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TRULY INDEPENDENT
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TRULY INDEPENDENT

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- of Covid-19 measures



Representative Cole

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Continental News

Lesotho PM resigns amid ex-wife's murder case

Thomas Thabane has announced he will step down as prime minister of Lesotho following months of pressure after he was named as a suspect in the murder of his ex-wife.

He did not say when he would leave office but his party said a new premier would be sworn in on Tuesday. The 80-year-old's current wife, with whom he was living at the time of the murder, was charged in connection with the killing in February.

The pair have denied any involvement. "I decided to personally come and inform you that I am stepping down as prime minister of Lesotho," AFP news agency says he told supporters in his Abia home constituency on the outskirts of the capital Maseru.

Lesotho has been plagued by political instability this year - he lost his majority in parliament last week when the coalition backing him fell apart and a new government

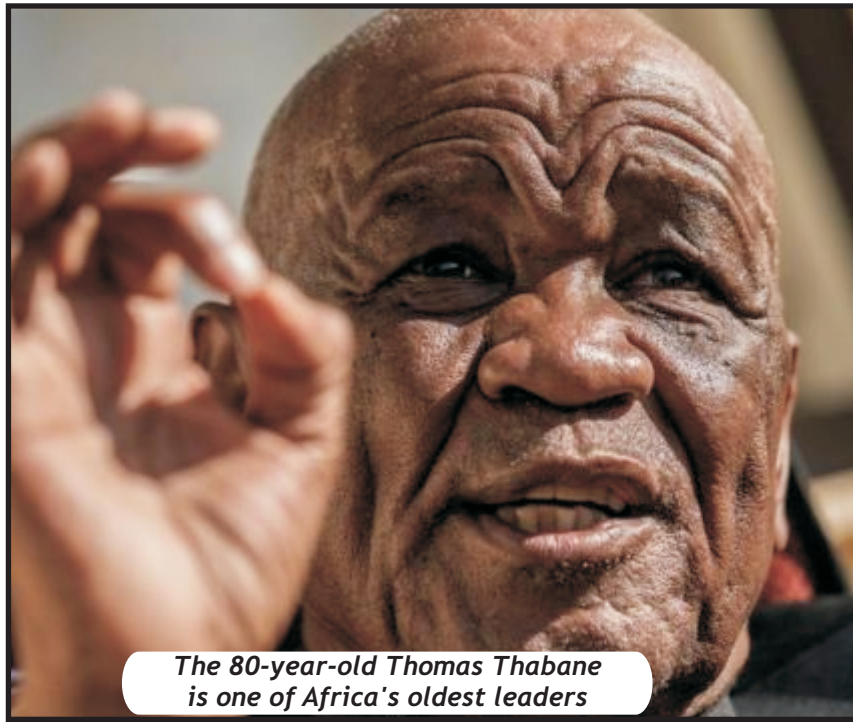
is expected to be installed on Friday.

Gunmen shot and killed Lipolelo Thabane on 14 June 2017 - two days before Mr Thabane was sworn in as prime minister. While returning home, she was ambushed, shot several times at close range and died on the side of a dirt road. She was

58.

At the time, Lipolelo was going through a bitter divorce with Mr Thabane and had been living apart from her husband since 2012.

He had moved in with a new woman, Maesaiah Thabane, some time between 2012 and 2017.



The 80-year-old Thomas Thabane is one of Africa's oldest leaders

Mr Thabane appeared in court in February for acting in "common purpose" but he hasn't been formally charged yet. Mr Thabane, 80, is one of Africa's oldest leaders and has spent most of his working life as a politician.

No stranger to political rivalry, Mr Thabane once fled to South Africa, alleging a coup plot by the military and had to be escorted back to Lesotho by the police.

The characters at the heart of Lesotho's murder drama

In the February court case his lawyer argued that his position as prime minister granted him immunity from prosecution. The case was referred to the High Court. But the High Court has not heard the case yet.

It is not clear why the case has taken so long to come to court.

Mr Thabane insists that the accusations against him are politically motivated.

It may be that he was trying

to negotiate with his party to get an agreement that the investigation would be dropped in return for him resigning.

If that is the case, it hasn't worked so far.

A spokesperson for the All Basotho Convention (ABC) told the BBC's Pumza Fihlani that it will not be supporting any attempt by him to get immunity.

He has resisted immense pressure from his own party to resign earlier.

Around the time of his court appearance he announced that he would not step down until July.

He cited old age as the reason for his resignation, without mentioning the murder case.

In April, South African mediators negotiated a deal which promised a "dignified" exit.

But a few days later he was reported to have said that he will not be pushed out of office until he is ready to leave and that nobody had the right to set the time for his departure. BBC

Madagascar quotes price to Nigeria for herbal drug

Nigeria has been asked to pay 170,000 euros (N78, 200,000) for the coronavirus drug sent to the country. This demand was made by the Republic of Madagascar.

According to a source, Madagascar has made it clear that the drug is not given to Nigeria for free.

However, the source said Nigeria might have to pay them because the African Union (AU) has directed that the drug be supplied to

African countries, The Nation reports.

"For our consignments in Guinea Bissau, Madagascar has asked Nigeria to pay over €170,000 (N78, 200,000). We have received the invoice because the African country has made us to realise that the drug are not being given out free.

"We are being asked to pay for the drug yet to be validated. Since the AU directed the supply of the drug to African countries, we may have no choice than to pay for it.

"This payment may, however, be one-off because mass importation of the drug from Madagascar will not be cost effective. By the time we take into account the cost of freight, the amount will be too high.

"This is why we are looking at local options available to us as a nation," the source was quoted to have said.

Recall that Legit.ng had reported that Nigeria's leader, President Muhammadu Buhari, has received the much-talked-about herbal drug. The presidency confirmed this on Saturday, May 16 in a tweet by a special assistant to the Nigerian president on social media, Bashir Ahmad. According to Ahmad, President Buhari will not allow anything that will hurt Nigerians as a result, he would suggest the drug to proper scientifically tests before approving its use.

The same, the Nigerian leader said, goes for every other drug whether herbal or orthodox. According to Ahmad, President Buhari said the necessary institutions must carry out their various tests on the drug. BBC



SA leader pictured breaking social distance rules

South African President Cyril Ramaphosa has been criticised for posing for photos with strangers despite telling people to keep their distance to reduce the spread of coronavirus.

A video shows Mr Ramaphosa joking about breaking social distancing rules after two women asked him for the photo.

He is heard saying "come, before we get arrested", prompting laughter.

On Sunday the country reported 1,160 new coronavirus infections - the highest daily numbers yet. South Africa has had some of the strictest lockdown measures in the world, including a ban on cigarettes and alcohol, but is now easing some restrictions.

The country has the highest number of cases of Covid-19 in Africa - 15,515, with 264 deaths. However, Egypt and Algeria have had more fatalities, with more than 500 each. The video was posted on Twitter on Sunday by journalist Nwabisa Makunga who said the incident happened outside her window. It appears Mr Ramaphosa, known for his love



of outdoor exercise, was going for a walk or a jog when the women approached him.

Although they do not shake hands, but bump elbows, the two women then posed for a photo standing right next to the president, disregarding official advice to keep at least two metres away from people from different households.

An article reproduced on a government website about social distancing explains that "one needs to avoid handshakes, hugs and other forms of direct contact as well as keeping a distance of at least two metres from others".

After joking about being arrested, Mr Ramaphosa says: "I'd rather be arrested with you."

South Africa's security forces have been accused of brutality while enforcing the lockdown restrictions. BBC

EDITORIAL

Lip-servicing genuine reconciliation

GENUINE NATIONAL RECONCILIATION would continue to elude Liberians for long because the country's national leaders seem to lack political will to drive this vital instrument of cohesion. A nation that is so divided in its historical and political existence can but go no further.

LIBERIANS CELEBRATE MAY 14 each year as National Unification Day, credited to the late 18th president William V.S. Tubman, who saw a compelling need to unite indigenous citizens and former slaves from America, who settled here and exercised a dominance posture over those they met on the ground, perhaps as a result of influence from ex-slave masters.

DIVISIVE POLITICS OR politics of exclusion is one vice that has subjected a population of less than 5 million people to deep-seated hate for one another with some semblances of envy, greed and narrow mindedness.

PRESIDENT GEORGE MANNEH Weah said this year's National Unification Day couldn't be commemorated officially due to the novel coronavirus fight in the country. But truth to the matter, what is there to celebrate?

MR. WEAH HIMSELF, who once headed Liberia's national reconciliation under former president Ellen Johnson Sirleaf prior to winning the presidency in 2017, failed to initiate any meaningful program to bring Liberians together, despite coming from a marginalized and politically deprived segment of the society.

SOME MAY ARGUE that he might had adapted such done-care posture for obvious political reasons, not wanting to have a leader whose position he was eagerly eyeing, to take the glory or credit. However, ex-president Sirleaf herself had publicly remarked that her real weakness is forgiveness. She has no desire or interest in pardoning her perceived enemies.

NOTWITHSTANDING, THEN here is Mr. Weah, now President, saying he wouldn't sit with members of the opposition to share views and ideas on ways to not just uniting Liberians, but moving the country forward, principally because of persistent criticism against his government.

SO LIBERIA CONTINUES to wallop in this unfortunate quagmire with leaders from one administration to another talking reconciliation on their lips, rather than from the bottom of their hearts. They preach one thing in public, and totally mean something else in private.

JAILED FORMER PRESIDENT Charles Ghankay Taylor, from the Americo-Liberian background or descendant of settlers, said his greatest regret as a former leader, is he was not able to reconcile Liberians. He led a bloody rebel incursion in 1989 against the first indigenous President of Liberia, Samuel Kanyon Doe in a clearly reprisal attack, for Doe toppling the Tolbert regime, which was dominated by the settlers.

THIS NATIONAL DIVISIVENESS has stagnated this country for over a century, and from every indication, is not going away any time soon. The 14 years (1989-2003) civil war even exacerbated the situation. The people are divided from tribes, clans, communities, right into households and families.

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+231-775407211 Managing Editor: Othello B. Garblah; Editor-In-Chief: Jonathan

COMMENTARY

Susan Athey ,kendall
Hoyt & Michael Kremer

Everyone Wins from Vaccine Cooperation

The only way to develop and deploy a COVID-19 vaccine at the pace and scale that the current crisis demands is through international coordination. Unlike national-level strategies, a collective approach both minimizes the risks and maximizes efficiency.

CAMBRIDGE - As countries around the world ponder strategies for developing a COVID-19 vaccine, it should be clear that the fastest and most effective approach is to work together. More than any other single intervention, a widely distributed, effective vaccine would allow the world economy to restart. With \$375 billion in global wealth evaporating each month, that moment cannot come soon enough.

So far, world leaders have pledged \$8 billion in funding for the Access to COVID-19 Tools (ACT) Accelerator, a global partnership to develop diagnostics, drugs, and vaccines. Yet that is only a fraction of the investment needed to bring a vaccine rapidly to scale. Fewer than one in ten vaccine or drug candidates that enter clinical trials is eventually approved for use. And, once approved, scaling up production to the necessary levels will introduce many more uncertainties. Vaccine manufacturing is an intricate process, requiring approval by regulators at each stage and in each facility. With some of the COVID-19 vaccine candidates having been built on hitherto unlicensed platforms, these safety and quality-control protocols could pose additional challenges to rapid deployment.

The best way to manage these risks is to collaborate. Multilateral investment in a diversified portfolio of vaccine candidates would help to scale up production capacity as soon as a vaccine's safety and efficacy have been established. Provided that much remains unknown about the novel coronavirus, we estimate that an investment of about \$145 billion (.17% of world GDP) would be ideal, but that a program just half that size would yield substantial benefits. Although the United States and China are pursuing individual investment strategies, both could still advance their own national interests through international collaboration, either by way of the ACT Accelerator or via pooled contracts negotiated directly between countries and firms.

There are four primary benefits to collaboration. First, each country can reduce its own risk of having not invested in the right vaccine. By diversifying investment across a broad portfolio of technological approaches, all countries can improve their chances of having access to a successful vaccine. For example, our analysis of past vaccines suggests that if a country invests in two candidates that have begun clinical trials, the chance that one will succeed is at most one in three, and could be much lower. Yet if that country were to invest in a dozen or more candidates, the odds of near-term success would increase to more than eight in ten.

Moreover, the more distinct approaches there are in the mix, the greater the productive capacity that can be repurposed when some candidates fail. But the portfolio must not only be large; it also must be coordinated, because countries acting collaboratively can achieve far greater diversification than could any country acting on its own. Individual countries might all invest in similar candidates, which might all then fail for similar reasons.

Second, international collaboration allows for more resource pooling, which is needed to scale up investments in manufacturing capacity. Left to their own devices, individual countries are unlikely to invest in sufficient capacity to meet their own people's needs, let alone global demand. If each country is "locked in" with a small set of suppliers, it will have less leverage to induce those firms to innovate and accelerate their manufacturing processes. And with significantly expanded capacity, there will be less conflict over vaccine access once successful candidates emerge.

Third, global coordination reduces the risk of supply-chain disruptions. Just as shortages of swabs and reagents have delayed coronavirus testing, so shortages of glass vials, bioreactors, or adjuvants (substances used to boost the body's immune reaction to a vaccine) could delay efforts to deploy new treatments and vaccines. Biopharmaceutical production relies on a tightly linked global web, such that even the US, which ranks high on indices for biopharmaceutical innovation, is a net importer of most medical supplies.

Without international coordination, export controls imposed in response to the pandemic could interfere with the ability to scale up production in a timely fashion. By contrast, a substantial global effort would provide the necessary resources to anticipate and mitigate supply-chain bottlenecks, as well as reallocate essential ingredients and materials to the vaccine candidates that are the highest priority for mass production.

Fourth, to maximize the health and economic benefits of a vaccine, health-care workers and vulnerable populations in all countries must have top priority in receiving it. Here, international collaboration would allow participating countries to pursue a needs-based vaccine-allocation strategy, which is crucial for ending the pandemic as quickly as possible, and for restoring trade and travel with minimal risk of reintroducing infections from abroad. All countries have an imperative to protect essential workers, high-risk citizens, and those who must travel. And in today's interdependent world, every country will benefit from enabling as many others as possible to restart their economies.

Countries that insist on pursuing individual investment strategies do so at considerable risk. They would be far better off with guaranteed access to the first tranche of successful vaccines under a global mechanism. A proprietary scheme that locks up supply among a small number of candidates may well fail, putting that country back at square one. Even a country with a unilateral investment program would be serving its own interest by collaborating internationally. If its own candidates fail, it would still be in line for a vaccine developed from the internationally sponsored diversified portfolio.

We need the medical countermeasures to COVID-19 to proceed at an unprecedented pace, and on an unprecedented scale. Only a global response can ensure this outcome.

Noise in Bong over donation

By Joseph Titus Yekeryan
in Bong

Several Pastors in Whomgbay, Bong County Electoral District #3 have uttered serious dissatisfaction in Representative Josiah Marvin Cole for allegedly misdirecting about 10 barrels intended for them.

The issue continues to be discussed extensively both on social media and on radio stations as Cole is being accused of allegedly corrupting the minds of some of the Pastors and citizens of Whomgbay.

The Head Pastor of the Internal Life Ministry Rev. Ernest S. Flomo says the materials sent by Canada-based donor Mr. David Miclash were not only meant for the Linda Miclash Children's Home for school going kids, but for some Pastors and the community as well.

But he alleges that they did not receive all the materials which he says the donor sent since February of this year.

instrument for Church, fifteen sewing machines for the community (Whomgbay), among many things. But out of the fifteen machines, we only received one along with few other items," Flomo alleges.

He told our Bong County correspondent that the donor, Mr. Miclash left Canada and came to Liberia for the distribution of the materials, but notes that the materials did not arrive sooner until Miclash went back to his country.

Our correspondent says after four weeks of investigation, he found that the Canadian donor had firstly engaged the office of Vice President Jewel Howard Taylor to help bring the materials on a duty free basis.

However, the VP's office is said to have directed Mr. Miclash to the office of Representative Cole as lawmaker of the district that hosts Whomgbay.

When reportedly engaged by the donor, Rep. Cole allegedly agreed to help bring the materials on his duty free

to see the improvement of the citizens.

"I didn't do anything bad but rather did what exactly I was told to do by Mr. Miclash, the donor," Rep. Cole replies.

According to him, he decided to help bring those materials on duty free because the materials were vital to the people of Whomgbay.

"Firstly when they met the Vice President, she immediately told them to reach me because I am the head of the district. After the donor met me, I told him that I would help in the process because as lawmakers, we are entitled to duty free," he explains.

Cole says the Canadian guy even told him to do a communication requesting the need for more materials which would give him grounds to lobby for more support.

On the basis of their discussion, Cole says his office did a communication, appreciating the donor for the support including the construction of the school in Whomgbay".

He laments that it is very saddened that some people will spread false information about a character like him who has built his integrity over the past years.

"I even thought that we would have gotten those materials absolutely free from the port but we didn't because the port authorities said that they were not our personal materials so I paid four thousand United States Dollars from my pocket to free them," Cole told Radio Gbarnga on a Saturday morning talk-show.

Our Correspondent says since the lawmaker promised to provide documents relating to the freeing of the materials, he has since failed to do so.

He however vows to resign his post if those alleging that he misdirected the donated materials provide pieces of evidence that he directed the materials to his personal use.

Meanwhile, Rep. Cole has threatened over a million dollars lawsuit against a local talk show participant who has been very hard-hitting on the issue.

In furtherance of this investigation, our Bong County correspondent sent a mail directly to Mr. David Miclash to inquire about how many barrels were in the container and how did he want those items to be distributed.

But our correspondent says the donor has not responded, for reason best known to him. -**Edited by Winston W. Parley**

Liberia's ROBOTIC team

Starts from back page

to encourage you all to engage one another and create a national event that will inspire students of Liberia to learn about real world challenges, like what other students are doing around the world in order to invent, create, design, and build Liberia".

The Speaker informed the team that he will continue to support Liberia students and challenged them to continue to seek knowledge and skills which will enable Liberia to compete with the rest with the world. He stated, "our kids must travel and meet their colleagues in the developed world to improve their skills and knowledge about building robot and the emerging technology that our world is headed to.

Speaker Chambers wholeheartedly sponsored Team Liberia to participate in the 2017 inaugural FIRST Global Robotic Challenge held in Washington DC, USA.

The Team was made of seven (7) students from District #2 representing six (6) high schools in Pleebo City and trained by the Department of Electrical and Mechanical Engineering at William V.S Tubman University in Harper City, Maryland. These kids were made to learn about robot design, programming, and simulations for four (4) months before leaving Liberia to participate with their counterparts in the United States.

The 2017 FIRST Global Challenge centered around the theme of providing access to clean water. Liberia was ranked at the position of 12th in the world and 2nd in Africa in mid-July, where 163 teams from 157 nations gathered together at Constitution Hall in Washington, D.C. to not only share in their love of STEM through Competition, but to also meet and learn from youth around the globe as they move forward to being change makers in their communities.

Additionally, the Speaker continued his support to the team to participate in another Robotic Challenge centered around the theme "Energy Impact" held in August 2018 Mexico City, Mexico. Dr. Bhofal Chambers, upon hearing about another FIRST Global Robotic Challenge to be held in Dubai, United Arab Emirates, he did not waver on his support and immediately made several donations to the team which was trained by the Liberia National Student Union (LINSU) for three (3) months before airlifting to the United Arab Emirates. Team Liberia successfully participated in the Dubai Robotic Challenge where Team Liberia Mentor was awarded "Outstanding

Mentor of the Year". Team Liberia was among eleven (11) (all girls) teams that participated making the total of 191 teams represented by various nations in the world.

Team Liberia is one of the Partners of FIRST Global, comprising of high school students who have a passion for Science Technology Engineering & Mathematics (STEM) from across the 15 subdivisions of the country. FIRST Global organizes a yearly international robotics challenge to ignite a passion for Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) among more than two billion youths across the world. Established by the founder of FIRST® (For Inspiration and Recognition of Science and Technology), FIRST Global was established as a US-based 501(c) (3) not-for-profit public charity to provide the framework for an "Olympics"-style robotics challenge, FIRST Global invites one team from every nation to participate in an international robotics event that builds bridges between high school students with different backgrounds, languages, religions, and cultures.

By bringing these future STEM leaders together in an engaging and collaborative competition, that drives home the importance, excitement, and applicability of STEM education, FIRST Global inspires students to learn the skills they will need to make the discoveries their parents and grandparents would consider miracles, impossible, or just plain science fiction. FIRST Global also strives to convince the various national governments and organizations of the world to embrace STEM education, and to support it by investing in their young adults that will soon begin to make their marks in the world.

The Speaker made his initial financial startup for the 2020 FIRST Global Robotic Challenge, but a decision was reached on May 4, 2020 by the event committee of FIRST Global to have the event canceled, due to the Coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak. The Speaker has been contributing towards the building of the research and innovative capacities of Liberian students through robotics and STEM education since 2016. As a lover and promoter of education, Speaker Chambers has invested so much in preparing the future of underprivileged students in his district and some of the universities around the country, through the provision of scholarships and STEM programs.



Representative Josiah Marvin Cole

"Well I have not been able to ask Hon. Cole for the remaining materials because it is very difficult to see him. But some of the Pastors who are heading the team have not explained to us what really happened," Pastor Flomo explains.

Pastor Flomo is demanding Rep. Cole to bring their remaining materials or explain to the beneficiaries why most of the materials were not given to those they were intended for.

"In total, we received only five barrels so we need the remaining ten because the donor sent fifteen," he notes.

According to him, while the Donor was still in Canada, he told them that the materials were packaged in the barrels according to the way it needed to be distributed.

"When he called us, he said that he was sending many things including bath soap, school materials, musical

immunity since they belonged to his constituents.

Also speaking, the Deacon of Internal Life Ministry Joseph Reeves says he was astonished to have heard from the office of Rep. Cole that the materials were sent by Partners International, describing the statement as fabrication.

"Those materials were sent by Mr. Miclash for our community, not to Hon. Cole or for political reasons," Deacon Reeves tells our correspondent.

Our Bong County correspondent says during the time the container was freed from the Free Port of Monrovia, the office of Rep. Cole was spotted in some parts of his political district distributing some materials with claims that they were sent by his international partners.

When contacted about the allegations, Rep. Cole denies any wrongdoing, stating that those who are involved in making such claim against him are detractors who do not want



TENDER ANNOUNCEMENT

Consultancy: To Provide expert technical communication consultancy capacity building training for MAP 'Land for Life' Communication & Reporting Officer and two other staff from MAP Actors in Liberia and building/developing websites and domains for the MAP Initiative

Introduction

The project '*Land for Life – Making Policies Work for Food Security*' otherwise known as the MAP – Multi-Actor Partnership (MAP), launched in Liberia in 2017 aims to facilitate the formation of a Multi-Actor Partnership (MAP) platform around land governance and responsible agricultural investment. Such a PLATFORM will bring together Government actors, CSOs, Private Sector, Academia, and Community representatives. Communication is a very essential component of the MAP, it is one of the effective and efficient tools that keeps the initiative very much connected to its many actors.

However, over the years this is one area that has proved to be a fundamental challenge for the initiative because of the huge and demanding role involved with communication. In order to ensure the MAP initiative achieves its desired results, the Communication and Reporting Officer must have the required skillset of effective communication- which includes the relevant tools, technical capacity and reporting expertise.

It is in this regard that the MAP Liberia Secretariat formulates this Terms of Reference to guide the selected consultant in providing expert technical communication training to strengthen the capacity of the Communication and Reporting Officer (CRO). Such capacity building package will deepen the knowledge of the CRO in carry out his duties in the most professional and effective manner. Additionally, the training will involve two staff from two of the MAP actors/organizations.

Objective

The objective of this consultancy is to provide a tailor-made capacity building training to the MAP Communication and Reporting Officer on the relevant tools and technical skills of effective and efficient communication.

Expected Outputs of this Consultancy

- Train MAP Communication and Reporting Officer and partner staff on the steps involved in creating social media links, technical set up of blogs and email using organization as domain
- Guide the CRO and other participants on how to host/arrange online meetings/webinars (Business Skype, Zoom, BlueJeans, Microsoft Teams)
- Support the communication and reporting officer to understand the basics on video and audio editing, steps and procedures
- Coach participants on the use of YouTube, including steps involved in creating and uploading videos/documents. Linking the YouTube channel with MAP LfL website is a major concept for this aspect
- Provide skills in photography and writing (developing key messages, writing a story/a blog)
- Provide training on content management system WordPress to administer website (including uploading documents)
- Undertake study and present a basic understanding of the prevailing Liberian laws regarding the publication of photos, video material, and websites.

Activities

- Develop detailed and easy-to-understand training content/materials and share with MAP Secretariat for inputs.
- Outline the key tools / instruments (software) which the consultancy will roll out in training the CRO.
- In concert with the MAP Secretariat, develop timeline/schedule for rolling out the training.
- Strengthen the capacity of the CRO, other staff and after the training, provide a two-week on-the-job mentoring and coach support.
- Produce training report and recommendations and share with the secretariat.

Duration of the Consultancy

The consultancy will be carried out for three weeks (21 days) and in two phases beginning June 3, 2020 as follows:

Phase 1: Face-to-face capacity training for one week- June 3-9, 2020

Phase 2: Provide on-the-job mentoring and coaching support to the CRO after the training-June 10-23, 2020.

Availability to Provide Training Amid Covid-19

The consultant must be available during this period of the COVID-19 pandemic to provide the training at a safe location selected in concert with the secretariat. The Secretariat and the consultant will come to terms with a feasible schedule for the face-to-face training. Such training will be provided safely in adherence of the guidelines underlined by the government on social distancing, wearing of face masks; perpetual washing of hands and avoiding large gathering to prevent COVID-19. The training will only involve four participants at most.

Remuneration:

Indicate/state your daily consultancy fees per day.

Qualifications:

- A good honors degree in social sciences, or mass media with minimum 4 years' professional experience in designing and implementing comprehensive communications plans/activities ideally for INGO/NGOs.
 - Additional knowledge and experience in land governance and responsible agricultural investment an added advantage.
 - Good photography and graphic design skills Excellent report writing skills
 - Good knowledge of consultancy and training skills.
- Both Male & Female candidates are encouraged to apply.

Education:

- Bachelor's degree in communications or related fields: Journalism, Sociology, English, Humanity, etc.
- Master degree is an asset.

Languages

- Excellent command of spoken and written English

Computer skills:

- Good knowledge of Microsoft Office (Word, PowerPoint, Publisher, Excel)
- Experience in photography
- Good working knowledge of modern office equipment (printers, scanners, etc)
- Knowledge in using graphics design software

Personal Skills:

- Proactive, creative and collaborative team member
- Intercultural competence
- Gender sensitive
- Willing to learn and share knowledge
- Professional and commitment to project demands

Starting date

- June 3, 2020

Terms and conditions

Terms and conditions are attractive and will take note of qualification and experience in determining remunerations and related personnel cost:

Duration: Twenty-One (21) Days

How to Apply: Interested candidates should apply by email to: The Administrator, Rights and Rice Foundation; email: henri.singbeh@yahoo.com, cc: rightsrice@gmail.com; ivangray86@gmail.com.

Date of release of the Tender Announcement: May 13, 2020

Deadline for application: May 30, 2020 @4:30PM.

MORE HEADLINE NEWS

MORE HEADLINE NEWS

ArcelorMittal lockdown concession area in Buchanan

ArcelorMittal Liberia (AML) announces a 14-day lockdown of its Buchanan Concession area as part of new tougher control measures. The decision comes after a number of

none is exhibiting symptoms. Authorities of the Ministry of Health and the National Public Health Institute of Liberia (NPHIL) are overseeing management of the case recorded from

during this period, the management of ArcelorMittal Liberia will enforce a range of measures including but not limited to restriction of movement in and out of the concession-meaning there will be no entry or exits (except for essential staff) and that all private vehicles will be denied access.

Essential employees who live outside the Loop will continue to come to work, but only utilizing the company's vehicles which will be disinfected regularly during the workday.

The company further noted that all residents in the concession will be required to remain indoors and not go beyond 2 meters of their home, while domestic workers (who live outside the area) will be denied access for the 14 days.

The mining company opined that to ensure strict compliance, security will be posted outside the home of any staff in isolation.

It says Ecobank and ERA supermarket branches in the Loop will be closed to the

▶ CONT'D ON PAGE 11



additional positive Covid19 cases were reported 16th May 2020 - all related to the initial positive case reported May 14.

All of the positive case patients are feeling well, and

within the ArcelorMittal Liberia Concession in Buchanan and all related suspected cases or exposed contacts.

The company says the lockdown will begin at 3:00 PM on Tuesday May 19, 2020 and

CBL joins fight against Covid-19

The Central Bank of Liberia (CBL) joined the fight against the deadly COVID-19 Pandemic on 16 May 2020 by making donation to the 14 Military Hospital in Margibi.

Major Kowo, the Commanding Officer of the Military Hospital, along with Dr Heounohu Hessou, Clinical Coordinator of the John F. Kennedy Medical Center, received a special CBL delegation that included CBL Executive Governor J. Aloysius Tarlue, Jr. and Deputy Governor for Economic Policy, Dr. Musa Dukuly.

In making the presentation, CBL Executive Governor Tarlue said the presentation was part of its corporate social responsibility and in recognition of the great work that health professionals were doing to safeguard the health of all Liberians in the wake of COVID-19 Pandemic. He said: "Health care workers are protecting us all, so this is our way of saying thank you. If the population is not healthy then the economy will not be healthy."

CBL Deputy Governor for Economic Policy re-echoed the sentiments expressed by Governor Tarlue, saying that the role of the health sector has implications for economic productivity and that CBL's mandate links with activity in other sectors, notably the health sector.

Major Joseph Kowo, who was on hand to receive the CBL's donation on behalf of Dr. Jerry Brown, the National Case

Management Coordinator, thanked the Bank for joining other kind-hearted people of Liberia for the donation, saying that the donated items will help in managing COVID-19 cases and motivate the Hospital's nurses. Clinical Coordinator Dr. Heounohu Hessou also thanked CBL for the donations and said, "we all have to come

▶ CONT'D ON PAGE 11



GVL reduces workforce

Golden Veroleum (Liberia) Inc. (GVL) has announced a reduction in its workforce about 440 employees across its concession areas in Sinoe and Grand Kru Counties.

The redundancy exercise cites the downturn of the global economy, including the impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic happening globally and in Liberia, poor infrastructure causing the company spending high logistics cost, high vehicle and road maintenance costs, and the slumping price of palm oil on the company's operations and unsustainable losses as the basis for reluctantly taking such measures. The workforce reduction took place in second week of May 2020.

The number of employees redundant constitutes about

incredibly difficult decision for our Management Team. We remain committed to the country and people of Liberia, and our main priority is to ensure the long-term sustainability of our operation."

The company statement said employees who are affected by this current redundancy will be provided the appropriate severance packages in keeping with applicable laws of Liberia (Decent Work Act), and the company's Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA) with the Golden Veroleum (Liberia) Inc. Agriculture Workers Union of Liberia. The company further said it will continue to implement a number of other measures to cut costs in its operations, including streamlining of the



10% of the company's workforce. The company states that "the continued low crude palm oil prices, high overhead costs associated with the company's concession agreement with the Government of Liberia, low production as a result of the company inability to expand due to a series of work stoppage, and the country's uncertain business climate are the primary reasons for the continuing financial losses. These layoffs are the third such broad reductions since 2013."

According to Mr. Elvis G. Morris, Vice President for Stakeholders and Sustainability, "Our employees are very important to us and making any change to our operations and employees is an

company's business functions to reduce expenses to improve operational efficiencies. GVL affirmed that when the company's financial/economic status improves in future and warrants additional employment depending on the business operational requirement, employees who are affected by this redundancy may be prioritized for re-employment.

Golden Veroleum (Liberia) Inc. says it has injected millions USD into the Liberian economy through government taxes, salaries and, local purchases and, and has spent over \$20 million in providing free education, healthcare, housing and security support at the local, county and national levels. -Press release

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MORE HEADLINE NEWS

Grand Bassa records 4 COVID-19 cases -residents call for quarantine

Report from Buchanan, Grand Bassa County says the county's confirmed COVID-19 cases have reached four (4) with citizens calling for a complete quarantine of

counties, respectively. Local correspondent says less than a month, the county has recorded four confirmed cases of the virus with the latest incident reported in less than three days, specifically from

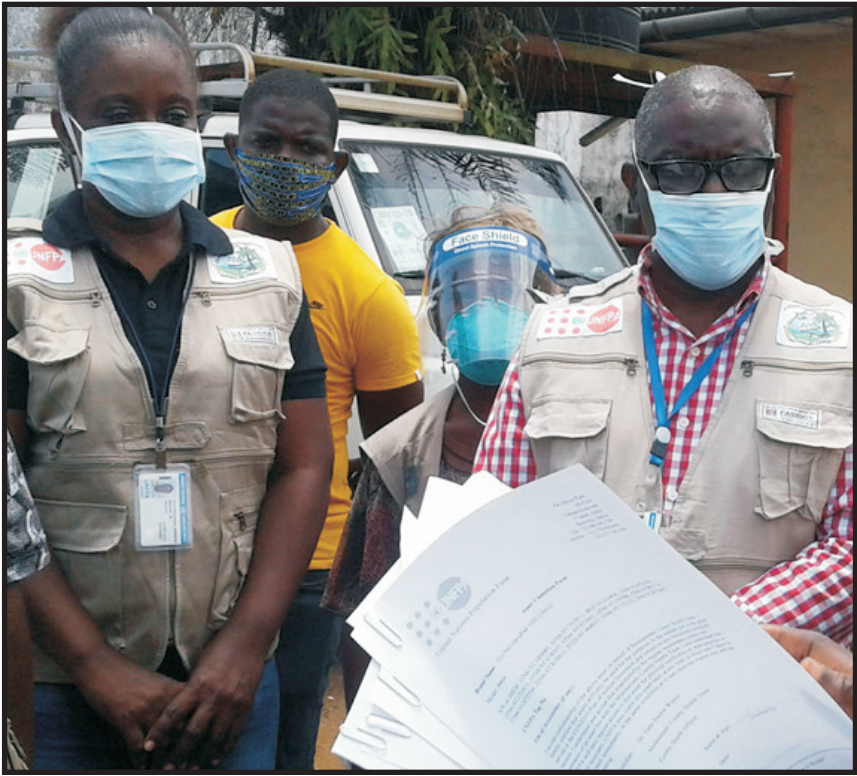
Grand Bassa County authorities continue to sensitize citizens about health protocols, including social distancing and regular hands washing, among others.

Grand Bassa Senator Youngblee Kangar Lawrence has reportedly consented to citizens' call to quarantine the Loop, but correspondent told OK FM early Monday, May 18, 2020 that most residents of Buchanan depend on relatives, friends and loved ones from there for support.

The iron ore mining company, ArcelorMittal transports ores from Mount Nimba thru rail to the Port of Buchanan for export.

Meanwhile, latest report from Buchanan says ArcelorMittal Liberia (AML) has announced a 14-day lockdown in its operational area there in the wake of additional positive Covid19 cases. The lockdown comes into force effective today, Tuesday, May 19, at 3:00pm.

The National Public Health Institute of Liberia (NPHIL) and the Ministry of Health are said to be coordinating situation within the Buchanan loop. *Story by Jonathan Browne*



the Loop, occupied by employees of the concession firm, ArcelorMittal. ArcelorMittal is a mining company that operates in both Nimba and Grand Bassa

the Loop. Citizens are calling on their local authorities to immediately quarantine the residential quarter to prevent spread of the virus.

President Weah congratulates "Just Sam"

President George Manneh Weah has congratulated Samantha Diaz on her victory in the just-ended American singing competition series, American Idol.

Samantha, also known as "Just Sam" - who has Liberian roots - won the 18th season of the show after getting the most votes of the top seven finalists.

According to a press release issued Monday, 18 May, President Weah said Samantha's exploits on the world stage, coming after she lived a life of poverty on U.S. streets, demonstrates that "with hard work and dedication, we can achieve any dreams we set out for ourselves."

The grandmother of Samantha with whom the newly crowned American Idol lived from a very young age, has constantly touted the star's Liberian lineage.

President Weah, who's an ardent music lover and supporter of local artists, observes that Liberians and

their offsprings who are engaged in different spheres of work are endowed with varying talents that should be celebrated, regardless of which part of the world they find themselves.

He says geographic or political boundaries should not prevent a person with Liberian blood and heritage from having some of the same rights and

privileges of their compatriots on the homeland.

President adds that "Just Sam" has not only made the country proud, but that "this presents another opportunity when we should unite in our love and admiration for one of our heroines; because no matter which nationality she bears, she remains Liberian in our hearts." --*Press release*



WAEC faces predicament

-as Ghana expresses readiness to write exams

The West African Examination Council or WAEC is currently in a quandary over call by Ghana that it is ready to write the regional exams in June amid the COVID-19 pandemic.

Ghana is among the five Anglophone countries in West Africa, including Liberia that writes the regional exams for 12th graders.

The head of the WAEC Liberia Office, Dale Gboto made the disclosure here Monday, 18th May while speaking to 'Truth Breakfast Show' hosted by Truth FM 96.1 in Paynesville.

All five countries of WAEC - Liberia, Sierra Leone, The Gambia, Ghana and Nigeria have upgraded to the West African Senior Schools Certificate Examination or WASSCE for 12th graders.

But Mr. Gbotoe discloses

The Ministry of Education closed schools across the country since March as part of measures to avoid people crowding in public places and thereby spreading the virus.

However, some Liberian educators who called on the show said Liberia should join member countries to administer the exams in June, warning that allowing one country, in this case Ghana, to write the exams could send a bad precedent.

On March 21, 2020, the Liberia National Office of the West African Examinations Council in consultation with the Ministry of Education, placed an indefinite suspension on the conduct of all its Examinations for School Candidates, scheduled to have begun on April 6, 2020 until further notice.

WAEC said in a press release



that despite the novel Coronavirus pandemic, the Government of Ghana says its students (12th graders) are ready to write the WASSCE in June even if other member countries are not prepared in the wake of the global health crisis.

He explains that tests for the WASSCE are prepared by all member countries and it is not in the purview of any single country to decide when the exams should be administered.

Dale notes that WASSCE can only be administered when students are in a right frame of mind, and not amid a global pandemic characterized by deaths, lockdowns and closure of schools, among other precautionary measures announced by health authorities.

the decision is as a result of the negative impact of the novel and deadly Corona virus (COVID-19) pandemic and the subsequent protocols being put in place by governments of member countries of WAEC to prevent the spread of the disease.

"The affected Examinations are: the West African Senior School Certificate Examination (WASSCE) for School Candidates, 2020, the Liberia Junior High School Certificate Examination (LJHSCE), and the Liberia Primary School Certificate Examination (LPSCE)", the release detailed.

A total of 39, 887 candidates from across Liberia (12th Graders) wrote the 2019 WASSCE, at 237 centers nationwide. *-Story by Jonathan Browne*

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Français

Les responsables de la santé se soumettent au test du COVID-19

Les autorités sanitaires ont commencé à se faire tester au nouveau coronavirus, à quelques jours du confinement total du Libéria, dans le but d'encourager le public à faire comme eux dans les prochains jours.

Le gouvernement du Libéria prévoit un confinement total des communautés et une distribution de rations alimentaires. Il s'agirait d'obliger les gens à rester

chez eux afin de les tester.

Le Dimanche 17 mars, le ministre de la Santé, le docteur Wilhemina Jallah, a conduit un éventail de responsables du personnel soignant au stade Samuel Keyon Doe à Paynesville, en dehors de Monrovia, pour se faire tester.

"Nous nous réunissons ce matin pour nous faire tester et donner des exemples à suivre à nos citoyens", a déclaré le ministre de la Santé, qui a déclaré publiquement que sur les 20 personnes décédées du

COVID-19 dans le pays, une seule personne est morte dans le centre de traitement à l'hôpital militaire 14.

Elle a averti que pour que le coronavirus soit totalement éradiqué du Libéria, il faut que chaque citoyen, à commencer par les responsables, se soumette à des tests, ce qui, selon elle, renforcerait la confiance des citoyens dans le système de santé.

Le docteur Jallah a expliqué que la décision de

▶ CONT'D ON PAGE 9



La distribution de la nourriture devrait encore retarder de quelques semaines

Le Comité directeur du Programme COVID-19 de soutien alimentaire des ménages (COHFSP) a annoncé un retard dans la distribution des produits alimentaires pendant quelques semaines en raison de plusieurs problèmes indépendants de la volonté du Comité directeur. Le Comité avait précédemment fixé au 23 mai 2020 la date de début de la distribution.

Le président du comité directeur du programme de soutien alimentaire COVID-19, le professeur Wilson Tarpeh, reste cependant optimiste quant au fait que la distribution qui ciblera les ménages touchés par le COVID commencera dès que les procédures budgétaires et financières seront terminées.

Dans un communiqué de presse, M. Tarpeh a indiqué clairement que le programme d'aide alimentaire ne sera pas

déployé avant le 23 mai comme initialement prévu, principalement parce que le processus de confirmation du budget par l'Assemblée législative du Libéria nécessite des ramifications prudentes, consultatives et juridiques, ce qui ne peut se faire en un jour

ou deux.

Par ailleurs, même si le budget est approuvé par le pouvoir législatif, le gouvernement est dans l'obligation d'attendre la décision d'approbation du budget par le Conseil

▶ CONT'D ON PAGE 9



Prof. Wilson Tarpeh

Éditorial

La véritable réconciliation ne se fait pas au bout des lèvres !

LA RÉCONCILIATION NATIONALE VÉRITABLE continuera de glisser entre les mains des Libériens pendant longtemps parce que les dirigeants du pays semblent manquer de volonté politique pour promouvoir cet élément indispensable à la cohésion nationale. Une nation si divisée dans son existence historique et politique ne peut aller plus loin.

LES LIBÉRIENS CÉLÈBrent LE 14 MAI chaque année comme Journée nationale de l'unification, instaurée par le 18^e président William V.S. Tubman, qui voyait un besoin impérieux d'unir les citoyens autochtones et les anciens esclaves d'Amérique, qui se sont installés ici et ont exercé une position dominante sur ceux qu'ils ont trouvés sur place, peut-être en raison de l'influence des anciens maîtres esclavagistes.

LA POLITIQUE DE DIVISION ou la politique d'exclusion est un vice qui a dressé les moins de 5 millions d'habitants les uns contre les autres, attisant en eux la haine, l'envie, la cupidité et l'étroitesse d'esprit.

LE PRÉSIDENT GEORGE MANNEH Weah a déclaré que la Journée nationale de l'unification de cette année ne pouvait pas être commémorée officiellement en raison de la lutte contre le coronavirus dans le pays. Mais en vérité, qu'est-ce qu'il y avait à célébrer ?

MONSIEUR WEAH lui-même, qui dirigeait autrefois la réconciliation nationale du Libéria sous la direction de l'ancienne présidente Ellen Johnson Sirleaf avant de remporter la présidence en 2017, n'a pas lancé de programme significatif pour rassembler les Libériens, bien qu'il provienne d'un segment marginalisé et politiquement défavorisé de la société.

CERTAINS POURRAIT PENSER qu'il aurait pu adapter une telle posture alors dans l'opposition pour des raisons politiques évidentes, ne voulant que le leader dont il visait impatiemment le fauteuil prenne la gloire ou le mérite. A noter aussi que l'ex-présidente Sirleaf elle-même avait déclaré publiquement que sa véritable faiblesse était son incapacité de pardonner. Elle n'avait naturellement non plus aucun désir ni intérêt de pardonner à ses ennemis.

NONOBTANT, alors voici M. Weah, maintenant président, qui dit qu'il ne s'assoierait jamais avec des opposants pour échanger des points de vue et des idées sur les moyens non seulement d'unir les Libériens, mais de faire avancer le pays, parce que ces derniers ne cessent de critiquer son gouvernement.

PAR CONSEQUENT, LE LIBERIA CONTINUE de se débattre comme un beau diable dans ce bourbier malheureux avec des dirigeants qui parlent de réconciliation sur le bout des lèvres et non du fond du cœur. Ils prêchent une chose en public dont la signification est totalement opposée de ce qui est dit.

L'ANCIEN PRÉSIDENT Charles Ghankay Taylor, issu du milieu américano-libérien ou descendant des colons, a dit que son plus grand regret en tant qu'ancien chef, était de ne pas avoir été en mesure de réconcilier les Libériens. Il a mené une incursion sanglante rebelle en 1989 contre le premier président indigène du Libéria, Samuel Kanyon Doe, en représailles contre ce dernier pour avoir renversé le régime de Tolbert, qui était dominé par les colons.

CETTE DIVISION NATIONALE date de plus d'un siècle et, de toute évidence, est ancrée dans les mœurs. Les 14 années (1989-2003) de guerre civile ont même exacerbé la situation. Les gens sont divisés en tribus, clans, communautés, directement en ménages et familles.

Français

Les responsables de la santé se

diriger un éventail de responsables de la santé, y compris le représentant du US Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), le représentant national de l'Organisation mondiale de la santé au Libéria, le docteur Peter Clement, le médecin en chef du Libéria, le docteur Francis Kateh et le chef de la mission de l'USAID, entre autres, vise à encourager le public à se faire tester.

Le Dr Peter Clement, de l'OMS, a affirmé qu'il est important que des responsables, en particulier du secteur de la santé, prennent l'initiative, car cela encouragera certainement les autres. » Notre présence ici aujourd'hui est une manifestation claire que les dirigeants souhaitent réduire la propagation du virus. », a dit le docteur Clement.

Le sous-ministre de la Santé et médecin hygiéniste en chef, le docteur Kateh a fait savoir qu'il était très important qu'ils se soumettent au test pour montrer l'exemple, ajoutant : « Maintenant que nous avons commencé ce processus, nous voulons faire appel à notre

personnel pour suivre ; ce n'est qu'à ce prix que nous allons vaincre ce virus. »

S'exprimant plus tôt à la radio de la CEDEAO samedi, il a expliqué qu'Ebola n'était pas aussi contagieux aussi que le COVID-19, notant qu'avec Ebola, vous devez toucher une personne infectée pour contracter le virus. "Pour Ebola, quand une personne meurt, le corps devient plus contagieux."

Docteur Kateh: « Mais pour COVID-19, quand une personne décède, nous prenons un échantillon et mettons le corps dans un sac en bloc et le gardons, en attendant le résultat du test. Vous pouvez garder le corps aussi longtemps que vous le souhaitez une fois qu'il est placé dans un congélateur. Le nombre total de cas confirmés du nouveau coronavirus est officiellement de 218, dont 20 décès et plus de 90 récupérations.

Quant aux représentants nationaux du Centre américain de contrôle et de prévention des maladies, le docteur Desmond Williams, il s'est dit optimiste, car maintenant les responsables de la santé ont pris les devants. « Il est temps pour les citoyens de suivre les traces de leurs dirigeants », a-t-il dit.

La distribution de la nourriture devrait

d'administration du FMI dont la réunion est prévue le 2 juin 2020. Le transfert de fonds prendrait alors encore quelques jours pour atteindre la Banque centrale du Libéria et rendu accessible pour financer l'opération d'aide alimentaire.

Le professeur Tarphe plaide maintenant avec passion auprès de tous les Libériens pour qu'ils continuent à faire preuve de patience et soutiennent le processus visant à vaincre COVID-19, car « le gouvernement est très déterminé à atteindre à la fois les objectifs de santé et de protection sociale de la pandémie ».

Pendant ce temps, que se passera-t-il pendant la distribution de nourriture ?

Les services de santé se rendront dans chaque communauté avant le COHFSP pour effectuer la recherche des contacts, tester et fournir un soutien aux personnes malades. Cet exercice de santé prendra 5-7 jours selon la taille de la communauté.

Suite à l'intervention des équipes sanitaires, les communautés vulnérables recevront un mois de ration alimentaire et le gouvernement demandera un confinement total de cette communauté pendant 14 jours. Le COHFSP ne ciblera que les ménages les plus pauvres et les plus exposés à l'insécurité alimentaire touchés par COVID-19. Les leaders communautaires travailleront avec LISGIS sur l'enregistrement des ménages.

COMMENTAIRE

Par Susan Athey, Kendall Hoyt & Michael Kremer

La coopération en matière de vaccin est bénéfique pour tout le monde

CAMBRIDGE - Alors que les pays du monde entier se penchent sur des stratégies de développement d'un vaccin du COVID-19, il devrait être clair que l'approche la plus rapide et la plus efficace consiste à collaborer. Plus que toute autre intervention, un vaccin efficace et largement distribué permettrait à l'économie mondiale de redémarrer. Avec 375 milliards de dollars de richesse mondiale qui partent en fumée chaque mois, le plus tôt sera le mieux.

Jusqu'à présent, les dirigeants mondiaux se sont engagés à verser 8 milliards de dollars pour financer l'accélérateur d'accès aux outils COVID-19 (ACT), un partenariat mondial pour développer des diagnostics, des médicaments et des vaccins. Pourtant, ce n'est qu'une infime partie des investissements nécessaires pour mettre rapidement à l'échelle un vaccin. Moins d'un candidat vaccin ou médicament sur dix qui participe aux essais cliniques est finalement approuvé pour utilisation. Une fois approuvé, l'augmentation de la production aux niveaux nécessaires introduira de nouvelles incertitudes. La fabrication des vaccins est un processus complexe qui exige l'approbation des organismes de réglementation à chaque étape et dans chaque établissement. Pour certains candidats vaccins du COVID-19 ayant été élaborés sur des plates-formes sans licence jusqu'ici, ces protocoles de sécurité et de contrôle de qualité pourraient poser des difficultés supplémentaires pour un déploiement rapide.

La meilleure méthode de gestion de ces risques, c'est celle de la collaboration. Des investissements multilatéraux dans un portefeuille diversifié de candidats vaccins permettraient d'augmenter la capacité de production dès que l'innocuité et l'efficacité d'un vaccin auront été établies. Étant donné qu'on ne sait pas grand-chose du nouveau coronavirus, on estime qu'un investissement d'environ 145 milliards de dollars (17 % du PIB mondial) serait idéal, mais qu'un programme deux fois plus petit produirait des bénéfices substantiels. Bien que les États-Unis et la Chine poursuivent des stratégies d'investissement distinctes, ces deux pays pourraient encore promouvoir leurs propres intérêts nationaux par le biais d'une collaboration internationale, soit par le biais de l'Accélérateur ACT, soit par le biais de contrats collectifs négociés directement entre les pays et les entreprises.

La collaboration présente quatre avantages principaux. Premièrement, chaque pays peut réduire son propre risque de ne pas avoir investi dans le bon vaccin. En diversifiant les investissements dans une gamme étendue d'approches technologiques, tous les pays peuvent augmenter leurs chances d'avoir accès à un vaccin réussi. Par exemple, notre analyse des vaccins passés suggère que si un pays investit dans deux candidats qui ont commencé des essais cliniques, la probabilité qu'un vaccin réussisse est au plus d'une chance sur trois, et pourrait être beaucoup plus faible. Pourtant, si ce pays devait investir dans une douzaine de candidats ou davantage, les chances de succès à court terme augmenteraient à plus de huit sur dix.

En outre, plus il y a d'approches distinctes dans la combinaison, plus grande est la capacité de production qui peut être réaffectée quand certains candidats échouent. Mais le portefeuille doit non seulement être important, mais doit également être coordonné, parce que les pays qui agissent en collaboration peuvent parvenir à une diversification bien plus importante que n'importe quel pays faisant cavalier seul. Chaque pays peut choisir d'investir dans des candidats similaires, qui pourraient alors échouer pour des raisons similaires.

Deuxièmement, la collaboration internationale permet de mettre en commun davantage de ressources, ce qui est nécessaire pour augmenter les investissements dans la capacité de production. Livrés à eux-mêmes, il est peu probable que les pays investissent individuellement dans une capacité suffisante pour répondre aux besoins de leur propre population, sans parler de la demande mondiale. Si chaque pays « se cantonne » à un petit nombre de fournisseurs, il aura moins d'effet de levier pour inciter ces entreprises à innover et à accélérer leurs processus de fabrication. Et avec une capacité considérablement élargie, il y aura moins de conflits sur l'accès aux vaccins une fois que les candidats retenus seront connus.

Troisièmement, la coordination mondiale réduit le risque de perturbations des chaînes d'approvisionnement. Tout comme le manque d'écouvillons et de réactifs a retardé les tests du coronavirus, le manque de flacons de verre, de bioréacteurs ou d'adjuvants (des substances utilisées pour stimuler la réaction immunitaire du corps à un vaccin) pourrait retarder les efforts de déploiement de nouveaux traitements et de vaccins. La production biopharmaceutique repose sur un réseau mondial étroitement lié, de sorte que même les États-Unis, qui se classent en tête de liste des indices d'innovation biopharmaceutiques, sont un importateur net de la plupart des fournitures médicales.

Sans coordination internationale, les contrôles à l'exportation imposés en réponse à la pandémie pourraient nuire à la capacité d'augmenter la production en temps opportun. En revanche, un effort global substantiel fournirait les ressources nécessaires pour anticiper et atténuer les goulots d'étranglement des chaînes d'approvisionnement, ainsi que pour réaffecter les composants et matériaux essentiels aux candidats vaccins qui sont la plus haute priorité pour la production de masse.

Quatrièmement, afin de maximiser les avantages économiques et sanitaires d'un vaccin, les professionnels de santé et les populations à risque de tous les pays doivent en bénéficier en priorité. À cet égard, la collaboration internationale permettrait aux pays participants de poursuivre une stratégie d'allocation des vaccins fondée sur les besoins, qui est essentielle pour mettre fin à la pandémie le plus rapidement possible, et pour rétablir le commerce et les voyages avec un risque minimal de réintroduire des infections issues de l'étranger. Tous les pays doivent impérativement protéger les professions essentielles, les citoyens à haut risque et ceux qui doivent voyager. Dans le monde interdépendant d'aujourd'hui, en permettant à autant d'autres pays que possible de relancer leur économie, chaque pays va augmenter ses propres chances de succès.

Les pays qui insistent sur la poursuite de stratégies d'investissement individuelles prennent un risque immense. Ils seraient bien mieux lotis s'ils choisissaient un accès garanti à la première tranche de vaccins réussis dans le cadre d'un mécanisme mondial. Un système propriétaire qui bloque l'offre parmi un petit nombre de candidats pourrait bien échouer, d'où le risque de retour à la case départ pour le pays en question. Même un pays avec un programme d'investissement unilatéral agirait dans son propre intérêt en collaborant au niveau international. Si ses propres candidats échouaient, ce pays serait toujours en liste d'attente pour un vaccin développé à partir du portefeuille diversifié parrainé à l'international.

Nous avons besoin des contre-mesures médicales au COVID-19 pour travailler à un rythme sans précédent, à une échelle sans précédent. Seule une réponse mondiale peut garantir ce résultat.

ARTICLE

ARTICLE

In Era of COVID-19, Russia's Strategic Politics of Coronavirus Aid Takes the Stage in Africa

By Kester Kenn Klomegah*

Cont'd from last edition

Russia's Sputnik News, under the headline, "Tunisia Asks Russia for Respirators, Masks, Medical Equipment Amid Pandemic" quoted the Tunisian Ambassador to the Russian Federation, Tarak ben Salem who said: "This request for assistance is a part of friendly relations between Tunisia and Russia. Tunisia, like many other countries, is facing an unprecedented health and economic crisis. We need respirators, masks and medical equipment that will help provide services in public hospitals."

"Tunisia, a country close to Italy, appreciated the assistance provided by Russia to this neighboring friendly country," Salem explained and added "Tunisia hopes for a step forward from Russia, which has promised to consider our request. This can only confirm the quality of friendly and fraternal relations between our countries and our peoples." Nevertheless, Russia is also exploring the opportunities in Tunisia, and as part of its geopolitical expansion and influence in Maghreb region. According to the ambassador, Russia has pledged to look into Tunisia's request.

The United States had granted \$500,000 in health assistance to address the coronavirus outbreak in Djibouti. Shortly thereafter, the Russian Foreign Ministry also posted to its official website that Russia had delivered humanitarian assistance to Djibouti in East Africa. Late April, Russian humanitarian aid to the Ministry of Health of the Republic of Djibouti was delivered and was described as part of a joint project with the World Health Organization. It was financed by the Russian Government to enhance Djibouti's potential in the field of medical emergency readiness and response.

"This humanitarian action comes in response to an official request from the Djiboutian authorities in view of the serious deterioration in the sanitary and epidemiological situation in the country caused by heavy floods and the spread of the novel COVID-19 infection. A consignment of humanitarian aid weighing a total of 13.5 tons and consisting of more than 20 multi-purpose medical modules to fight dangerous infectious diseases was delivered to Djibouti's seaport. The shipment included tents and components to build two medical units for rendering skilled assistance to over 200,000 people," according to report of the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

The report indicated that "the ceremony was attended by Russian Ambassador to Djibouti Mikhail Golovanov, WHO Representative Dr Ahmed Zouiten and Djiboutian Minister of Health Mohamed WarsamaDirieh. The Djiboutian leadership expressed its sincere appreciation to the Russian side for the assistance amid such a complicated epidemiological situation."

Djibouti has seen a rapid spike in coronavirus cases with the Horn of Africa nation, as the population largely ignores measures imposed by authorities. As a tiny country, it shares borders with Somalia in the south, Ethiopia in the south and west, Eritrea in the north and the Red Sea. Djibouti is a multi-ethnic, with a population about one million, but strategically important country that hosts the United States and French military bases, has recorded 1,116 positive coronavirus cases -- small on a global scale. Only two (2) people have died to date, according to the report from the Ministry of Health.

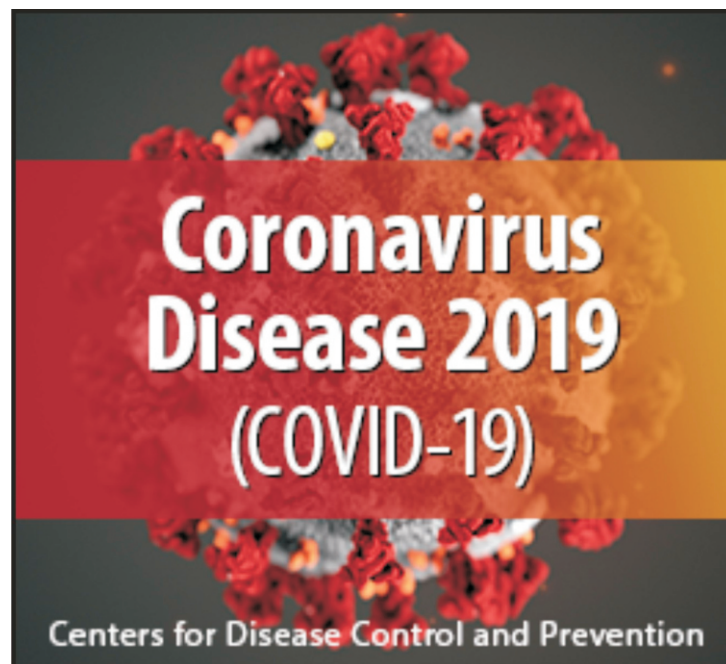
With its burgeoning commercial hub, it serves strategically as the site for various foreign military bases. The hosting of foreign military bases is an important part of Djibouti's economy. The United States pays \$63 million a year to rent Camp Lemonnier, France and Japan each pay about \$30 million a year and China pays \$20 million a year.

The lease payments added up to more than 5% of Djibouti's GDP of \$2.3 billion in 2018.

China has stepped up its military presence in Africa, with ongoing plans to secure an even greater military presence in Djibouti specifically. China's presence in Djibouti is tied to strategic ports to ensure the security of Chinese assets. Djibouti's strategic location makes the country prime for an increased military presence.

Undoubtedly, Russia has shown interest in strengthening its ties with the country. Russians believe it could take steps to overcome the impasses in the disputes between Ethiopia and Eritrea, between Ethiopia and Djibouti, as well as international support for Somalia's efforts to restore its statehood in the Horn of Africa. It has proposed an elaborate plan from maintaining peace and security to promoting socioeconomic development in the Horn of Africa and that includes Djibouti. Over the past few years, Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov has had extensive discussions on investment in high technology and transport logistics in Djibouti and Eritrea, both neighboring countries in the region.

It is worth to note that Russia and Algeria have friendly sustainable relations. A Russian cargo aircraft has delivered personal protective equipment to help tackle the novel coronavirus pandemic in Algeria. Algeria's Minister of Health, Population and Hospital Reform Abderrahmane Benbouzid and Russian Ambassador Igor Belyaev were at the air base of Boufarik, Blida (50-km south of Algiers), to take delivery of the cargo, Algeria Press Service reported April 30.



According to the information made available, the Russia's humanitarian aid, consists of medical protective equipment was purchased by the Rosoboronexport, the State Arms Exporter, it was done upon the Russian government's instructions in order to fight the coronavirus pandemic. "Among the medical items delivered to Algeria are infrared thermometers, suits, medical masks and other goods, needed by the friendly nation of Algeria and its healthcare sector," the media said. Cooperation in fighting COVID-19 strengthens the humanitarian aspect of Russian-Algerian relations.

Given this global scenario of COVID-19, it becomes a conduit to play some game cards. For instance, Russia's pursuit of playing a bigger role in global political realm is grounded on the consequences Russia faced in the aftermath of the collapse of USSR. That was followed by a huge political chaos and instability of its socio-economic space. However, Russia cling to it as the new game changer and now plays the catch-up. Russia seems to have neglected the potential opportunities in Africa, according to Punsara Amarasinghe, a former research fellow at the Faculty of Law, Higher School of Economics in Moscow, and now a PhD candidate in international law from the Sant'Anna School of Advanced Studies in Pisa, Italy.

"Perhaps, Russia needs a lot more of efforts to revive old ties in African countries, to engage in a large scale investments and energy. Humanitarian assistance could be a strategic mechanism, the lack of Russian soft power in African states is another main trouble that continues to

hinder Russia's realization of its policy projects," Amarasinghe wrote in his emailed discussion.

He further compares how Britain, France and even India are performing with the use of their soft power in African space, added finally that "Russia still has the opportunities, Moscow only needs to address more on African states beyond arms trade and offering assistance, but covering much important issues such as education, energy politics and investment. These have to be taken in practical terms, not just mere rhetoric."

On April 29, Russian International Affairs Council (RIAC), a powerful autonomous Russian NGO that focuses on foreign policy, held an online conference under theme "The Future of Africa in the Context of Energy Crisis and COVID-19 Pandemic" - with participation of foreign policy experts on Africa. Chairing the online discussions, Igor Ivanov, former Russian Foreign Affairs Minister and now RIAC President, made an opening speech. He pointed out that Russia's task in Africa following the pandemic is to present a strategy and define priorities with the countries of the continent, build on the decisions of the first Russia-Africa Summit, held in Sochi in October 2019.

On the development of cooperation between Russia and African countries, Igor Ivanov strongly reminded that "Russia's task is to prevent a rollback in relations with African countries. It is necessary to use the momentum set by the first Russia-Africa Summit. First of all, it is necessary for Russia to define explicitly its priorities: why are we returning to Africa? Just to make money, strengthen our international presence, help African countries or to participate in the formation of the new world order together with the African countries? Some general statements of a fundamental nature were made at the first Summit, now it is necessary to move from general statements to specificity."

The speakers presented scenarios of the development of the COVID-19 coronavirus pandemic on the continent, the impact of the coronavirus on various industries, the economic and social development of African countries. Experts discussed the role of integration associations on the continent, the existing and the expected problems in the work of humanitarian missions and programs supervised by international organizations.

For many African countries, it is the time to reflect on African countries' responses to COVID-19. It is time to take the opportunity it offers to catalyze action on structural deficits. The current predicament triggers long-term shifts toward universal access to health and education. It is time to think of improving communities with the necessary infrastructure. Although it has abundant natural resources, Africa remains the world's poorest and least developed continent, the result of a variety of causes that include corrupt governments, and worse with poor development policies. It is time to prioritize and focus on sustainable development.

With its 1.3 billion people, Africa accounts for about 16% of the world's human population. Africa, comprising 54 countries, is the world's second largest and second-most populous continent after Asia. As the coronavirus spreads around the world, many foreign eyes, such as the United States and Canada, Europe, China, Russia and the Gulf States, are still on Africa.

Significantly, the global pandemic has exposed the weaknesses in Africa's health system, adversely affected its economic sectors, it is therefore necessary for African leaders, the African Union (AU), Regional organization and African partners be reminded of issues relating to sustainable economic development and subsequent integration. It sets further as a reminder to highlight and prioritize the significance of these in the context of tasks set out by the UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the African Union's Agenda 2063. *By Kester Kenn Klomegah writes frequently about Russia, Africa and the BRICS.

Ellen proposes assessment

Former President Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf has proposed an assessment of the impact of the coronavirus measures being put in place here to enable government make an informed decision as to whether it should continue with the measures or not.

"I think an assessment needs to be made now ...and based on the current circumstances including the level of transmission of the virus then I think we can see whether additional measures need to be taken," former President Sirleaf told France 24 in an interview on Friday May 15.

She believes that each country must judge based on its own confidence issues, cautioning that at some point one has to begin to realize that the restrictions that are placed on the population don't face some resistance, unless there are

The Former President further stated, "We all have been subjected to these lockdowns," saying the closures have been mandated for all activities - churches, mosques, entertainment centers, theater, bars, and stores schools.

Mrs. Sirleaf suggests that in the wake of the health crisis, one also has to improve the communication and the financing to ensure that whatever that is done helps to win the public confidence.

She believes though that countries have to adopt those measures initially, but must be guided by the circumstances and be able to give full reporting, obtain reliable information on the status of the transmission of the virus and be able to act accordingly.

Mrs. Sirleaf's second term here was faced with the Ebola epidemic that disrupted the country's economy and exposed its poor health sector.

Meanwhile, the former

interest of the population.

Mrs. Sirleaf also warned that the biggest challenge is yet to come. She said once the pandemic has ended, the effect on the economy is going to be awesome.

"But the biggest challenge is yet to come. Just as the case of Ebola, once the pandemic has ended, the effect on the economy is going to be awesome," Mrs. Sirleaf says.

She continues that Liberia has not fully recovered from the destruction of the economy and so Liberians can only hope that the support that is coming now for the humanitarian gesture [would] be able to stop the virus.

She expresses belief that the African continent which has experienced the lowest number of coronavirus cases compared with the rest of the world, will continue to be able to remain relatively



very good reasons to continue the harsh measures that are imposed initially.

She says if measures are not taken to assess the impact of the lockdown and the hardship it has imposed on the citizenry, the government could lose the public confidence it needs.

"...because we also know that we impose hardship on the population - the market women, the farmers who cannot, the small businesses are all affected...that is a tolerance that cannot be stretched to its ultimate limit." Mrs. Sirleaf warned.

She admits though that lockdowns and containments are necessary measures when a pandemic has hit. She states that it is necessary initially because that is the only way you can obtain the compliance and the containment measures to gain the confidence of the public that what you are doing is in their best interest.

president says she thinks that the government has acted in accordance with data - the information that they received from the health authorities as to the extent of the transmission.

Also, she says she believes that they used the experience of Ebola and how Liberia faced this deadly virus and the destruction and death that occurred as reasons why they were very timely in imposing these measures.

Regarding the opening of churches, Mrs. Sirleaf says her understanding is that they are looking at the situation to be able to open churches, but she hopes that before they make that final decision, they will communicate with the public.

She hopes also that the government will give the public honest, reliable reporting of the status of the pandemic by now so that they can have the confidence of the public that whatever decision they have made is in the

[low] in terms of Covid-19 cases.

"We try to wonder why and I believe some of the reasons will have to do with our climate, perhaps our genes," she says.

Mrs. Sirleaf indicates that she also knows that as a result of the Ebola experience, many African countries have acted very timely to put in place the protocols to be able to adopt and implement measures of containment, lockdowns that require all the closures to be able to hold down the transmission.

"I know that there are predictions that there might be a new wave that might increase the transmission and the cases of Africa. But I like to believe that will not be the case," she says.

Mrs. Sirleaf observes that the reaction of the international community to Covid-19 is much improved "compared to what we faced

ArcelorMittal

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public, while employees working during the lockdown will be required to abide by all safety protocols including the wearing of masks, frequent hand washing and social distancing.

The company also noted that while additional precautions are being taken to mitigate the impacts of the pandemic, it is maintaining core operations and employment levels.

It added that the management of the company recognizes the threats posed by the COVID-19 and the need for a concerted effort and has been working closely with the Government of Liberia, County Superintendents and local health authorities to

combat the disease.

As a company that prioritizes the safety and wellbeing of its staff and the public, ArcelorMittal Liberia assures of its continued commitment and support to efforts to combat the spread of the Coronavirus in Grand Bassa County and across Liberia.

About ArcelorMittal

ArcelorMittal is the world's leading steel and mining company, with a presence in 60 countries and primary steelmaking facilities in 18 countries. In 2019, ArcelorMittal had revenues of \$70.6 billion and crude steel production of 89.8 million metric tonnes, while iron ore production reached 57.1 million metric tonnes.

CBL joins fight against

Cont'd from page 6

together to make Liberia COVID-19 free".

Items that CBL donated to the 14 Military Hospital included masks, aprons, rice, oil, detergent, canned food and cholera buckets.

The donation to the 14 Military is the first of many

such donations planned by CBL. CBL intends to further take the fight against this deadly Pandemic to the School of the Blind, Gibraltar Community, Home of the Elderly and Liberia Nursing Association.

La Liga clubs

Starts from back page

forward on the road towards restarting professional football in Spain, which has been on hold since March 12 due to the Covid-19 pandemic," read a statement from La Liga.

The league's president, Javier Tebas, who is aiming for a June 12 restart, told Movistar's El Partidazo: "The start of the next phase in La Liga's Return to Training protocol is another step towards the restarting of the competition.

"It will be good to be able to set all training routines on an equal footing. It's very important that every club have the same chance to be in good shape. It's not essential, but it's very important and we're grateful that it will be like that."

Tebas thinks football can be played every day once La Liga returns in order to finish the season, saying: "That is what I hope.

"We shouldn't have any problems playing on Mondays across the eleven rounds of matches we have left to play. I hope for some sense from the Royal Spanish Football Federation on this.

"It's very important for us to be able to give both our national and international broadcasters, and fans across the world, football on as many days as possible to ensure as little disruption as possible."

He also welcomed the return of Bundesliga action at the weekend.

"I'm very happy, and I've congratulated them because they've taken a very important step," he said.

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when Ebola struck."

"This time it's not only three, four African countries that are affected, it's the world. So the attention of the world is much more diligent and much timely and much more responsive," she says.

In the case of Liberia, she believes that the partners have responded in a timely

manner, stressing that she understands that they are giving the technical support, not only the financial support.

In a related development she calls for support in the fight against malaria, saying it kills more than any other disease on the African continent. -**Edited by Othello B. Garblah**

Liberia's ROBOTIC team meets Speaker Chambers



House Speaker Dr. Bhofal Chambers, on Wednesday, May 11, 2020 met with leaders and mentors of FIRST Global-“Team Liberia”, for Inspiration and Recognition of Science and Technology.

FIRST Global began its operations here in 2016 with the aspiration of creating passion in the disciplines of Science, Technology, Engineering, and

Mathematics (STEM).

Since then, TEAM LIBERIA has represented Liberia at International Robotic Competitions in the style of Global Olympics, winning distinct awards and ranked at surprising positions with astronomical performances among more than 180 countries.

During the Team presentation, the Speaker extolled mentors of the team

for a splendid work and challenged the team to be more innovative by applying the culture of research and innovation “Firstly, I want to thank all of you for taking the courage to represent our country Liberia on the international stage. It is pleasing to know that Liberia was represented again during the 2019 challenge, but I want

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La Liga clubs return to training in groups of 10

La Liga clubs have returned to training in groups of up to 10 players.

Barcelona and Atletico Madrid were among the teams to post photos from the next phase of the Spanish top flight's attempted return early on Monday.

Following La Liga's coronavirus hiatus, players were allowed to resume individual work from May 4 as the country began to de-

escalate its lockdown measures.

Although strict guidelines are set to remain in place for Madrid and Catalonia over the coming weeks, the lockdown is being eased in many other regions of Spain, and in accordance with government regulations and protocols, clubs are now able to resume group sessions at their training bases.

Initially teams will be required to work in groups of no more than 10 players, but they



are still not permitted to use changing facilities and must arrive and leave individually. The groups must work on different pitches, or at the very least in opposite halves.

La Liga confirmed "group training may be carried out by all clubs, regardless of the de-escalation phase of the province in which they are located". Strict preventive and safety guidelines are in place.

"This is a significant step

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