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Covid-19 food set for May 23 **-Steering Committee**



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Continental News

Madagascar ships anti-virus potion to Guinea-Bissau

Madagascar on Saturday delivered to Guinea-Bissau a shipment of a herbal tea that President Andry Rajoelina has touted as a powerful remedy against the novel coronavirus and hopes to distribute across West Africa and beyond.

Baptised Covid-Organics, the drink is derived from artemisia -- a plant with proven efficacy in malaria treatment -- and other indigenous herbs.

Guinea-Bissau's self-proclaimed President Umaro Sissoco Embalo was at the airport to oversee reception of the cargo donated by Madagascar, AFP correspondents said.

After Equatorial Guinea on Thursday, Guinea-Bissau is the second country to take delivery of the potion that Madagascar claims cures COVID-19 patients within 10 days. The World Health Organization has said that the herbal tea's effects had not been tested, and there are no published scientific



Bottoms up (AFP Photo/RIJASOLO)

studies of the potion.

Embalo's chief of staff Califa Soares Cassama told reporters that part of Saturday's shipment was to be passed along to the other 14 members of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS).

Rajoelina had on Friday

thanked Embalo for taking charge of the distribution in West Africa.

There was no indication of how Guinea-Bissau, poor even by African standards and chronically unstable politically, would handle the required logistics.

The country of 1.8 million

has reported 200 coronavirus cases, including Prime Minister Nuno Gomes Nabiam and four other cabinet members, and one virus death.

Embalo has said that he

will test the potion from Madagascar on leading government members, including the premier.

Equatorial Guinea meanwhile announced that it will distribute the potion to infected people in hospitals during two weeks and, in its preventative version, to everybody else.

Back in Madagascar, unarmed soldiers have been going door to door in the capital Antananarivo handing out Covid-Organics.

When launching the distribution last month, Rajoelina said two people had already been cured thanks to the potion, and added: "We can change the history of the entire world."

There is currently no scientifically proven cure for coronavirus, which has killed more than 240,000 people worldwide according to official figures compiled by AFP.

President questions Tanzania coronavirus kits after goat test

Coronavirus test kits used in Tanzania were dismissed as faulty by President John Magufuli on Sunday, because he said they had returned positive results on samples taken from a goat and a pawpaw.

Magufuli, whose government has already drawn criticism for being secretive about the coronavirus outbreak and has previously asked Tanzanians to pray the coronavirus away, said the kits had "technical errors". The

COVID-19 testing kits had been imported from abroad, Magufuli said during an event in Chato in the north west of Tanzania, although he did not give further details. The president said he had instructed Tanzanian security forces to check the quality of the kits. They had randomly obtained several non-human samples, including from a pawpaw, a goat and a sheep, but had assigned them human names and ages.

These samples were then submitted to Tanzania's

laboratory to test for the coronavirus, with the lab technicians left deliberately unaware of their origins.

Samples from the pawpaw and the goat tested positive for COVID-19, the president said, adding this meant it was likely that some people were being tested positive when in fact they were not infected by the coronavirus.

"There is something happening. I said before we should not accept that every aid is meant to be good for this nation," Magufuli said, adding the kits should be investigated. As of Sunday, Tanzania had recorded 480 cases of COVID-19 and 17 deaths but unlike most other African countries, Dar es Salaam sometimes goes for days without offering updates, with the last bulletin on cases on Wednesday.

COVID-19 infections and fatalities reported across Africa have been relatively low compared with the United States, parts of Asia and Europe. But Africa also has extremely low levels of testing, with rates of only around 500 per million people. -Reuters

Ivory Coast PM flies to France for medical checks



Ivory Coast Prime Minister Amadou Gon Coulibaly, the ruling party's candidate in October's presidential election, has flown to France for medical checks, the presidency said on Sunday. The brief statement said Gon Coulibaly left on Saturday but gave no details about his state of health.

A source close to Gon Coulibaly, who had heart surgery in 2012, said the prime minister had missed a scheduled check-up in France in April because he was busy coordinating Ivory Coast's coronavirus response.

"His intense activity these last weeks had an impact on his health, but it is nothing very serious. He is doing well," the source said, adding that Gon Coulibaly would return to

Ivory Coast in a few days.

Defence Minister Hamed Bakayoko, who recovered from the coronavirus last month, will serve as interim prime minister in Gon Coulibaly's absence, the presidency's statement said.

Gon Coulibaly self-isolated in late March because of possible exposure to the coronavirus but did not test positive.

President Alassane Ouattara designated Gon Coulibaly in March as the ruling RHP party's candidate for the presidential election after saying he would not himself seek a third term.

Ivory Coast has recorded more than 1,300 cases of the coronavirus, one of the highest totals in West Africa, with 15 deaths. -Reuters



FILE PHOTO: Tanzania's President-elect Magufuli is escorted after inspecting a Tanzanian military guard of honour during his inauguration ceremony at the Uhuru Stadium in Dar es Salaam

EDITORIAL

It's time to become more vigilant

SOME UNSCRUPULOUS BUSINESS people including foreigners are using this global health crisis to flood the Liberian market with substandard and unsafe commodities, mainly drugs and other products, endangering the lives of our already disadvantaged population.

NEWS THAT THE Liberia Revenue Authority (LRA) seized a huge quantity of substandard pharmaceutical products smuggled in to the country recently has drawn our attention.

A RELEASE ISSUED by the LRA last week Thursday detailed the substandard pharmaceutical products, including Vitamin C, Vitamin B-2, Cold Caps and Amoxicillin, among others, were concealed in 18 boxes onboard three Guinean commercial buses with a total cost of US\$10,000.

THEY WERE ILLEGALLY imported into Liberia through the Liberian-Sierra Leonean border post at Bo Waterside in Grand Cape Mount County by four individuals who are not licensed to import medicines, the LRA said.

THE RELEASE SAID the substandard medicines have been turned over to the Liberia Medicines and Health Products Regulatory Authority (LMHRA) for inter-agency coordination and action.

BESIDES, OFFICERS OF the LRA Anti-Smuggling & Investigation Unit (ASIU) recently intercepted a 20-foot Container with Hazardous Chemical (Sulphuric Acid) imported from the Netherlands without permit, which breached Liberia General Business Law and the Environmental Protection and Management Law of the country.

WE WONDER HOW many other contrabands have succeeded in slipping thru our borders and entering our market, exposing both Liberians and the public generally to health hazard and eventual complications.

IT IS ABOUT time authorities at the Liberia Medicines and Health Products Regulatory Authority (LMHRA) become more vigilant, particularly during this COVID-19 crisis when our people are desperate in seeking medications for various types of sicknesses.

WE SHOULD NOT sit supinely and allow unscrupulous individuals purporting as honest business people to flood our markets with products that would send them to their early graves.

EVEN PRIOR TO the COVID-19 pandemic, we all are aware of companies out there that manufacture substandard medicines and bring them to countries with weak scrutiny for sale, endangering lives. What's more of a crisis period when everything seems to be upside down?

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COMMENTARY

By Bertrand Piccard

Business Leaders Commit to a Clean Economic Recovery

With pressure mounting in some quarters for a return to "normal," there can be no delay in planning for the post-pandemic future. Unless the world's leading businesses commit to rebuilding on an entirely new foundation, another global crisis will be inevitable.

LAUSANNE - The COVID-19 crisis is far from over. Yet, even as people continue to transmit the coronavirus and the death toll mounts remorselessly, pressure for a return to normal is already growing in some quarters.

The immediate question is what normal even means. After all, the global economy was built on a fragile, unsustainable, and unequal basis and could hardly be called normal. A tenuous political, ecological, and socioeconomic system that was already existentially threatened by climate change has now been brought low by a microscopic nemesis. Is that really the type of society we want to see emerge from this crisis?

Imagine, instead, that the COVID-19 crisis does pave the way to a new world. What might it look like? Commentaries and analyses proposing what should come next are everywhere. But simply calling for change won't make it happen. That is why the Solar Impulse Foundation and its corporate partners are committing to implementing concrete solutions ourselves.

All told, the Foundation's partners account for more than one million jobs worldwide, as well as a considerable share of the global economy. We produce everything from critical health-care equipment to basic and luxury goods and raw materials. We manage financial products, build new infrastructure, and provide clean energy. Our activities help people to feed and clothe themselves and their families, stay warm, travel, and pursue the lives they want to lead.

As major economic and industrial players, we are fully aware of our role in society, and we will do everything we can to build a better post-pandemic world - cleaner, fairer, more sustainable, more efficient, and more respectful of biodiversity and the climate. Though the COVID-19 crisis is hitting us as hard as anyone else, we remain committed to meeting our emissions-reduction targets and ushering in a circular economy, by promoting sustainable and affordable food, renewable energies, and fair-trade products.

We will do this with clean technologies whose development the Solar Impulse Foundation has been supporting through its 1000 Solutions Challenge for several years now. Regardless of what sector one operates in - from water, energy, and infrastructure to transportation, manufacturing, and agriculture - innovations are emerging to ensure sustainability.

Our commitment is not just to the planet, but also to the economy. Today's clean technologies are increasingly good for business. They furnish us with less costly renewable energy and more efficient industrial processes. They reduce waste and

pollution, and streamline recycling. As assets that are both clean and profitable, they are a key engine of qualitative, rather than merely quantitative, economic growth.

With clean technologies, we can create an entirely new economic system in which consumption is improved even as we consume less. Environmentalists' interests would no longer be pitted against those of the major industrial players. Instead, we would all be focused on the same goals: to create good jobs, support social welfare, and improve the quality of life on this planet.

In the case of the COVID-19 crisis, some commentators have welcomed the halt to human activities, insofar as this has reduced pollution and greenhouse-gas emissions. But this is no cause for celebration. Millions will suffer through the downturn. The current situation demonstrates precisely how fragile the prevailing economic model has become, and it increases the urgency of creating a system in which economic interests go hand in hand with those of the planet.

Some companies have already begun to use the technologies needed to do this. But adoption must become more widespread, so that clean tech becomes the new normal to which we return when the pandemic threat has passed.

To that end, we are calling on all governments to implement ambitious environmental policies, offering clear strategies and sector-specific targets that will drive the necessary investments. Moreover, we want all legal or legislative frameworks to avoid distortion of competition between market actors who are part of the solution and those who continue to act as if there was no environmental crisis at all.

Though it is a terrible tragedy, the pandemic can serve as an opportunity to rebuild on a new, more sustainable footing. The Solar Impulse Foundation and its partners are committed to doing precisely that, and we urge governments and the rest of the business community to join us.

This commentary is co-authored by the following Solar Impulse Foundation partners: Bernard Arnault, Chairman and CEO, LVMH; Pierre-Etienne Bindschedler, CEO, SOPREMA; Jean-Laurent Bonnafé, Director and CEO, BNP Paribas; Jean-Pierre Clamadiou, Chairman of the Board of Directors, ENGIE; Ilham Kadri, CEO, Chairman of Executive Committee, Solvay; Georges Kern, CEO, Breitling; Florent Menegaux, Chief Executive Officer, Michelin and President, Movin'On; Benoît Potier, Chairman and CEO, Air Liquide; Anne Rigail, CEO, Air France; Mark Schneider, CEO, Nestlé; Markus Steilemann, CEO, Covestro; and Jean-Pascal Tricoire, Chairman and CEO, Schneider Electric.

O-PED

By Andrés Velasco

The Populists' Pandemic

Because populist leaders of both the right and left have topped the ranks of incompetence during the pandemic, it has become common to claim that they will soon become its political victims. Alas, this may be wishful thinking.

LONDON - US President Donald Trump suggested that injecting them with household disinfectant might cure people of the coronavirus. Filipino President Rodrigo Duterte ordered police and military to shoot dead anyone "who creates trouble" during the stay-at-home period. And in Mexico, President Andrés Manuel López Obrador denied for weeks that the virus was a threat and continued to hug and shake hands with supporters, only to flip suddenly and impose a severe lockdown without warning.

Because populist leaders of both the right and left have topped the ranks of incompetence during the pandemic, it has become common to claim that they could soon become its political victims. Alas, this may be wishful thinking. The virus is lethal and ruthless, but alone it will not flatten the populist contagion curve.

The crisis has had one healthy byproduct: restoring a modicum of respect toward expertise. After making disparagement of experts a trademark of their political careers, both Trump and UK Prime Minister Boris Johnson have been forced to hold press conferences with their scientific advisers, who have openly contradicted their bosses when needed. Even worse, Trump has had to endure the indignity of a poll showing that Anthony Fauci, the government's top infectious disease expert, enjoys an approval rating nearly twice as high as his own.

This is one strike against the anti-elitism that has propelled populists to power. But other factors still operate in their favor. Wild-eyed populists are certainly not the only ones making a hash of things. Spanish Prime Minister Pedro Sánchez and Italian Prime Minister Giuseppe Conte - not populists themselves, though they have populist junior partners in their coalition governments - have the unenviable record of leading countries that are world leaders in per capita coronavirus deaths.

And who ever said that facts drive political preferences, anyway? The weight of fake news and identity-driven politics may be rising, not falling, in the era of COVID-19. Trump blamed China for the virus and closed off the US to migrants, and his base cheered. Brazil's President Jair Bolsonaro followed the same script, claiming that the coronavirus crisis is a media trick. As an epidemiologist from the University of São Paulo put it: "It's as if everybody's on the same train heading towards a cliff-edge and someone says: 'Look out! There's a cliff!' And the passengers shout: 'Oh no there isn't!' And the train driver says: 'Yeah, there's nothing there!'"

Because establishing causal relationships is hard (Are lockdowns effective in slowing the rate of contagion? Are fiscal expansions effective in pulling the economy out of recession?), most people do not expect to arrive at answers on their own. Instead, they look to others who claim to know, and then they follow a simple rule of thumb: Believe people with whom I can identify, who talk and act like I do, and who are likely to share my values and make the decisions I would have made if I had enough information.

That is why voters trust populist politicians and distrust the political establishment, leaders of traditional institutions and, until recently, experts and technocrats. Whether populists gain or lose politically from the pandemic thus depends on whether the crisis strengthens or further weakens trust in democratic institutions.

I can imagine two very different replies to this second question. The first is the 2010 answer: As many voters saw it, after the global financial crisis Wall Street got a bailout, while Main Street got only unemployment and home foreclosures. (Forget that in the US the bailout averted another Great Depression and also made the government money.)

In some countries, the economic recovery was slow; in others, like Greece, the crisis dragged on for nearly a decade. Add a spoonful of corruption, a pinch of ineptitude, and a dash of juicy scandal, ranging from FIFA to the Catholic Church, and voilà: a perfect casserole of distrust. We are not in this together, many concluded. Elites look out only for themselves. Let's drain the swamp.

The alternative answer dates back to 1945. From the rubble and devastation of war, durable social trust emerged. In the UK and the US, the rich kid from Oxford or Yale had fought shoulder-to-shoulder with the coal miner's son from North Yorkshire or Hazard, Kentucky. Private businesses, large and small, had mobilized for a public purpose: the war effort. And politicians had delivered on the ultimate common good: victory.

The suffering and loss of life during World War II had been horrific. But in many countries, citizens could plausibly conclude that we are in this together, and together we will build a better tomorrow.

Trust in a public institution and in your neighbors is bad for populism, and populist politicians know it. That is why Santiago Abascal, the leader of Spain's far-right Vox movement, is demanding an end to the applause and to the enthusiastic singing that accompanies it. Instead, he wants Spaniards to bang pots and pans in protest against the government.

But before liberal democrats get their hopes up, they should remember that the crisis will also sow plenty of divisions: between professionals who can work from home and factory workers who cannot; between the elderly who cannot go outside and the young who are being kept inside by government decree; and between formal workers who receive wage subsidies and the self-employed who have lost all income.

The virus contagion curve may be flattening, but the unemployment and business bankruptcy curves remain on the rise. If the public-health shock is followed by a protracted economic crisis that leaves many people behind, trust in government and institutions will suffer and national identities will fracture even more. It will be 2010 all over again - or worse. United we stand, divided we fall. If we fall, it won't be liberal democrats who pick up the pieces.

OPINION

By Jeffrey Frankel

How to Avoid a W-Shaped Recession

As policymakers plan their COVID-19 responses, policymakers should remember a simple rule of thumb: let "W" stand for premature "withdrawal" of public-health or economic-stimulus measures. As previous crises have shown, such proposals should be avoided like the plague.

CAMBRIDGE - "Those who cannot remember the past are condemned to repeat it," George Santayana famously quipped in 1905. It is a phrase that has been repeated for over a century, but rarely heeded. As COVID-19 decimates the global economy, our understanding of history could be the difference between a V- or U-shaped recession and a W-shaped one, in which incipient recovery is followed by successive relapses.

As recently as March, V-shaped recoveries in individual economies seemed plausible. Once infections and deaths had peaked and begun to decline, the logic went, people would eagerly return to work. Economic activity might even get an extra boost, as consumers released pent-up demand.

This is in line with the pattern of recovery from natural disasters, such as earthquakes and hurricanes, as well as the epidemic of severe acute respiratory syndrome in 2003. Though output in China - the outbreak's epicenter - did suffer as a result of SARS, it recovered so fast that annual GDP was hardly affected.

Today, China reports that industrial production rebounded in March from its plunge in February. But, overall, it seems clear that forecasts of a V-shaped global recovery from COVID-19 are too optimistic.

Policymakers may, however, be able to engineer a U-shaped recovery. In such a scenario, certain segments of the economy would be reopened, with employees separated physically and, if possible, temporally (in shifts). This would keep the economy going until the health crisis is under control, at which point all sectors could be restarted and a full economic recovery could begin.

This scenario would require countries to ensure frequent, free testing on a massive scale. That is technically feasible, at least in high-income countries, though governance failures in many - such as the United Kingdom and the United States - have impeded its implementation. If effective tests for antibodies are developed, and the relationship between antibodies and immunity to COVID-19 is confirmed, a return of economic activity would be all the more achievable. Contact tracing - which has helped to limit the spread of the virus in parts of Asia, such as Singapore and South Korea - should also be considered.

Of course, a cure or vaccine would be a game changer. But even in the best-case scenario, testing and approving any breakthrough could take a year and a half. If economic activity remained severely depressed for that long would, the status of the current recession would be confirmed as by far the worst since the Great Depression of the 1930s.

But there is an even more devastating scenario: a prolonged W-shaped recovery, caused by political leaders' failure to heed the lessons of history. Two policy mistakes - echoing those made in the interwar period - seem particularly likely.

The first mistake - toward which many leaders, beginning with US President Donald Trump, have already shown a dangerous predilection - would be to declare "victory" over the virus prematurely, abandon public-health interventions, and allow a second wave of infections to take hold. That is what happened during the so-called Spanish flu pandemic a century ago. The first wave hit the US in early 1918. The second wave, in September 1918, was far deadlier. The third wave persisted into 1920.

In 1918, like today, cities instituted social-distancing measures, including school closures, prohibitions on public gatherings, and face-mask requirements. But delayed action was common, and few maintained the interventions for long. A 2007 study from the National Academy of Sciences found that US cities' success in reducing the number of deaths "was often very limited because of interventions being introduced too late and lifted too early."

In fact, nobody upheld the public-health interventions as long as they should have. San Francisco reduced mortality by at least 25% - the highest rate among US cities. But, rather than reinforcing its commitment to its interventions, this success led the city to cancel its restrictions in November; a second, much deadlier wave of infections followed in December and January. Had San Francisco sustained its social-distancing rules for longer, the National Academy of Sciences estimates, it could have cut the death toll by 95%.

Political leaders might also abandon economic stimulus too soon - the second mistake that could lead to a W-shaped recession. The events of 1936-37 in the US show just how devastating this decision can be.

In 1936, satisfied with progress in recovering from the depression that had begun seven years earlier, President Franklin D. Roosevelt's administration curbed federal spending and raised taxes. At the same time, the US Federal Reserve tightened monetary policy, doubling bank reserve requirements and sterilizing gold inflows. By 1937, the US economy had relapsed into a severe recession, which lasted through 1938.

US policymakers made a similar blunder after the 2008 global financial crisis. President Barack Obama's fiscal stimulus program, enacted in February 2009, together with the Fed's monetary expansion, halted the economy's free fall. The recovery began in June of that year. But in 2011, after Republicans took control of the US Congress, the fiscal stimulus was prematurely ended, impeding the recovery considerably.

There is good reason to worry that US policymakers will make a similar mistake today. While unprecedented bipartisan fiscal and monetary measures are helping, the job is far from finished. If Trump loses the White House in the November election, but Republicans remain in control of the Senate, they may suddenly rediscover the evils of debt and once again demand policies that are effectively procyclical. After all, America's debt-to-GDP ratio will climb above 100% by the end of the fiscal year, according to new CBO forecasts. (It doesn't help to have entered 2020 already saddled with a \$1 trillion budget deficit - a reflection of awful fiscal policy at a cyclical peak.)

Policymakers everywhere should remember a simple rule of thumb: to avoid a W-shaped recession, let "W" stand for premature "withdrawal" of public-health or economic-stimulus measures. As previous crises have shown, such proposals should be avoided like the plague.

ARTICLE

ARTICLE

Remembering legendary Nigerian drummer Tony Allen

By KesterKennKlomegah

Exactly in August 2009, legendary Nigerian drummer Tony Allen, who created the Afrobeat along with his old bandmate FelaKuti, and I had our first historical meeting in Paris, France. I had flown in from Shanghai, China, to meet with him for an informal encounter. Despite our heavy working schedules and limited time, the meeting lasted for about two hours. During the discussions, I asked him several questions about his professional musical career and life. In fact, he was extremely passionate and enthusiastic talking with me, and to remember him here are a few excerpts:

When did you begin your musical career and who are your favorite musicians?

My career started at the age of 20. In fact, I was hired by Sir Victor Olaiya to play claves with his highlife band, "the Cool Cats" and was able to fill the drum-set chair when the former Cool Cats drummer left the band. I also played with Agu Norris and the Heatwaves, the Nigerian Messengers and the Melody Makers.

In 1964, I joined Fela's 'KoolaLobitos' and stayed with Fela for 15 years. When I was learning to play I'd check out LPs and magazine tutorials by Gene Krupa, Art Blakey and Max Roach, Guy Warren was also an influence. Of course, I was also a fan of Elvin Jones, Tony Williams and Bernard Purdie.

I was asked to name my dream band to play with, and I chose: OumouSangare and Salif Keita on vocals, Bootsy Collins on bass, George Benson on guitar, Wayne Shorter on sax, Joe Zawinul on keys, Don Cherry on trumpet, and with a line-up like that I'd have to be the drummer!

What was the motivation behind your chose profession?

My parents were...not keen. Back then, musicians were more or less thought of as beggars, or worse. But I just put it in front of them. I was an electrical technician, but I wanted to make a change. My mother was never happy about it, but my father, who was an amateur musician, eventually agreed.

How is this profession influencing or shaping your own social life?

It has had a profound effect. Our albums with Afrika 70 either provoked or described a series of increasingly brutal attacks by the Nigerian army and police. Fela and his immediate family bore the brunt of this long and shameful catalogue of assaults, trumped up charges and jailings, and I myself was jailed on one occasion. With Fela it was like being at university, and you don't run away from education. We learnt so much by not being cowards.

When I left Fela's band that had a big effect on my life. Lagos was too small for me and Fela. It was a small place, and I wanted room to take off without causing competition, I eventually chose Paris partly because the British immigration people were giving me difficulties, but also because African music was more happening then in Paris than in London, and my record company at the time was in France. It was the only place I felt I could exercise my knowledge. The only place to make a living. Being a musician, the line between work and social life is, often blurred doing what I do for a living is what I do for enjoyment.

There seems to be some truthfulness in your career. Which songs spiritually appeal most to you personally when on stage?

Absolutely, as a musician and an artist you have to be true to yourself. Different songs appeal to me more at different times and under different circumstances, it can depend on who you're playing with, where you're playing and how the audience respond to what you're playing. Playing music is very spiritual but I won't say that one thing I do is more spiritual than another as I try to invest all in

everything that I do.

Of what importance are the messages you convey through your songs to our society, in your interpretation? Afrobeat has always been about the struggle, then and now. Fela was right about everything, especially the messages in all his songs. Everything he sang about is still happening. Nigeria's not getting any better. It's all misadministration and corruption, survival of the fittest. Lagos is a complete mother ***** of a place. These messages we send to the government, they never listen to them. The people wait for an effect, but there's no effect. These guys do nothing. Afrobeat is rebellious music. We have to keep shouting.

Do you mind talking about your experiences (both positive and negative) in previous European tours?

Laughs! I don't mind at all but this is a big question that I'm not sure how to answer. The fact is that the good experiences overwhelmingly outweigh the bad, which is why I'm still out on tour at nearly 70 years old. As long as



people want to come and see me play, I'll play.

How do you usually visualize your audience during musical performances?

I am very pleased to have had the chance to play at many festivals abroad. The foreign people know all about social and political upheaval, so even though our cultures and heritage are completely different, they feel the power of Afrobeat and confirm my belief that music is the great healer in the world. It was a long musical trip, there is no way back but well worth it. You just don't have to return, I have to move forward!

Many people think going into musical world is just to make quick money. What is your reaction to this?

Ha! Most musicians are struggling musicians only a small minority make serious money, musicians all around the world play for the love of it, to express themselves creatively and for the interaction with the audience. A lucky few might make millions but you can't judge everyone else on that basis, lawyers, accountants, bankers, those guys make the serious money. Also, those motivated by money don't make as good music, if your inspiration isn't true, then it shines through in music.

Would you have opted out of stage if you were offered an alternative job? Not all, as I said earlier, I had job which I left in order to be a musician, that was almost 50 years ago and I am still in it. I think I made the right decision.

If you could have lunch with anyone, real or fictional, alive or dead, who would it be and what is the first thing

you would ask him or her?

It's impossible to pick one single person, there are loved ones that would be great to see one more time, but musically the most obvious person would be FelaKuti, and I'd ask him if he's happy with what's happened to the music that we created together.

What are your goals for the coming years?

I want to keep on doing what I do, improving and doing new things. I'm very happy with my band and our new album, we can do great things together. I'm very fortunate that I get the opportunities to work with all manner of artists doing different and interesting projects, long may it continue.

Music is my mission. I never get satisfied and I'm still learning from others. The musical world is very spiritual, and I don't think there's an end to it. The best legacy is your professional work and leaving an indelible mark on the minds of people.

Additional information: Agence France Press (AFP) wrote that Allen was the drummer and musical director of FelaKuti's band Africa '70 in the 1960s and 1970s. During that time, the pair created afrobeat, combining West African musical styles such as highlife and Fuji music with American imports jazz and funk. Afrobeat went on to become one of the totemic genres of 20th century African music.

Over Allen's thrilling beat, Fela laid out his revolutionary and pan-African message, which led him to become one of the abiding icons of the struggle for freedom across the continent. Allen and Fela recorded around 40 albums together in Africa '70, before parting ways after a mythic 26-year collaboration. Such was the hole that Allen left in his band, Fela needed four drummers to replace him.

Allen taught himself to play drums from the age of 18, drawing inspiration from American jazz greats Dizzy Gillespie and Charlie Parker as well as contemporary African music. He remained hugely influential and beloved by generations of musicians.

British musician and producer Brian Eno has called Allen "perhaps the greatest drummer who ever lived." Allen was the drummer in the supergroup The Good, the Bad & the Queen, also featuring Blur singer Damon Albarn and The Clash bassist Paul Simonon, which released its second album in 2018. Tony Allen died suddenly at the age of 79 in the Paris suburb Courbevoie, France.

MORE HEADLINE NEWS MORE HEADLINE NEWS

Lonestar Cell MTN launches MTN Business

Lonestar Cell MTN has launched MTN Business, a division of Lonestar Cell MTN offering tailor-made solutions for corporate entities and small & medium enterprises. MTN Business leads the delivery of the "Bold New Digital World" by providing a variety of

advertising, USSD mobile banking, APN, A2P, LTE WiFi, and postpaid phone service.

The Company in a release issued said the MTN Business offers exclusive new and exclusive products for customers with attractive data bundles, voice packages and special international rates to

each other. SME Friends & Family allows groups of five or more persons to enjoy tailored data bundles special rates for local & international calls. MTN Business's SpeedNet Routers have been designed to give you the fastest internet speeds and most stable and reliable connection over long periods of use.

Commenting on the launch, the CEO of Lonestar Cell MTN, UcheOfodile, said, "We are uniquely positioned to be a partner to any business in Liberia in any stage of their journey, whether they are trying to grow or they are an established business. We don't see MTN Business as just a business but as a partner to empower businesses to be good and to be bigger than they are to drive our economy forward through good business and innovation. And we promise to ensure that we provide a quality network and to always be there when you need us to develop customized solutions that work just for you, because we are #goodtogether."

The company says to sign up for any MTN Business product and become a #good business, businesses can visit any Lonestar Cell MTN service center or call 5656.



Lonestar Cell MTN, Uche Ofodile

products that can be customized to match clients' needs.

Key services offered by MTN Business include fiber and dedicated internet, virtual private network, co-location, data hosting, web hosting, bulk SMS and mobile

Lebanon, Nigeria, Guinea, India, USA, China, Canada on the expanded postpaid service.

Another product, Made To Share is a convenient new product for SMEs and corporate businesses which allows grouped users to share both data and voice minutes with

Pres. Weah applauds Israel on 72nd Independence observance

President George Manneh Weah has congratulated the Government and people of the State of Israel on the observance of the 72nd Independence Anniversary of that country.

In the message to Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, President Weah,

in commemorating this historic day amidst the COVID-19 pandemic, it is my prayer that the bonds of friendship and cooperation subsisting between our two countries and peoples will be further strengthened for the betterment of the two countries and peoples".

President Weah also prayed



Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu

on behalf the Government and Peoples of Liberia, extended heartfelt congratulations and best wishes to the Government and people of the State of Israel as they celebrate this historic milestone.

According to a Foreign Ministry Release, the President noted that "As Liberia join the State of Israel

that the Almighty God will continue to endow Prime Minister Netanyahu with abundant wisdom, strength with good health as he leads his countries to sustained peace and prosperity. -Press release

Local group unhappy over withdrawal of GIZ programs

By Ben P. Wese

The Traffic and Roads Safety Network of Liberia (TARSNOL) has seriously frowned on the Liberian Government over a report stating that the German Government will now only direct its attention toward health program and withdraw support from other development programs that GIZ has in Liberia due to lack of impact.

According to the Chief Executive Officer of TARSNOL Abraham W. Weohn, the German government through GIZ is not [only a] supporter of the Liberian economy, but also a major player in terms of road safety here.

The group says its attention is drawn to the publication in a local daily here which indicated that Liberia had lost its economic programs from Germany.

Mr. Weohn claims that higher placed sources at the German Embassy have



confirmed to his organization that Germany will now only direct its attention to health and withdraw support from any other development programs that GIZ has here.

"They are not the ones that saying that they fail to have

impact felt, they give the necessary support to our government. It's the business of government to utilize these kinds of support so that it creates an impact or shows some impact," Weohn argues.

He continues that monies

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brought to Liberia by partners are taxpayers' monies from other countries, saying underprivileged countries that receive others' support should show signs of appreciation by implementing programs supported by the donors.

He believes that failure to implement the programs hampers and undermines the credibility of the country, as he suggests that this is responsible for the German Government's withdrawal of its support to other developmental programs in Liberia.

Weohn pleads with the German Government not to withdraw its support from

Liberia, but rather redirects the funds to other organizations within Liberia to carry on the programs.

"The German government played a major role, specifically when it comes to the traffic sector of this country," he says, while blasting the Liberian Government for not making impacting in the use of other countries' taxpayers' monies.

"It's not good for our country, it doesn't speak any progress so we are very disappointed in our government," Weohn notes. -Edited by Winston W. Parley

MORE HEADLINE NEWS

MORE HEADLINE NEWS

ECOWAS Recognizes the Guinea-Bissau's Presidential Election

By Kester Kenn Klomegah*

The Economic Community of West African States, a regional group of fifteen West African countries often referred to as ECOWAS, after

May 1975, operates in three co-official languages - French, English, and Portuguese, and consists of two institutions for implementing policies. Its core mission is to promote good governance, security and

followed "a thorough analysis of the political situation in the country." The development signifies a diplomatic victory for SissocoEmbaló, who had organized his own investiture at the end of February and moved to the presidential palace, with the support of the country's military.

However, ECOWAS has asked Embaló to appoint a new Prime Minister and a new government by 22 May at the latest, "in accordance with Guinea Bissau's constitution." In January, Guinea Bissau's National Electoral Commission had proclaimed SissocoEmbaló, a former army general and prime minister, winner of the runoff 29 December polls with 53.55%. His opposition challenger, Domingos Pereira, then appealed to the Supreme Court for a recount of the ballots cast in the second round of the vote.

April 3 and 15, the Constitutional Court of Guinea confirmed the results of the March 22 national referendum on the draft of the new Constitution and

economic integration across the region.

This regional intergovernmental organization, in an official statement, said the decision



months of election dispute has finally recognized the victory of Umaro Sissoco Embaló of Guinea-Bissau.

ECOWAS, established on 28

▶ CONT'D ON PAGE 10

3 organizations combine efforts to support Covid - 19 - affected children

SOS Children's Villages Liberia, Save the Children, and Plan International have joined forces to support the Government of Liberia in the fight against coronavirus to support children affected by the outbreak of the virus.

"There are parents who are affected and are held at the COVID-19 isolation center located at the 14 Military Hospital along with their

children and there are a lot of debates about what to do for them," Augustine A. Allieu, SOS Children's Villages Liberia National Director says at the office of Madam Mary Broh, the head of the COVID-19 Response Task Force.

Whether to separate the children from their parents who are already affected or to provide support while they are with their parents, Mr. Allieu says why these debates are

ongoing, the three organizations are joining forces - for children can't wait.

"We thought that these children require immediate relief, care, and support while the health experts and authorities are thinking about medium to long term solutions for these children," he laments.

▶ CONT'D ON PAGE 10



Save the State donates to orphanages

Amidst the wide spread of the Coronavirus here, a political Action Committee, Save the State (STS), comprising professionals from diverse persuasions in Liberia and the diaspora, has presented bags of rice, assorted materials and cash donations to three orphanages in Logan Town, Jamaica Road and Thumps Up in Caldwell.

According to a press release issued in Monrovia under the signature of Unity Party stalwart, Mr. Amos Tweh, Save the State is a sincere attempt by Liberian professionals to arrest and reverse the social decline of the country and reignite the spirit of self-reliance, collective work and responsibility and the principles of Liberty that established the country.

The group hopes that Liberia may be that lone star

expressed disappointment over the apparent lack of openness and transparency including the President's alleged frequent breach of health regulations.

STS points at the president's recent public appearance at checkpoints across Monrovia where he was seen in close contacts with police officers distributing nose masks with no social distancing measures in place.

The organization notes that from the beginning of Liberia's index case of covid-19, officials of government have continued to unabatedly flout established regulations, something very symptomatic of the persistent disregard for laws, system, processes and procedures by the political leadership of the government since its inauguration on January 22, 2018.

Recently, STS says the



shining on the West Coast of Africa where all citizens are united for one aim, one goal and one destiny.

The organization is calling on Liberians to obey all established health regulations as part of global campaign to crush the corona virus pandemic.

The Political Action Committee points out social distancing, frequent hand washing, self-reporting and self-isolation when a person is said to encounter any asymptomatic or covid-19 positive patient as necessary steps to defeat the coronavirus.

Meanwhile, STS is calling on the President to lead by example in the fight against the novel coronavirus as is done in the case with his regional counterparts that are openly and transparently handling the fight against COVID-19.

Save the State has

President was seen in a virtual conference of heads of State of ECOWAS with two members of his cabinet, one of whom has been declared COVID-19 positive.

According to the Political Action Committee, the refusal of the President to self-isolate and report for testing in line with the dictates of health protocols on COVID-19, only endangers the health and wellbeing of the already vulnerable population who are left to fend for themselves amidst drastic surge in economic hardship and political uncertainty.

In the release, the group calls on the Liberian government to take seriously the fight against COVID19 by inviting Liberian health professionals with solid technical and academic experience in fighting infectious diseases.—Press release

Français

Les Libériens attendent avec impatience le résultat du test de Weah

La révélation du secrétaire de la presse présidentielle, Isaac Solo Kelgbe, selon laquelle le président George Manneh Weah se soumettrait au test du COVID-19 a poussé les libériens à être impatients de savoir si leur président a de toute manière été exposé au virus.

Bien avant que le chef de l'Etat se soumit au test, la

présidence avait tenu à préciser que le président Weah allait bien contrairement aux informations relayées par certaines institutions médiatiques selon lesquelles M. Weah aurait contracté le nouveau coronavirus.

"Le président Weah fera son test très prochainement", avait déclaré mercredi le porte-parole Kelgbeh au quotidien New Dawn, rejetant

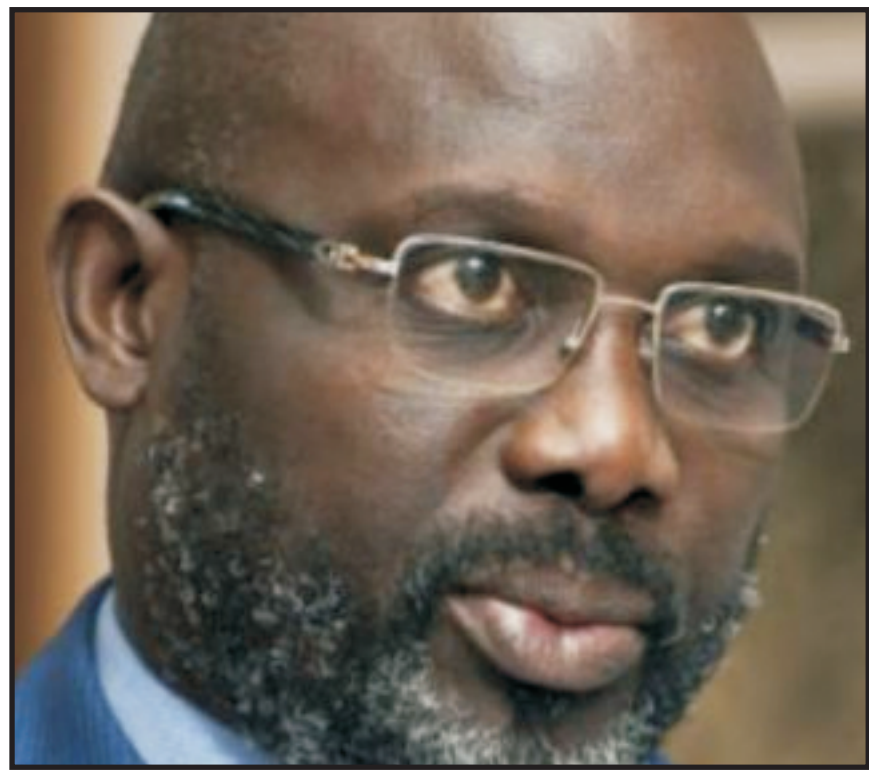
les rumeurs selon lesquelles le président serait positif au COVID-19.

Pendant toute la semaine, les médias sociaux ont été inondés de rumeurs selon lesquelles le président Weah aurait pu contracter le virus à partir de deux ses ministres - le ministre de la Justice Frank Musa Dean et le ministre de l'Information, de la Culture et du Tourisme, Lenn Eugene Nagbe, qui ont tous deux été officiellement testés positifs.

Les deux responsables sont mis en quarantaine à l'hôpital militaire 14, le principal centre de quarantaine du gouvernement à l'extérieur de Monrovia.

S'exprimant au micro de ce quotidien le jeudi 30 avril, plusieurs libériens choisissent au hasard de déclarer que si le résultat du test réalisé sur le président Weah s'avérait négatif, cela apporterait non seulement un grand soulagement dans le pays, mais permettrait aussi au chef de l'Etat de plutôt se concentrer sur la

▶ CONT'D ON PAGE 9



Le sénateur Conmany B. Wesseh fait une précision sur son état de santé

Le sénateur Conmany B. Wesseh du comté de Rivergeee, l'un des dirigeants du comité sénatorial sur la défense, la sécurité, le renseignement et les anciens combattants a précisé qu'il a été testé négatif au nouveau coronavirus.

«Je suis contraint d'annoncer que mon résultat de test CORONAVIRUS du 26 avril est NÉGATIF. Cela est devenu nécessaire en raison des rapports contradictoires sur mon statut à la suite du test COVID-19 auquel je me suis soumis avec tous les autres responsables qui ont participé à la réunion conjointe de sécurité du 11 avril 2020 au ministère de la Défense à Monrovia», a écrit le sénateur Wesseh sur sa page Facebook.

Lui et deux autres collègues du Comité sénatorial ont participé à une réunion de haut niveau sur la sécurité nationale, à laquelle ont également assisté des responsables des

Forces armées du Libéria, du ministère de la Défense, de la police nationale du Libéria, des services d'immigration du Libéria et d'autres, dont le directeur de l'Agence libérienne de lutte anti-drogue, Marcus Soko, décédé du COVID-19 le 23 avril.

Racontant son calvaire, il a déclaré que le ministre de la Santé, le docteur

Wilhemina Jallah, l'avait appelé dans la soirée du 25 avril pour lui demander de se rendre au centre de test COVID-19 au Complexe sportif Samuel Kanyon Doe le lendemain.

«Je m'y suis rendu vers 13 heures le dimanche 26 avril. Un de mes fils, Babu, qui m'a conduit au Centre a fait le

▶ CONT'D ON PAGE 9



Éditorial

Les autorités libériennes devraient donner l'exemple

Les Libériens sont non seulement surpris, mais totalement confus après avoir appris que des responsables de haut niveau qui dirigent la réponse contre le COVID-19 ont été testés positifs au nouveau coronavirus à la suite d'une réunion sur la sécurité.

Il y a même eu un décès parmi eux. Pourtant, ce sont les mêmes autorités qui veillent au respect de l'état d'urgence et du confinement, fouettant les pauvres gens pour ne s'être pas lavés les mains régulièrement, pour n'avoir pas respecté la distanciation sociale ou encore refusé de porter des masques faciaux, entre autres mesures préventives.

L'inspecteur général de la police, Patrick Sudue, a failli se faire exploser la tête, criant à la radio lundi que la police se servirait des fouets pour veiller au respect des mesures de sécurité sanitaire. Les forces de l'ordre ont effectivement sévi mardi matin à Red Light, à Duala et à Waterside. Elles ont malmené les pauvres femmes qui étaient allées à la recherche des moyens de survie, les fouettant sévèrement.

Mais le paradoxe c'est que les agents de sécurité communs qui veillent au respect de ces réglementations ne portent pas eux-mêmes de masques et ne respectent pas non plus la distanciation sociale. Depuis des auvents surpeuplés, ils s'approchent des véhicules aux différents points de contrôle, le visage exposé, mettant directement en danger les conducteurs et les occupants. En fait, certains sont plus préoccupés par les conseils des conducteurs que par le but pour lequel ils sont déployés le long des routes.

Le fait que des responsables de haut niveau tels que les ministres de la Justice, de l'Information et de la Défense, ainsi que d'autres hauts responsables ont été touchés après une réunion est pour le moins très inquiétant.

Les autorités ont-elles la manie d'imposer une chose aux citoyens et font quelque chose de totalement différent dans les coulisses ? Ou bien qu'est-ce qui se passe réellement au Libéria ? Nous pensons qu'il est nécessaire que nous réexaminions nos stratégies de lutte contre le nouveau coronavirus, sinon les situations pourraient empirer avant de s'améliorer, comme l'indiquent les réalités actuelles.

Nous avons été très déçus l'autre jour quand un journaliste a appelé Joy FM à Monrovia et a révélé que plusieurs législateurs, dont le représentant du comté de Montserrado Hassan Kiazulu, s'étaient rassemblés dans un bar à Brewerville en fin d'après-midi pour boire des boissons alcoolisées en violation flagrante de l'état d'urgence et des mesures de confinement.

Cela n'était en aucun cas un acte exemplaire de la part des législateurs prétendument impliqués, car cela envoyait un très mauvais signal au public.

Le ministre libérien de la Santé, le docteur Wilhemina Jallah, a dit que le pays semble gaspiller des kits de tests indispensables sur les morts que sur ceux qui vivent, ce qui semble insinuer que nos autorités sanitaires ne font rien de bon.

Il est temps que le gouvernement cesse de faire du bruit ici et là dans cette lutte contre le COVID-19 et se mette au travail. Nos autorités ne devraient pas utiliser l'état d'urgence et le verrouillage pour dilapider nos impôts et les fonds des donateurs sous le déguisement de la lutte contre la crise sanitaire dans le pays.

Quand un haut fonctionnaire, un ministre de la Santé, soulève une telle inquiétude au sujet de ce qui se passe en réalité dans les centres de traitement, alors il faut dire que quelque chose va fondamentalement mal. Il faut prendre des mesures dès maintenant pour corriger le tir pour faire avancer notre combat.

Pour que le Libéria gagne cette bataille, et nous sommes convaincus que nous le ferons, il est temps que nos dirigeants donnent l'exemple de haut en bas pour donner aux Libériens ordinaires et au public en général un aperçu clair de la direction que nous prenons en tant que peuple pour vaincre cette pandémie mondiale.

Français

Les Libériens attendent

lutte en cours, tout en pilotant les affaires de l'Etat.

"Je suis heureux que le président soit prêt à faire son test pour que tous ces ragots s'arrêtent", a fait remarquer Edwin Randall, un habitant de Chicken SoupFactory, Gardnersville.

Il estime que toutes ces spéculations non fondées sur l'état de santé du président risquent de mettre le pays tout entier mal à l'aise au milieu d'une crise nationale majeure.

"Mon fils, certaines personnes veulent tout simplement souhaiter que du mal arrive au chef que Dieu nous a donné, mais rien n'arrivera au président Weah", a déclaré Elizabeth Pratt, 43 ans.

Un jeune chef de file de la communauté de Battery Factory, Augustine Paye, a accusé les opposants au président Weah d'avoir répandu une rumeur aussi dangereuse, disant qu'ils aiment toujours lui souhaiter (M. Weah) du mal.

Plusieurs responsables de haut niveau ont été infectés par le virus lors d'une

réunion conjointe de sécurité organisée à Monrovia le 11 avril, entraînant la mort du chef de l'Agence libérienne de la lutte anti-drogue, Marcus Soko.

Le ministre de la Justice avait présidé cette réunion en tant que président de la sécurité conjointe, à laquelle ont également assisté le ministre de l'Information Nagbe et le ministre de la Défense nationale, le général à la retraite Daniel Ziahnkan, parmi d'autres hauts dirigeants de la sécurité conjointe.

Le ministre Ziahnkan a par la suite été testé négatif au complexe sportif Samuel Kanyon Doe de Painesville, mais ses collègues n'ont pas eu autant de chance.

Cependant, M. Solo Kelgbeh a en outre précisé que le président Weah n'était entré en contact étroit avec aucun des responsables concernés, contrairement à la rumeur.

«Le président Weah travaille à domicile. Il tient de grandes réunions à JamaicaResort et des réunions en petits groupes à sa résidence», a-t-il expliqué.

Le sénateur Conmany B. Wesseh fait

test avec moi », a expliqué le sénateur Wesseh.

Il a dit que le lendemain après-midi, le 27 avril, le ministre l'a de nouveau appelé et lui a annoncé que son résultat était NÉGATIF, ajoutant : « Plus tard dans la soirée du même jour des tests, le médecin en chef du Libéria, le Dr Francis Kateh m'a aussi appelé pour confirmer mon résultat et pour donner le résultat NÉGATIF de mon fils. »

Au moins trois représentants du gouvernement ont été testés positifs au virus, tous ayant participé à la réunion de sécurité nationale. Il s'agit du ministre de la Justice, Me Musa Dean, du ministre de l'Information Len Eugene Nagbe et de l'inspecteur général adjoint de la police, le colonel Sadiatu Reeves.

Il y a des spéculations selon lesquelles l'inspecteur général adjoint de la police, le colonel Marvin Sackor, qui a emmené le défunt patron

de la LDEA à l'hôpital pour un traitement, a été testé positif, mais cela n'a pas encore été confirmé par les autorités sanitaires ici.

Ainsi, plusieurs responsables seraient en danger, car il y a eu de multiples interactions entre les responsables de la sécurité et d'autres responsables gouvernementaux depuis la réunion du 11 avril, où les trois responsables auraient été infectés.

Le ministre de la défense Ziahnkans'est quant à lui mis en quarantaine en dépit du fait qu'il a été testé négatif.

Cette évolution est intervenue au moment où le Libéria est entré dans la phase deux de la mesure de verrouillage avec le port obligatoire du masque facial en public.

Les autorités policières ont promis d'appliquer la mesure et de veiller à ce que les citoyens respectent les nouvelles règles relatives au port du masque en public.

COMMENTAIRE

Par Bertrand Piccard

Des patrons d'entreprises s'engagent pour une relance propre

LAUSANNE - La crise du Covid-19 n'est pas terminée. Beaucoup de gens en souffrent encore et déjà des voix s'élèvent pour revenir « à la normale ». Mais qu'est ce que cela signifie après tout ? Avant la crise, la situation était-elle normale ? Notre société était fragilisée, pas suffisamment durable et socialement inéquitable. Déjà affectée par des changements climatiques, elle a été terrassée par la pandémie en cours. Est-ce vraiment cette société-là que nous voulons retrouver ?

Si la crise est censée déboucher sur un monde nouveau, à quoi ce monde ressemblera-t-il ? Partout fleurissent des tribunes, analyses, et opinions sur ces questions essentielles ; un peu comme s'il suffisait de souhaiter le changement pour qu'il se réalise.

Nous, la Fondation Solar Impulse et les entreprises qui la soutiennent, n'appelons pas simplement de nos vœux un monde meilleur, nous nous engageons auprès de vous à le mettre en œuvre par des actions très concrètes.

Les partenaires de la Fondation Solar Impulse représentent plus d'un million d'emplois dans le monde et une part significative de l'économie mondiale. Nos activités permettent aux gens de se nourrir, se vêtir, se chauffer, se déplacer, vivre des expériences, s'épanouir et entreprendre ; nous fabriquons du matériel de santé, des produits du quotidien et des biens de luxe, des matières premières et des pneus ; nous gérons des produits financiers, construisons des infrastructures ; nous fournissons de l'énergie et en assurons une utilisation efficiente.

En tant que grands acteurs économiques et industriels mondiaux, nous avons pleinement conscience de notre rôle dans la société. C'est pourquoi nous allons tout mettre en œuvre pour bâtir un monde meilleur après cette crise. Un monde à la fois plus propre, plus durable, plus juste, plus efficient, plus respectueux de la biodiversité et du climat... Malgré la crise qui nous frappe comme des milliers d'entreprises, nous nous engageons à respecter nos objectifs environnementaux et à promouvoir une alimentation accessible et durable, des énergies renouvelables et des produits issus de circuits responsables, à réduire nos émissions de gaz à effets de serre, à soutenir les processus d'économie circulaire et l'utilisation efficiente des ressources.

Comment ? Grâce aux technologies durables qui se développent partout dans le monde et que la Fondation Solar Impulse sélectionne, soutient et promeut depuis plusieurs années à travers son défi des 1000 Solutions. Il en existe en effet des milliers, dans les domaines de l'eau, de l'énergie, des infrastructures, de la mobilité, des processus industriels et de la production agricole.

Cet engagement nous le prenons autant pour l'économie que pour la Planète. En effet, ces technologies propres ne sont pas seulement bénéfiques pour l'environnement, elles sont devenues financièrement rentables. En nous

permettant de consommer une énergie renouvelable moins coûteuse, en rendant nos procédés industriels plus efficaces, en réduisant le gaspillage et les déchets, en améliorant le recyclage, ces solutions propres et rentables sont un formidable levier pour une croissance économique qualitative plutôt que quantitative. Elles mettent en place un nouveau système économique fondé sur le remplacement de produits et procédés polluants par des produits et procédés durables. Consommer mieux, plutôt que consommer plus.

Notre vision commune est celle d'un monde qui n'oppose plus les intérêts des activistes environnementaux et ceux des grands acteurs économiques et industriels, car nous partageons les mêmes buts : créer des emplois, participer au bien-être social, et améliorer la qualité de vie sur cette planète.

Bien que certains se réjouissent que l'arrêt des activités humaines diminue la pollution, la situation actuelle nous montre parfaitement combien le ralentissement économique est désastreux pour des millions de gens. Notre objectif commun est de construire un monde dans lequel la prospérité de nos sociétés va de pair avec celle de notre Planète.

Les technologies pour ce faire existent, nous commençons déjà à en utiliser certaines, mais nous avons besoin qu'elles se généralisent. C'est pourquoi nous appelons unanimement les gouvernements à mettre en œuvre des politiques environnementales ambitieuses, avec des stratégies claires et des trajectoires adaptées par secteurs, qui nous donnent la sécurité nécessaire pour investir dans le futur. Le cadre juridique et législatif doit permettre d'éviter la distorsion de concurrence entre ceux qui font preuve d'un esprit pionnier et ceux qui continuent d'agir comme si la crise environnementale n'existait pas.

La situation que nous vivons en ce moment, malgré ses aspects les plus terribles, est une opportunité pour reconstruire un nouveau modèle économique et industriel durable. Nous, la Fondation Solar Impulse ainsi que ses Partenaires, nous nous engageons à le mettre en œuvre et vous appelons à en faire de même.

Un engagement co-signé par Bertrand Piccard, Président, Fondation Solar Impulse, et ses partenaires: Bernard Arnault, Président-Directeur Général, LVMH ; Pierre-Etienne Bindschedler, Président-Directeur Général, SOPREMA ; Jean-Laurent Bonnafé, Administrateur Directeur Général, BNP Paribas ; Jean-Pierre Clamadieu, Président du Conseil d'Administration, ENGIE ; Ilham Kadri, Présidente du Comité Exécutif et Directrice Générale ; Solvay, Georges Kern, Président-Directeur Général, Breitling ; Florent Menegaux, Président, Michelin Group ; Benoît Potier, Président-Directeur Général, Air Liquide ; Anne Rigail, Directrice Générale, Air France ; Mark Schneider, Administrateur Délégué, Nestlé ; Markus Steilemann, Directeur Général, Covestro ; Jean-Pascal Tricoire, Président-Directeur Général, Schneider Electric.

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Stop strangulating Liberian Businesses

By Alston C. Armah

On Tuesday this week, a harrowing video emerged, showing a scuffle between a man and three security personnel assigned at the Capitol, seat of the Liberian Legislature. The video which has since gone viral shows a man named Gus Winn, being manhandled by security personnel said to be a part of the security detail of House Speaker Bhofal Chambers. What was Mr. Winn's crime? He had gone to the Capitol to demand payment of money the House of Representatives allegedly owes him, and in the process of asserting his claim for payment he allegedly became unruly to the extent of banging against each other the pot lids he had carried with him. The banging of pot lids appears to have emerged recently as part of a subculture demonstrating disgust, anger, and sometimes excitement or happiness.

The man in the video can be heard explaining that he was contracted to paint the Capitol, and, since the completion of the painting contract in last January, the House of Representatives is yet to pay his money, something which he claims is not only against the terms of the contract but also exposes him to potential lawsuits as he, in relying on the honour of the House of Representatives, had taken loans and hired labourers to execute the painting contract. He further explains that he had made several visits to the Capitol, spoken with Speaker Chambers and other lawmakers, yet his money, an amount in the neighbourhood of US\$26,000 remains unpaid. The man also explains that on one occasion, Representative Marvin Cole, the Chairman of the House Committee on Rules, Order & Administration, had threatened to jail him whenever he went to ask for his money and did not put himself "together".

All this is happening just a week after legislators were reported to have received at least US\$6,000

each for "operational" expenses.

Mr. Gus Winn's ordeal is symbolic of the quiet struggles Liberian businessmen encountered at the hands of their own government. Liberian businesses go through an awful lot of hell to claim payments for goods supplied or services rendered the Liberian Government. I know this for a fact. I used to work at the Ministry of Education up until two years ago. While working at the Ministry of Education, I encountered several contractors and vendors seeking to claim their just payments for goods and services ranging from newspaper publications, catering & accommodation to travels and construction works. Time without number, businesses would be told "wait until the new budget passes" or "wait until the Ministry of Finance & Development Planning (MFDP) makes allotments." Even when vouchers were prepared for payment, checks would most likely not be processed unless bribes were paid out to personnel at the MFDP. As a technician and not a policy maker, I could only empathize with these businesses.

There are so many small Liberian-owned businesses going to hell and coming back as they try to stay afloat in their operations. Some do not have the boldness to be as 'radical' as Mr. Gus Winn, the man in the video making the rounds on social media. Yet still, several others do not have the courage to go to court for they just cannot stomach the long process of litigation or simply cannot imagine the possibility of a Liberian court rendering fair judgment against the Liberian Government.

This article makes one appeal to the House of Representatives and the Liberian Government in general: STOP STRANGULATING LIBERIAN BUSINESSES.

We continue to hear our government officials make the trite and timeless statement 'that the private sector is the engine that drives economic growth.' Truth be told, the government is the spark that ignites and powers the

private sector to drive economic growth. Government can power the private sector by paying its bills as and when due, promoting a good investment climate, and, most importantly, treating Liberian-owned businesses with a margin of preference.

When government settles its indebtedness to businesses such as newspaper publishers, such settlement will have ripple effects: businesses will pay wages to their staff and their staff will not only put food on their tables but will also send their children to school and, very importantly, pay the taxes due government.

Government is an institution intended to imagine and re-imagine solutions to societal problems. But when a government, by design, fails to pay businesses the just amounts due for services provided, then such failure is not only a testament to irresponsibility but a testament to the lack of imagination and the lack of compassion at once.

The Author:



Alston C. Armah is a Liberian citizen who resides and works in Liberia. He is interested in seeing his taxes used responsibly and in a way that promotes economic growth. He can be reached at stonalcman@gmail.com



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SPECIFIC PROCUREMENT NOTICE LETTER OF INVITATION 4A150/ME/001

Recruitment of Individual Consultant for Senior Monitoring & Evaluation (M&E) Consultant for Liberia Electricity Corporation (LEC)

Background and Context

The United States of America, acting through the Millennium Challenge Corporation ("MCC") and the Government of Liberia (the "Government" or "GoL") have entered a Millennium Challenge Compact for Millennium Challenge Account assistance to help facilitate poverty reduction through economic growth in Liberia (the "Compact") in the amount of approximately 256,726,000 USD ("MCC Funding"). The Government, acting through Millennium Challenge Account - Liberia (the "MCA Entity"), intends to apply a portion of the MCC Funding to eligible payments under a contract for which the Letter of Invitation ("LOI") is issued.

MCA-Liberia now invites applications from eligible Individual Consultants for Recruitment of Individual Consultant for Senior Monitoring & Evaluation (M&E) Consultant for Liberia Electricity Corporation (LEC). This requirement is only for individual consultants. Submissions from consulting firms will not be accepted. Individual consultants are also not allowed to subcontract any part of this work to other individuals or firms.

The LOI is for:

Recruitment of Individual Consultant for Senior Monitoring & Evaluation (M&E) Consultant for Liberia Electricity Corporation (LEC)

How to Participate in the Process:

Interested individual consultants should send an email to MCALiberiaPA@cardno.com requesting a copy of the LOI, which is free of charge.

Important dates:

No.	Activity	Dates
1	Release of LOI	May 1, 2020
2	Last date for questions/clarifications	May 11, 2020 at 5:00 pm
3	MCA Response to Questions/Clarifications	May 15, 2020
4	Deadline for Submission of Applications	May 22, 2020 at 5:00 pm

3 organizations combine

Cont'd from page 7

According to him, the joining forces for children has gathered food items, educational materials, hygiene kits, toiletries and toys and games for the children and their caregivers.

He adds that they are collaborating under the psychosocial pillar of COVID-19 response, which is led by the Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection.

Mr. Allieu maintains that joining forces for children would like to do more to ensure that more children are protected from harm and abuse, especially at this time.

For his part, Mr. Joseph Yarsiah, Country Director for Save the Children Liberia says there has never been a time when a child lives at risk than this particular moment.

"We came together to provide supplies for at least two months, this is an initial contribution. We also envision if the crisis escalates we will lobby to get more supplies," he discloses.

Mr. Mohamed Kamal, representing Plan International in Liberia uses the occasion to thank the government, NGOs, and the media for the level of support in responding to the COVID-19 threat.

"As international organizations, our work is to support the effort of the government. This is why we are here today," he adds.

Receiving the items on

government's behalf, Madam Mary Broh, Head of the COVID-Response Taskforce thanks SOS Liberia, Save the Children and Plan International for the collaboration.

"SOS Children's Villages has been around for some time now and they have produced some of our country's brightest talents, some of which are in government today and contributing to society," she notes.

She appeals to the media to also follow the work of the NGOs to know what they are doing.

The Minister of Gender, Children and Social Protection Mrs. Wilhelmina Piso Saydee-Tarr also expresses her gratitude to the Joining Forces For Children alliance for their collaboration to support the children of Liberia through the ministry.

"We can't focus on a certain segment of the population and forget about another group," says Minister Tarr.

She says while it's true that older persons are mostly affected by COVID-19 disease, children are also very much affected in several ways.

"They need our care and support now more than ever before", she says, as she outlines some of the areas of collaboration and support provided by SOS Liberia to youth, children, and their families in communities.—*Press release*

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Covid-19 food set for May 23

The Steering Committee of the Government's Household Food Support Program has announced that it will begin the distribution of the much awaited emergency food packages to Liberians on May 23, 2020.

President George Weah weeks ago presented a stimulus package before the Liberian Legislature to provide emergency relief to

Emergency (SOE) but also extended the SOE by 60 days with a controversial USD6, 500 payoff to members of the Senate-some senators described it as payment of overdue operational funds, while others say it was their sitting fees for coming back from break to sign the SOE.

Meanwhile, the Steering Committee which comprises government officials, opposition members and the

"We will begin with the initial four affected counties-Montserrado, Margibi, Nimba and Bong Counties," Minister Tarpeh was quoted to have said in a statement over the weekend.

He said the remaining 11 counties will be included in the food distribution program at a latter state.

He further stated that in order to keep the wheels of the economy turning during



citizens here during the country's State of Emergency. An amount of US\$25 million was earmarked to cover the entire stimulus package, which includes emergency food distribution, electricity and water supply, hazard pay for medical workers etc.

However, since the rectification of the resolution by the National Legislature, which did not only approved the President's State of

World Food Program says the household food support program will target vulnerable groups and slum communities.

According to the Steering Committee Chairman, Commerce Minister Prof. Wilson Tarpeh, the distribution will be modelled after the former Special Emergency Life Food (SELF) food distribution program but will be headed by the World Food Program assisted by the community leaders in targeted slum areas.

this period of emergency, the Committee has decided to include local farm produce such as palm oil, red beans etc, as part of the food package. He opined that the move is to empower local farmers.

"This is intended to empower our local farmers economically as we battle the pandemic," said Tarpeh.

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ECOWAS Recognizes

parliamentary elections. Thus, the new fundamental law, supported by 89.76 percent of voters, has been adopted. In the new Parliament, over two thirds of seats (79 out of 114) were won by the ruling party, Rally of the Guinean People - Rainbow.

Born in Bissau, Embaló holds a degree in International Relations from the Higher Institute of Social and Political Sciences at the Technical University of Lisbon, as well as both master's degree in Political Science and doctorate in International Relations from University of Madrid.

He served in the military, undertaking National Defense Studies at the National Defense Center of Spain, and underwent further studies on National Security in Brussels, Tel Aviv, Johannesburg, Japan

and Paris. He rose to the rank of Brigadier-General. He specializes in African and Middle-Eastern affairs and in matters of military, international co-operation and development. He is also a former Minister of African Affairs.

Virginie Battu-Henriksson, Spokesperson for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy at the European Union explained, in a statement, that the decision taken by the ECOWAS to recognize the victory of Umaro Sissoco Embaló at the second round of presidential elections of December 2019 brings an end to a prolonged post-electoral stalemate which was detrimental to the stability of the country.

"It is crucial that all actors respect the decision and work within the constitutional framework. As a first step, the President should appoint, at the

latest on 22 May, a Prime Minister and a new Government in compliance with the provisions of the Constitution and in conformity with the results of the legislative elections of March 2019," the statement said.

The EU further commends the ECOWAS for its continuous engagement with Guinea-Bissau and remains committed to lend its full support to the consolidation of democracy and stability in Guinea-Bissau.

Guinea-Bissau follows a nonaligned foreign policy and seeks friendly and cooperative relations with a wide variety of states and organizations.

Sharing borders with Guinea (to the southeast), Gambia and Senegal (to the north), Guinea-Bissau attained its independence in

Cummings Africa Foundation

Starts from back page

said the foundation remain committed to supporting the local economy in this difficult period in continuation of our entrepreneurship program which focuses on supporting and developing Liberian businesses.

The CAF team began distribution in Grand Cape Mount County on Thursday, Montserrado, Margibi and Nimba thereafter.

Distribution for the Southeast will begin early May. A local Liberian owned vessel has shipped the food and cleaning items for the southeast and the ship is expected to arrive in Maryland County shortly.

The Cummings Africa Foundation is a local non-profit organization established in 2015 by the Cummings family to provide humanitarian services to Liberians in the areas of education, health, and business. Over the years,

the Foundation has spent over 1 million United States Dollars in Liberia for scholarships, healthcare supplies, support for non-profit and charitable organizations.

The Foundation currently supports the Alexander B. Cummings Model Science and Technology School (ABCMTS), a STEM school located on Duport Road, Paynesville. Last Year, the Foundation held the first Liberia Entrepreneurship Summit providing grants totaling US\$25,000 to two Liberian businesses.

The Foundation remains committed to improving the lives of Liberians with funding from the Cummings Family and other donors.

"We encourage everyone to continue to adhere to the health protocols for COVID-19 and stay safe," she said

Don't take COVID-19

Starts from back page

a direct representative of the Ivorian government to Liberia, it was pleasing to join hands in helping the Government of Liberia by complimenting its efforts in identifying with everyone within its borders amidst the lockdown to fight this deadly virus out of the African continent and the world at large.

"As everyone of you are aware of the serious threat this virus has posed to the world, therefore, I want to encourage Ivorian citizens who are residing in Liberia, and Liberian themselves to continue to practice all of the health protocols that are being prescribed by health authorities in Liberia; by doing this we believe it will help in [stopping] the spread of the virus."

He says considering the nature of the pandemic, many families are going through difficulties, and orphanages are among the most vulnerable thus, the intervention is to bring some relief to members of the Ivorian community thru the food distribution.

Receiving the donation, the Chairman of the Ivorian Community in Liberia, Mr. Lagee Laurent extols the Ambassador and his staff for the kind gesture, which he says is highly

appreciated.

"Mr. Ambassador, as you may know during any critical - whether health or conflict times the person that reaches at your door steps is a person that have feeling for you; against this, we want to thank you for your speedy intervention", Chairman Laurent expresses on behalf of his fellow countrymen.

A resident of the 17th Street community, Ms. Victoria Weah, who is one of the beneficiaries, thanks the Ivorian Embassy for thinking about them, saying, "I'm over plus happy to be receiving these food items from the Ambassador.

Imagine since the President told us to be at home not a single official of government had made any form of donation; this is the first and may God bless these people for having us in their mind."

Madam Weah calls on national government and humanitarian organizations in Liberia to emulate the Ivorian Embassy by coming to the aid of people in desperate situations in these critical times.

Liberia has recorded 152 confirmed cases of COVID-19, including 18 deaths. -Editing by Jonathan Browne

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September 1973. Its population estimated at 1.9 million, and more than two-thirds lives below the poverty line. The economy depends mainly on agriculture: fish, cashew nuts and peanuts are its major exports. Besides

ECOWAS, Guinea-Bissau is a member of the African Union and the United Nations. *Kester Kenn Klomegah writes frequently about Russia, Africa and the BRICS.

Cummings Africa Foundation announces COVID 19 packages



Cummings Africa Foundation (CAF), Country Director Wede Elliott-Brownell, says her foundation has begun reaching out to Liberians across the country with COVID-19 response packages.

CAF is currently reaching out in seven counties- Montserrado, Margibi, Nimba, Grand Kru, River Gee,

Maryland and Grand Cape Mount Counties.

"These Counties were selected in order to serve all regions of the Country during this difficult period," Mrs. Elloitt-Brownell said.

She disclosed that the total amount raised for the CAF Food Distribution is \$70,000 United States Dollars, of which US\$25,000 was given as a grant to a local NGO, Teach for Liberia

(TFL), to provide food and cleaning items to 3,000 teachers and students around the country.

The Cummings Africa Foundation began its food distribution in Grand Cape Mount County on Thursday, April 30, 2020, Montserrado, Margibi and Nimba thereafter.

Distribution for the Southeast will begin early May, the foundation explained adding that a local Liberian owned vessel has shipped the food and cleaning items for the southeast and the ship is expected to arrive in Maryland County shortly.

Each package include rice, palm oil, vegetable oil, super gari (with milk and sugar) and detergent to promote hand-washing and sanitation.

"We are also pleased to announce that most of the food products were procured from local Liberian producers, while the rice was procured through a Liberian importer," she added.

The CAF Country Director

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Don't take COVID-19 for joke

-Ivorian Ambassador to Liberia warns

By Lewis S. Teh

The Ivorian Ambassador to Liberia Feni Kouakou, warns members of the Ivorian community here and Liberians to keep observing all health protocols against the new coronavirus to stay safe.

He notes that the virus poses serious threat globally and the only way to contain its continuous spread is to practice all of the health

protocols prescribed by health authorities.

"COVID 19 is not a matter to be taken for joke; it's serious matter that requires a collective effort whether you are Ivorian citizens or not", says Ambassador Kouakou.

He spoke over the weekend at the Ivorian Embassy in Sinkor, Monrovia during distribution of assorted food items, including rice, soap, clorox, sardine, face masks and hand sanitizers,



among others to members of the Ivorian community in Liberia and some older Liberian citizens who reside near the embassy.

The Ambassador puts total cost of the items donated as over \$ US10, 000, which he says is the Ivorian Embassy's way of identifying with the Ivorian community here, and citizens living around the embassy compound in the wake of lockdown and State of Emergency.

Ambassador Kouakou says as

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