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The New Dawn

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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.

VOL.10 NO. 34

THURSDAY, MARCH 12, 2020

PRICE LD\$40.00



EIS legacy is our legacy

-Former U.S. Amb. Greenfield

Liberia drops in rule of law ranking



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CMYK



Continental News

Guinea delays referendum for a second time

Guinea has delayed a controversial referendum for a second time.

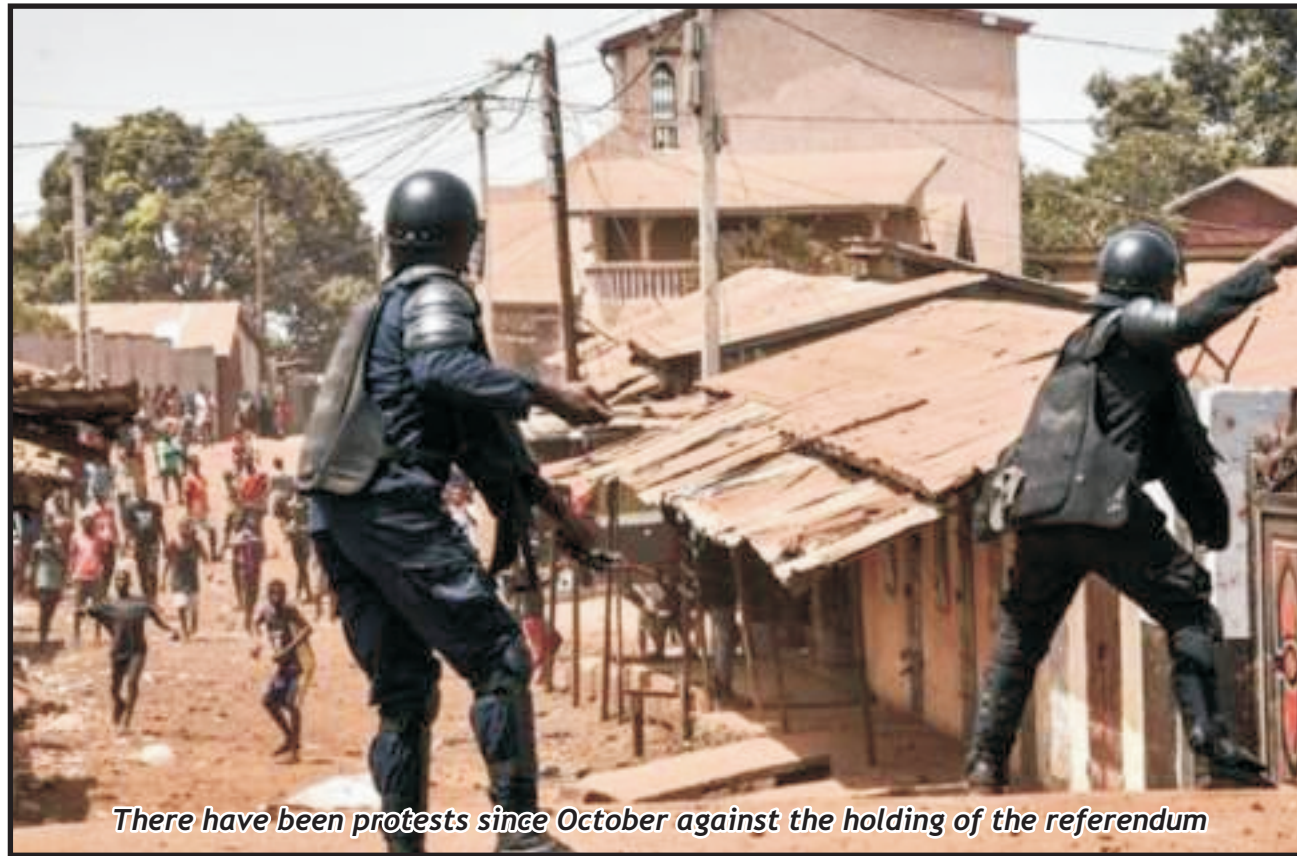
President Alpha Condé initially delayed it last month saying there would be a "slight postponement" because of concerns about the fairness of the process.

Voters were also due to elect members of parliament this coming Sunday.

But the electoral commission said there had to be another postponement as it was awaiting a report from the West African body Ecowas.

It sent a delegation last week to investigate the electoral process, in particular the electoral roll, reports the BBC's West Africa reporter Chi Chi Izundu.

In February, the International Organisation of La Francophonie (OIF), a grouping of French-speaking nations, said there were problems identifying around



There have been protests since October against the holding of the referendum

2.5 million names listed on the electoral roll.

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

If passed it would allow the 82-year-old president to seek a third term in office.

The proposed constitution does not scrap term limits - a

president would still only be able to serve two terms - though the length of a term would be extended from five to six years.

However, the adoption of the new constitution would mean that the time Mr Condé has already served would not count - and his second term comes to an end in December.

Mr Condé has not said he intends to run again, but his party has not denied that the new constitution would allow him to do so.

The government says the constitution is in need of a revamp as the current one was written during a time of military rule between 2008 and 2010.

The proposed one also has many laws aimed at improving gender equality in the mainly Muslim nation - it would ban female genital mutilation (FGM), as well as outlawing underage and forced marriages.

It also states that no one gender would make up more than two-thirds of government institutions. But a coalition opposing the move argues all such reforms could be done through parliament. BBC

Uganda sends \$500,000 to China 'by mistake'

Uganda's finance ministry has asked the Ugandan embassy in China to refund money sent "erroneously" to their account, after it emerged they sent almost 10 times more than planned.

The Ugandan cabinet had approved \$61,800 (£47,700)

to be sent to China for students in Wuhan, the epicentre of the coronavirus outbreak.

But the education ministry requested \$600,000 - a much higher amount. A ministry official is quoted by the Daily Monitor newspaper as saying the money had been approved.

However, the Ministry of Finance stated in a recent letter that the amount approved by cabinet was the lower amount of \$61,800, and said it had asked the embassy to refund \$538,200. BBC

FBI in Sudan to help probe assassination attempt



The prime minister's motorcade was attacked as he was on his way to work

A team from the US Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) has arrived in the Sudanese capital, Khartoum, to help with enquiries into a failed assassination attempt against the prime minister. Abdalla Hamdok's convoy was attacked with explosives and gunfire on Monday.


It is not yet clear who was behind the attack and the arrival of the three US investigators follows a call

from the Sudanese authorities for foreign assistance.

Mr Hamdok, an economist, was appointed to head the transitional government following the overthrow last April of the long-standing President, Omar al-Bashir.

Correspondents say there are concerns over Sudan's stability given some once powerful personalities are opposed to the widespread political and security reforms taking place. BBC

Telephones: Kampala 341305 (230487)
 Fax No. 23352
 Telegrams: "Accounts"
 E-Mail: info@finance.go.ug
 Plot No. 2/12, Apollo Kyoga Road
 In any correspondence on this subject please quote No. AOO/113/196/01



THE REPUBLIC OF UGANDA

Ministry of Finance, Planning & Economic Development,
 Accountant General's Office,
 P.O. Box 7031,
 Kampala, Uganda.

10 March 2020

The Accounting Officer
 Uganda Embassy in Beijing
 BEIJING

SUBJECT: RETURN OF EXCESS FUNDS (USD 538,200) TRANSFERRED ERRONEOUSLY TO YOUR ACCOUNT

Reference is made to a letter from the Hon. Minister for Education and Sports dated 19th February 2020 requesting for mobilization and transfer of resources amounting to USD 600,000 through the Ugandan Mission in Beijing to support the affected students. Further reference is made to the cabinet extract number 62 (CT2020) which authorised a release of USD 61,800 to support students in Wuhan City, China.

As you are aware, on the 28th of February 2020 this Ministry transferred USD 600,000 to the Ugandan Mission in Beijing to support the affected students. However, upon receipt of the Cabinet extract, we noted that there is a discrepancy between the amounts therein and that stated in the letter from Ministry of Education and Sports.

The Purpose of this letter, therefore, is to direct you to return the excess USD 538,200 back to the Contingencies Fund account as detailed below:

Account Name : Contingencies Fund
 Account Number : 003300138000005
 Bank : Bank of Uganda

By Copy of this letter, the Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Education and Sports is requested to clarify on the above discrepancy.

Keith Mubikazi
 PERMANENT SECRETARY / SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY.

Copy to: The First Lady and Hon. Minister of Education and Sports.
 The Hon. Minister of Finance, Planning and Economic Development
 The Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Education and Sports.
 The Accountant General.

The 60-year-old tourist died after refusing to be transferred to an isolation ward

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EDITORIAL

Africa suffers leadership drain

NEWS THAT THE Mo Ibrahim Foundation couldn't find any leader on the Continent to award its prestigious 2019 Ibrahim Prize for Achievement in African Leadership is a slap in the face of governance in Africa.

THE PRONOUNCEMENT SHOULD sound a wakeup call to the current breed of leaders on the Continent to do more in the areas of improving living standards of their people, particularly health, education, women and youth empowerment in order to leave a legacy after retiring.

LIBERIA'S FORMER PRESIDENT Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf, first democratically-elected female president in Africa, was adjudged the last winner in 2017. There has been no winner for the last two years.

REPORTS SAY SIMILAR scenario occurred when former Namibian President Hifikepunye Pohamba won the prize in 2014, it took three years to find a winner in President Sirleaf in 2017. In 2011, President Pedro Pires of Cabo Verde was adjudged the winner; he followed President Festus Mogae of Botswana in 2008 and President Joaquim Chissano of Mozambique (2007). Nelson Mandela was the inaugural Honorary Laureate in 2007.

PRIZE COMMITTEE CHAIR Festus Mogae says, "The Ibrahim Prize recognizes truly exceptional leadership in Africa, celebrating role models for the continent. It is awarded to individuals who have, through the outstanding governance of their country, brought peace, stability and prosperity to their people. Based on these rigorous criteria, the Prize Committee could not award the Prize in 2019."

THIS A CHALLENGE for current African leaders, as the Ibrahim Prize is said to be the largest annually awarded prize in the world, consisting of US\$5 million over ten years. How could the entire Continent allow such recognition slipped away?

AFRICA NEEDS PEOPLE-CENTERED leaders who can lift the next generation of Africans from hunger, diseases, illiteracy and misery. Leadership should not be just about winners taking all, dinning and pillaging national resources, while losers sit and watch in dejection.

AFRICA NEEDS A revolution on governance that would promote peace, stability, unity, and democratic leadership. African leaders such as aspire for standards in leadership.

AMONG OTHERS, THE Ibrahim Prize recognizes and celebrates African leaders who, under challenging circumstances, have developed their countries, lifted people out of poverty and paved the way for sustainable and equitable prosperity; highlights exceptional role models for the continent; and ensures that the African continent continues to benefit from the experience and wisdom of exceptional leaders once they have left national office, by enabling them to continue in other public roles on the continent.

WE THROW OUT a direct challenge to all current leaders on the Continent to endeavor to govern their people, considering these yardsticks, which inevitably portray a very positive image of Africa.

COMMENTARY

By Jules Kortenhorst
& Whitney Heastie

Clean Energy Is Also Resilient Energy

After years of increasingly severe hurricane seasons in which island countries and territories in the Caribbean have lost power for weeks and even months at a time, the need for climate resilience could not be clearer. And as the Bahamas is showing, the cleanest energy sources can also be the most resilient.

NASSAU - The Caribbean and its surroundings are on the front lines of climate change. The Bahamas, the archipelago that stretches over the crystal-blue waters between Florida and Cuba, have been battered in recent years by devastating hurricanes, which have increased in severity and frequency as a result of global warming. As is the case worldwide, there is an element of injustice to this. Given that the Bahamas and Caribbean countries emit relatively minuscule amounts of carbon dioxide, their residents bear very little of the blame for the climate crisis.

But the people of the region are now flipping the script, transforming themselves from victims of climate tragedies into global leaders in clean, secure energy. The Caribbean countries have compelling economic reasons for embracing the green-energy transition. For generations, they have relied on imported fossil fuels to power their economies, which means they have long had to deal with the uncertainties of world oil markets and thus significant cost fluctuations for electricity.

Thanks to advances in renewable energies, that economic challenge has created an opportunity. Unlike imported fossil fuels, which are subject to rising costs, the prices of solar power and other clean energy sources, along with the necessary battery storage systems, continue to fall. As these technologies have become more affordable and competitive with older, dirtier fuels, they have created a powerful incentive for island countries to move away from conventional fossil fuel-fired power plants. Moreover, this trend will only grow more pronounced from here on out, as the cost advantages of newer, cleaner energies make them increasingly attractive relative to fossil fuels.

For regions like the Caribbean, solar and battery storage systems do more than simply reduce the costs of electricity; when deployed in the right way, they also improve climate resilience. As the Bahamas and other countries across the region have demonstrated over the past few years, solar- and battery-powered microgrids can provide critical services for island communities during and after severe weather events that otherwise would knock traditional energy sources offline.

But in order for these new energy solutions to provide real resilience, they themselves

need to be able to withstand the storms, which tend to ravage power lines and disconnect communities from centralized sources of energy generation. Thus, in the case of solar, much depends on the methods used to secure solar panels to the ground and to rooftops.

We already know that it is possible to construct photovoltaic (PV) systems capable of surviving even the most severe category of hurricane. Through a collaboration between the Rocky Mountain Institute, the government of the Bahamas, and the country's national utility, the Bahamas Power and Light Company (BPL), we have developed and installed a solar parking canopy at the National Stadium in Nassau that can withstand the winds of a category-five hurricane. We have also built the country's first category-five resilient solar and battery storage microgrid on Ragged Island, and are now focusing on designing and delivering sustainable and resilient microgrids for critical facilities on Abaco, following the destruction wrought by Hurricane Dorian in September 2019.

As the planet continues to warm, increased moisture in the air will translate into even more severe and frequent tropical storms and hurricanes. What we saw with Dorian and Hurricane Maria in Puerto Rico in 2017 is likely to become commonplace. Fortunately, as the partnership in the Bahamas shows, many of the same measures needed to build resilience are also those needed to limit greenhouse-gas (GHG) emissions and slow the pace of global warming. Far from requiring a tradeoff, resilient PV systems check both boxes.

The Caribbean and Atlantic are hardly the only regions that will need to build more resilient energy infrastructure to prevent power disruptions. Communities around the world are increasingly confronting the challenges posed by severe and extreme weather, including the devastating fires in Australia, Indonesia, and the Western United States.

In all of these cases, clean, localized energy solutions offer unique advantages in terms of reducing emissions and keeping the lights on after a disaster. They point the way to a better future for our electricity system. By embracing the clean-energy transition, the Bahamas is setting an example for the rest of the world - and particularly for those countries that are responsible for the overwhelming share of global GHG emissions.

New Dawn
FULLY INDEPENDENT

O-PED

By Shashi Tharoor

Remembering the Forgotten Gandhi

The Dandi March, which started 90 years ago, inaugurated Mahatma Gandhi's most successful attempt at civil disobedience against the British Raj. Unfortunately, while the originality of Gandhi's thought and the example of his life still inspire people around the world, one must wonder if we really have learned what he meant by truth.

NEW DELHI - March 12 marks the 90th anniversary of one of the most momentous events in India's nationalist struggle: the start of the Dandi March, which inaugurated Mahatma Gandhi's most successful attempt at civil disobedience against the British Raj. With India's pluralism and democracy under greater threat today than at any time since independence, the lessons of the march have never been more relevant.

The Dandi March was rooted in a longstanding grievance. The British had turned salt production and distribution into a lucrative monopoly. Indians were prohibited from producing or selling salt independently, and were required to buy expensive, heavily taxed, and often imported salt. Indian protests against the salt tax had begun in the nineteenth century, but Gandhi's decision in 1930 to demonstrate against it was a breakthrough moment.

Gandhi started marching from his ashram near Ahmedabad to the town of Dandi on the Arabian Sea, some 385 kilometers (239 miles) away. Along the way, his group stopped in villages, wherever larger crowds gathered to hear the Mahatma denounce the tax. Hundreds joined as the marchers made their way to the coast.

On April 5, they reached Dandi. The next morning, Gandhi and his followers picked up handfuls of salt along the shore, thus technically "producing" salt and breaking the law - a visually compelling and profoundly effective act of civil disobedience.

This dramatic event seized the imagination of India and the world. Gandhi continued his protest against the salt tax for the next two months, exhorting other Indians to break the salt laws. Thousands were arrested and imprisoned; the Mahatma was imprisoned in early May, after he informed Viceroy Lord Irwin of his intention to lead a march on the Dharasana saltworks.

News of Gandhi's detention spurred tens of thousands more to join the march, which went ahead on May 21. Some 2,500 peaceful marchers were attacked and beaten by police. By the end of 1930, roughly 60,000 people had been jailed.

The Raj had seen nothing like it, and the imperial authorities realized that continued repression and detention were unsustainable. Gandhi was released from custody in January 1931 and began negotiations with Irwin. A truce was formalized in the Gandhi-Irwin Pact, signed on March 5, 1931. The calming of tensions paved the way for Gandhi, representing the Indian National Congress, to attend the second session of the Round Table Conference in London. His civil disobedience campaign had succeeded; moral victory was his.

The Indian National Congress, now in opposition, is recalling this moment by partly re-enacting the Dandi March. In doing so, the party is echoing Jawaharlal Nehru, India's first prime minister, who, at the moment of independence, spoke of the Mahatma as "embodying the old spirit of India" whose message would be remembered by "succeeding generations."

What was that message? The Mahatma led the world's first successful nonviolent movement for independence from colonial rule. At the same time, he was a philosopher who constantly sought to live out his ideas, whether they applied to individual self-improvement or social change: revealingly, his autobiography was titled *The Story of My Experiments with Truth*.

No dictionary imbues "truth" with the depth of meaning Gandhi gave it. His truth emerged from his convictions: it meant not only what was accurate, but what was just and therefore right. Truth could not be obtained by "untruthful" or unjust means, which included inflicting violence upon one's opponent.

To describe his method, Gandhi coined the expression *satyagraha* - literally, "holding on to truth," or, as he variously described it, truth force, love force, or soul force. He disliked the English term "passive resistance," because *satyagraha* required activism, not passivity. If you believed in truth and cared enough to obtain it, Gandhi felt, you could not afford to be passive: you had to be prepared to suffer for truth.

So, nonviolence, like non-cooperation and non-alignment, meant much more than the denial of an opposite. It did not merely imply the absence of violence. One vindicated the truth by inflicting suffering on one's self rather than on one's opponent. Accepting punishment was essential to demonstrate the strength of one's convictions.

This was the approach Gandhi brought to India's independence movement - and, unlike sporadic terrorism and moderate constitutionalism, it worked. Gandhi took the issue of freedom to the masses as one of simple right and wrong and gave them a technique to which the British had no response.

By renouncing violence, Gandhi wrested the moral advantage. By breaking the law nonviolently, he highlighted the injustice of the law. By accepting the punishments imposed on him, he forced his captors to confront their own brutal behavior. By voluntarily subjecting himself to hunger strikes, he demonstrated the lengths to which he was prepared to go in defense of what he considered to be right. In the end, he made the perpetuation of British rule impossible.

Dandi and Gandhi offer today's India more than historical resonance. But one fact must be acknowledged: Gandhian nonviolent civil disobedience works only against opponents vulnerable to a loss of moral authority - a government responsive to domestic and international public opinion and capable of being shamed into conceding defeat. It has little effect on those who are not interested in whether they are wrong. For them, your willingness to undergo punishment to prove them wrong is the most convenient means of victory. Gandhism without moral authority is like Marxism without a proletariat.

Yet few who have tried his methods have had his personal integrity or moral stature. While the world was spiraling into fascism, violence, and war, the Mahatma taught the virtues of truth, nonviolence, and peace. He destroyed colonialism's credibility by opposing principle to force. And he set and attained personal standards of conviction and courage that few will ever match. He was that rare leader who was not limited by the inadequacies of his followers.

The originality of Gandhi's thought and the example of his life still inspire people around the world. Unfortunately, it is a world in which one must wonder if we really have learned what he meant by truth - and how to identify and defend it.

OPINION

By Alexander Mikaberidze

Napoleon's Middle East Legacy

Napoleon Bonaparte's 1798 invasion of Egypt represented the first modern attempt to incorporate an Islamic society into the European fold. Although the expedition was a military fiasco, it left a lasting legacy in the region.

MANCHESTER - "In the beginning was Napoleon." So commences the late Thomas Nipperdey's acclaimed history of nineteenth-century Germany, Germany from Napoleon to Bismarck. But although Nipperdey was referring to Napoleon Bonaparte's central role in creating modern Europe, in many respects his statement also applies to today's Middle East.

Napoleon's 1798 invasion of Egypt marked the first instance of liberal imperialism, and highlighted the speed with which the French Revolution had transcended France's borders - and Europe's. Although the expedition was a military fiasco, it left a lasting legacy in the region.

For starters, the invasion represented the first modern attempt to incorporate an Islamic society into the European fold. It also constituted the formative moment for the discourse of Orientalism, when all of its ideological components converged and a full arsenal of instruments of Western domination was employed to protect it. The occupation itself did little to modernize Egyptian society, because the revolutionary principles that the French tried to introduce were too radical and foreign, and met determined local resistance. But Napoleon created a political vacuum in Egypt that was soon filled by Kavalali Mehmet Ali Pasha, who, within a decade of the French departure, began laying the foundation for the reformed and modernized Egypt that later would play such an important role in the Middle East.

Napoleon's Egyptian campaign also upended traditional European policies toward the region. Instead of striking its intended blow at Britain's imperial power, the French invasion drove the Ottoman Empire, France's traditional ally, into an alliance with its former adversaries, Russia and Britain, and transformed the nature of Franco-British rivalry in the East. Up to that point, France traditionally had launched forays into India from island bases in the Indian Ocean, relying on naval power that the British could counter with their own fleet. But Napoleon's attempt to conquer Egypt by land profoundly altered this equation by forcing Britain also to consider the possibility that other powers might approach India through territories adjacent to the Indian subcontinent.

This imperative drew Britain into a lasting endeavor to secure additional dominions to protect its Indian possessions against an overland attack. "We have won an empire by armed might," observed British East India Company officials in 1798, "and it must continue to rest on armed might, otherwise it will fall by the same means to a superior power." This reliance on force underpinned the British Raj until 1947 and sustained British interventions in Egypt, Yemen, Oman, Iran, and Afghanistan.

The wider Napoleonic Wars cast a long shadow over the Islamic heartland. Although fundamentally European in nature, they shaped Europe's relationship with the Islamic world for the next century. The Ottoman Empire found itself the target not only of Russian imperial ambitions, but also of French, Austrian, and British designs that contributed to its continued territorial losses and the emergence of the "Eastern Question." Moreover, the similarities between Napoleon's rhetoric and methods and those used in twentieth-century Western interventions in the Middle East underscore the long-term impact of his legacy.

In 1810-1812, a century before "Lawrence of Arabia," Napoleon's agents were seeking to encourage Arab tribes in Syria and Iraq to unite in revolt against the Ottomans. And later French governments realized Napoleon's vision of a French colonial empire. In 1830, French troops, some of them veterans of the Egyptian campaign, invaded Algiers on the basis of contingency plans developed under Napoleon two decades earlier, and laid the foundation for a period of French colonial rule that lasted until 1962.

Iran, its own empire a thing of the past, endured an equally painful fate, becoming a pawn in the hands of European powers. Double-crossed by both France and Britain, Iran suffered humiliating defeats at the hands of Russia, which acquired Georgia and southeastern Caucasia by 1813 and all but supplanted Iranian influence in the region.

The Napoleonic Wars revealed glaring inefficiencies in the Ottoman and Iranian states, and highlighted the growing military and economic imbalance between them and the leading European powers. The wars thus ushered in an era of state-sponsored reforms, as Ottoman, Egyptian, and Iranian political leaders sought to remake their administrations and militaries in a European image.

Herein lies one of the most enduring Napoleonic legacies in the Middle East. Reform-minded rulers such as the Ottoman Sultan Mahmud II, Mehmet Ali of Egypt, and Iran's Crown Prince Abbas Mirza did not question the cultural norms or social structures on which traditional order rested. Instead, they believed that European-style military and administrative reforms would enable them to consolidate their domestic power and protect their states more effectively from outside threats.

But these reforms entailed the introduction of Western practices into Islamic societies and posed challenges to existing power structures, because they inserted the central government into the daily lives of its subjects more directly and pervasively than ever before. That is why many groups - including the ulama (religious leaders), the Saudis in central Arabia, Ottoman Janissaries, and Iran's traditional elites - reacted so negatively, and rejected even those modernizing changes that could have better protected their respective states.

This confrontation increasingly came to be seen as a struggle for the very essence of the Islamic way of life. And its profound effects, along with other aspects of Napoleon's legacy, continue to reverberate in the Middle East today.

MORE HEADLINE NEWS MORE HEADLINE NEWS

Liberia urged to embed integrity in education

-At Integrity Icon campaign launch

By Winston W. Parley

Liberia Revenue Authority (LRA) Assistant Commissioner for Budget and Finance Mr. Ord - Siejepo Jlateh has stressed the need to embed integrity in the education of Liberians to promote change in their

people educated, the better your country will be. But I have this other way around. If you tech people just the academic, it's not enough. If integrity is not embedded in that education, you are finished," he said Tuesday, 10 March in Monrovia.

Delivering the keynote

rich at once.

He discourages Liberians against defending and hailing people who steal public money to build their personal properties in the country, saying the proceeds from properties built with stolen money do not go to the public but into the pockets of the individuals who stole the money.

"There's a school somewhere in the village that does not have chairs, the money [the] guy stole and built that house for himself, that money could be used to build [different thing]," he argues.

"Someone is dying somewhere because the machine in the hospital that the hospital needs, the machine is not there and government does not have money...," he adds.

Integrity Icon is a campaign that Accountability Lab Liberia has run since 2014 since its launch in Nepal, and it continues to promote citizen engagement and demand for individual integrity to strengthen government - citizen relations here.

The launch of the campaign on Tuesday for this year is the beginning of an eight - month long program which is intended to invite the public to nominate outstanding public servants in various government sectors

who demonstrate honesty and integrity under difficult circumstances through the Lab's extensive youth networks.

According to Mr. Jlateh, the issue of integrity is not just in the public sector, but what is done in homes is what is portrayed in public.

"And so this means that we cannot overemphasize the need for integrity in our society," he says.

Mr. Jlateh notes that if you travel to neighboring Ivory Coast and Ghana, you would think those countries are on a different continent, but if you return to Liberia and just see the country's airports, you see that something is wrong somewhere.

"Our country is endowed

with abundance [of] resources. We have here iron ore, we have the gold, we also have diamonds here, we have our forests," he explains.

Mr. Jlateh laments that Liberia has the richest soil in the region and everything you think about, but raises a question as to why the country is so rich and yet so poor.

"The answer is just so simple. Mismanagement," he says, adding that the Liberian society is so different that no one wants to pay tax or to even hear about that.

He notes that people here "do everything possible to undermine whatever is setup," cautioning that when you evade taxes it is an issue of integrity.

Mr. Nils Bredin,



mindset for nation building, cautioning that it is not enough to only train people academically.

"For us to build our nation is change the human being. We say let's educate people, right. The more you have

speech at the 2020 Integrity Icon launch at Accountability Lab Liberia on Carey Street, Mr. Jlateh observes that due to some people's mindset of not appreciating gradual progress, some guys just want to work at the bank and steal money to get

House summons LWSC, City Corporations

By Bridgett Milton

The House of Representatives has summoned the Managing Director of the Liberia Water and Sewer Corporation, the Mayors of Monrovia, Brewerville and Paynesville to appear before full plenary next Tuesday, 17 March to explain why the major streets in central Monrovia are flooded with feces for the past two years.

The lawmakers' decision to

have been working with the administration of the Liberia Water and Sewer Corporation (LWSC) to bring an end to the daily flooding of the street in the market with feces from the sewage line of the LWSC, but nothing has been done.

The Montserrado county lawmaker complains that this situation can cause his people to get sick or lead to people to lose their lives.

Representative George

EPA boss entangles in scandal

By E. J. Nathaniel Daygbor

Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Executive Director Nathaniel Blama fans off allegations that he is a signatory or managing partner in Planet Management Services, a private firm, thereby utilizing his office to solicit money for personal use, but the EPA denies.

Deputy executive director Randall Dougbayou says there is a defined criterion developed by the EPA for the issuance of accreditation to environmental consultant firms.

"This process is conducted every two (2) years during a training cycle of Environmental and Social Impact Assessment Consultants and members of environmental Units of relevant line Ministries, Agencies, and Commissions (MACs) as required by the Environmental Protection Agency Act and Environmental Protection and Management Law of Liberia,"

Dougbayou explains.

Addressing a news conference in Monrovia, he says there is no such company or institutions involved in environmental-related matters termed as Planet Management Services, but rather Planet Resources Management Inc. whose qualification is based on legal, administrative, and scientific criteria outlined by law.

He notes that the EPA also has a unique record of all its

environmental consultant firms and the level of professional work done by each institution across Liberia, so it is completely independent.

Dougbayou encourages the public to contact the umbrella organization Union of Certified Environmental Professional of Liberia (UCEL), headed by Mr. Dweah Siehwloh Borley for clarification on these matters.



Executive Director Nathaniel Blama



summon the institutions followed a communication sent to plenary by Montserrado County District #7 Representative Solomon C. George.

According to Representative George, for the past two years the street of Monrovia has been flooded with feces from its controlled sewage system.

He explains that the marketers at Waterside Market

continues that with all this going on, the Director General of the LWSC along with his team is sitting and doing nothing to bring this under control.

According to Representative George, some of the marketers are already suffering from sicknesses due to inhaling the stench from the pollution on the road.—Edited by Winston W. Parley

OPEN LETTER TO JNB

OPEN LETTER TO JNB



NATIONAL HEADQUARTERS UNITY PARTY (UP)

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5 March 2020

Ambassador Joseph Nyuma Boakai, Sr.
Standard-bearer/Political Leader
Unity Party
Rehab, Paynesville
Republic of Liberia

Ref: **EXPRESSING MY CONCERNS**

Dear Ambassador Boakai, Sr,

I am constrained to use this unorthodox medium to convey my concerns about reports being carried widely in the electronic, social and print media and attributed to the "National Executive Committee" of the Unity Party. In the reports, which I am sure you may have heard, read or are aware of, it is categorically said that I have been "unanimously removed from office as National Chairman of the Unity Party". The reports state further that this decision was taken on Wednesday, 4 March 2020 in a meeting of the "National Executive Committee".

While I do not intend to discuss the validity and/or legality of the aforementioned action in this communication, I recall that through the intervention of Dr. Mohammed Sheriff, a concerned Party stalwart and eminent person in Liberia, a *three-hour meeting was held at your Rehab residence on Tuesday, 3 March 2020 during which you made a suggestion for my consideration*. The purpose of that meeting, at least as I learned from the facilitator, was to find a resolution that will benefit the Unity Party during this crucial election year. My impression from the meeting was that each of us would exercise good faith and sincerity throughout. We all agreed that I should study the suggestion. Today makes it forty-eight (48) hours since our meeting.

As I stated during that meeting, there it is never my desire to pursue and/or seek any recourse that will subject the Party to a rigmarole that inhibits its forward march. This is because, as all of us admitted during the meeting, while collectively we have all made tremendous contributions to the Unity Party over the last decade or so, the sacrifices and contributions that I have made are unmatched. I do not say this with any arrogance. Instead, I am simply restating what was said in the meeting, a truth no one disputed or challenged. I recall that you did not support me during the National Convention of 30 October 2010 during which I was elected as National Secretary-General. In spite of this I assured you that you could count on my fullest cooperation, a promise that I kept unhesitatingly as was demonstrated throughout my six-year tenure as National Secretary-General and afterward. I was pleased when you admitted in the same meeting that there was no time that I ever disrespected or treated you contemptuously.

It is however shocking that within barely twenty-four (24) hours after the meeting facilitated by Dr. Mohamed Sheriff, an action would be taken to undermine the Unity Party and complicate matter further. I am afraid this is what our detractors and political rivals may desire to see.

The question now is, "*Where did the good faith, sincerity, truthfulness and honesty that we all stressed throughout that meeting go?*" I had expected that all of us, irrespective of whatever the individual consideration might be, would see the need to refocus our energies, resources and time to preparing our Party for the ensuing 2020 special senatorial elections. Such demonstration would match all previous pronouncements that we were ready to reconsolidate our efforts and resolve for the electoral challenges ahead. This is unfair to the vast majority of the Party's members, supporters, sympathizers and friends, all of whom are anxious to see an immediate end to the unnecessary bickering, witch-hunt and continual scapegoating of one person for all that had transpired before, during and after the 2017 elections.

Let me restate that it has never been my desire to see the Unity Party that I have served diligently with avowed loyalty and allegiance for about a decade now being compelled to yet again undergo another embarrassing experience. You are aware that memories from the long legal rigmarole following the expulsion in January 2018 of your predecessor and three(3) others for their conduct during the 2017 elections are still fresh. You are also aware that even though that decision was born out of a resolution from the County Chairpersons and that as National Chairman my power, authority and privileges during meetings of the National Executive Committee are limited to presiding over deliberations, that expulsion decision was blamed on the National Chairman. It is unfortunate that within less than a year after this issue was "resolved", we have another issue to contend with. This has repercussions for the forward march of the Party we profess to love.

In the first place, how could a matter as simple as *disagreements over a public pronouncement made on 5 January 2020 which does not violate any provision of the Party's constitution and which was made in good faith as were all previous utterances, be used to divert our attention from the core issues that should claim our utmost attention?* In a crucial election year, it is a waste of time, energies and resources to force upon the Party another situation that has no consequential political benefits. It shows that



the "reconciliation" that some have been advocating for has no foundation in truth and is only intended to appease certain individuals. And you are aware that throughout when this campaign began, I expressed concern to you on many occasions, hoping that this was not a camouflage to foment a crisis within the Party. The argument that "*Those who want to support the Unity Party financially prefer a new leadership*" without regard for the Party's constitution is an impossible sell, especially at a time when our trumpets about the critical indispensability of good governance, justice and the rule of law are growing louder and louder every day.

Under the circumstances, and because, as you know, there is no justification for yesterday's action, I will now proceed to redeem my hard-earned reputation, credibility and integrity by pursuing the appropriate recourse in order to protect the rights, power, privileges and authority bestowed to and vested in me by both the May 7, 2010 Constitution of the Unity Party, 1986 Constitution and Laws of the Republic of Liberia, respectively. This decision is a reaction to a wrong action and should not therefore be blamed for any difficulties that may arise therefrom.

In the meantime, let me reemphasize, as I did during our meeting of Tuesday, 3 March 2020 that I am committed to a genuine drive toward the positive transformation of Liberia's governance system without any inclination toward replacing injustice with injustice and exploiting the present situation in the country to validate the past wrongs. Those seeking sanctuaries from their self-inflicted wounds despite this country and its people having provided them so much are only interested in validating their evil deeds, especially since they have shown no remorse for those wrongs. But as for me, my belief in the Unity Party and commitment to Liberia remain rock-solid.

My courage in working to make Liberia free of corruption and all forms of injustice is unbending. All this did not begin with my election as National Secretary-General in 2010 or with my eventual election, by acclamation, in 2016 as National Chairman. It is a direct product of the fundamental Christian principles, virtues and moral training that I received right from infancy. No situation now or in the foreseeable future can weaken my resolve.

Finally, I hope that you will take some time to consider these concerns and view them, once again, as a genuine demonstration of true faith in the Unity Party, its Objectives and Purpose as clearly articulated in Article V of the Party's constitution. I am optimistic that all is not yet lost to reposition the Unity Party for the 2020 senatorial elections, which are only six (6) months away. I had hoped that this would be our priority focus right now.

Kindest regards.

Very truly yours,

Wilmot J. M. Paye
NATIONAL CHAIRMAN



Mr. Wilmot Paye

Français

La Présidente Sirleaf citée dans une affaire de détournement de fonds

Le ministre Samukai, l'un des proches collaborateurs de la présidente Ellen Johnson - Sirleaf, témoignant lundi 9 mars en tant que premier témoin à décharge concernant le fonds d'épargne obligatoire des soldats des Forces armées du Libéria (AFL), a déclaré que tous les retraits effectués sur le compte du fonds d'épargne des soldats

avaient non seulement reçu l'approbation de l'ancienne commandante en chef des Forces Armées du Libéria, Mme Sirleaf, mais aussi ils l'ont été dans l'intérêt des militaires.

« Votre Honneur, tous les retraits effectués sur ce compte l'ont été après avoir demandé et obtenu l'autorisation de la commandante en chef des Forces armées du Libéria et ils l'ont été dans l'intérêt des

militaires des AFL », a-t-il dit.

Le tribunal correctionnel «C» de Monrovia a donné l'ordre aux autorités de la présidence et des ministères de la Défense et de la Justice de mettre à sa disposition les copies originales des communications à laquelle a fait référence l'accusé Brownie J. Samukia, ancien

▶ CONT'D ON PAGE 9



La Fondation Mo Ibrahim annonce qu'il n'y a pas de Lauréat 2019

La Fondation Mo Ibrahim a annoncé aujourd'hui qu'il n'y a pas de lauréat 2019 du Prix Ibrahim pour un leadership d'excellence en Afrique. La décision a été prise à l'issue des délibérations du Comité indépendant d'attribution du Prix.

Annonçant la décision, le président du Comité, Festus Mogae, a déclaré : « Le Prix Ibrahim récompense les dirigeants africains qui ont fait preuve d'un leadership véritablement exceptionnel, et met en exergue des modèles d'exception pour le continent. Il est décerné aux

dirigeants qui, grâce à leur gouvernance remarquable, ont apporté paix, stabilité et prospérité à leurs concitoyens. A l'aune de ces critères rigoureux, le Comité n'a pas été en mesure d'identifier un lauréat pour 2019. »

Pour Mo Ibrahim, Président de la Fondation Mo Ibrahim : « L'Afrique est confrontée à une pluralité de défis parmi les plus lourds du monde contemporain. Notre continent réclame des dirigeants capables de gouverner dans le respect des valeurs et principes démocratiques et de transformer ces défis en opportunités. Les deux tiers de nos concitoyens vivent désormais dans un pays mieux gouverné qu'il y a dix ans : les progrès sont donc indéniables. Je suis certain que nous aurons prochainement l'occasion de décerner ce Prix »

Notes aux rédacteurs

Les candidats au Prix Ibrahim sont d'anciens chefs d'État ou de gouvernement d'un pays africain, élu



L'ALJA condamne l'agression de la garde présidentielle contre des journalistes Libériens

L'Association des journalistes libériens vivant en Amérique (ALJA) condamne fermement « l'augmentation de l'agression des forces de sécurité libériennes contre les journalistes libériens ».

Dans un communiqué de presse, l'Association a averti que si rien n'est fait dès maintenant, « les attaques répétées des forces de l'ordre, qui sont payés et financés par les contribuables libériens, risquent d'anéantir la liberté de la presse et de l'expression acquise au prix de gros sacrifices et dont jouissent actuellement les professionnels des médias dans le pays.

L'Association, citant des articles de presse, a déclaré qu'un certain nombre de journalistes avaient été agressés et arbitrairement détenus par des agents de la garde présidentielle « the Executive Protection Service (EPS) ». Leur crime serait d'avoir couvert une manifestation organisée le mardi 3 mars 2020 à Monrovia par des défenseurs de la création d'un tribunal des crimes de guerre. Le groupe, dirigé par un certain M. Emmanuel Savice, exige la création d'un tribunal des crimes économiques et des crimes de guerre au Libéria pour mettre fin à la culture de l'impunité.

Selon l'ALJA, des informations en sa disposition font état de la bastonnade et de la détention illégale du journaliste Salam Kaloko de Magic TV. Ses effets personnels et son argent auraient été saisis par les agents de l'EPS, à en croire ces informations.

L'Association a aussi nommé le journaliste libérien Aryee Davis de Truth FM qui a été l'une des victimes de l'agression des éléments de la garde présidentielle. Le journaliste Davis avait lui aussi été arrêté et brièvement détenu puis relâché par la suite grâce à l'intervention de la Press Union of Liberia (PUL).

L'organisation basée aux États-Unis s'est dite troublée à plus d'un titre par les attaques de la garde présidentielle qui sont survenues en moins d'une semaine après l'enterrement du journaliste Zenu Miller d'Ok FM, qui avait dit avoir été victime d'une agression similaire de la part de certains éléments de cette garde présidentielle.

À la suite de cet incident, le regretté journaliste Miller s'est plaint à plusieurs reprises de douleurs à la poitrine et aux jambes avant son décès en février 2020.

Avant sa mort, le regretté journaliste a déposé une plainte officielle auprès de la PUL et du ministre libérien de l'Information, Lenn Eugene Nagbe, pour ouvrir une enquête,

mais l'affaire n'a jamais fait l'objet d'une enquête.

L'ALJA a déclaré qu'il y a une semaine, le ministre Nagbe a publiquement admis que Miller s'était plaint d'avoir été victime d'agression physique des agents de l'EPS, mais le gouvernement libérien n'a pas enquêté sur l'allégation ni rendu justice au défunt.

Le ministre a ensuite présenté les excuses du gouvernement à la famille Miller pour son incapacité à enquêter sur les allégations du journaliste disparu. L'ALJA a soutenu que l'admission du ministre Nagbemet en exergue une parodie de justice au pays dans le cas de feu Miller.

L'organisation appelle ainsi le gouvernement libérien à collaborer avec la PUL afin d'ouvrir une enquête impartiale sur les récentes attaques de l'EPS contre les journalistes Salam Kaloko de Magic TV et Aryee Davis de Truth FM. L'Association a souligné que l'enquête est indispensable car elle permettra de faire la lumière sur les allégations d'agression des forces de sécurité contre des citoyens civils.

« Il est regrettable », affirme l'ALJA, « que l'EPS, dont les opérations sont financées par les contribuables libériens, choisisse de se comporter comme des hors-la-loi en attaquant à plusieurs reprises des Libériens pacifiques. Ces actes scandaleux de l'EPS nous rappellent le vilain passé du Libéria et cela doit cesser immédiatement ».

A l'organisation de rappeler que le gouvernement libérien et les médias ne sont pas des adversaires, encore moins des ennemis. Ils doivent donc travailler main dans la main pour faire du Libéria un pays stable et où il fait bon vivre. L'organisation dénonce une tentative d'intimidation et de bâillonnement des voix des sans voix, et un stratagème qui consiste à museler la presse.

Elle appelle les journalistes libériens à rester fermes et à faire preuve de professionnalisme dans leurs reportages. Elle exhorte les médias libériens à contribuer au maintien de la paix et à la promotion de démocratie au Libéria en faisant preuve de diligence raisonnable dans leurs reportages sur les événements dans le pays.

Selon les médias, les forces de sécurité du pays ont arrêté et détenu environ sept journalistes seulement au cours des deux dernières semaines à travers le pays, notamment dans les comtés de Lofa, de Rivercess et de Montserrado.

Français

La Présidente Sirleaf

ministre de la Défense, dans son témoignage.

Selon lui, à la suite du rapport et des recommandations des autorités militaires concernant l'utilisation des fonds d'épargne des militaires, plusieurs réunions ont eu lieu entre le 15 et le 17 janvier 2018, auxquelles ont participé des responsables du ministère de la Défense, le haut commandement de l'armée, la présidente sortante Sirleaf et le nouveau président George Manneh Weah.

Il a fait savoir que Mme Sirleaf a dit avoir discuté avec M. Weah au sujet de l'argent, et les deux présidents (Mme Sirleaf et M. Weah) "ont convenu de rembourser les près de 1,3 million qui ont été utilisés".

Selon M. Samukai, grâce à ce fonds, les militaires ont bénéficié de plusieurs choses, dont entre autres une formation en vue du déploiement à la mission de maintien de la paix au Mali et des prestations [de décès] du personnel militaire à l'intention des bénéficiaires.

L'ancien ministre de la Défense et l'ancien ministre adjoint de la Défense Joseph Johnson et l'ancien contrôleur du ministère de la Défense Nyumah Dorbor sont jugés pour détournement des fonds générés dans le cadre d'un plan d'épargne

obligatoire établi en juillet 2009 pour le personnel militaire sous le règne de l'ancienne présidente Sirleaf.

Le régime du président George Manneh Weah a inculpé les responsables le 9 octobre 2019, les accusant d'avoir commis des actes de sabotage économique, de vol de biens et de détournement de fonds publics, entre autres. Cependant, des responsables militaires actuels ont témoigné dans cette affaire, affirmant que le président Weah s'était engagé à rembourser l'argent en question.

Selon le ministère public, grâce à ce plan d'épargne, l'ancien ministre Samukai, l'ancien vice-ministre de la Défense Johnson et l'ancien contrôleur du ministère de la Défense Dorbor ont réussi à déduire des montants sur le salaire mensuel de chaque personnel militaire, tous grades confondus. Il s'agissait d'une épargne parallèle qui permettrait aux soldats ou à leurs familles de bénéficier d'une pension supplémentaire en cas de blessure, retraite ou de décès.

Plus de 1,2 million de dollars sur les 1,9 million de dollars générés auraient été détournés par M. Samukai et ses complices qui seraient les seuls signataires du compte (aucun représentant du haut commandement militaire n'est signataire).

La Fondation Mo

démocratiquement, et ayant quitté leur fonction au cours des trois dernières années écoulées, au terme du mandat fixé par la constitution de leur pays.

Les lauréats précédents sont Ellen Johnson Sirleaf (2017), ancienne présidente du Libéria, Hifikepune Pohamba (2014), ancien président de la Namibie, Pedro Pires (2011), ancien président du Cabo Verde, Festus Mogae (2008), ancien président du Botswana, et Joaquim Chissano (2007), ancien président du Mozambique. En 2007, Nelson Mandela a été nommé Lauréat d'honneur.

Le Prix Ibrahim :

- identifie et met à l'honneur les dirigeants africains qui, souvent confrontés à des défis complexes, ont développé leur pays, sorti leurs

concitoyens de la pauvreté et construit les bases d'un avenir équitable et durable ;

- met en avant des modèles d'exception pour le continent ;

- permet au continent africain de continuer à bénéficier de l'expérience et de la sagesse de ses dirigeants d'exception en donnant à ces derniers l'occasion de poursuivre leur action publique sur le continent, une fois achevé leur mandat national ;

- représente un « prix d'excellence », et non un « premier prix » ; il n'y a pas nécessairement de lauréat chaque année.

Critères :

- Ancien chef d'État ou de gouvernement africain

- ayant quitté ses fonctions au cours des trois dernières années

COMMENTAIRE

Par Jules Kortenhorst & Whitney Heastie

L'énergie propre est aussi une énergie résiliente

NASSAU - Les Caraïbes et la région environnante sont en première ligne du changement climatique. Les Bahamas, l'archipel qui s'étend de Cuba à la Floride et connu pour ses eaux turquoise translucides, ont été sérieusement malmenés ces dernières années par des ouragans dévastateurs, dont la gravité et la fréquence ont augmenté en raison du réchauffement climatique. Comme ailleurs dans le monde, il y a une part d'injustice dans la situation des insulaires. Les Bahamas et les pays des Caraïbes n'émettant qu'une infime quantité de dioxyde de carbone, leurs habitants ne portent que très peu de responsabilité dans la crise climatique.

Les habitants de la région sont toutefois en train de renverser la vapeur, se transformant de victimes de tragédies climatiques en leaders mondiaux de l'énergie propre et sûre. Les pays des Caraïbes ont des raisons économiques impérieuses de s'engager dans la transition vers l'énergie verte. Ils dépendent depuis des générations des combustibles fossiles importés pour faire tourner leurs économies et doivent, en conséquence, depuis longtemps gérer les incertitudes des cours mondiaux du pétrole et donc les importantes fluctuations des coûts de l'électricité.

Grâce aux progrès réalisés dans les énergies renouvelables, ce défi économique a engendré une opportunité. Contrairement aux combustibles fossiles importés dont les coûts peuvent augmenter, les prix de l'énergie solaire et d'autres sources d'énergie propre, ainsi que des nécessaires systèmes de stockage d'énergie par batteries, continuent de baisser. Et comme ces technologies sont devenues plus abordables et plus compétitives par rapport aux combustibles plus anciens et plus polluants, elles ont créé une puissante incitation pour les pays insulaires à abandonner les centrales électriques conventionnelles alimentées par des combustibles fossiles. En outre, cette tendance ne fera que s'accroître à l'avenir, car les avantages en termes de coûts des nouvelles énergies plus propres les rendent de plus en plus attrayantes par rapport aux combustibles fossiles.

Pour des régions comme les Caraïbes, l'énergie solaire et les systèmes de stockage par batteries ne réduisent pas seulement les coûts de l'électricité ; lorsqu'ils sont correctement déployés, ils améliorent également les capacités d'adaptation face au changement climatique. Comme les Bahamas et d'autres pays de la région l'ont démontré ces dernières années, les micro-réseaux alimentés par l'énergie solaire et les batteries peuvent fournir des services essentiels aux communautés insulaires pendant et après des événements météorologiques violents qui mettraient hors service les sources d'énergie traditionnelles.

Mais pour que ces nouvelles solutions énergétiques présentent une véritable résilience, elles doivent elles-mêmes être

capables de résister aux ouragans, qui ont tendance à arracher les lignes électriques et à déconnecter les communautés des sources centralisées de production d'énergie. Ainsi, dans le cas de l'énergie solaire, les méthodes utilisées pour fixer les panneaux solaires au sol et sur les toits revêtent la plus grande importance.

Nous savons déjà qu'il est possible de construire des systèmes photovoltaïques capables de résister aux ouragans les plus violents. Grâce à une collaboration entre le Rocky Mountain Institute, le gouvernement des Bahamas et la compagnie nationale d'électricité du pays, la Bahamas Power and Light Company (BPL), nous avons développé et installé un toit de panneaux solaires couvrant le parking du stade national de Nassau, à même de résister aux vents d'un ouragan de catégorie cinq sur l'échelle de Saffir-Simpson. Nous avons également construit le premier micro-réseau électrique solaire et de stockage par batteries sur Ragged Island, également capable de résister à des ouragans de catégorie 5. Nous nous attachons maintenant à concevoir et à livrer des micro-réseaux durables et résistants pour les installations essentielles des îles Abacos, suite à la dévastation totale causée par l'ouragan Dorian en septembre 2019.

À mesure que le réchauffement planétaire se poursuit, l'augmentation de l'humidité atmosphérique se traduira par des tempêtes tropicales et des ouragans encore plus violents et plus fréquents. Les énormes dégâts provoqués par Dorian et l'ouragan Maria à Porto Rico en 2017 vont probablement devenir monnaie courante. Heureusement, comme le montre le partenariat aux Bahamas, une grande partie des mesures visant à renforcer la résilience sont également celles qui permettent de limiter les émissions de gaz à effet de serre (GES) et ainsi ralentir le rythme du réchauffement climatique. Loin d'exiger un compromis, les systèmes photovoltaïques résilients sont performants sur tous les fronts.

Les Caraïbes et l'Atlantique ne sont pas les seules régions, tant s'en faut, qui devront mettre en place des infrastructures énergétiques plus résistantes pour prévenir les coupures de courant. Les communautés du monde entier sont de plus en plus confrontées aux défis posés par des phénomènes météorologiques extrêmes et sévères, dont les incendies dévastateurs en Australie, en Indonésie et dans l'ouest des États-Unis.

Dans tous ces cas, les solutions énergétiques propres et localisées offrent des avantages uniques en termes de réduction des émissions de GES et de maintien de l'approvisionnement énergétique après une catastrophe naturelle. Elles montrent la voie à suivre pour un avenir énergétique plus fiable. En s'engageant dans la transition vers une énergie propre, les Bahamas donnent l'exemple au reste du monde, et en particulier aux pays qui sont responsables de la très grande majorité des émissions mondiales de gaz à effet de serre.

ARTICLE

ARTICLE

Work in progress for Africa's remaining conflict hotspots

Insecurity persists in the DR Congo, Somalia, South Sudan, Nigeria, Central African Republic, Mali and Libya

BY: KINGSLEY IGHOBOR

Despite efforts by various stakeholders to establish a peaceful Africa, armed conflicts continue in parts of the continent. The nature of violent conflicts in Africa has changed since before independence when they were mostly ideologically-driven guerilla warfare. Many of the current conflicts are driven by prospects of political power or financial gain, with armed groups fighting to acquire valuable mineral resources, assert their ideology or address grievances.

In its quest to “Silence the Guns” in Africa by 2020, which is its theme for the year, the African Union and other partners ought to focus on the main crisis spots currently: The Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), Somalia, South Sudan, Nigeria, the Central African Republic (CAR) and Libya, where tens of thousands of people have been killed and millions more displaced.

Democratic Republic of the Congo

The war in the DRC is one of Africa's deadliest. More than five million people have been killed in the Congolese war, according to the news agency Reuters. It began in 1998 with the involvement of about 20 different armed groups who maraud the country's vast jungles. Many of these groups fight each other, while others from neighbouring countries use the Congolese territory to launch attacks on their home countries. Others simply exploit the country's mineral resources, including gold, platinum and coltan fueling the various conflicts further.

Among the several armed groups are the Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Rwanda; the Allied Democratic Forces, a Ugandan rebel group based in the Rwenzori Mountains of eastern Congo; the Lord's Resistance Army, another Ugandan rebel group based along the northern border; the National Forces of Liberation, a Burundian rebel group operating in South Kivu; and the Mai-Mai militias operating in the Kivu.

In the first half of 2019, about 732,000 new displacements were recorded, 718,000 associated with conflict and 14,000 associated with disasters, posing additional challenges for the new DRC government.

About 18,500 UN peacekeepers, including military and police personnel, provide security for civilians threatened by the armed groups and support the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration of former combatants. The UN Mission in the DRC (MONUSCO) also helps to strengthen institutions for reconciliation, law enforcement and justice, and the equitable management of natural resources. Furthermore, it is involved in disarmament, demobilisation and community violence reduction efforts.

South Sudan

After a brutal civil war, South Sudan declared its independence from Sudan in 2011. However, tensions persisted over natural resources, specifically access to the oil fields in newly-independent South. Matters have also been strained between the Sudan People's Liberation Movement led by President Salva Kiir, and the Sudan People's Liberation Movement in Opposition led by Mr. Kiir's former vice president Riek Machar.

Since civil war broke out in 2013, about 380,000 people are reported to have been killed and more than two million have been forced to flee their homes. A 2015 peace deal fell apart after clashes between government forces and rebels. A new “revitalized” peace agreement was signed in 2018 however progress is slow. A second deadline to form a unity government has passed with Mr Machar expressing concerns over some unresolved issues.

The UN Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS) was established in 2011 and consists of about 17,000 uniformed and civilian personnel. It works to support peace consolidation, assist in protecting civilians, create suitable conditions for the delivery of humanitarian

assistance, among other tasks. As part of its women, peace and security efforts, it is actively working to increase women's participation in political processes.

Central African Republic

CAR has suffered more than six years of conflict. The initial trigger was the Séléka armed opposition entering the capital city Bangui in March 2013 in opposition to then-President François Bozizé and effectively seizing control of the country. Security conditions deteriorated further in December when clashes erupted between various armed groups. This fighting persists and has been further complicated by the fragmentation and reforming of alliances.

In response, the UN Security Council established the UN Mission in the Central African Republic (MINUSCA) in April 2014. It was mandated to protect civilians, facilitate the delivery of humanitarian assistance, and support national efforts to disarm, demobilise and reintegrate former combatants and armed elements.

In February 2019, the Government and 14 armed groups signed a peace agreement which has led to fewer direct clashes. The UN, the African Union and others are cooperating in support of the agreement to end violence against civilians, strengthen the extension of state authority and bring social and economic development to the country.

With approximately 14,000 peacekeepers, MINUSCA continues to support the implementation of the peace deal and its other mandated tasks. However, insecurity and attacks against civilians, humanitarians, and UN peacekeeping forces continue. More than 600,000 people are internally displaced, and thousands have been killed.

Libya

The ongoing conflict in Libya began in 2011 after the collapse of Muammar Gaddafi's regime and centres mostly around the control of territory and oil fields.

Fighting has been between the House of Representatives' (HoR) which came into office in 2014 and controls eastern and southern Libya and its Tripoli-based rival, the General National Congress (GNC). In December 2015, the warring parties signed the Libyan Political Agreement (LPA), committing to a Government of National Accord (GNA). However, the GNA, which is recognised by the UN, continues to face opposition from within the HoR and GNC.

In April 2019, Khalifa Haftar, the head of the self-styled Libyan National Army, which controls much of the countryside, launched an attack on Tripoli. About 1,000 people were reported to have been killed in that attack and more than 128,000 displaced since the latest round of the conflict began in April. A UN arms embargo continues to be breached with both sides drawing on international support for weapons.

The UN Support Mission in Libya (UNSMIL) was established in September 2011 to assist the country's transitional authorities in their post-conflict efforts. This includes support to implementation of the LPA and future phases of the transition process.

Nigeria

The Boko Haram insurgency in Nigeria that began in 2009 has extended to neighbouring countries, including Cameroon, Chad and Niger. Currently led by Abubakar Shekau, the jihadist group's initial objective was to confront what it perceived as the westernization of Nigerian culture. In 2015, Abubakar Shekau pledged allegiance to the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant or ISIS, rebranding his organisation as the Islamic State in West Africa.

More than 30,000 people have been killed in Nigeria's long-running conflict with Boko Haram. About two million people have fled their homes and another 22,000 are missing, believed to have been conscripted. In April 2014, the group abducted 276 girls from a school in Chibok, a village in Borno State, northeast Nigeria. A few managed to escape or be rescued. More than 112 girls remain missing.

A multinational joint task force of about 10,500 troops from



Benin, Cameroon, Chad, Niger and Nigeria is currently battling the insurgency.

Mali

In 2012, the Tuareg separatist rebels of the National Movement for the Liberation of Azawa (MNLA) conquered northern Mali. Prior to this, a sizable number of Tuareg rebels had moved to Libya to join Muammar Gaddafi's fighting forces. They returned with sophisticated weapons to join the 2012 attack on northern Mali after the fall of Gaddafi's government.

Since then several other armed groups emerged or splintered off from existing ones with different interests related to self-determination and political and socio-economic grievances. The Malian government and two coalitions of these armed groups – the Plateforme and Coordination – signed the Agreement on Peace and Reconciliation in Mali in May 2015. However, fighting continues with armed Islamist groups attacking civilians, state counterterrorism actions, and intercommunal violence.

The UN Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA) was established in April 2013 to support political processes and bolster security in the country. The 15,000 uniformed and civilian personnel work to support the implementation of the peace agreement and reduce violence. They also protect civilians, support the re-establishment of state institutions and basic services, and support the cantonment, disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration of armed groups. MINUSMA is one of the UN's most challenging operations and it has suffered significant casualties in recent years.

Somalia

The Somali civil war began in 1991 when the government of President Siad Barre was overthrown. Armed groups started competing for power. Without a central administration, Somalia became a failed state, with rival warlords and different groups controlling the capital Mogadishu and other southern parts of the country.

The Al-Shabaab militant group emerged as an offshoot of the Islamic Courts Union which controlled Mogadishu in 2006, while a transitional federal government was in exile in Kenya. Ethiopian forces routed the courts union, paving the way for the government in exile to return home. Al Shabaab carried out attacks against the government, prompting the deployment of the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) in 2007.

In 2012, a new federal government was constituted. The same year Al-Shabaab declared allegiance to the militant group al-Qaeda. Fighting between armed Islamist groups and pro-government forces has led to the deaths of thousands of civilians and the displacement of over two million people. Despite gains against the group, Al-Shabaab insurgents continue to launch sporadic attacks against civilians and the government.

The UN Assistance Mission in Somalia (UNSOM) provides policy advice to the Somali government and AMISOM on security sector reforms, disengaging combatants, rule of law, among other issues. Furthermore, UNSOM is helping build the Federal Government's capacity to promote respect for human rights and women's empowerment, promote child protection, and prevent conflict-related sexual and gender-based violence.

<https://www.un.org/africarenewal/>

Liberia drops in rule of law ranking

Liberia falls in the 2020 rule of law score, decreasing by 1.3% and ranking 98 among 128 countries in this year's Index.

The World Justice Project (WJP) on Tuesday March 10, released the WJP Rule of Law Index® 2020, an annual report based on national surveys of more than 130,000 households and 4,000 legal practitioners and experts around the world.

The WJP Rule of Law Index measures rule of law performance in 128 countries and jurisdictions across eight primary factors: Constraints on Government Powers, Absence of Corruption, Open Government, Fundamental Rights, Order and Security, Regulatory Enforcement, Civil Justice, and Criminal Justice. The Index is the world's leading source for original, independent data on the rule of law.

Liberia's overall rule of law score decreased 1.3% in this year's Index, at 98th place out of 128 countries and jurisdictions worldwide, but improved one position in global rank.

Liberia's score places it at 15 out of 31 countries in the



Sub-Saharan Africa region* and 8 out of 19 among low income** countries.

Denmark, Norway, and Finland topped the WJP Rule of Law Index rankings in 2020. Venezuela, RB; Cambodia; and Democratic Republic of the Congo had the lowest overall rule of law scores—the same as in 2019.

More countries declined than improved in overall rule of law performance for a third year in a row, continuing a negative slide toward weakening and

stagnating rule of law around the world. The majority of countries showing deteriorating rule of law in the 2020 Index also declined in the previous year, demonstrating a persistent downward trend. This was particularly pronounced in the Index factor measuring Constraints on Government Powers.

The declines were widespread and seen in all corners of the world. In every region, a majority of

countries slipped backward or remained unchanged in their overall rule of law performance since the 2019 WJP Rule of Law Index.

Regionally, Sub-Saharan Africa's top performer in the Index is Namibia (35th out of 128 countries globally), followed by Rwanda and Mauritius. The three countries with the lowest scores in the region were Mauritania, Cameroon, and Democratic Republic of the Congo (126th out of 128 countries globally).

Countries with the strongest improvement in rule of law were Ethiopia (5.6% increase in score, driven primarily by gains in Constraints on Government Powers and Fundamental Rights) and Malaysia (5.1%, driven primarily by gains in Constraints on Government Powers, Fundamental Rights, and Regulatory Enforcement).

The largest declines in the rule of law were seen in Cameroon (-4.4%, driven primarily by falling scores in Order and Security and Fundamental Rights) and Iran (-4.2%, driven primarily by falling scores in Criminal Justice). Over the last five

years, countries experiencing the largest average annual percentage drop in the rule of law were Egypt (-4.6 %); Venezuela, RB (-3.9%); Cambodia (-3.0%); Philippines (-2.5%); Cameroon (-2.4%); Hungary (-2.1%); and Bosnia and Herzegovina (-2.1%).

The single biggest decline by factor over the past five years was Egypt's and Poland's score for Constraints on Government Powers, with an average annual decline of -8.5% and -6.8%, respectively.

"The rule of law is not just a matter for judges or lawyers," said William H. Neukom, WJP founder and CEO. "It is the bedrock of communities of justice, opportunity, and peace. We are all stakeholders in the rule of law and therefore we all have a role to play in upholding it. The 2020 Index underscores that we have our work cut out for us."

The complete 2020 report—including country profiles, data visualizations, methodology, and download options—is available on March 11 at: www.worldjusticeproject.org/2020-Index

EJS legacy is our legacy

Former U.S. Ambassador to Liberia, Mrs. Linda Thomas Greenfield says Ellen Johnson Sirleaf legacy, is a legacy for all women.

The former U.S. Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs speaking during the launch of former President

not big enough. What we see here today is a big dream. President Sirleaf set standards during her 12 years as President of Liberia. She began and continues to set standard as role model for women empowerment," Madame Greenfield, who doubles as the

Madame Greenfield explained that the establishment of the Ellen Johnson Sirleaf Presidential Center and its flagship Amujae is the realization of a scary dream. The initiative aimed at empowering women across the African continent and beyond.

"You've worked hard... Ma Ellen did not shut the door behind her, she looked back," Madame Greenfield said of Mrs. Sirleaf.

She narrated that Madame Sirleaf has demonstrated her true nature as a leader, one who went through the door and looked back to help others to follow her path and achieve their goals as well.

She believes that with such an initiative to groom women to take up leadership positions, there is a future for Africa.

The Amujae initiative is the first of its kind- to develop young women and cushioned them into leadership-"Thank you Madame, (its) the first but not the last," Madame Greenfield said.

The former U.S diplomat told the audience that the Amujae initiative requires the effort of all to do their part and ensure that women meet their 50% goal of occupying positions in national leadership.

chair of the Amujae America's chapter asserted.

She told the audience that Mrs. Sirleaf had a huge dream to establish a presidential library and a center to nurture young women into leadership and today that dream has become a reality.



Mrs. Linda Thomas Greenfield

Ellen Johnson Sirleaf's Presidential Center for Women Empowerment flagship program Amujae, on Sunday March 8, noted that Mrs. Sirleaf has set a standard for all women.

"I truly believe if your dream does not scare you it is

EJS Center to raise

Cont'd from back page

the fence one sits or stands, the reality is Liberia's 24th president, our 24th president is the first democratically elected female president on the continent of Africa, one who served two terms at the will of the Liberian people; and when her term was up after 2 6-year terms of leadership, she stepped aside, which was unprecedented for 7 decades of presidential leadership in Liberia. She is also a Nobel laureate and the first and only female so far to have received the Mo Ibrahim Prize for Achievement in African Leadership. There are so many firsts and experiences, that are inspirational, that should be digitized, preserved and celebrated, and this center will do just that" she opined.

Expectation for the Center "We can all look forward to a world class PCWD that has broad local, African and global appeal," Dr. Weeks explained.

"We look forward to a Center that will ensure that Liberia as it develops and grows, that Africa as it develops and grows will be gender equitable and inclusive within its leadership landscape," she added.

However, she acknowledged that there is still much work to be done and it requires the efforts of all and sundry.

Dr. Weeks said the center has many dimensions: "There is a 'bricks and mortar'

component, which includes a presidential library a museum, a training center, that needs to be built...funding is required; there are presidential papers and memorabilia that need to be collected, digitized, and archived, continually and sustainably; there are the Amujae Leadership Fora that must be sustainably implemented in a 3-sessions cycle annually."

On Sunday March 8, former President Sirleaf launched the Ellen Johnson Sirleaf Presidential Center flagship Amujae, at which time she encouraged women to participate in the program which is aimed at grooming women to take up future leadership roles in their countries.

"I hope to encourage everyone here today to participate in any way you can. Become a mentor. Lend expertise. Tell a story. Tell other people's stories. Give support. Dream big. Come together and dream even bigger!" Mrs. Sirleaf said.

There were special congratulatory messages from former British Prime Minister Tony Blair, Former U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton and Ethiopian President Sahle-Work Zewde.

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EJS Center to raise waves of women leaders

-Dr. Weeks



Dr. Ophelia Weeks

The Executive Director of the Ellen Johnson Sirleaf Presidential Center for Women Empowerment and Development, Dr. Ophelia Weeks says the vision of its founder is to raise women's ambition into leadership position.

"Madame Sirleaf has a vision to embolden and empower women, to raise women's ambitions to leadership positions; not just one woman here and one woman there, but waves of women leaders, through deliberate programing efforts that create pipelines of women aspiring to top

positions," Dr. Weeks said as she delivered her acceptance speech on Sunday.

Dr. Weeks the immediate past President of the University of Liberia was vetted and appointed as the first Executive Director to head the EJS Presidential Center with its flagship program the Amujae-meaning we are going up.

The EJS Presidential Center for Women Empowerment Executive Director noted that the center will also provide corrective lens for those in power (not just political) to see the importance, the necessity of including women in leadership positions.

The Library Dr. Weeks explained that the library, museum, exhibitions and archives will preserve President Sirleaf's experiences, her life's work and legacy, for current and future generations, and will serve as a lighthouse for all.

"No matter what side of

▶ **CONT'D ON PAGE 11**

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Lonestar Cell MTN connects remote Liberian villages

Lonestar Cell MTN announced Wednesday that it has expanded its telecommunication services to over 53 rural villages in four counties namely, Bong, Nimba, Gbarpolu and Grand Capemount Counties.

The Liberian mobile telecommunications giant said it is the demonstration of its commitment to providing full network coverage to all Liberians to connect them to the digital world.

"In line with this commitment, the company has been working with its partners to expand its network coverage to reach the most remote towns and villages across Liberia, the company stated in a release issued on Wednesday March 11.

"People in these locations, which were not previously covered by any networks, can now make calls, send text messages and even use the internet Lonestar Cell MTN added.

It explained that the



installation of these new sites means that customers no longer have to travel long distances to search for a signal to make a connection.

The company added that the expansion is part of the significant investment

Lonestar Cell MTN is making to improve the experience for its customers and deliver high-speed data and high-quality voice calls across Liberia.

Commenting on the new sites, Lonestar Cell MTN's Chief Executive Officer,

UcheOfodile said, "We believe everyone deserves the benefit of a modern, connected life. Our continued network expansion is our way of ensuring that in the most remote parts of Liberia, people can now connect to their families and loved ones using the MTN network. We are Liberia's brightest network and our customers, who we consider our family, can always enjoy quality and affordable telecommunications services everywhere they go."

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