash donations to be used for the promotion of God’s work on earth. The family also wish to express their gratitude to all for the continued prayers, material & financial support and visitations since the homegoing of our dear mother. The late KebbeKonahKollie was survived by several children, grandchildren and great grandchildren and a host of relatives hailing from Kpademai and Kparkamai towns in Lofa county, Liberia and the Diaspora.

Signed: Aaron B. Kollie and Esther G. Kollie  
Son and Daughter of the deceased, for the family

## LMDI, Internews end

Cont’d from page 7

campaigns is the Liberia Media for Democratic Initiative (LMDI), an implementing partner for Internews Liberia.

Internews under its “Liberia Media Development (LMD)” program with funding from the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) is working with 21 community radio stations across the country, providing trainings and broadcast equipment, respectively.

One of the many forums

conducted by LMDI brought together participants from Gbon, Yediaken, and Weleken recently on the Gbawily football field, Yederobo Chiefdom, Karluway Statutory District.

After many testimonies of human trafficking, participants, at the close of the forum, hailed Internews and partners, and called for more awareness in the county.

-Editing by Jonathan Browne



## Beckham: Great opportunity to sign Messi, Ronaldo



**D**avid Beckham said MLS side Inter Miami have a "great opportunity" to sign superstars Lionel Messi and Cristiano Ronaldo.

Barcelona captain Messi and Juventus forward Ronaldo have both been linked with moves to the United States - Beckham's expansion franchise Inter looming as a possible destination for the pair.

There is speculation Inter,

who will make their MLS debut against Los Angeles FC on Sunday, could lure both players to Miami after Minnesota United head coach Adrian Heath talked up the possibility.

Inter co-owner Beckham addressed the speculation during his appearance on 'The Tonight Show Starring Jimmy Fallon' on Wednesday.

Well you know what, we've got great opportunities down in Miami," former Manchester United, Real Madrid and

England star Beckham said with a smile.

"We've been contacted by a lot of different players with possibly coming to join the team. As any owner, you really want the best players and if we have the opportunity to bring in players like Cristiano or Leo, I have such admiration for them as athletes, if we could bring those players in than great.

"But at the moment, we have a great roster. Young players, a couple of experienced players too, but a lot of young players who are just ready to play.

"One of the things I learnt from [former United manager] Alex Ferguson... he turned around to me and said whoever you bring in, they have to be the right fit for the club. It's not about the biggest name or personality, it's about who fits in best with the players.

"That's what we'll do. But like I said, as an owner if you want to bring these players in than we have a great opportunity."



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## Inter director says Serie A risks not finishing due to coronavirus

**T**he Serie A season runs the risk of not finishing if more matches are postponed because of the coronavirus outbreak, Inter Milan's chief executive Giuseppe Marotta said on Sunday.

Inter's match at Juventus, which was to have been played later on Sunday, was one of five which were postponed by Serie A on Saturday. The games, all in regions where sporting events have been banned by the

government, had been due to be played behind closed doors.

Italy has registered more than 1,100 confirmed cases of coronavirus since the contagion came to light in wealthy northern regions on Feb. 20 and at least 29 people have died.

Inter's match at home to Sampdoria was one of four which were postponed last Sunday and Marotta said a crowded fixture list meant they were running out of dates to restage the games.

"If more matches are called



off then, yes, we run that risk," Marotta told Gazzetta dello Sport when asked if the championship might not finish.

He added that, because some matches had been postponed and others had not, the "balance of the championship has been altered. It's a distorted tournament. You just need to think of injuries and suspensions. And there is the psychological aspect when you look at the standings."

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