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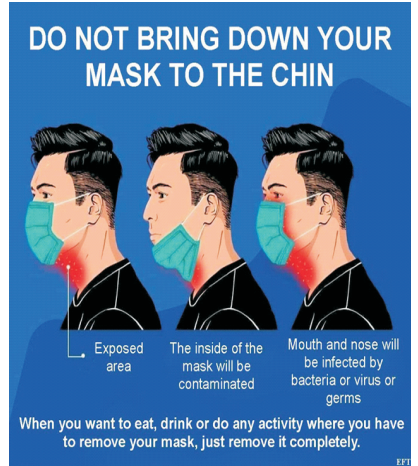
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TRULY INDEPENDENT



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Rep. Snowe warned



Rep. Edwin Melvin Snowe



Associate Justice Sie-A-Nyene G. Yuoh

-Amidst divorce complaint

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Continental News

UN joins global condemnation of Mali coup

The United Nations has joined global condemnation of the military takeover in Mali, which saw President Ibrahim Boubacar Keita forced to resign.

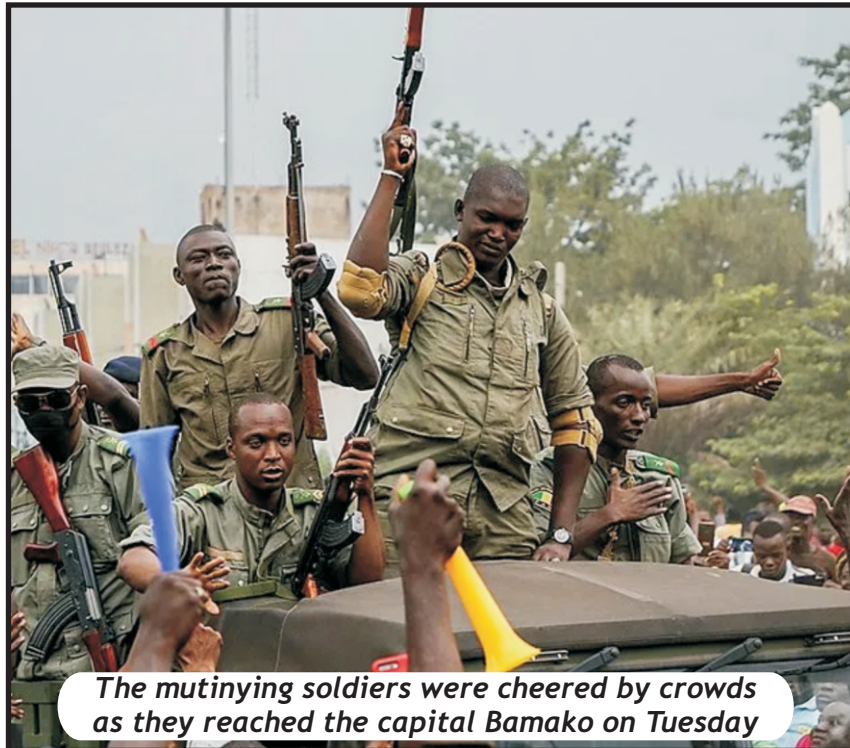
The UN's Security Council echoed similar calls by regional bodies for the immediate release of all government officials and the restoration of constitutional order. The soldiers said they acted to prevent the country falling into further chaos.

They say they will set up a civilian government and hold new elections.

Mali, a vast country stretching into the Sahara Desert, is among the poorest in the world and has experienced several military takeovers. It is currently battling to contain a wave of jihadist attacks and ethnic violence.

Mr Keita won a second term in elections in 2018, but since June has faced huge street protests over corruption, the mismanagement of the economy and disputed legislative elections.

There has also been anger among troops about pay and



the conflict with jihadists. The African Union earlier suspended Mali, saying military coups were "something of the past which we cannot accept anymore".

"Whenever you have a crisis and the military people have a coup and say 'we are responding to the will of the people', this way of responding is not acceptable at all," the AU's Commissioner for Peace and Security, Smail Chergui, told the BBC's Focus on Africa

programme. The 15-member Economic Community of West African States (Ecowas) has also taken swift action against Mali - closing borders, suspending financial flows and ejecting it from decision-making bodies. It is holding a virtual conference on Thursday what further action to take. US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo tweeted his condemnation, and French President Emmanuel Macron

urged a return to civilian rule saying "the fight against terrorist groups and the defence of democracy and the rule of law are inseparable". Reports in Mali say Colonel Assimi Goita has been confirmed as president of the new military junta, which is calling itself the National Committee for the Salvation of the People (CNSP). Col Goita, said to be the head of Mali's special forces, met senior civil servants earlier on Wednesday and told them: "We have no political ambitions, we are soldiers, our objective is to rapidly transfer power. The state will continue, we assure you of our support in order to work in tranquillity, we want to reassure you," the Malian newspaper Journal du Mali reports. Other members of the junta identified in the report include Col Malick Diaw, CNSP vice-president, and Col Ismaël Wagué, the air force deputy chief of staff, who had earlier read a statement on behalf of the group.

The newspaper quotes local websites as saying four civilians were killed by gunfire during the military takeover, although this has been denied by coup leaders.

In another development, the head of the Mali's opposition M5 movement, conservative Imam Mahmoud Dicko, announced he would be withdrawing from politics after meeting the coup

leaders. No reasons were given. Mr Dicko has called for reforms after rejecting concessions from Mr Keita. One of the parties in the M5 opposition coalition led by Mr Dicko, CMAS, said it would support the coup leader in "developing a roadmap" towards new elections and called for rallies on Friday "to celebrate the Malian people's victory". It appears that mutinying soldiers took control of the Kati army camp, about 15km (nine miles) from Bamako, on Tuesday. They then marched on the capital, cheered by crowds who had gathered to demand Mr Keita's resignation.

The soldiers then stormed the presidential buildings, arresting Mr Keita and his prime minister and taking them to Kati Camp. The president's son, the speaker of the National Assembly, the foreign and finance ministers were also reported to have been detained.

Appearing on TV on Tuesday night, President Keita said he would resign as he did not want "blood to be spilled to keep me in power".

Although banks and offices were closed in Bamako on Wednesday, there were signs of daily life resuming. Some residents had gathered to celebrate the coup, while some were worried about who would now be in charge of the country, reports journalist Mohamed Salaha. BBC

Kenya journalist freed from detention in Ethiopia

Kenyan journalist Yassin Juma has been released from detention in Ethiopia - about a week after his lawyer said he had contracted coronavirus in prison.

He has been moved to a state-run isolation facility for treatment, and will be allowed to travel back to

Kenya once he recovers.

Mr Juma, a freelance reporter, was detained in the capital, Addis Ababa, in July, following the unrest that broke out after the killing of popular Oromo musician Hachalu Hundessa.

Authorities in Ethiopia this week ordered his release, saying he had been "wrongfully

arrested".

Kenya's Foreign Ministry said he was released after the intervention of its embassy in Ethiopia, which had sent several protests notes to Addis Ababa. Mr Hachalu's death sparked widespread protests mainly in the Oromia region, which is home to Oromos, the largest ethnic community in Ethiopia. Nearly 200 people died and 9,000 were arrested in the unrest. Among those still in detention include dozens of prominent opposition leaders and journalists. There are reports of a fresh wave of protests in Oromia over the continued detention of opposition leaders from the region.

Security forces have been accused of shooting at protesters during clashes, killing dozens and injuring many more, according to hospital sources.

Members of the Oromo community in the US have also been holding street demonstrations against the detentions. BBC



Yassin Juma detention in July caused a global outcry

Zimbabwe seeks Vatican's stand on bishops' criticism



Zimbabwe's government has reached out to Vatican representative Archbishop Marek Zalewski to seek clarification on criticism by Catholic bishops.

The bishops recently released a pastoral letter highlighting corruption, poverty and human rights abuses in the country. They called for an urgent resolution to the country's economic and political challenges.

Justice Minister Ziyambi Ziyambi says the government wants to know if the bishops spoke on behalf of Vatican.

"Government is compelled to engage the Vatican in order to ascertain whether or not such statements reflect the official attitude of the Holy See towards Zimbabwe's leadership or whether these are merely the views of the various individuals concerned," he said.

Mr Ziyambi said Foreign Minister Sibusiso Moyo would meet the local Vatican representative.

The government had condemned the pastoral letter, accusing the bishops of joining groups seeking "to manufacture crises". BBC

EDITORIAL

CDC's mountain from a molehill

PRESIDENT GEORGE MANNEH Weah's governing Coalition for Democratic Change is building a mountain from a molehill here after opposition leader Alexander B. Cummings' recent response to instead, debate with the President than his surrogates.

MR. CUMMINGS, POLITICAL leader of the Alternative National Congress and chairman of four Collaborating Political Parties (CPP) in the country had thrown out the challenge to President Weah after the Minister of State for Presidential Affairs, Nathaniel McGill said on social media that he's prepared to debate the CPP leader on President Weah's performance into his nearly three years leadership.

BUT THE RULING CDC is fuming over the opposition leader's response to a challenge that had originated in fact, from the government itself. CDC chairman Mulbah Morlu, argues that it is unspeakable that the leader of a political party would want to debate with a seated President far ahead of a political campaign or an electioneering process.

WE DISAGREE TOTALLY with Morlu on this one. How effective is an opposition leader anywhere around the world if he or she cannot critically checkmate the ruling administration, especially, the President who presides over the governance of state and is chief architect of policies that affect lives of the people? The CDC chair should state clearly who is to scrutinize the daily workings of the government in power if not the opposition as an alternative national leadership?

IN THE FIRST place, it is an official of the Weah administration that threw out the challenge, and as leader of the opposition, Mr. Cummings only responded, rather preferring to debate with the President whom he seeks to replace at the ballot box than his surrogates.

BUT THE APPARENTLY less busy CDCians from the level of party chairman and others are raging with emotions, attempting to raise a mountain out of an issue that is as plain as it should be. For the record, Mr. Weah has not participated in any serious national debate with his opponents in past elections and the CDC knows that.

MR. CUMMINGS ONLY responded thru his facebook page, "The truth is, there is no debate that this Weah-led government is corrupt, incompetent, and that as a result, Liberians are suffering! But if they are serious about a debate, I prefer to debate Pres. Weah himself." We wonder what is wrong with this response that has put the ruling party on fire.

THE RULING COALITION should call press conferences to address matters such as rampant rape of our babies and teenage girls by heartless men in society, jobs creation, and youth empowerment, among others rather than sounding like an empty drum.

NOW THAT MINISTER McGill, chairman Morlu and the likes have transitioned from opposition and ascended to the glasshouse, they should stop throwing stones and get themselves busied with advancing the progress of Liberia rather than looking for molehills to elevate.

THE ACHIEVEMENTS OF any elected government are known by the level of impact is making on the lives of the people instead of constantly talking or defending itself, for its thru deeds, not words.

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COMMENTARY

By Hanan Morsy

How Africa Can Harness the Fourth Industrial Revolution

Owing to its large and growing youth population, Africa, more than many other regions, desperately needs to provide the education and skills training necessary for the jobs of the future. By empowering their people through technology, African countries can leapfrog many development hurdles.

A BIDJAN - Key features of the Fourth Industrial Revolution (4IR) - accelerating digitalization, artificial intelligence (AI), cloud computing, robotics, and 3D printing - have obvious and important implications for education, employment, and the future of work. This is especially true for African countries. Over the past decade, the share of the continent's under-20 population has expanded by more than 25%, and is projected to be the continent's largest age cohort by 2070. As Africa meets the 4IR, its youth will be one of its most important assets.

But to capture this demographic dividend, African countries must overhaul their education systems to prepare for the coming technological revolution. While automation could increase skills premiums and exacerbate income inequality, it also could increase productivity and create new occupations. As such, the 4IR represents a unique opportunity for African countries to leapfrog over development hurdles with the help of technology.

The 4IR will heavily influence which skills are needed in the labor market. Around the world, demand is evolving toward adaptable social, behavioral, and non-repetitive cognitive skills, and away from routine tasks and narrow skills tied to specific jobs. In Africa, demand for software engineers, marketing specialists, writers, and financial advisers is rising, whereas demand for mechanical technicians, administrative assistants, and accountants is falling.

Developing such skills starts in early childhood. In addition to strengthening education, African countries need to increase investment in nutrition, health, and social protections for children. Sadly, Africa is home to one-third of the world's stunted children under age five, and that number is still rising. Yet the link between nutrition and a workforce's cognitive capacity is clear. Governments that invest in better nutrition, particularly for the first 1,000 days from conception to age two, will see far-reaching economic - as well as humanitarian - returns.

At the other end of the youth spectrum, higher education is more important now than ever for preparing workers to adapt to the changing job landscape they will encounter over the course of their careers. Studies in Kenya and Tanzania, cited by the African Development Bank (AfDB), for example, show that non-repetitive and cognitive skills are associated with better starting pay, greater job satisfaction, and higher wages over time. Yet, across Africa, less than 4% of the population has a university degree. Moreover, education has remained concentrated in social sciences and humanities, and has lagged in the STEM (science, technology, engineering, and math) fields that are crucial for harnessing the 4IR.

As a result, there is a growing mismatch between businesses' evolving demands and the skills furnished by African education systems. The sooner African countries can close these gaps, the better chance they will have of reaping the benefits of new technologies.

Some countries are already making significant strides in this direction. Egypt, for example, has introduced "interactive classrooms," distributing 1.5 million tablets preloaded with an electronic encyclopedia that can also be accessed from school networks and youth centers. Around 2,500 Egyptian schools already have high-speed Internet access, and new solar-powered, "smart" classrooms are

being created in remote areas with the help of advanced mobile technologies.

For its part, the African Development Bank (AfDB) has launched "Coding for Employment" as part of its Jobs for Youth in Africa strategy to provide digital skills to the next generation. Among other components, this program (which targets youth aged 15-35) furnishes universities and training centers with computers and other equipment; provides demand-driven training programs in partnership with leading technology firms; and equips youth with essential soft and interpersonal skills, as well as direct employment opportunities. Moreover, in collaboration with academic institutions, the AfDB is participating in research on how to make African education systems more agile and responsive.

Although economic growth was strong in Africa before the COVID-19 crisis, it was not inclusive; poverty and inequality remain high across the region. And while the continent has made large gains in school enrollment, it lags behind other regions on a number of indicators, including average number of years of education and school quality. High-school dropout rates in Africa still exceed 30%, more than twice the global average of 13%.

To catch up with other regions, African countries must adopt national strategies for education and skills development, focusing not only on youth but also on adult workers, dropouts, informal-economy workers, and those from economically and socially disadvantaged groups. African employers often cite inadequately prepared workers as a major constraint on their businesses' growth. Similarly, AfDB research finds that close to half of employed African youth consider their skills to be mismatched to their jobs, and that two-thirds are either over- or under-educated, leading to depressed wages and job satisfaction.

Only by tackling these skill and education mismatches can African countries build an adaptable and flexible workforce that is ready for the 4IR. Doing so will require a new educational philosophy that prizes soft skills while investing in basic and digital infrastructure. To reduce dropout rates, attendance incentives and access to schools in remote areas must be enhanced, and primary school, at a minimum, should be made mandatory.

By ensuring more demand-driven education, African countries can reduce persistent labor-market mismatches and make education both more attractive to students and more relevant for employers. One exciting option is for African countries to use new dynamic information systems to track current and future labor-market needs in the economy, making it easier for youth to learn about job openings, apply for jobs, and meet their skill requirements.

An overhaul of African education would translate into increased productivity and output for the continent as a whole. AfDB research finds that improvements in both educational attainment (completion rates) and quality (more and better teachers, textbooks, and other resources) are positively correlated with worker productivity, and in turn with a country's development outcomes.

The importance of skills development for Africa's youth thus must not be overlooked. It represents one of the key drivers of innovation on the continent. To benefit from that relationship, the African workforce must start preparing today for tomorrow's jobs.



Lord, this is so true

Dear Father,

You know, quite honestly let me confess here that I am not a fan of Nigerian movies. I may watch briefly if I came home and met my wife watching because it would be rude to change the channel and switch on the news immediately.

But to sit and watch it like I would do Hollywood movies based on sub-titles, I am yet to develop such taste, and maybe in the future I don't know.

But what I know is this. Just the other day while playing with my phone, I saw one of those teasers- a clip from what I appears to be a political satire.

In that brief clip, a young lady kneeled down begging a rich woman for help to buy food for her and her children. The lady took a piece of bread, one vegetable tomato and 1 naira or so and gave it to the beggar.

The young female beggar then look at this rich and affluent woman and said the gift could not do anything for her, let alone her ten children.

The benevolent lady then turned back and asked if the young beggar voted during the last election, and she replied in the affirmative.

She said during the election when you people were collecting 10,000 Naira to go and vote didn't you know that you were selling your future?

The young female beggar became speechless. But the woman continues, she said now the politicians don't owe you anything because they have already bought your votes. She told the beggar that the 10,000 naira given to influence their votes included good hospitals, schools, and better living conditions that would have improved their lives.

She didn't stop there, she said since they electorates have already been paid, its means they politicians can do whatever they like-send their children abroad to good schools and hospitals, go on vacations etc.

It was a few minute clip that spoke volume and depicted why politicians would invest in they and their family members and forget those who elected them to those offices-simply because voters sold their rights before the results could even be announced.

This brings me to our own situation Father. There is a pending election right before us in less than four months. Politicians have begun passing around dishing out cash to potential voters. Nobody is asking why these people are dishing out such huge money to them.

On December 8, instead of voting to have good hospital and schools and for good policies that will better their lives, they will collect their futures now, and vote because of the little cash one dishonest crook has dished out to them.

Yes Father, then we want our country to improve, where? The money given in the period leading to election are investments that the politicians would have to reap their returns from when they get elected.

Father, until our people stop voting for people because of the money they received in return, our village will not go anywhere.

Now we are hearing gossip that the Camp of the Footballer is dishing out 100,000 Uncle Sam's money to each of its contestants and we pray it's not true.

But let assume that it is, what would you expect when those heartless individuals get reelected or get elected-obviously they will have to pay back into the party's coffers and they will not be working to improve conditions in the village but rather to pay back and pledge their loyalty to the Camp.

So even if the Footballer woke up from his wet dream one morning and say you know what I want you people to pass a law for me to go for third round, you can't blame them because they've already bought your rights. Thus, only if we knew the consequences of taking money to vote for people, we would think again.



With Jones Mallay

fredrickdiamondm@yahoo.com

Did Madam Jewel Taylor and Laymah Gbowee failed miserably to fight Systemic Sexual Abuses and Gross Domestic Violence Against Innocent Liberian Children, Girls, and Women Legally in Liberia?

Post-war Liberia has raised a dramatic and indisputable profile of several unique women personalities across Liberia. Few among the most prominent and celebrated are 48-years old Layman Roberta Gbowee, a Nobel Peace Laureate, a trauma counselor, a peace activist, founder/president of the Gbowee's Peace Foundation Africa; and head of the Women Peace and Security Network Africa based in Ghana and Madam Jewel Howard Taylor, the 57-years old, current Vice President of the Republic of Liberia, former Senator of Bong County, ex-wife of the then notoriously known convicted war criminal Charles Gankay Taylor, and a zealous and active founding member and chairperson of the Notorious National Patriotic Front of Liberia (NPFL), which subsequently gave birth to the National Patriotic Party (NPP) which now has a very staunch political ties with the Congress For Democratic Change (CDC) in a shakable political Coalition.

Liberia is definitively sinking gradually in a much deeper and much greater human calamity in the form of a social warfare mounted fearlessly against innocent and vulnerable children, girls, and women especially under the watchful eyes of the government of the Ruling Coalition for Democratic Change (CDC), which Madam Taylor's NPP is a beneficiary. It is beyond description to see Liberia being terribly and unconditionally engulfed with infested dangerous sexual and domestic violence male-predictors who are persistently vandalizing innocent children, women, and girls and walks away majestically with strong and unstoppable impunity.

Angry sources in Liberia who are in acknowledgment of this dangerous and ongoing menace, revealed that sexual and domestic violence is at the highs of Liberian society, since the Liberian civil carnage ended technically around 2015 and practically in 2016.

Since then, there has been a Sharpe increased in sexual and domestic violence at a huge magnitude. The angry sources further lamented that in 2016, there were 700 sexually assaulted cases and UP under the then President Sirleaf did nothing. In 2018 there were 1,145 and the CDC did nothing. In 2019 there were 2, 590 cases and the CDC did nothing. The beginning of early 2020 there had been over 500 cases and the CDC is doing nothing. These terrible figures do not include records on women brutalities and summary killings by evil men across Liberia.

Some political skeptics wonder as to what had been the consolidated and moral standing of past and present governments in Liberia, which also includes the then President Sirleaf's government and the present CDC led government under President Weah? It appears that the issues of sexual assaults coupled with a much deeper and unreportable domestic violence cases have now become the new norm in the Republic of Liberia with a lot of talking, with little or no action taken legally to grab those nefarious men and have them placed in cages.

This is also a clear massive failure on the part of the Ministries of Gender, Internal affairs, Justice, and the Liberia National Police Force whose priorities are far from protecting children girls and women from the deadly hands of sexual predictors across Liberia. With such massive institutional failures, on the part of the current government of Liberia under President Weah to cultivate the will needed to identify and put behind bars those sexual deviants who are still parading confidently in towns and cities across the countryside of Liberia.

However, two renounced personalities who are not expected to fail on this matter in the persons of Madam Laymah Roberta Gbowee and Madam Jewel Howard Taylor are rather the most disappointing in all of these unthinkable scenarios due to their huge inactiveness to take some concrete and legal actions against the LNPF, Gender, Internal Affairs, and Justice Ministries, rather than constantly visiting and consoling families and parents whose child or children had been visually vandalized in all manner of gross disrespect by parading evil minds across Liberia.

Madam Laymah Roberta Gbowee and Madam Jewel Howard Taylor are few of our most wonderful and celebrated iconic mothers, dependable sisters, guaranteed and forceful activists and officials in Liberia. They are very significant personalities in the Liberian society. Their presence has not been felt among children, girls, and women who have been and continues to be abused systematically, killed or disappeared in silence.

Madam Gbowee did not obtain her Nobel Prize in isolation, she earned it on the back of the Liberian crisis with focused on peacebuilding and a strong emphasis on women's and girls' rights in Liberia. The Nobel Prize was given to her as a national service fee for a job well done. It is simply in recognition of her continues service to fight for women and girls' rights in Liberia. But Madam Gbowee's inactive role since she earned the Noble Prize in 2010 is not in alignment with her objective for which she was awarded the Noble Peace Prize.

Madam Gbowee will need to wake up, because, the International Community especially the Noble committee is keeping eye on her concerning the ongoing abuses of children, girls, and women in Liberia. Vice President Jewel Howard Taylor for her part, should have used her unique office to mount a strong fight against women and girls' continues abuses such as rape, domestic violence, women and girl brutalities, and all sorts of other abuses but to no avail, she is even sleeping three times then the most fearless forest lions.

VP President Jewel Taylor had not used her office legally to fight the growing abuses against children, girls, and women in many respects. The VP's constant quest to identify herself with many victims of rapes and domestic violence cases in Liberia. It is a good mood, but not necessarily a timely one, considering the alarming abuses being mounted against children, girls and women in Liberia. Madam Taylor will need to put in place some form of strong legal framework through which cruel men are identified and punished legally for abusing children, girls, and women in Liberia. It is not too late for these unique personalities to show case in their fight against this social calamity.



VACANCY NOTICE

The Independent Committee of Experts is seeking applications from qualified and competent Liberian citizens, at home and abroad, to occupy the following vacant positions of Chairperson and two (2) Commissioners at the Independent National Commission on Human Rights (INCHR).

General Information:

Candidates for the position of **Chairperson** must meet the following criteria:

- Must be at least 40 years of age;
- Must be a Senior Lawyer with proven professional competence and commitment to the promotion and protection of human rights;
- Must **NOT** have been convicted by court for any criminal offence involving moral turpitude;
- Must **NOT** engage in any other occupation, business or profession or any other activities for which he or she is paid;
- Must **NOT** hold any other public or government office; and
- Shall hold office for six (6) years.

Candidates for the position of **Commissioner**:

- Must be at least 40 years of age;
- Must **NOT** have been convicted by court for any criminal offence involving moral turpitude;
- Shall **NOT** hold any other public or government office;
- Shall **NOT** engage in any other occupation, business or profession or any other activities for which he or she is paid;
- Shall **NOT** hold any position incompatible with the proper performance of the Commissioner's official duties; and
- Shall hold office for five (5) years.

Qualifications for the Positions:

- University degree or equivalent practical experience in a discipline or related work of the INCHR's mandate;
- Must be of the highest calibre and meet the highest standard of expertise, skill, independence and commitment to the promotion and protection of human rights;
- Excellent oral, written and inter-personal communication skills, experience in public speaking and private sectors, as well as other relevant stakeholders.

General Criteria for Applicants:

- Candidate should be sensitive to issues involving the vulnerable individuals and groups such as women, children, the elderly, the disabled, opposition supporters, men, religious, ethnic, nationality, race, detainees, and others who may face the risk of becoming victims of abuses;
- Experience in investigating, litigating or otherwise handling cases of human rights violations before judicial and quasi-judicial bodies would be an asset for the candidate;
- Experience in lobbying, advocacy, working with authorities responsible for abuse, including relevant military, police and prison officials;
- Proven characteristics of the candidate should be independence, impartiality, and personal integrity.

Competencies:

- Candidate should be sensitive to issues involving vulnerable groups such as women, children, the elderly, the disabled, detainees, and others who may face the risk of becoming victims of abuses;
- Candidate must demonstrate experience in human rights monitoring, investigation and documentation;
- Candidates must demonstrate working knowledge of the Paris Principle in the protection and promotion of human rights;
- Knowledge in litigating or otherwise handling cases of human rights violations before judicial or quasi-judicial bodies;
- Experience in lobbying, advocacy, working with authorities responsible for the protection of human rights such as the court, military, police, prison officials and other security agencies;
- Candidate must have proven record of independence, impartiality, and high degree of integrity;
- University degree or equivalent practical experience in a discipline related to the work of the INCHR Commission's mandate;
- Excellent oral, written and interpersonal communication skills, experience in public speaking, and private sectors as well as other relevant stakeholders;
- Candidate must be a Liberian, have good human rights record;
- Candidate must be a non-partisan, with no political interest; and
- Candidate must be a Researcher.

NOTE:

- **ONLY SHORTLISTED CANDIDATES WILL BE CONTACTED;**
- **FEMALE CANDIDATES ARE ENCOURAGED TO APPLY; AND**
- **ANY APPLICATION SUBMITTED AFTER THE CLOSING DATE AND TIME WILL BE REJECTED.**

How to Apply:

- All applications must be accompanied by Curriculum Vitae and supporting document(s) addressed to

*The Chairperson
Independent Committee of Experts
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Law Library, Ashmun Street, Monrovia, Liberia*
or sent by E-mail to: independentcommitteeofexperts@gmail.com

Please Indicate Position on the Envelope or E-mail:

CHAIRPERSON OR COMMISSIONER

STARTING DATE FOR RECEIVING APPLICATIONS
August 20, 2020

CLOSING DATE
September 3, 2020 at 4:00 p.m.

O-PED

Shang-Jin Wei

A Better Alternative to Trump's WeChat Ban

Shang-Jin Wei, a former chief economist at the Asian Development Bank, is Professor of Finance and Economics at Columbia Business School and Columbia University's School of International and Public Affairs.

NEW YORK - Shortly after US President Donald Trump issued an executive order effectively banning the Chinese-owned social-media app TikTok, he issued a second order prohibiting "any transaction that is related to WeChat by any person ... as identified by the Secretary of Commerce." According to the White House, the WeChat ban - which will take effect on September 20 - is intended to protect Americans and visiting Chinese in the United States from violations of privacy by the Chinese government and to limit fake news from the Chinese government reaching Americans. But the ban is likely to be counterproductive, and there are better solutions to these problems.



WeChat, owned by Tencent, a Chinese company listed on the Hong Kong Stock Exchange, is a widely used multipurpose app that combines messaging, social media, digital payments, and other functions. If Tencent's founders, Pony (Huateng) Ma and four other partners, had built their company in the US, they would be celebrated in much the same way that Bill Gates, Jeff Bezos, and Elon Musk are.

Chinese entrepreneurs likely have had to overcome much greater difficulties to succeed than their American counterparts. After all, funding for those without family wealth or political connections is scantier in China due to a less developed capital market. Property rights protection is weaker, and Chinese Internet users' purchasing power is much lower than that of Americans. In 1998, when Tencent was founded, China's per capita income was a mere \$850 - less than 5% of the US level and less than 20% of the Mexican level that year.

WeChat was introduced in 2011, and quickly grew to become China's dominant social-media app. It is now a ubiquitous communications tool, used by young and old alike. Virtually every Chinese person with a smartphone has a WeChat account, which they use to stay in touch with friends, family, and work colleagues, and to pay restaurant, utility, and grocery bills. Even the US Embassy in China has an official WeChat profile, where it broadcasts US government information and provides services to US citizens living and working in China.

US residents with family members or friends in China are also likely to use WeChat when they communicate, and Chinese tourists in other countries rely on the app to stay connected while abroad. Similarly, many academics in the Chinese diaspora now use the service to collaborate with researchers in Singapore, Hong Kong, and mainland China (where it is used much more often than WhatsApp, Zoom, or Skype).

Banning WeChat outright will thus disrupt the lives of many US citizens and residents - probably on the order of one million people - who use the app regularly. Whether the move is worthwhile depends on if it serves some higher purpose effectively.

According to Trump's order, WeChat is guilty of two offenses. First, it collects mobility data and the content of communications from US citizens, permanent residents, and visitors to the US from China, and potentially makes this information available to the Chinese government. So, a ban protects people's privacy. Second, the Trump administration claims that disguised Chinese government entities are spreading disinformation on WeChat, in which case a ban would curtail Beijing's ability to transmit propaganda.

Both these apparent benefits are illusory. The idea that a ban strengthens privacy rests on the assumption that WeChat users in the US are stupid or uninformed, and thus cannot weigh the costs and benefits on their own. The implication is that Uncle Sam needs to strip away the right to download and use the app in order to protect users from themselves. The irony is that the ban comes from a president who declines to adopt a mandatory face-mask requirement in public places during a viral pandemic, which would have saved American lives.

As for the claim about disinformation, there are two points to consider. First, given the Chinese state's control of all media (online and off) within the country, WeChat is a relatively unimportant channel for the government's message outreach.

Second, US-based users often share information with friends and family in China, who then may pass it along to other WeChat groups. That makes WeChat a crack in China's Great Firewall. Even if a post is taken down by a WeChat censor, it is often reposted in some other form, and users regularly deploy creative wording and formatting in their messages to bypass the censoring algorithm. By banning WeChat in the US, Trump is closing an important opening in the firewall.

An alternative three-pronged policy would be superior to a ban. First, the president could order all US government agencies and employees not to use WeChat, with the US embassy in China being the exception. Second, the US government could mandate that Apple, Google, and other US app vendors issue a pop-up warning to anyone downloading WeChat. It could state that, "The US government determines that this app may be used to track your movement and the content of your communication and that this data could be available to the Chinese government. Some advertisements on WeChat may come from the Chinese government."

MORE HEADLINE NEWS MORE HEADLINE NEWS

Police accused in rape cases

By Ben P. Wese

A group of protesters including women and men have accused some officers of the Liberia National Police (LNP) of allegedly requesting money from the parents of rape victims to facilitate the arrest and investigation of perpetrators here.

The protesters under the banner Women NGO Secretariat of Liberia (WONGOSOL) were at the LNP Headquarters on Capitol Hill Thursday, 20 August to present to police authorities a statement containing accusations against some police investigators.

The protesters made the claims at a time cases of rape and other sexual gender - based violence continue to rise in the country, with troubling reports emerging of how kids as low as three years or below are being victimized

survivors for money.

“Our attention has been drawn to the growing complaint from parents and guardians for the payment of money to constable or arresting officers to facilitate the arrest of perpetrators and the investigation of crime scenes,” Madam Dahn claims.

She also urges Col. Sackor to instruct his officers to speedily conduct preliminary investigations into reported case and forward the perpetrators to court as per the law.

Madam Dahn continues that women advocates have been working for decade to break the silence on rape and all form of sexual violence in the country.

However she notes that consistently the majority of rape and sexual -based violence cases are unlikely to end in arrest and as a result, unlikely to end in conviction.

She further explains that the

reported.

Unfortunately she says 90 percent of the survivors were children, noting that the statistical trend on sexual violence from the sexual gender - based violence crimes unit shows that rape is the recurrent SGBV crime committed against women and girls in Liberia.

Madam Dahn adds that in 2018, approximately 2,145 cases of sexual violence were reported with 98 percent females and 6 percent were males, while in 2019, 2,590 cases were reported with 91 percent females and 9 percent males.

According to her, the trending data also shows that sodomy rape against boys is gradually on the rise.

“Approximately thirty two cases were prosecuted from January to June 2020, this is an analysis from the sexual gender - based violence

ArcelorMittal Liberia & Government launch CDF



ArcelorMittal Liberia and the Government of Liberia has announced the launch of the Community Development Fund for communities in proximity to the operations of ArcelorMittal Liberia in Nimba, Grand Bassa and Bong Counties.

In 2020, the Government of Liberia and ArcelorMittal Liberia agreed that the company shall disburse 20% of the County Social Development Fund, while it pays 80% to the Government on behalf of the beneficiary Counties.

According to the agreement, ArcelorMittal Liberia will disburse the 20-percent directly to beneficiary communities within the vicinity of the iron ore mine, port and along the length of

the railroad in Bong, Nimba and Grand Bassa Counties through the implementation of various projects. The 2020 allocation to the Community Development Fund is eight hundred forty thousand US dollars (US\$ 840,000).

The Community Development has a three-tier management structure. All projects are selected by beneficiary committees (in District Sittings) and are approved by the County Approval Committee in each County. ArcelorMittal Liberia will manage all contracts for goods and services and disburse payments.

Projects will be in the areas of agriculture, education, roads and bridges, water, health and hygiene, community cohesion and peacebuilding and housing.



as well.

“We want cases to be reported, and once they are reported, that the police be very supportive through investigation and effecting arrest of the alleged rapist void of putting additional trauma on the survivors and their parents, guardians and or activist or social workers,” Madam Eliza Dahn of WONGOSOL says.

Reading the group’s petition, Madam Eliza Dahn tells Deputy Police Inspector General for Operations (102) Col. Marvin Sackor to warn his officers not to ask rape

narrative is changing and they need the Liberia National Police as a partner in the fight so as to stop or prevent further more women, girls, or children from getting their future damaged by ensuring that the evil perpetrators face the wrath of the law.

Madam Dahn discloses that a total of 1,251 sexual violence cases were reported from across the country during the period of January to May 2020.

Compared to 2019, Madam Dahn indicates that the statistics show that during the period of January to May 2019, there were about 900 cases

crimes unit at the Ministry of Justice for the period of May 2020. The problem of rape and sexual gender - based violence cases attrition persists,” Eliza Dahn laments.

Receiving the petition, Police Deputy Inspector General for Operations Col. Marvin Sackor thanks the group for its level of maturity shown while assembling at the police headquarters to present a petition.

Mr. Sackor asks members of the group to come with their pictorial and video evidence any time officers of the Liberia National Police request parents or survivors for money before handling a case.

Col. Sackor notes that officers that are involved in such practice will be dealt with according to the law.-- Edited by Winston W. Parley

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MORE HEADLINE NEWS MORE HEADLINE NEWS

Pres. Weah calls for utmost caution in Malian crisis

President George Manneh Weah has said while Liberia is prepared to give its full backing to measures that ECOWAS will resolve to take in order to bring stability and a return to constitutional order in Mali, including the suspension of Mali from all

that sanctions, such as embargos or the closure of air and land borders, will negatively affect the Malian people, "whose interests we are trying to protect and secure while the use of military force through the activation and deployment of the ECOWAS Standby Force must be given

Boubacar Keita by mutinous soldiers, noting that the "illegitimate action" is "completely unacceptable" and runs contrary to ECOWAS' protocols on democracy and good governance.

He says Liberia stands by ECOWAS in its action against the coup leaders but warns



decision-making bodies of ECOWAS, "I would advise that we exercise the utmost caution and give our most careful consideration of the likely unintended consequences of these measures."

According to the Executive Mansion, Pres. Weah noted

thorough thought."

Speaking Thursday, August 20, 2020, during a virtual Extraordinary Summit of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) which was called to discuss the political crisis in Mali, President Weah condemned the ouster of Malian President, Ibrahim

that economic and other sanctions would compound the woes of ordinary Malians.

According to Mr. Weah, seizure of power in Mali is an unfortunate incident and ill-fated attempt to return Mali to military rule of its ugly past

▶ CONT'D ON PAGE 11

Dillon's bill hits Senate floor

By Ethel A Tweh

Opposition Montserrado County Senator Abraham Darius Dillon has officially presented a bill to the Plenary of the Liberian Senate which aims to set a fixed salary for lawmakers.

The bill which was read by the Secretary of the Senate Thursday, 20 August is titled: "An Act to Fix the Monthly Salary of Legislature."

In his communication profiling the bill, Senator Dillon notes that Article 7 of the Constitution of Liberia says that the Republic should manage the national economy and natural resources of the country.

According to Mr. Dillon, the economy of Liberia has experienced a major decline over the years, especially during the Ebola epidemic, noting that the prevailing

Covid-19 crisis has worsened the economy.

He adds that the country is in tough economic times. Dillon continues that Article 36 of the Constitution says the

Legislature shall have a fixed salary, and therefore proposes that the salaries, allowances and benefits of the Legislature be fixed to nothing more than US\$5,000



African Development Bank debars four companies

The African Development Bank Group on 20 August 2020, announces the 24-month debarment of Sangtech International Services Limited, Sangar & Associates (Nigeria) Limited, Mashad Integrated and Investment Co. Limited and Medniza Global Merchants Limited. All four companies are registered in Nigeria.

An investigation conducted by the Bank's Office of Integrity and Anti-Corruption established that the debarred companies engaged in fraudulent and collusive practices during a tender for the supply of water meters, automatic meters and house connection materials, under the Zaria Water Supply Expansion and Sanitation Project in Nigeria.

The sanction renders Sangtech International Services Limited, Sangar &

Associates (Nigeria) Limited, Mashad Integrated and Investment Co. Limited and Medniza Global Merchants Limited ineligible to participate in Bank-financed projects during the debarment period. Additionally, the 24-month debarment of the companies qualifies for cross-debarment by other multilateral development banks under the Agreement for Mutual Recognition of Debarment Decisions, including the Asian Development Bank, the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, the Inter-American Development Bank and the World Bank Group.

The Zaria Water Supply Expansion and Sanitation Project in Nigeria is co-financed by the African Development Fund, an entity of the African Development Bank Group.



or its equivalent in Liberian dollars.

Mr. Dillon also proposes in the bill that the Speaker of the House of Representatives and President Pro - tempore of the Liberian Senate make nothing more than US\$5,000 monthly as their benefits.

Making the motion, Senator Saah Joseph says the Senate accepts the bill and it was sent to the committees on Ways, Means and Finance and Judiciary to report to the Plenary within two weeks.

Meanwhile, Maryland County Senator H. Dan Morais says the time frame for the

committee to report is short, arguing that most of them including the author of the bill are going for re-election.

He notes that the bill wait till the elected senators come in January, saying: "We cannot do a bill now that will affect future lawmakers."

A head count vote was taken on the bill to be reported within two weeks, during which 10 senators voted in favor of it, and none voted against the decision. Meanwhile two senators abstained from voting.--

Edited by Winston W. Parley

Français

L'opposant Cummings dans le collimateur du parti au pouvoir

La Coalition au pouvoir s'en est prise au chef de l'opposition libérienne Alexander Cummings pour avoir dit qu'il préfère débattre avec le président George MannehWeah des questions d'intérêt national et non avec ses fonctionnaires.

S'exprimant lors d'une conférence de presse au siège du Congrès pour le

Changement Démocratique (CDC) à Congo Town le mercredi 19 août, le président national de la coalition au pouvoir MulbahMorlu a qualifié d'incroyable le fait qu'un chef de l'opposition cherche à débattre avec un président en exercice bien avant la période électorale.

«Quand avez-vous entendu dire que le président va à un débat avec un leader politique

de l'opposition en dehors de la période électorale ? Même si nous étions en période de campagne présidentielle, quelles sont vos statistiques ? Regardez aux États-Unis, vous ne participez pas à certains débats si vous ne recueillez pas un certain nombre de voix », a dit le chef du parti au pouvoir.

▶ CONT'D ON PAGE 9



Le Gouvernement libérien veut lutter contre le piratage

Le Ministère du commerce et de l'industrie lancera sous peu une campagne vigoureuse contre la piraterie dans le pays. Le ministre du Commerce et de l'Industrie, Wilson K Tarpeh, a déclaré que l'essence de la campagne était de faire en sorte que les artistes libériens profitent de leurs talents.

La déclaration du ministre du Commerce fait suite aux inquiétudes soulevées par les artistes libériens qui se plaignent du fait que certaines personnes reproduisent leurs œuvres, sans compter les autres pratiques illégales qui constituent une atteinte aux droits d'auteur de ces derniers.

Le professeur Tarpeh a déclaré que le gouvernement veillera à ce que les droits de propriété intellectuelle des artistes du pays soient protégés, y compris ceux du président libérien George MannehWeah qui est lui-même artiste musicien. «Le président, en tant qu'artiste lui-même, tient à soutenir la propriété intellectuelle en protégeant le travail des artistes», a souligné le professeur Tarpeh.

Le ministre du Commerce et de l'Industrie a donné l'assurance lundi lors du lancement officiel de la Copyright Society of Liberia.

La Société du droit d'auteur du Libéria a été créée par l'Office de la propriété intellectuelle du Libéria (LIPO). Au cours de la cérémonie, Me Delkar a été installé dans ses fonctions de directeur exécutif de la

Copyright Society of Liberia.

M. Delkar s'est engagé à travailler avec les parties prenantes concernées afin de résoudre les problèmes liés à la piraterie au Libéria.

La Copyright Society of Liberia enregistrera, documentera et autorisera les artistes et leurs œuvres. Elle collectera et répartira aussi les redevances entre les artistes.



Liberia, Covid-19 : George Weah reçoit le rapport du comité d'enquête NPHIL

Le président de la République du Liberia, George MannehWeah, a reçu le rapport du comité d'enquête spécial chargé d'enquêter sur les violations signalées des protocoles sanitaires et administratifs qui guident la délivrance des résultats des tests de Covid-19, par l'Institut national de santé publique de Liberia (NPHIL). Le comité dirigé par le Dr Linda Birch, président du Conseil médical et dentaire du Liberia (LMDC), a présenté son rapport au dirigeant libérien, le vendredi dernier. Le Dr Birch a remercié le Président Weah de lui avoir donné l'occasion de présider le

violations systémiques dans la procédure de rapport des résultats du Covid-19 et de recommander des mesures à prendre pour remédier à la situation dans le pays. Les autres membres du comité étaient le ministre de la Justice, Frank Musa Dean, le vice-ministre des Affaires étrangères, MawineDiggs, et un représentant de chacun des Centers for Disease Control (CDC) des États-Unis et de l'Organisation mondiale de la santé (OMS).

Notons que le nombre de cas confirmés de Covid-19 en Afrique a augmenté de 1 08 837, alors que le bilan s'est alourdi à 25 337 décès, a



comité. Elle a déclaré que le rapport était complet et comprenait des conclusions et des recommandations. «Voici le rapport conforme au mandat qui nous a été confié. Ce rapport est également accompagné de preuves », a-t-elle souligné.

Le chef de l'exécutif libérien a remercié le Dr Birch et l'ensemble du comité d'avoir mené à bien cette tâche. «Je vais parcourir attentivement le rapport et faire ce qui est le mieux car la santé et le bien-être des Libériens et des résidents restent primordiaux », a déclaré le Dr Weah.

Le comité était chargé de déterminer s'il y avait eu des

révélé dimanche le Centre africain de contrôle et de prévention des maladies (CDC Afrique). Le Liberia s'est aussi associé à six autres pays africains qui ont décidé de commencer à effectuer des tests massifs anti-coronavirus sur les citoyens.

Ces tests permettront d'identifier la présence actuelle du Covid-19 au sein de la population des pays concernés. Il s'agit du Maroc, de la Sierra Leone, de la Zambie, du Zimbabwe, du Cameroun et du Nigeria.

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Français

L'opposant Cummings

Pour Morlu, il n'est pas normal que M. Cummings veuille débattre avec le président Weah parce que le parti qu'il dirige n'a pas de député à l'Assemblée nationale. « Il n'a pas réussi à gérer son parti politique dans la mesure où le Congrès national alternatif a terriblement échoué à avoir des législateurs malgré des millions qu'il a dépensés lors des dernières et récentes élections partielles.

La semaine dernière, M. Cummings, chef politique du Congrès national alternatif (ANC) et actuel président de l'alliance des partis de l'opposition a déclaré qu'il préférerait avoir un débat avec le président George Weah.

«La vérité est que ce gouvernement dirigé par Weah est corrompu, incompetent et qu'en conséquence, les Libériens souffrent.

Cela est incontestable. Mais s'ils veulent contester cela, je préfère en discuter avec le Président Weah lui-même », avait écrit Cummings sur sa page Facebook.

Les propos de M. Cummings faisaient suite à une déclaration faite par le ministre d'État aux Affaires présidentielles, Nathaniel Falo McGill, il y a quelques jours. Le ministre d'État défiait le chef de l'opposition sur les médias sociaux concernant les réalisations du président actuel.

«Je veux inviter le chef de l'opposition à un débat. Allons à un débat; soyons très polis, respectons-nous les uns les autres, passons à un débat. C'est un défi ouvert lancé à M. Cummings pour parler des réalisations du président » avait dit McGill.

Mais pour M. Cummings les propos du ministre d'État montraient combien ce gouvernement n'était pas sérieux. « Sous aucun gouvernement sérieux, le directeur de cabinet du président invite le chef de l'opposition à débattre des réalisations de son patron pendant que celui-ci fuit ses responsabilités », avait écrit Cummings.

«C'est simplement un coup de publicité et une compétence démontrée qui caractérisent l'administration Weah.

Pourtant hier soir, nous étions sur le même vol hors du pays, et il ne m'a pas demandé en personne de débattre de quelque ce soit », avait poursuivi Cummings.

«La vérité est qu'il est incontestable que ce

gouvernement dirigé par Weah est corrompu, incompetent et qu'en conséquence, les Libériens souffrent ! Mais s'ils sont sérieux au sujet d'un débat, je préfère débattre avec le président Weah lui-même. Je veux que les Libériens qui traversent des moments difficiles sous ce gouvernement apprennent de leur président comment leurs conditions peuvent s'améliorer, et non de son directeur de cabinet qui n'est pas celui à qui les libériens ont confié leur destinée.

J'espère que le président Weah, qui a fui le débat lors des élections présidentielles de 2017,

voudra bien maintenant débattre des raisons pour lesquelles son gouvernement appauvrit les Libériens, pourquoi les biens et services deviennent inabondables, pourquoi les entreprises partent et le chômage augmente, pourquoi les Libériens souffrent sous son règne. C'est le débat que le peuple libérien mérite - un débat entre son président actuel et son chef de l'opposition », a ajouté Cummings.

Mais s'exprimant lors de sa conférence de presse, le chef du parti au pouvoir a déclaré que le président Weah est un grand débattre,

« il a débattu activement lors de l'élection présidentielle de 2005, pendant que Cummings était encore occupé à vendre des boissons coca cola dans les rues des États-Unis ».

Il a dit que pendant l'administration de l'ancienne présidente Ellen Johnson Sirleaf, Weah, alors ambassadeur de paix, a contribué au processus de paix qui a mis fin à 14 ans de troubles civils amers et est devenu plus tard sénateur du comté de Montserrado, « mais Cummings n'a pas encore montré ses contributions ».

Il a ajouté que la seule contribution de Cummings depuis son apparition soudaine en politique est de soutenir la protestation et d'accompagner des personnes qui ne respectent pas l'État de droit.

«La présidente Sirleaf a fait ce qu'elle pouvait faire et nous lui accordons quelques crédits; mais elle était une gardienne, fortement aidée par la communauté internationale. Avec le président Weah, il est assisté mais pas comparativement aux 12 ans de Sirleaf »,

a-t-il justifié.

A quelques mois des élections sénatoriales de mi-mandat qui auront lieu en décembre, l'atmosphère politique du Libéria est devenue lourde.

COMMENTAIRE

Par Hanan Morsy

Comment l'Afrique peut tirer parti de la quatrième révolution industrielle

ABIDJAN - Les composantes essentielles de la quatrième révolution industrielle - accélération de la digitalisation, intelligence artificielle (IA), cloud computing, robotique et impression 3D - entraînent des conséquences évidentes et importantes pour l'éducation, l'emploi et l'avenir du travail. C'est particulièrement vrai pour les pays africains. Ces dix dernières années, la part des moins de 20 ans dans la population du continent a augmenté de plus de 25 %, et devrait constituer la plus grande catégorie d'âge en Afrique d'ici 2070. Le continent africain s'apprête à vivre la 4RI, sa jeunesse constituera l'un de ses actifs les plus importants.

Pour bénéficier de ce dividende démographique, les pays africains devront néanmoins opérer une refonte de leurs systèmes d'éducation, afin de se préparer à la révolution technologique qui s'annonce. Bien que l'automatisation soit susceptible d'accentuer l'importance des compétences et les inégalités de revenus, elle pourrait également accroître la productivité, et créer de nouveaux métiers. La 4RI représente ainsi une opportunité unique pour les pays africains de sauter plusieurs étapes, en termes d'obstacles au développement, grâce aux technologies.

La 4RI exercera une influence considérable sur les qualifications nécessaires sur le marché du travail. À travers le monde, la demande évolue en direction de compétences sociales adaptables, comportementales, et cognitives non répétitives, à l'écart des tâches routinières et des qualifications étroites liées à des métiers spécifiques. En Afrique, la demande en ingénieurs en logiciels, spécialistes marketing, rédacteurs, et conseillers financiers connaît aujourd'hui une augmentation, tandis que diminue la demande en techniciens mécaniques, assistants administratifs, et comptables.

Le développement de ces compétences commence dès l'enfance. En plus de renforcer l'éducation, il est nécessaire que les pays africains augmentent leurs investissements dans la nutrition, la santé et la protection sociale des enfants. Malheureusement, l'Afrique représente un tiers des enfants de moins de cinq ans souffrant d'un retard de croissance, et ce nombre ne cesse d'augmenter. Or, le lien entre la nutrition et la capacité cognitive au travail est évident. Ceux des gouvernements qui investiront pour améliorer la nutrition, en particulier dans les 1 000 premiers jours à compter de la conception jusqu'à l'âge de deux ans, constateront des bienfaits économiques - et humanitaires - absolument majeurs.

À l'autre extrémité du spectre de la jeunesse, une éducation de meilleure qualité est aujourd'hui plus importante que jamais pour préparer les travailleurs à s'adapter aux changements du paysage des emplois qu'ils rencontreront au cours de leur carrière. Plusieurs études menées au Kenya et en Tanzanie, citées par la Banque africaine de développement (BAD), démontrent par exemple que les compétences cognitives et non répétitives sont associées à un premier salaire plus élevé, à une plus grande satisfaction au travail, ainsi qu'à de meilleurs salaires au fil des années. Or, en Afrique, moins de 4 % de la population est titulaire d'un diplôme universitaire. L'éducation demeure par ailleurs concentrée dans les sciences sociales et humaines, tandis que s'observe un retard dans les disciplines STEM (sciences, technologie, ingénierie et mathématiques), qui sont cruciales pour tirer parti de la 4RI.

Résultat, le décalage est croissant entre les demandes évolutives des entreprises et les qualifications conférées par les systèmes d'éducation en Afrique. Plus les pays africains combleront ces écarts rapidement, plus ils auront de chances de tirer parti des nouvelles technologies.

Certains pays réalisent d'importants progrès dans cette direction. L'Égypte a par exemple mis en place

des « classes interactives », et distribué 1,5 million de tablettes disposant d'une encyclopédie électronique, à laquelle les élèves peuvent également accéder depuis le réseau de leur école ou de leur centre de jeunesse. Près de 2 500 écoles égyptiennes disposent aujourd'hui d'un accès à Internet en haut débit, de même que plusieurs classes « intelligentes », alimentées à l'énergie solaire, sont créées dans les zones reculées à l'aide des technologies mobiles avancées.

De son côté, la BAD a lancé le programme « Coding for Employment », dans le cadre de sa stratégie baptisée Des emplois pour la jeunesse d'Afrique, afin de conférer des compétences numériques à la nouvelle génération. Entre autres aspects, ce programme (qui cible les 15-35 ans) fournit des ordinateurs et équipements aux universités et centres de formation, dispense des formations axées sur la demande dans le cadre de partenariats avec des entreprises technologiques de premier plan, enseigne à la jeunesse des compétences comportementales et interpersonnelles essentielles, et propose des opportunités directes d'emploi. Par ailleurs, en collaboration avec plusieurs institutions académiques, la BAD participe à des recherches sur la manière de rendre les systèmes éducatifs africains plus agiles et plus réactifs.

La croissance économique était certes solide en Afrique avant la crise du COVID-19, mais insuffisamment inclusive, la pauvreté et les inégalités demeurant fortes dans la région. Et si le continent a nettement progressé quant au nombre d'inscriptions scolaires, il reste à la traîne sur un certain nombre d'indicateurs, dont le nombre moyen d'années d'études, et la qualité de l'instruction. Le taux de décrochage au lycée atteint encore 30 % en Afrique, soit plus de deux fois la moyenne mondiale, qui se situe à 13 %.

Pour rattraper les autres régions, il est nécessaire que les pays africains adoptent des stratégies nationales de développement de l'éducation et des compétences, en se concentrant non seulement sur la jeunesse, mais également sur les travailleurs adultes, les décrocheurs, les travailleurs de l'économie informelle, ainsi que sur toutes les catégories économiquement et socialement défavorisées. Les employeurs africains parlent souvent de l'insuffisante formation de leurs salariés comme d'un obstacle majeur pour la croissance de leur entreprise. De même, les recherches de la BAD révèlent que près de la moitié des jeunes employés africains considèrent leurs qualifications comme inadéquates à leur emploi, tandis que deux tiers sont soit surqualifiés, soit sous-qualifiés, ce qui engendre un effet de dépression sur les salaires et une insatisfaction au travail.

Ce n'est qu'en s'attaquant à ces décalages, sur le front des qualifications et de l'éducation, que les pays africains pourront bâtir une main-d'œuvre adaptable et flexible, prête pour la 4RI. Pour ce faire, une nouvelle philosophie éducative sera nécessaire, qui privilégie les compétences interpersonnelles, tout en investissant dans les infrastructures basiques et numériques. Pour réduire les taux de décrochage, les incitations à l'assiduité ainsi que l'accès à la scolarité dans les zones reculées doivent être améliorés, en parallèle d'une obligation de suivre une scolarité au minimum jusqu'en fin de primaire.

En axant davantage l'éducation sur la demande, les pays africains peuvent combattre les décalages persistants qui affectent le marché du travail, et rendre l'éducation à la fois plus attractive pour les étudiants, et plus pertinente pour les employeurs. Une option enthousiasmante pour les pays africains peut consister à recourir aux nouveaux systèmes informatiques dynamiques pour suivre les besoins actuels et futurs du marché du travail, et ainsi faciliter du côté des jeunes la découverte d'offres de postes, les démarches de candidature, et la satisfaction aux exigences de qualifications.

ARTICLE

ARTICLE

Regional Integration as a Tool for Wealth Creation in Africa

The COVID-19 pandemic and its health and economic impacts has forced a global rethink of the current multilateral framework and what it means for the future. For Africa, COVID-19 has served as a wake-up call in many ways. The mitigation measures that were put in place by most countries, globally, to contain the spread of the pandemic, and particularly border closures and lockdowns, resulted in reduced economic activity and supply chain disruptions across the whole world, Africa included. Reduced economic activity has meant demand contraction in Africa's key markets, who were worse affected by the pandemic, thus depressing export revenues as commodity prices have continued to plummet.

Several African manufacturers have successfully reoriented operations to begin production of Protective Personal Equipment (PPE) and ventilators to meet local demand. However, for the most part, pandemic-related disruptions have exposed African economies' overdependence on high commodity prices and exports of raw materials to fund basic government services. Together, disrupted international supply chains and domestic lockdowns created a perfect storm in which income, goods or services stopped circulating as economies came to a standstill. No money, no movement, and a realization that most African countries lack economic diversity and resilience.

So, what is to be done? Simply put, there is a need to focus on fundamentals: producing more of what



production, processing and distribution. And it means raising the standards within African supply chains to enable African firms to produce world class industrial products.

To achieve this, there needs to be a concerted effort to shore up manufacturing in Africa. The demand for manufactured goods is already there, as evidenced by the figures on the import of manufactures. Key to enhancing manufacturing in Africa is improving intra-African trade through the effective operationalization of the Africa Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA), which would spur industrialization. The COVID-19 crisis has shown that enhanced industrial production in Africa is entirely achievable, especially as countries have struggled to source inputs and products from overseas. African industries do have the potential to respond to demand and in fact, there is potential to leap-frog into advanced manufacturing and create the required capacity to produce quality world class goods.

By extension, the pandemic has also exposed the vital importance of economic capacity not only for socioeconomic development and industrialization but to enhance resilience against crises and exogenous shocks that often occur without warning. Building on existing regional strategies for disaster risk reduction, there is also a need to factor in how pandemics present a multi-dimensional set of risks that require integrated responses to mitigate systemic risks.

The capacity to locally manufacture the basics that are critical during emergencies—foodstuffs, clothing, shelter—and building the markets and supply chains needed to ensure a good supply of these, would contribute significantly to GDP, income and job creation.

The question becomes how to build the markets and supply chains needed to ensure Africa can provide for itself, including during emergencies. For example, Africa has several agricultural commodities on which regional value chains can be constructed. These alone would contribute significantly to GDP, incomes and job creation while also paving a shift into the manufacture

of light intermediate goods (e.g., wood products, textiles and leather) adds to the range of possibilities. As Africa builds more critical mass, the continent would increasingly move investment into distribution, data transmission and services to ensure these goods make it to market. Financing and insurance are needed across the spectrum, as are all the skills of the youth and specialists who can help manage the IT and logistics that leverage digital capabilities. This will create high paying, skilled jobs for Africa's youth. In other words, there is a need to take a horizontal view of value creation and maximize opportunities to generate these in Africa, for African economies, African businesses, African workers and African consumers.

So how can this be achieved? Fulfilling the African Development Bank's High 5s priorities: Light Up and Power Africa; Feed Africa; Industrialise Africa; Integrate Africa; and, Improve the Quality of Life for the People of Africa, would address these challenges on multiple fronts and instrumentalize a tightly interconnected African market. The High 5s address the continent's demonstrated need for power generation to electrify households and industries; enhanced transport links to connect African countries by land, sea and air; ICT for communication and digital management of logistics; financial markets to integrate for more and better financial flows for business enterprises to flourish and to meet household needs; and agribusinesses that rely on the latest seed and other technology to produce the crop yields needed to sustain Africa's fast growing populations.

By producing what it consumes and consuming what it produces as its countries and businesses progress up the value chain, Africa can build wealth, opportunity and resilience and ensure the successful realisation of Agenda 2063.

Khaled Sherif is the Vice-President, Regional Development, Integration and Business Delivery at the African Development Bank



Africa consumes, and consuming more of what Africa produces. This does not mean cutting Africa off from the outside world. However, it does mean focusing first and foremost on the African market, and other markets secondarily. It means the need to think about Africa more as a single common market to facilitate scaling up. Producing and consuming locally will facilitate the development of supply chains that will offer small companies, and countries, opportunities to leverage their strengths and specializations and feed into large value chain networks that create more value through

Rep. Snowe warned

By Winston W. Parley

The Civil Law Court in Monrovia has sounded a caveat to Bomi County Representative Edwin Melvin Snowe that it would render a judgment by default if he fails to appear before it to answer to a divorce case filed against him by his wife Associate Justice Sie-A-Nyene G. Yuoh.

Judge Peabody further instructs the court's sheriff to notify Snowe to file his formal appearance or answer to Justice Yuoh's complaint in the judge's office on or before 22 August.

The case comes at a crucial time when Mr. Snowe who is in his third year in office for the six years tenure representative seat in his new electoral district in Bomi is also aspiring for the

intense early political battles against his political rivals in Bomi County including incumbent Senator Sando Johnson who is seeking re-election this December.

The court has instructed Mr. Snowe to appear before it to convene on 21 September at 10:00 AM, which is also the same date for the formal opening of the Court's



Rep. Edwin Melvin Snowe

Associate Justice Sie-A-Nyene G. Yuoh

Based on a complaint filed by Associate Justice Yuoh, Civil Law Court Judge J. Kennedy Peabody has instructed the sheriff of the court to summon Rep. Edwin Melvin Snowe, Jr. to answer the complaint filed by Justice Yuoh, with a caveat "that upon his failure to appear, judgement by default will be rendered against him."

county's senate seat in the polls due 8 December this year.

The former Montserrado County Representative who later won a seat in the 2017 polls to represent Bomi County, is a defendant in the action of divorce for incompatibility of temper filed by his wife Justice Yuoh before the Civil Law Court.

Snowe is already seeing

September Term.

Mr. Snowe who in the wake of his colleagues' efforts to remove him as Speaker of the House resigned Liberia's third most powerful office in 2007, was long before former President Charles Taylor's son-in-law when he married Zoe Taylor, and then later Mardea White.

Pres. Weah calls

Cont'd from page 7

and reverse the hard-won democratic gains that the Malian people deserve and demand.

"Liberia categorically condemns this illegitimate action in the strongest possible terms, which is completely unacceptable under the ECOWAS Agreement on Democracy and Good Governance, and which poses a major security threat to our entire sub-region," he expresses.

At the same time, President Weah commends President Umaru Sissico Umbalo of the Republic of Guinea Bissau, for his steadfast pursuit of peace and democracy in his country following many years of unrest.

He describes President Umbalo's decision and action to pursue the path of democratic rule in Guinea Bissau as in line with the tenets of good governance and will lead to lasting peace and prosperity for that country.

"We are pleased with his example as a leader who upholds the protocols of our regional organization," the President adds.

He also expresses appreciation to the President of the Republic of Niger and Chairman of the ECOWAS Authority of Heads of State and Government, Issoufou MAHAMADOU, for convening the Extraordinary Summit on the political crisis in Mali.

President Weah reminds his colleagues: "We have all agreed on zero-tolerance in our sub-region for any undemocratic or unconstitutional change of an elected government. Over many years now, we have exerted our concerted efforts as a regional body to put an end to wars and coups. In so doing, we have shared our treasure and shed our blood, and many of our brave soldiers have died in the cause of maintaining peace and upholding the tenets of democracy."

"We all share the view that

any person or group that wants a regime change must wait for the next election, when they can lawfully do so through the ballot and not the bullet. In the Liberian experience, coup d'états have never solved any problems, but have in fact exacerbated them with long term negative consequences."

He calls on all sides in the Malian conflict to return to the mediation process that ECOWAS has spearheaded since the beginning of this socio-political crisis in that country, in keeping with protocols and mandates relating to conflict prevention, management, resolution, peacekeeping, and security.

Additionally, Mr. Weah urges his colleagues to demand the immediate release of President Keita, Prime Minister Boubou Cisse, and all other officials now under arrest.

"We call on the mutineers to safeguard the personal security and safety of these detained officials, lay down their arms and return to the barracks, and ensure that the democratically-elected government is restored to its legitimacy under the Malian constitution without further delay."

Leaders present at the virtual Extraordinary Summit included the President of the ECOWAS Commission, Dr. Jean-Claude Kassi BROU; the Chairperson of the African Union Commission, Moussa Faki MAHAMAT; and the Special Representative of the UN Secretary-General for West Africa and the Sahel (UNOWAS), Dr. Mohamed Ibn CHAMBAS.

Acting Foreign Minister Henry Fahnbulleh, Defense Minister Daniel Ziankahn, Finance Minister Samuel Tweah, Information Minister Eugene Nagbe, Minister of State Without Portfolio Trokon Kpui and Presidential Advisor Emmanuel Shaw accompanied President Weah at the virtual event, says the Executive Mansion. -Press release

Liberia COVID-19 Daily Case Update by County

Total Confirmed
1284 (2 new)

Active Confirmed Cases
399

Confirmed cases by County

Bomi	18	(0 new)
Bong	35	(0 new)
Gbarpolu	10	(0 new)
Grd. Bassa	48	(0 new)
Grd. C/Mt.	1	(0 new)
Grd. Gedeh	7	(0 new)
Grand Kru	18	(0 new)
Lofa	45	(0 new)
Margibi	66	(0 new)
Maryland	28	(0 new)
Monts.	906	(2 new)
Nimba	55	(0 new)
Rivercess	5	(0 new)
River Gee	36	(0 new)
Sinoe	6	(0 new)

Cases by Gender

Female	441	(0 new)
Male	843	(2 new)

Report as of Aug. 19, 2020

Total Deaths
82 (0 new)

Total Recovered
803 (0 new)

Deaths by County

Bomi	0	(0 new)
Bong	5	(0 new)
Gbarpolu	2	(0 new)
Grd. Bassa	0	(0 new)
Grd. C/Mt.	0	(0 new)
Grd. Gedeh	0	(0 new)
Grand Kru	0	(0 new)
Lofa	11	(0 new)
Margibi	6	(0 new)
Maryland	2	(0 new)
Monts.	42	(0 new)
Nimba	11	(0 new)
Rivercess	2	(0 new)
River Gee	0	(0 new)
Sinoe	1	(0 new)

Recoveries by County

Bomi	11	(0 new)
Bong	26	(0 new)
Gbarpolu	1	(0 new)
Grd. Bassa	45	(0 new)
Grd. C/Mt.	1	(0 new)
Grd. Gedeh	3	(0 new)
Grand Kru	11	(0 new)
Lofa	30	(0 new)
Margibi	37	(0 new)
Maryland	23	(0 new)
Monts.	542	(0 new)
Nimba	34	(0 new)
Rivercess	0	(0 new)
River Gee	35	(0 new)
Sinoe	4	(0 new)

Deaths by Gender

Female	29	(0 new)
Male	53	(0 new)

Recovery by Gender

Female	284	(0 new)
Male	519	(0 new)

Location of Deaths

Death in COVID-19 Treatment Unit	10	(0 new)
Death in health facility	45	(0 new)
Death in community	27	(0 new)

Contacts under follow up
703 (0 new)

COVID-19 Cases by District in Liberia - August 19, 2020

2 new confirmed cases, No new death and No new recovery reported as of 10:00 pm, 19th Aug. 2020.

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NOTE: These data are subject to epidemiological reclassification | Data by: Liberia COVID-19 Incident Management System

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Abidal says farewell to Barca



Eric Abidal insisted that he tried his hardest to make Barcelona a better-run football club but fell short in an open letter released following his resignation as technical director on Tuesday. Abidal, who as a player at Camp Nou became a firm favourite, rejoined the Catalans in 2018 as the

successor to Robert Fernandez in the role. But his tenure coincided with a run of mixed results for the Blaugrana and severe criticisms of the club's transfer policy, while Abidal was also questioned for a public exchange with captain Lionel Messi earlier in 2020 after appearing to criticise the team's work-rate following the

departure of Ernesto Valverde.

Quique Setien became Barca's second coaching casualty in less than eight months when he was sacked in the wake of Friday's 8-2 Champions League humiliation at the hands of Bayern Munich, and despite early assurances that he would stay on in the boardroom, Abidal followed the ex-trainer by stepping down on Tuesday barely 24 hours later.

Ramon Planes, who had previously acted as Abidal's assistant in deciding on footballing matters, was subsequently promoted to the technical director position, while Barcelona also moved quickly to confirm ex-player Ronald Koeman as Setien's successor. The Frenchman finally broke his silence on Thursday, making his first public statement via Instagram as he affirmed that the decision to part company with the club was his own.



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Coutinho addresses speculation over his future

Philippe Coutinho says he is "fully focused" on winning the Champions League with Bayern, and insists that he hasn't yet thought about his future amid links with Arsenal.

Coutinho looks set to take in his final appearance for Bayern in Sunday's European Cup final, which will see the Bundesliga champions take on Paris Saint-Germain in Lisbon.

The 28-year-old scored twice against his parent club

Barcelona in a stunning 8-2 quarter-final victory last week, and also featured from the bench as Hansi Flick's side beat Lyon 3-0 in a last-four clash on Wednesday.

Bayern have already passed up the chance to sign Coutinho permanently at the end of his season-long loan, which means he is due to return to Camp Nou ahead of the 2020-21 campaign.

The Brazilian is still tied to the Blaugrana until 2023, however, it has been suggested that the club will cash in on the



playmaker rather than re-integrate him into the squad.

Coutinho struggled to live up to his £142 (\$187m) price tag after joining Barca from Liverpool in January 2018, and is now being tipped to return to the Premier League after a mixed year at Bayern.

Arsenal are reportedly keen on bringing in the former Reds talisman, while Manchester United and Chelsea have also been credited with an interest in his services.

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