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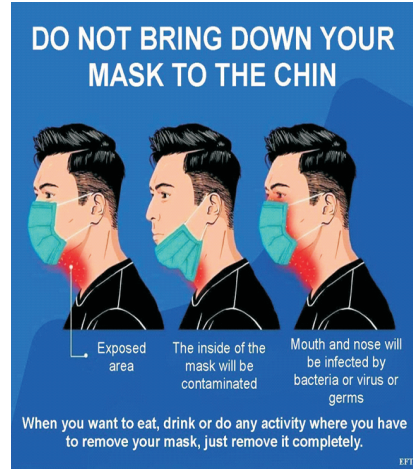


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# The New Dawn

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**P11**

## -Dr. Tipoteh urges

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# Continental News

## Sudan Refugees Face Life-threatening Risks from Floods

The U.N. refugee agency says heavy flooding in Sudan is putting the lives of tens of thousands of refugees, internally displaced people, and host communities at increased risk at a time when the coronavirus pandemic is spreading.

An estimated 125,000 refugees and internally displaced people are affected by Sudan's worst flooding in a century. The U.N. refugee agency says the situation is particularly bad in the regions of East Sudan, White Nile, Darfur and Khartoum. The agency says shelters have been washed away in the torrential rains, infrastructure has been destroyed and latrines have collapsed, heightening the risk of disease. Officials say roads have become too muddy for traffic to pass through, making it impossible to deliver emergency aid to many in desperate need.

UNHCR spokeswoman

Shabia Mantoo says the refugees and displaced people are in dire need of shelter and other relief. She says some have lost all their possessions and face the prospect of starting over.

"Hygiene and sanitary levels have plummeted due to flooded latrines and

contaminated water supplies, preventing people from exercising necessary COVID prevention measures such as regular hand washing. Some health facilities have been damaged, hampering their ability to treat patients should the transmission of

COVID or other viruses or disease increase," she said.

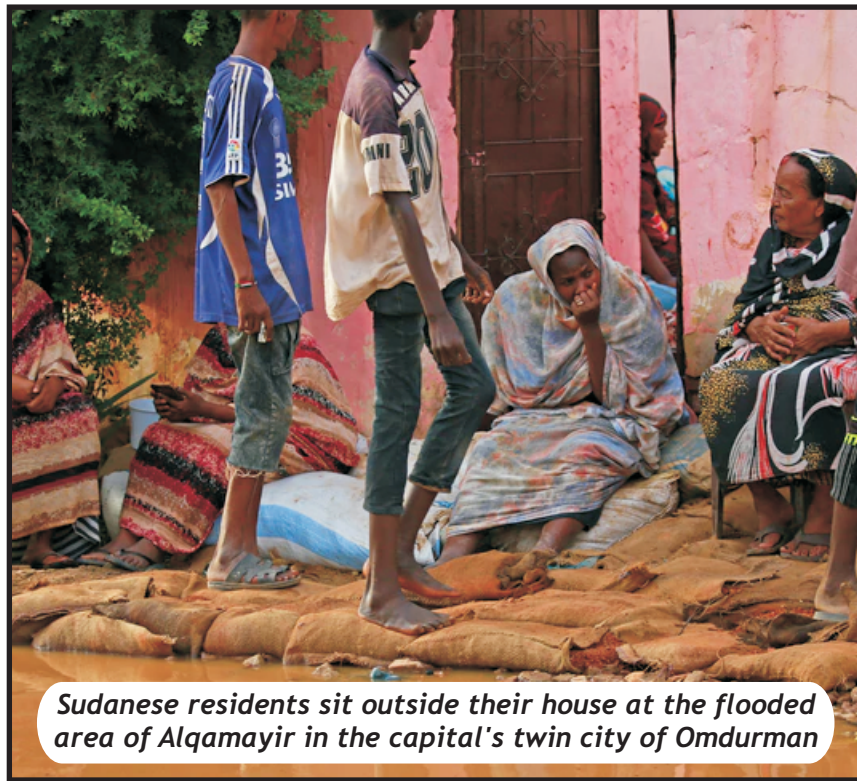
Mantoo notes many affected by the flooding have previously been displaced by conflict and have been unable to earn a living because of COVID-19 restrictions. She says they are living on a knife's edge and struggling to meet their most basic needs. COVID-19 is the disease caused by the coronavirus. The World Health Organization says Sudan has more than 13,000 coronavirus infections, including 833 deaths.

The UNHCR and other aid agencies are working with the

Sudanese government to provide emergency aid wherever possible to refugees, other displaced people and host communities throughout the country.

Officials say the devastation caused by this historic flooding will be long-lasting and people will require support for some time. The UNHCR says it is short of cash and is appealing to international donors for support.

The agency notes it has received just 38 percent of the \$275 million it needs for its humanitarian operation until the end of the year. VOA



Sudanese residents sit outside their house at the flooded area of Alqamayir in the capital's twin city of Omdurman

## 'Frightening' audit into use of SA Covid-19 funds

South Africa's auditor general has said an investigation into the use of the government's Covid-19 relief fund has revealed "frightening findings". He described overpricing and "potential fraud". He said in some cases personal protective equipment (PPE) was bought for five times more than the price the national treasury

had advised.

The report also has flagged up 30,000 relief grants which "require further investigation". Kimi Makwetu has been tracking the spending of 500 billion rand (\$26bn; £19bn) which is equivalent to 10% of the country's gross domestic product.

"A lot of the effort that we put into this on the detection side of things has revealed a

number of frightening findings that require to be followed up very quickly so that there is no significant passage of time before the required actions are implemented," he said at a press conference on Wednesday.

The allocated funds were meant to assist vulnerable households with food parcels, unemployment grants, support small business, farmers and to also procure personal protective equipment.

In May, South Africa introduced social relief of distress grants of 350 rand per month for people who are unemployed.

But Mr Makwetu said the system was vulnerable to hackers, fraud and "double dipping".

Out of four million people in the database he said the "somewhere around 30,000 beneficiaries require further investigation".

He also said there was a need for the area of procurement of PPE to be "further scrutinised" as "there are instances of the price being 200% and, in some

## Zambia's opposition leader alleges assassination plot

The leader of Zambia's main opposition party, Hakainde Hichilema, has alleged the government is plotting to kill him. Mr Hichilema is facing accusations of using his position as a consultant during the country's privatisation of state-owned entities to enrich himself. The accusations are spearheaded by former Finance Minister Edith

power?" he said in a statement.

He accused the ruling Patriotic Front party of getting desperate ahead of next year's general elections.

"If offering myself to serve the country that I love so much and growing increasingly popular are grave offences for which I must lose my life, so be it. I



Nawakwi, who leads another opposition party.

Mr Hichilema denies any wrongdoing. Although the privatisation happened in the 90s, the government has said it is "disturbed" by the accusations.

Mr Hichilema on Monday said there was more to the accusations.

"The truth is they want to have access to my physical body so that they can eliminate me. Their plan is to arrest and then kill me. But do I have to die for anyone to be in

am not afraid," Mr Hichilema added. Information minister and government spokesperson Dora Siliya on Monday said the government was studying the accusations "and is following closely the reaction by the citizens who are the true owners of the property in question."

In 2017 Mr Hichilema was imprisoned after he was charged with treason alongside five others for allegedly blocking a presidential motorcade in western Zambia. BBC

instances, five times more" than the price the national treasury had advised.

He referred a list of cases

pointing to the high risk of fraud to investigators and is expected to publish a fuller report in November. BBC



South Africa's auditor general finds authorities paying five times the recommended price for



# EDITORIAL

## Now we know the real chief feminist

**LAST WEEK'S STONE** throwing and running battle between anti-rape protesters and riot officers of the Liberia National Police that led to the coming into the street of ex-President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf to join protesters in solidarity over the increasing wave of rape across the country when in fact, President George Manneh Weah out-rightly refused to meet with the protesters despite their demand clearly indicates who is the real chief feminist for Liberia.

**FOR THREE CONSECUTIVE** days last week protesters, including little girls as old as five, six and seven years marched from the Monrovia suburb of Vamoma House to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to present a petition to President Weah against endemic rape in the country. They had insisted to give the petition to the President himself, but Mr. Weah did not come out in spite of their demand.

**AND SO WHEN** it became very obvious that they won't see President Weah at his official office in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the protesters decided on the last day of their campaign to instead, go to Mr. Weah's residence in Rehab community along the Robertsville highway outside Monrovia, but armed riot police brutally prevented them, save the appearance of former President Sirleaf, who met with the crowd predominantly women and young girls and expressed solidarity.

**HOW DISAPPOINTING IT** has been that President George Weah, who some time ago, declared himself as Liberia's chief feminist, could not come out to meet women with bleeding hearts, lamenting over the wave of brutal abuse of their babies, daughters and sons sexually by evil men whose ages range from 20 to 50 and above.

**BEING A WOMAN**, mother and grandmother herself, MsSirleaf heard the wailing of protesters in the street and she came out to identify with them in their grievance over an act that is rapidly destroying future wives, mothers and husbands of the land, while the self-declared chief feminist [President Weah] sent emissaries upon emissaries with excuses that the President couldn't be there himself over a situation that has become very alarming in the country.

**LIBERIANS NEED NOT** to look any farther to know who the true chief feminist is for the country. We know that President Weah is a very busy leader or so he ought to be. But taking out at least 10 or 15 minutes of his busy schedules to have come to receive protesters' petition, especially when they had insisted so, would have worth the effort and demonstrated that the 'Father' and "Chief Feminist" of the Land is in empathy with their struggle to seek justice.

**INSTEAD, WHAT THEY** got were bruises, scars and allegedly broke limbs as a result of Police heavy-handedness to stifle and quiet their voices. What a paradox in a land that is supposedly presided over by a leader who presides himself as chief feminist! Is it mere title or does President Weah really care about issues that confront women of Liberia?

**BETWEEN EX-PRESIDENT SIRLEAF** and President George Weah we can clearly see that it is not about self-title but demonstrated actions to match the title, for actions speak louder than words. By Thursday evening last week, Madam Sirleaf was on the BBC, acknowledging the endemic rape in the country and suggesting what could be or needs to be done to addressing the problem. That's the mark of a true leader.

**ON THE CONTRARY**, the current administration is politicizing everything and suspicious of everybody, even grieving women and girls protesting for their own lives in the streets. Who should provide them security, if not the government they elected at the ballot box? President Weah should know that he has a duty to ensure the peace, security and happiness of the people at all times.

**MR. WEAH MISSED** a great opportunity to demonstrate political leadership by his refusal to meet with protesting women and girls and receive their petition over a situation that is portraying Liberia negatively under his watch. We wonder whether the President understands the consequences of his reluctance or sheer inaction over a cruel crime such as rape and abuse of women and girls.

# COMMENTARY

By Edoardo Campanella

## The Siren Song of Scranton

*Since the Industrial Revolution, economic activity has tended to concentrate in a few ever-expanding urban hubs. But now that the COVID-19 crisis has acquainted everyone with the benefits of remote work, many of the factors that have traditionally attracted talent and capital to megacities are suddenly in flux.*

**MILAN** - The Great Lockdown in response to COVID-19 has altered billions of people's perception of geographic space. For weeks, social and professional interactions were mediated by digital technologies that compressed physical distance and blurred the boundaries between the digital world and the real one. This unprecedented socioeconomic experiment is likely to have lasting effects, potentially transforming many aspects of our lives, and ultimately inducing people to rethink where they want to reside. The hierarchy of urban core and periphery, predominant in the Western world since the first Industrial Revolution, could be upended.

Economists have long tried to understand what makes cities so special. Over a century ago, Alfred Marshall argued in Principles of Economics that proximity creates an ideal atmosphere for firms operating in the same industry. As he put it, there is something "in the air" that allows ideas to flow freely from one firm to another, continuously inspiring new inventions through a process of imitation and innovation. Moreover, manufacturers within the same district tend to have ready access to a large pool of skilled labor and specialized suppliers of intermediate inputs.

Of course, historically, entrepreneurs did not choose at random where to locate. Though they benefited from the proximity of peers, they also wanted to minimize their costs by locating close to the markets where their key inputs were produced or their products were sold - or somewhere in between. For his part, Marshall was thinking about Victorian-era manufacturing hubs like the Lancashire textile district in northwest England, where climatic conditions were ideal for producing cotton goods. In the United States, meatpackers clustered in Chicago, because that was the conduit through which cows and pigs were shipped from the agrarian west to the urban east.

Inevitably, as a city flourishes and attracts more talent and capital, many other cities become less economically relevant. That is why there have always been clearly discernible urban hierarchies, which in turn correspond to disparities in wealth. But this pattern is not uniform across the board. In a highly centralized country like France, for example, most economic activities are concentrated in Paris, whereas in a federal country like Germany, they are more evenly distributed across regions.

In any case, large cities have continued to prosper and grow, even as globalization and the decline in transportation costs have led many firms to diffuse their production capacity around the world. The reason for this continued urban expansion is simple: knowledge-based jobs in technological and financial hubs depend to a large extent on face-to-face interactions that allow those who hold them to stay ahead of the curve. This is why patents are positively correlated with city size.

But new technologies could well reduce the incentive to cluster, thereby altering urban hierarchies. Digital platforms, in particular, provide opportunities for remote social and professional interactions. Teleconferencing, virtual collaboration tools, dating apps, and many

other innovations have all proven effective in reaping some of the benefits of agglomeration from a distance. The potential, apparent before the pandemic, now is being realized on a massive scale.

If demand for face-to-face encounters were to decline permanently, the agglomeration costs of crowded, polluted, expensive cities could start to outweigh the benefits, pushing even qualified professionals toward smaller towns, where they would enjoy greater purchasing power and a higher standard of living. After all, many of the professional and leisure opportunities that make cities like Paris, New York, and London unique are disproportionately enjoyed by a small elite with the means for discretionary spending. It is this narrow cohort that has the strongest incentive to keep such cities populated.

To be sure, a structural shift away from highly concentrated megacities would have no historical precedent. In the past, when people left a declining city, it was to follow the capital and job opportunities to the next major hub. But now, the movement could run in the opposite direction: from rich urban areas to economically depressed ones, where those with disposable income can enjoy a significantly better life while maintaining jobs that are headquartered elsewhere. This would represent not just a rearrangement but also a flattening of traditional urban hierarchies.

This is not to suggest that the "death of the city," or anything like it, is on the horizon. Virtual life will never be a perfect substitute for the real thing, and most of the movement would not be toward a hermit-like existence in the countryside but rather to smaller and mid-size towns.

Moreover, labor markets will still impose hard limits. As of now, roughly one-third of jobs in the US and Europe can be performed remotely, and many are in professions that will still benefit from the networking effects offered by vibrant urban areas. Ultimately, the cities where the jobs are formally based will retain relatively more economic power than other locations.

Nonetheless, even a partial, gradual repopulation of less-developed areas could bring far-reaching benefits, not least by helping to close regional divides that have been exploited by populist politicians across Western countries in recent years. According to economist Enrico Moretti of the University of California, Berkeley, the introduction of one high-skilled job in a local economy tends to create at least five lower-skilled jobs, thereby helping to raise living standards for all living in the same area. Thus, over time, the inflow of skilled workers into previously marginalized cities could create more dynamic and resilient local economies, preparing the ground for a more geographically and socioeconomically balanced growth model.

Governments should seek to facilitate such a transition by building adequate digital infrastructure in peripheral areas, providing tax credits for relocation, and expanding the incentives for remote-working arrangements. In Europe, where thousands of towns with centuries of history have been completely depopulated, the benefits of such policies would be enormous - not least that they would reduce geographic disparities far more effectively than imposing higher taxes on the urban elite would.

**The New Dawn**  
TRULY INDEPENDENT



## O-PED

By Cobus Van Staden

## Africa's Gathering Debt Storm

*Without rapid and vastly increased external help to weather the COVID-19 storm and ease their debt-service burden, many African economies could collapse. This would directly affect the rich world in ways for which it is not prepared.*

CAPE TOWN - The COVID-19 crisis is pushing Africa to the financial brink. African governments are under pressure to continue servicing their external loans, leaving them with few resources to confront a historic pandemic and its economic fallout. Without external support - specifically, a comprehensive repayment freeze - some African economies will buckle under their debt burden. The resulting domino effect could imperil the entire continent's development and harm richer countries, too.

The international community's response so far has been mixed. The most notable step so far - the G20's Debt Service Suspension Initiative (DSSI) for the world's poorest countries - covers only official bilateral debt. But 61% of African DSSI countries' debt-service payments this year will go to private creditors, bondholders, and multilateral lenders like the World Bank. And, despite the G20's assurances, some countries joining the DSSI were subsequently downgraded by global ratings agencies.

The World Bank has played an unhelpful role here. Although its president, David Malpass, recently The " called for expanded debt relief and even raised the possibility of a write-off, he has also resisted calls for the Bank itself (a major lender to Africa) to freeze debt repayments. Instead, the US-dominated institution seems more interested in scoring political points by urging the China Development Bank to join the G20 initiative, even though doing so would really affect only one African country.

Geopolitics are also derailing the promising option of a new allocation of the International Monetary Fund's Special Drawing Rights (its global reserve asset) in order to unlock extra liquidity. This initiative faces resistance from US President Donald Trump's administration, which worries that some of the funds would flow to countries like Iran.

A major problem for Africa is that it now has significant private-sector debt. In May, a group of 25 of the continent's largest private creditors was created, in consultation with the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA). The organization's executive secretary, Vera Songwe, has been pushing for Africa's debt to be bundled into an instrument resembling a collateralized debt obligation, backed by an AAA-rated multilateral finance institution or a central bank. This would save countries time by quickly giving them a two-year repayment freeze in order to deal with the pandemic, without preventing them from tapping credit markets in the future to fund economic recovery.

But the private creditors quickly rejected such blanket approaches, insisting that African countries' debt needs to be dealt with on a case-by-case basis. This risks wasting so much time that many countries could slide into default while they're waiting, which would be especially galling in view of the large profits these creditors have made by chasing Africa's sky-high yields.

Although none of these proposals is a magic bullet, Africa's debt problem is not intractable. The continent's debt-service payments in 2020 amount to \$44 billion. That is a lot of money, but it's small change compared to the trillions of dollars that rich-country governments are pumping into their own economies.

Pious laments about how the "poorest countries will suffer the most" accompany the infighting among Africa's creditors. This response assumes that while Africa's distress is regrettable, it's also far away, and the continent will quietly suffer in its corner. Today, such thinking is woefully naive.

Until early this year, many African economies had been growing robustly. Now, without external help to weather the COVID-19 storm, these countries could face economic collapse. This will directly affect the rich world in ways for which it is not prepared.

For China, the current debt crisis represents its biggest political setback to date in Africa. The continent's economic value to China may have declined somewhat, but its political value as a dependable bloc of votes in multilateral institutions is increasing. If Democratic challenger Joe Biden wins November's US presidential election, China will face concerted pressure in those organizations. And although China has joined the G20's DSSI in principle, its application remains piecemeal and opaque.

The political costs are mounting. China currently faces a chorus of debt-related disapproval in Nigeria, both on social media and in the country's House of Representatives. Nigerian politicians are calling for an audit of every Chinese loan to the country - an unprecedented move in China-Africa relations. If the economic and debt crisis worsens, this hostility will spread across the continent.

During previous hard times, African opposition parties campaigned against the Chinese presence in their countries. Increased economic chaos may lead not only to an erosion of high-level African support for China in forums like the UN, but also to populist targeting of Chinese firms and citizens.

America's engagement in Africa has a strong military and anti-terrorist component. US policymakers should thus be concerned that the Islamic State (ISIS) has recently taken control of a port in Mozambique. Africa has a population of 1.2 billion, with an average age of 19. A continent of teenagers with no economic prospects will not be difficult to radicalize.

Europe is already dealing with the scandal of Greek authorities abandoning African migrants, leaving them to die on the high seas. If African economies collapse, Europe will face an unprecedented migration crisis that dwarfs that of 2015, which almost triggered right-wing populist takeovers in several EU countries.

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## OPINION

By Jan-werner Mueller

## The Parties Must Go On

*Amid the tawdry spectacle of the Republican Party behaving like a subsidiary of the Trump Organization, one shocking aspect stands out: the party has no platform. The GOP's transformation into an ideas-free cult of personality is bad news not just for US conservatives, but also for the American political system.*

BERLIN - The recent Republican National Convention was scandalous for many reasons - from the misuse of the White House as a campaign prop (in violation of the Hatch Act and longstanding norms) and the brazen mendacity of its speakers, to the parade of Trump family members. Amid the tawdry spectacle of the GOP being transformed into a subsidiary of the Trump Organization, one shocking aspect stood out: the party offered no platform. The Republicans' only purpose, apparently, is "to enthusiastically support the President's America-first agenda."

On one level, eschewing a policy platform can be read as a smart strategy to insulate the party from Donald Trump the person. In the event that Trump is defeated in November, members of the GOP establishment can wash their hands of it, claiming that it was only an unpopular leader who lost; the party's long-standing principles remain sound.

But a more plausible interpretation is that the toxic mix of polarization and hyper-partisanship in America has reached a new level of concentration. Having been completely hollowed out, at least one of the country's main political parties no longer fulfills its basic democratic function.

That function requires parties not only to offer the electorate a choice, but also to determine how political battles will be waged. By appealing to some groups more than others, parties draw lines in the sand; and by focusing on some political fault lines over others, parties assemble coalitions that could have looked quite different had the emphasis been placed on various other equally salient issues.

The point of democracy is not to forge consensus on every issue, but rather to manage conflicting interests and commitments. But democracy can break down when parties or politicians openly demonize or deny the legitimacy of other contenders for power. Such tactics have long been the specialty of right-wing populists, who wage culture wars in an effort to reduce all political conflict to questions of belonging. Hence, rather than engage with his opponents' arguments, Trump simply smears all critics as "un-American."

As the political scientists Jacob S. Hacker and Paul Pierson have shown, the GOP's propensity for culture warfare owes much to the fact that its economic-policy agenda is profoundly unpopular. Having cut taxes for the rich and failed utterly in the face of the COVID-19 pandemic, Trump and his party need to distract potential voters from material concerns.

This "plutocratic populism," Hacker and Pierson show, is the result of the GOP's complete inability to generate new policy ideas. Republicans have simply doubled down on tax cuts and mindless deregulation, while proving incapable of offering any coherent alternative to the 2010 Affordable Care Act ("Obamacare"), which they are always just about to replace with "something terrific."

Just as the GOP has outsourced its identity to culture warriors on far-right television networks and websites, so has it handed off intellectual work to think tanks, most of which are more committed to their donors than to crafting broadly popular and effective policy proposals.

These are not just American problems, of course. Across the West, traditional parties have been challenged by upstarts that tend to hold no serious internal debates, let alone embrace democratic decision-making. In the Netherlands, the far-right populist Geert Wilders' party has just two official members: Wilders and a foundation of which he is the only member. Similarly, in the United Kingdom, the Brexit Party boasts more than 110,000 "paying supporters," but is in fact a limited liability company with four officers and just one registered "person with significant control": the ubiquitous Brexiteer and serial polarization entrepreneur Nigel Farage.

To be sure, political parties aren't debating societies. But they are supposed to produce new ideas and policy plans, which a one-man show or a family enterprise is unlikely to do. While parties need to represent certain principles that their members share, deciding on such principles will always be contentious, and upholding them does not happen automatically.

US President Lyndon Johnson once observed that, "What the man on the street wants is not a big debate on fundamental issues; he wants a little medical care, a rug on the floor, a picture on the wall." But as Johnson's Democratic Party learned the hard way, even "a little medical care" can become a matter of principled conflict.

Such contests are best hashed out not just with one's partisan adversaries but also in open, pluralistic internal debate. When disputes are settled in this fashion, the losers are more likely to accept defeat and remain loyal to the party. By contrast, mass acclamations of the kind the GOP staged for Trump often send some party members heading toward the exits.

The hallmark of a well-functioning party is its ability to attract people with stable partisan commitments over time. Paradoxically, the party that allows members to offer criticism without being tarred as traitors ultimately instills deeper loyalty.

The point is not to idealize intra-party participatory democracy. Yet there is a reason why the constitutions of Germany, Spain, and Portugal, for instance, prescribe internal party pluralism. By habituating people to democratic debate and forcing them to consider that the other side might have a valid point, this model embodies what has been lost in an age of polarization.

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REPUBLIC OF LIBERIA  
GENERAL SERVICES AGENCY

United Nations Drive - Old USTC Compound - 1000 Monrovia, 10 Liberia  
P. O. Box 9027



Office of the Director General

Invitation for Bids

1. The General Services Agency (GSA) has received funding from the Government of Liberia through its 2020/2021 budgetary allotment and intends to apply part of this funding for the Procurement of goods under the contract packages listed in the table below.

Code	Contract Package	Quantity/Lot	Bid Closing Date	Bid Opening Date
IFB# GSA/NCB/001/20/21	Building Materials	Lot-1, General Materials Lot-2, Electrical Materials Lot-3, Plumbing Materials	Oct. 1, 2020 10:00AM	Oct. 1, 2020 10:15AM
IFB# GSA/NCB/002/20/21	Vehicle Spare Parts	Assorted	Oct. 1, 2020 10:00AM	Oct. 1, 2020 10:30AM
IFB# GSA/NCB/003/20/21	Cleaning Materials Services	Assorted	Oct. 1, 2020 10:30AM	Oct. 1, 2020 10:45AM
IFB# GSA/NCB/004/20/21	Generators Spare Parts	Assorted	Oct. 1, 2020 10:30AM	Oct. 1, 2020 11:00AM

- 2. The GSA now invites sealed bids from eligible and qualified bidders for the supply of goods stated above.
- 3. Bidding will be conducted through the National Competitive Bidding (NCB) procedures as specified in the PPCA and approved by the PPCC, and is open to all eligible bidders.
- 4. Interested eligible bidders may obtain further information from the General Services Agency and inspect the Bidding Documents at the address given below.
- 5. A complete set of bidding documents in English may be purchased by interested Bidders upon payment of a nonrefundable fee of \$50.00 US for each set from 9:00 AM to 4:00 PM Monday through Friday.
- 6. All submissions must be signed, sealed in an envelope and clearly marked with the code and name of contract package that is being bid for and must be delivered to the address below at date and time stated. Bids shall be valid for a period of 90 days after the deadline of bid submission. All Bids must be accompanied by a Bid Security in the amount as required in the Bid Data Sheet, in the form of a Bank Guarantee, Manager's Check, or an Insurance Bond. Late bids will be Rejected and returned unopened. Bids will be opened in the presence of Bidders or their representatives and those who choose to attend at the address below.

THE DIRECTOR OF PROCUREMENT  
GENERAL SERVICES AGENCY  
OLD USTC COMPOUND, UN DRIVE  
MONROVIA, LIBERIA  
MOBILE NUMBER: 0886554465/0770554465  
EMAIL ADDRESS: sloanjohnsonp@gmail.com

7. The General Services Agency (GSA) reserves the right to reject or accept any bid submitted and to annul the process at any time without incurring any liability and without assigning any reason therefore; Invitation for Bids and Award of Contract will be issued to qualified bidders in accordance with procurement procedures applicable under the Republic of Liberia Amended and restated Public Procurement and Concessions Act published and approved September 18, 2010.

Signed:   
Director of Procurement

Approved:   
Director General

JUDICIAL BRANCH  
SUPREME COURT OF LIBERIA

OFFICE OF THE COURT ADMINISTRATOR  
TEMPLE OF JUSTICE  
MONROVIA, LIBERIA



Invitation for Bids for Assorted Food Items

DATE: August 6, 2020

IFB NO. JUD/NCB/004/2020/2021

- The Judiciary Branch of Government Received funding from the Government of Liberia through its 2020/2021 fiscal budget for the procurement of services appertaining to Assorted Food Items, the Judiciary wishes to solicit sealed bids from reputable agencies dealing in the provision of services relating to the Sale of Assorted Food Items. This invitation for bids follows the special procurement notice for this project which appears in two local dailies.
- The Judiciary now invites sealed bids from eligible and qualified bidders for the provision of the services described below. The Bid submission begins on August 6, 2020 from 9:00 AM to 4:00PM daily. The final date of submission September 8, 2020@ 11:30 AM.

Package: Assorted Food Items

Lot	DESCRIPTION	QUANTITY	BID SECURITY
Lot-1	Assorted Food Items	Assorted	US \$530.00

- Bidding will be conducted through National Competitive Bidding (NCB) procedures as specified in the REPUBLIC OF LIBERIA Amended and Restated Public Procurement and Concession Act (PPCC ACT) published and approved: September 16, 2010. Bidding is opened to all eligible and qualified bidders' source as defined in the guidelines.
- A complete set of bidding documents for the specified Assorted Food Items may be obtained upon payment of a non-refundable fee of US\$50.00. Bidders are required to submit the bid security in the form of Bank Guarantee along with their Bid.
- Qualification requirements include the following:
  - (a) Current Business Registration Certificate (Liberia Business Registry) with the code or another appropriated code.
  - (b) Current Tax Clearance Certificate (LRA);
  - (c) Certificate of Incorporation (Ministry of Foreign Affairs);
  - (d) Financial Records of Performance for the past one (1) year with indication of at least two previous or current clients, with their Addresses and Telephone Numbers;
  - (e) Availability of products at all times; and,
  - (f) PPCC Vendor registry certificate
  - (g) Proof ability to pre-finance. Additional details are provided in the bidding documents.
  - (h) Should be Capable of transporting goods to the designated areas authorized by the Judiciary
  - (j) Due diligent exercise will be done after the opening of bid documents
- Interested and eligible bidders may obtain additional information on the bidding process from the Procurement Unit at the Temple of Justice Main Building, fifth floor Room # 501 or 505 Monrovia, Liberia; and from Monday - Friday during the hours of 9:00 A.M. thru 3:00 P. M.
- All Submissions must be signed and sealed in an envelope with one original and two duplicates to be sealed in one envelope including other information.
  - (1) IFB NO. JUD/NCB/004/2020/2021 - CONFIDENTIAL BID for the provision of Assorted Food Items; to the Judiciary for Fiscal Year 2020 - 2021; and shall be addressed to:

DIRECTOR OF PROCUREMENT  
TEMPLE OF JUSTICE MAIN BUILDING  
FIFTH FLOOR RM. # 501  
MONROVIA, LIBERIA

- All Submissions must be delivered to the Procurement Unit on or before August 6, 2020 @ 11:30 A. M. However, No Electronic bids will be accepted and late bids will be rejected.
- A pre-bid opening meeting will be held on September 4, 2020 @ 12:30 P. M. in the office of the Director of Procurement in Room #501, to answer questions relevant to the bidding process, Seven (7) days after which, all further clarification requests would remain unanswered.
- Sealed bids for Assorted Food Items will be opened in the presence of all bidders or their representatives on September 8, 2020 @ 11:30 P. M. All potential bidders are asked to please take note of the time herein stated. Bids shall be valid for a period of thirty (30) days from the deadline of submission.
- Note: The Judiciary reserves the right to reject or accept any bid without incurring any liability or assigning any reason thereof.

Signed:   
Director of Procurement

Approved:   
Court Administrator

# Ex-district# 12 contestant provides micro-loan

By Emmanuel Mondaye

A former contestant for Montserrado County electoral district #12 Michael Williams has provided micro-loans to hundreds of marketers in the district, expressing his desire to re-contest in the district.

Mr. Williams said the loan will not only help the marketers, but drastically reduce suffering of women most of whom, he noted are vulnerable in terms of income generating businesses.

He disclosed that at least 500 women have benefited from the exercise within the district with the sole intent to boosting their economic ability for self-sustainability and growth.

According to him, the prime motive is to enable less-fortunate women make a dramatic change or improvement in their livelihood.

Mr. Williams named women of Redemption, Kesselly Boulevard, and Chicken Soup Factory general markets in the Township of Gardnersville as beneficiaries of his gesture.

Meanwhile, credible information obtained within the district indicates that the former representative candidate had provided scholarships to dozens of underprivileged and deserving students for their role played in the fight against the Coronavirus in Liberia.



He disclosed his intention to re-contest for the district seat is in response to numerous appeals from residents, who still believe in his ability to represent them in the House of Representatives, and have asked him not to abundant them in the midst of degrading political situation within the district since the current lawmaker was elected.

He quotes electorate as blaming underdevelopment of the district to lack of vision and leadership ability by their lawmaker. District#12 is currently represented by Lawmaker Dr. George Samba. -Editing by Jonathan Browne



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**Cole launches \$1m loan scheme**

By Joseph Titus Yekeryan in Bong

Bong County District #3 Representative Josiah Marvin Cole has launched a one million Liberian Dollars loan scheme for petty

by banking institutions and credit unions in supplementing their financial strength for an improved business operation.

Representative Cole told beneficiaries of the loan over

underdeveloped economy.

The Bong County lawmaker has promised to provide additional money for the local business people which will target shop and store owners in Bong County.

He states that the loan will not require it as an interest until the beneficiaries become stronger financially.

Some of the beneficiaries extended commendations to the Bong County Representative and promised to improve their local businesses using the money provided.

According to them, for too long they have been forgotten by some leaders in the county, but with the help of Representative Cole, they can now boast of something that will help them to enhance their businesses and gradually contribute to Liberia's economy.

The one million loan agreement is titled "J. Marvin Cole 100 Young Entrepreneurs Economic Empowerment Program."--*Edited by Winston W. Parley*



Representative Josiah Marvin Cole

marketers in Gbarnga.

According to Rep. Cole, the loan program will help local business people in Bong County, many of whom have in the past been allegedly denied

the weekend that he decided to venture into loan programs in order to develop their individual lives and build their financial capacity, which will also help build Liberia's

**Senate committee recommends confirmation of Paulita Wie**

By Ethel A Tweh

The Senate Committee on Internal Affairs, Good Governance and Reconciliation has recommended to the Plenary of the Liberian Senate that Madam Paulita Wie be confirmed as Deputy Internal Affairs Minister for Urban Affairs.

Madam Wie got reappointed to the position which she earlier resigned from to contest the 2019 Montserrado County senatorial by-election won by opposition candidate Mr. Abraham Darius Dillon.

The committee reports that after examining the nominee's Curriculum Vitae, she has the requisite educational background to work in the position for which she has been nominated by President George Manneh Weah.

The committee says it determines that her policy vision will positively and efficiently impact the Ministry of Internal Affairs.

The committee which is headed by Maryland County Senator Gble-bo Brown says that Madam Wie has the working experience and she will perform well.

According to the committee, Madam Wie will proficiently manage the affairs of the position that she has been appointed to, adding that without any reservation, it has unanimously confirmed her as

Abraham Darius Dillon of Montserrado County and Francis S. Paye of Rivercess County.

Senator Abraham Darius Dillon who defeated the nominee in the past senatorial



Madam Paulita Wie

Deputy Minister for Urban Affairs at the Ministry of Internal Affairs.

Members of the Committee include Senators J. Gble-bo Brown of Maryland County,

by-election made the motion that the committee's report be received by plenary and confirmation action be taken in executive.

Madam PaulitaWie, once a

**Speaker Chambers probes salary scandal at Capitol Building**

House Speaker, Dr. Bhofal Chambers, has constituted a special committee to investigate and forward findings within three working days about concerns raised by some staffers of the House of Representatives about cuts in their salaries and benefits.

In recent times, some staffers of the House of Representatives have been murmuring in the corridors of the Capitol Building about claims of their salaries and benefits been cut. But legislative pundits at the same Capitol Building have divulged that what some staffers at the Legislature may be experiencing is the outcome of the Liberian Government's adopted policy, in conjunction

County Representative Dixon Seboe in their bid to speak on the clarity and understanding of the Government standardization and harmonization policy doctrine.

During the meeting in the Joint Chambers of the Legislature, both Rep. Koung and Seboe did not reach a reasoning point with the staffers' concerns, as they (staffers) demanded that they would prefer an action from the Speaker or the Plenary of the House of Representatives, under the stewardship of Speaker Dr. Bhofal Chambers.

Following the development that ensued from the Joint Chambers meeting, a representative from the Capitol Building workforce,



House Speaker, Dr. Bhofal Chambers

with the International Monetary Funds (IMF) to harmonize and stabilize the salary grading scheme of all persons on the GOL payroll platform across all three branches of the Liberian Government.

Yesterday, at the Capitol Building in Monrovia, some staffers from the House of Representatives elevated their concerns, when they convened a meeting in the Joint Chambers of the Capitol Building, a mood that attracted the attention and participation of the House's Co-chairman on Ways, Means, Finance and Development Planning, Nimba County Representative Jeremiah Koung, along with Montserrado

identified as, Benjamin Myers, along with other Capitol Building employees were accompanied by Reps. Koung and Seboe to appeared before the Plenary of the House of Representatives, to acquaint that body with the worker's concerns.

In his presentation on behalf of aggrieved staffers, Mr. Myers contended that cuts in their benefits and salaries needed to be spoken about clearly. Myers stated that a resolution signed by both the House of Representatives and the Liberian Senate clearly states that members of the Legislature and the Judiciary particularly judges shall have

▶ CONT'D ON PAGE 10

Deputy Minister for Urban Affairs at the Ministry of Internal affairs, resigned her post to contest in the Montserrado County Senatorial

election on the ruling Coalition for Democratic Change and was defeated by Mr. Dillon.--*Edited by Winston W. Parley*



MORE HEADLINE NEWS MORE HEADLINE NEWS

# Drugs peddler sentenced to 18 months

By Patrick N. Mensah, Maryland

A 47-year-old man has been convicted by the Harper Magisterial Court for being in possession of unlicensed narcotic substances in Maryland County sentenced to 18 months imprisonment at the Harper Central Prison.

The Harper Magistrate court put the 50 kilograms Marijuana

Tarpeh pleaded for mercy after confessing to the crime, disclosing that he has been in the drugs business for more than 10 years, which has enabled him to sustain himself and his family.

"I begged the Court to please let me go because I have sold this for over 10 years now, and from the selling, all of my

court after he was arraigned to answer questions to the charge brought against him.

But despite his confession, Magistrate Morgan handed down a guilty verdict thereby, sentencing him.

Meanwhile, the commander of the Liberia Drugs Enforcement Agency in Maryland County Joseph Dean has lauded the court for the judgment. Commander Dean noted that the sentencing of drugs sellers and users will serve as deterrence to would-be substance dealers and abusers in the county.

He revealed that Tarpeh was arrested after his office launched an operation code-named "Dagnet" early August 20, 2020 aimed at tracking down drug users, dealers and importers.

The LDEA commander said Tarpeh's arrest has brought great relief to residents of Newkru Town, who have repeatedly complained to the LDEA about his activities.

"We launched the operation to get those guys arrested who are constantly spoiling our peaceful citizens and thank God we caught one who is a major importer of drugs in Maryland County."

Commander Dean however noted that several constraints need to be addressed to raid the county of dangerous drugs, including providing logistics for the LDEA.



Convict Nelson Tarpeh with 50kgs of Marijuana

arrested from Nelson Tarpeh at over 31,000 Liberia Dollars.

Convict Nelson Tarpeh was sentenced for the crime after he admitted to transporting and selling illegal substances in Newkru Town, Harper City, Maryland County.

Appearing before Magistrate Dweh Morgan,

children are in school, including feeding my family, so if I am locked up, who will feed my family again?" He asked.

"I think if they let me go, the little money I have I will get into different business for my family and I to live, rather than locking me up even though, I know it is my doing", Tarpeh expressed in

# Weah desire to change Liberia is paramount

-Dr. Bropleh

Former information minister, Rev. Dr. Laurance K. Bropleh says President George Weah's desire to change Liberia remains paramount.

Dr. Bropleh, currently advisor and special envoy to President Weah notes,

"President Weah is not perfect but with all his imperfections his desire to changing this country is paramount"

Speaking to OK FM 99.5 in Monrovia early Wednesday, he urged Liberians to demonstrate love for country, saying, you can't claim to have

place, but to answer your question, I can say yes, progress has been made in Liberia under this government."

According to him, for Liberians to witness the kind of change that they anticipate would take time, adding that change is not an event but rather a process.

"If this country will see transformation, we must all work on our consciousness across the length and breadth of this country"

However, during the live talk show, Dr. Bropleh struggled in citing instances he has offered pieces of advice to President Weah, with majority



Rev. Dr. Laurance K. Bropleh

# Legal reform key to increasing women representation in Legislature

The Women NGOs Secretariat of Liberia (WONGOSOL) on Monday, August 31, 2020, kicked off a two-part webinar discussion on "Strategies to Enhance Women's Political Participation."

The discussion, which was held via Zoom, brought together 40 women from civil society, the legislature and other women's advocacy groups to talk about ways to overcome the barriers that prevent women from entering politics.

The discussion was led by a panel that included Representative Rosanna Schaak, District 1, Rivercess County; Frances Greaves, former president of the National Civil Society Council of Liberia (NCSCOL); Julia Duncan Cassell, former Minister of Gender, Children and Social Protection; and



Facia Harris, a women's rights advocate and founder of Paramount Young Women Initiative.

The second webinar discussion is planned for Friday,

September 4, 2020, and will feature some of the women vying for the December 8, 2020, Senatorial elections. The discussion will be held via zoom from 11am to 12:30

love for Liberia with a selfish interest.

"One thing I want to say before I go forward is love for country is paramount to the development of this country, and we all know that hate derives from selfish personal interest and this has been the problem we continue to face as a country", her says.

Asked whether Liberia has made progress under the Weah-led administration, Dr. Bropleh argues that the Weah Presidency comes at the time Liberia is at a crossroads, saying, there is a level of hate and enmity seeing all over the

of callers accusing him of failure to properly advice the President on issues of national concerns, especially, during recent anti-rape protests by women and children for three days, demanding Mr. Weah to come out and receive their petition but the President failed to show up.

But Dr. Bropleh counters every time he talks to President Weah, it was a privilege giving him, saying, "I wasn't appointed advisor for the public but instead to advise the President on trending national issues." -Editing by Jonathan Browne

p.m. Friday.

The webinar discussion is part of the Election Coordinating Committee Electoral Reform Project supported by USAID Liberia Accountability Voice Initiative (LAVI).

The panelists at Monday's forum underscored the need for women and their

supporters to continue advocating for legal reforms that will include gender parity. The lack of women's representation in the Legislature is a major challenge as Liberia prepares for the Senatorial elections in December and the 2023 presidential and general



# Français

## Le chef du parlement hué par des employés qui exigent des arriérés de salaire

Le président de la Chambre des Représentants, Bhofo Chambers, député de la Coalition pour le changement démocratique (coalition au pouvoir), a essuyé sa première humiliation mardi en tant que législateur. Le député du Maryland a été hué par les membres du personnel de la première chambre du parlement qui exigeaient des salaires impayés.

En effet, mardi, les membres du personnel de la Chambre des représentants ont pris d'assaut l'entrée de la Chambre basse pour exiger des arriérés de salaires et des avantages qui auraient été coupés sans raison valable.

Tout a commencé lorsque des membres du personnel, sous la direction de Benjamin Myers, ancien président de la jeunesse du Congrès national alternatif (opposition), ont

convoqué une réunion dans le pavillon du Capitole pour discuter de la conduite à tenir pour que la composante en dollars libériens déduite de leur salaire leur soit restituée.

Mais, alors qu'ils discutaient, le co-président du comité parlementaire sur les voies, les moyens, les finances et le budget, le représentant du comté de Nimba, Jeremiah Koung, et le représentant du comté de Montserrado, Dixon Seibo, sont intervenus dans l'espoir de calmer les esprits.

Une attention particulière leur a été accordée et Koung et Seibo ont immédiatement demandé que la réunion soit transférée dans la salle William Richard Tolbert en vue d'une discussion fructueuse et une entente cordiale.

À leur arrivée dans la salle, les employés en colère, par la voix de leur leader Benjamin Myers, ont indiqué que la réduction de leurs avantages et salaires était illégale, d'autant plus que « la résolution signée à la fois par la Chambre des représentants

▶ CONT'D ON PAGE 9

constitutions, pauvreté, etc.

Que nenni ! S'il a réussi un bilan économique appréciable, il n'en reste pas moins que sur le plan politique, il n'a pas fait mieux que les autres Présidents.

Son référendum pour changer la Constitution a abouti à la création du Front national de défense de la constitution (Fndc) qui regroupe beaucoup de partis politiques et des membres de la Société civile.

Leurs manifestations nombreuses pour barrer la route à Condé a fait plusieurs morts. Aujourd'hui, avec

▶ CONT'D ON PAGE 9



## Alpha Condé, un mythe qui s'effondre !

Il avait, en 2010, date de son arrivée au pouvoir, laissé entendre qu'il y aurait "une ère nouvelle" dans son pays. Mais il avait surtout promis d'être "le Mandela de la Guinée". Eh bien, le mythe Alpha Condé, forgé depuis plus de dix ans de lutte pour la démocratisation de son pays avant son élection, s'effondre. Pourtant, Condé avait catalysé tous les espoirs pour faire de la Guinée, un pays démocratique, prospère, conformément à ses promesses électorales.

Face à Conté Lansana, Condé avait symbolisé l'espoir d'une Guinée nouvelle. Il avait été emprisonné pendant vingt mois sans procès et avait été traduit dans une Cour de sûreté taillée sur mesure.

Nous étions en 2000 où il avait été effectivement condamné à cinq ans de prison pour atteinte à la sûreté de l'Etat. Pendant cette période noire, le monde entier s'est solidarisé avec cet homme. Les organisations des droits de l'homme comme Amnesty International, les hommes d'Etat de la trempe de

Jacques Chirac, de Madeleine Albright, etc. avaient apporté leur soutien. En Afrique, Tiken Jah Fakoly s'était surtout distingué à ce propos.

Condé qui s'est opposé à Conté, était auparavant Chargé de Cours à L'Université de Paris I. Tout le monde s'était dit qu'avec lui, les démons qui rongeaient la Guinée allaient disparaître. Ils ont pour nom ethnocentrisme, instabilité institutionnelle et sociale, corruption, tripatouillage des



## Cibler des ressources pour soutenir les victimes de viol

La prise de mesures pratiques telles que la création d'un centre d'appel SGBV et la fourniture de ressources pour le soutien aux victimes de viol démontrèrent la détermination du gouvernement du Libéria à lutter contre le viol qui est devenu récurrent dans le pays. C'est en tout cas ce que croit L'ambassade des États-Unis près de Monrovia.

« Nous exhortons le gouvernement à cibler les ressources sur les survivantes, à prendre fermement position contre les mutilations génitales féminines et à garantir des poursuites rapides et transparentes », a déclaré l'ambassade dans un communiqué publié sur son site Internet le lundi 31 août.

« En répondant à la violence sexuelle et sexiste, nous devons écouter les voix des survivantes et de leurs alliés, voix qui ont été réprimées trop longtemps et trop souvent. Nous soulignons l'importance de protéger les droits d'exercer pacifiquement les libertés d'expression, de pétition et de réunion. »

L'ambassade des États-Unis se tient aux côtés de tous ceux qui se sont joints pour lutter contre la violence sexuelle et sexiste dans le pays, soulignant que la prévention et la lutte contre la violence à l'égard des femmes, des filles et d'autres personnes vulnérables est un impératif des droits de l'homme, et pas seulement en Libéria, mais globalement.

Elle s'est dite convaincue que mettre fin à la violence sexuelle et sexiste nécessitera un leadership actif, persistant et surtout unifié de la part des décideurs, des professionnels de la santé, des groupes communautaires et confessionnels, des forces de l'ordre et de la société civile. « Du viol à la violence entre partenaires intimes en passant par le harcèlement et l'intimidation des militants, la violence sexuelle et sexiste reste omniprésente et aucun pays n'y a mis fin. La violence sexuelle et sexiste menace la santé et la sécurité des survivants et constitue un obstacle au développement social et économique. » Le gouvernement américain, à travers l'Agence américaine pour le développement international (USAID) et le Bureau des affaires internationales de stupéfiants et d'application de la loi (INL) du Département d'État américain, s'associe aux Libériens pour lutter contre la violence sexuelle et sexiste sous toutes ses formes et pour partager les meilleures pratiques et leçons apprises de part et d'autre. Selon le communiqué, la « plate-forme My Voice » de l'USAID lancée en juin 2020 dans le comté de Margibi reçoit des messages SMS ou des appels téléphoniques de victimes de SGBV pour fournir une

référence instantanée aux services de soutien, et que le plaidoyer de l'USAID a abouti à la collecte et à l'inclusion de données SGBV, y compris des informations sur les mutilations génitales féminines et la violence domestique, dans l'enquête démographique et de santé au Libéria 2019-2020 (LDHS) pour aider à apporter des réponses efficaces au problème. Toujours à en croire le communiqué, la loi internationale sur le narcotrafic a intégré des conseillers aux côtés de leurs homologues de la police nationale du Libéria pour offrir une assistance technique sur les enquêtes sur les cas de violence sexuelle et sexiste, tout en fournissant un soutien consultatif aux avocats de l'unité de violence sexuelle et sexiste libérienne sur la poursuite des cas de violence sexuelle et sexiste et au personnel judiciaire en temps opportun et traitement approprié.

La campagne annuelle « 16 jours d'activisme contre la violence sexuelle » du gouvernement américain en novembre a mis en lumière les réussites et le travail qui reste à accomplir en matière de violence sexuelle et sexiste dans le monde, y compris au Libéria. Les citoyens libériens concernés ont attiré pacifiquement et passionnément l'attention sur la violence sexuelle et sexiste (VSBG), protestant contre le taux élevé de viol au Libéria, l'impunité des auteurs et le manque de soutien aux survivants. Dans le même temps, l'ambassade des États-Unis salue les efforts du président George M. Weah pour proposer une feuille de route bien réfléchie pour mettre fin à la violence sexuelle et sexiste qui comprend une stratégie de prévention complète et un engagement à financer divers ministères pour soutenir la stratégie. Le président George Manneh Weah est optimiste quant au fait que le Libéria peut vaincre le fléau du viol, mais cela exigerait l'unité des objectifs et une concentration délibérée de tous les Libériens sur ce qui peut être fait collectivement. Le président Weah a reçu lundi 31 août un dossier de feuille de route du groupe de travail interministériel sur la violence sexuelle et sexiste au Complexe ministériel de Congo Town. Selon l'exécutif, le groupe de travail interministériel a été constitué par le président le 29 juillet 2020 avec pour mandat de mettre en place une équipe technique comprenant les parties prenantes concernées qui discuteront, consulteront et fourniront régulièrement des recommandations concrètes et exécutoires sur le renforcement de la lutte le viol et la violence.



# Français

## Le chef du parlement

et le Sénat libérien stipule clairement que les membres de l'Assemblée législative et du pouvoir judiciaire, en particulier les juges, connaîtront une réduction salariale de 31%, à l'exception des membres du personnel.

Selon eux, la résolution indique clairement que la réduction salariale en question ne concernait que les membres de l'Assemblée législative, c'est-à-dire les représentants et les sénateurs, et non les travailleurs ordinaires.

A cela, le représentant Seiboa répond que cette partie de la résolution ne peut être interprétée que par des juristes. C'est la goutte d'eau qui a fait déborder le vase. Il s'en est suivi un débat houleux. Et comme Koung et Seibo n'en pouvaient plus, ils se sont précipités vers la salle des conférences où se tenait une séance ordinaire, pensant qu'ils y seraient à l'abri. Mais c'est mal connaître les employés lésés, qui, sans hésiter, les ont suivis, criant « Chambers le voyou ! Chambers le voyou ! ». Le représentant Jimmy Smith a tenté d'intervenir pour ramener le calme, mais c'était comme s'il avait mis le feu à la poudre. Les membres du personnel se sont mis à cogner les portes.

C'est la première fois que les travailleurs lésés s'en prennent physiquement à l'édifice du parlement

pendant que la session est en cours et que de graves problèmes d'intérêt national sont débattus.

Et comme le bruit était trop et que les agents de sécurité affectés à l'entrée ne pouvaient rien, le Président de la chambre du parlement, Bhofal Chambers, la mine serrée, a demandé que le chef du personnel lésé soit autorisé en plénière pour parler au nom de ses collègues.

La réunion a duré des heures. Le Président Chambers a demandé une séance privée avec les dirigeants, après quoi le représentant du comté de Montserrado, Acarous Gray, a proposé la création d'un comité spécial pour enquêter sur les préoccupations des membres du personnel.

Ainsi, à la suite d'un vote, les membres du comité parlementaires sur les voies, les moyens et les finances ont été choisis pour mener des investigations sur cette affaire. Le comité a jusqu'à aujourd'hui jeudi 3 septembre pour présenter son rapport et faire des recommandations.

Les salaires des membres du personnel de l'Assemblée législative, y compris la Chambre basse et le Sénat, ont fait l'objet d'une réduction dans le cadre du programme d'harmonisation des salaires initié par le gouvernement Weah.

En juillet, des membres du personnel du Sénat libérien protestaient contre cette réduction.

## Alpha Condé, un my

l'officialisation de la candidature d'Alpha à un troisième mandat, les contours ont été remis à zéro à propos du risque énorme de la Guinée de verser dans l'instabilité.

Car, réagissant officiellement à cette candidature, le Fndc estime, dans un communiqué en date de ce 1er septembre, que : "Il est désormais évident pour les plus sceptiques que M. Alpha Condé qui revendique des décennies de lutte pour la démocratie en Guinée n'est autre que la plus grande désillusion de l'histoire politique de notre pays".

En conséquence, cette plateforme de lutte qui ne se dit pas surpris, "demande à l'ensemble de ses démembrés à l'intérieur et à l'étranger de se préparer à la reprise des manifestations suivant les dates et les modalités pratiques qui seront annoncées dans un court délai". Une situation qui

signifie que la Guinée va renouer avec ses vieux démons. Pire qu'au Mali, la candidature non-acceptée d'Alpha Condé, le leader du RPG Arc-en-ciel va créer une impasse politique et peut-être des violences qui pourraient avoir de graves conséquences.

Car, manifestement, Condé est resté sourd aux appels de ses nombreux amis. Il a pris goût au pouvoir et n'entend nullement céder le fauteuil.

Et comme pour le référendum couplé à des législatives, il sera pratiquement seul avec ses partisans car l'opposition radicale ne va y participer.

Pis, Condé a d'autant plus déçu qu'il a refusé une médiation de la Cedeao qui a voulu prendre les devants pour éviter cet état de fait.

Manifestement, Alpha Condé est la preuve manifeste que les dirigeants africains ont un rapport particulier avec le pouvoir et qu'il n'y a pas un

## COMMENTAIRE

Par Edoardo Campanella

## Le chant des sirènes de Scranton

MILAN - Le Grand Confinement, en réponse à la pandémie de COVID-19, a modifié la perception de l'espace géographique de milliards de personnes. Des semaines durant, les interactions sociales et professionnelles ont été intermédiées par des technologies numériques qui ont réduit la distance physique et brouillé les frontières entre monde numérique et monde réel. Cette expérience socio-économique sans précédent risque d'avoir des effets durables, transformant potentiellement de nombreux aspects de nos vies et incitant en fin de compte les gens à réfléchir à nouveaux frais au choix de leur domicile. La hiérarchie entre centre urbain et périphérie, prédominante dans le monde occidental depuis la première Révolution industrielle, pourrait être bouleversée.

Les économistes tentent depuis longtemps de comprendre ce qui fait cette spécificité des villes. Il y a plus d'un siècle, Alfred Marshall affirmait dans son ouvrage Principes d'économie politique que la proximité crée une atmosphère idéale pour les entreprises qui travaillent dans un même secteur d'activité. Comme il l'a dit, il y a quelque chose « dans l'air » qui permet aux idées de circuler librement d'une entreprise à l'autre, ce qui leur inspire continuellement de nouvelles inventions par un processus d'imitation et d'innovation. En outre, les industriels d'une même région ont tendance à avoir facilement accès à un grand bassin de main-d'œuvre qualifiée et à des fournisseurs spécialisés d'intrants intermédiaires.

Bien sûr, historiquement, les entrepreneurs n'ont pas choisi leur emplacement à la légère. Bien qu'ils aient bénéficié de la proximité de leurs pairs, ils souhaitaient également réduire leurs coûts en se trouvant à proximité des marchés où leurs principaux intrants étaient produits et où leurs produits étaient vendus - ou quelque part entre les deux. Quant à lui, Marshall pensait à des centres de production de l'époque victorienne comme le district du textile du Lancashire dans le Nord-Ouest de l'Angleterre, où les conditions climatiques étaient idéales pour la production d'articles de coton. Aux États-Unis, les emballeurs de viande se sont regroupés à Chicago, parce que cette ville était un passage par où les vaches et les porcs étaient expédiés de l'Ouest agricole vers l'Est urbain.

Inévitablement, alors qu'une ville prospère et attire davantage de talents et de capitaux, beaucoup d'autres villes deviennent moins pertinentes d'un point de vue économique. C'est pourquoi il y a toujours eu des hiérarchies urbaines clairement perceptibles, qui correspondent à des disparités de richesses. Mais cette tendance n'est pas uniforme dans tous les domaines. Dans un pays fortement centralisé comme la France, par exemple, la plupart des activités économiques sont concentrées à Paris, alors que dans un pays fédéral comme l'Allemagne, elles sont plus équitablement réparties entre les régions.

Dans tous les cas, les grandes villes continuent de prospérer et de croître, alors même que la mondialisation et la baisse des coûts de transport poussent de nombreuses entreprises à diffuser leur capacité de production dans le monde entier. La raison de cette expansion urbaine continue est simple : les emplois fondés sur la connaissance dans les centres technologiques et financiers dépendent dans une large mesure d'interactions en face à face qui permettent à ceux qui les maintiennent de garder une longueur d'avance. C'est pourquoi les brevets sont positivement corrélés avec la taille de la ville.

Mais les nouvelles technologies pourraient bien réduire les incitations aux regroupements physiques, ce qui risque bien de modifier les hiérarchies urbaines. Les plateformes numériques, en particulier, offrent des possibilités d'interactions sociales et professionnelles à distance. La téléconférence, les outils de collaboration virtuelle, les applications de

rencontres et de nombreuses autres innovations ont tous été des outils efficaces pour tirer parti de certains avantages de l'agglomération à distance. Ce potentiel, évident avant la pandémie, se réalise à présent à grande échelle.

Si la demande de rencontres en face-à-face devait décliner de manière permanente, les coûts d'agglomération de villes surpeuplées, polluées et coûteuses pourraient commencer à l'emporter sur les bénéfices, poussant même les professionnels qualifiés vers des villes plus petites, où ils joueraient d'un plus grand pouvoir d'achat et d'un niveau de vie plus élevé. Après tout, une grande partie des opportunités professionnelles et de loisirs qui rendent uniques des villes comme Paris, New York et Londres sont disproportionnellement appréciées par une petite élite disposant de moyens de dépenses discrétionnaires. C'est cette cohorte réduite qui a la plus forte motivation pour continuer à peupler des villes de ce genre.

Il est certain qu'un changement structurel loin des mégapoles fortement concentrées serait sans précédent d'un point de vue historique. Dans le passé, quand les gens ont quitté des villes sur le déclin, il s'agissait de rejoindre une capitale et ses opportunités d'emploi en se ralliant à un nouveau grand pôle urbain. Mais à présent, le mouvement pourrait s'orienter dans la direction opposée : des zones urbaines riches vers les zones économiquement défavorisées, où ceux qui ont un revenu disponible peuvent jouir d'une vie bien meilleure tout en conservant des emplois dont le siège est situé ailleurs. Cela ne représenterait pas seulement un réarrangement, mais également un aplatissement des hiérarchies urbaines traditionnelles.

Cela ne signifie pas que la « mort de la ville », ou quelque chose de semblable, soit en ligne de mire. La vie virtuelle ne se substituera jamais de manière équivalente aux interactions en face à face, tout comme la plupart du mouvement ne se fera pas vers une existence ermite dans les campagnes, mais plutôt vers des villes plus petites et de taille moyenne.

En outre, les marchés du travail imposeront toujours des limitations strictes. À ce jour, environ un tiers des emplois aux États-Unis et en Europe peuvent être exercés à distance, et un grand nombre se situent dans des professions qui bénéficieront encore des effets de réseautage offerts par les zones urbaines dynamiques. En fin de compte, les villes où les emplois sont officiellement basés conserveront relativement plus de pouvoir économique que les autres.

Néanmoins, une repopulation même partielle et progressive des zones moins développées pourrait apporter des avantages considérables, en contribuant notamment à réduire les divisions régionales qui ont été exploitées par les politiciens populistes de tous les pays occidentaux ces dernières années. Selon l'économiste Enrico Moretti de l'Université de Californie à Berkeley, l'introduction d'un emploi hautement qualifié dans une économie locale tend à créer au moins cinq emplois moins qualifiés, contribuant ainsi à augmenter le niveau de vie de tous ceux qui vivent dans la même région. Ainsi, avec le temps, l'afflux de travailleurs qualifiés dans les villes auparavant marginalisées pourrait créer des économies locales plus dynamiques et plus robustes, préparant ainsi le terrain à un modèle de croissance plus équilibré d'un point de vue géographique et socio-économique.

Les pouvoirs publics devraient chercher à faciliter une telle transition en construisant des infrastructures numériques adéquates dans les zones périphériques, en fournissant des crédits d'impôt pour les délocalisations et en élargissant les incitations au travail à distance. En Europe, où des milliers de villes ayant des siècles d'histoire ont été complètement dépeuplées, les avantages de telles mesures seraient énormes : cela permettrait notamment d'atténuer les disparités géographiques bien plus efficacement que par la levée d'impôts plus lourds sur l'élite urbaine.



## Open Letter to the Liberia Telecommunication Authority (LTA)

September 2, 2020

Ms. Edwina Crump Zackpah  
Chairman  
Liberia Telecommunications Authority (LTA)  
RIA Highway

Dear Chairman Crump Zackpah:

The Leadership of the Press Union of Liberia (PUL), the representative body of journalists and media institutions in Liberia requests a meeting with the Full Board of Commissioners of the Liberia Telecommunications Authority (LTA) and your technical broadcast leads.

We are referring you to our position of 26th December 2019 in which the PUL urged the Liberia Telecommunications Authority and all broadcast stakeholders to organize a validation session on the draft LTA FM Radio Policy which this entity suddenly announced had gone into forced.

At the time, the Press Union of Liberia indicated that your public announcement was intentionally toned against Liberian broadcasters presenting them as irresponsible when the sectorial regulator (LTA) had created a messy airwave in Montserrado by uncontrollably granting of licenses.

The Press Union of Liberia and other stakeholders like the Association of Liberian Community Radios (ALICOR), Nimba Community Radio Association (NICORA) assisted by Internews/USAIDS have helped reviewed and established the gravity and ramification of the wide assignment of frequencies done by the LTA with hope that a solution was in sight.

Inputs from all the forums have been collated by the Internews- Liberia but unfortunately all the stakeholders' views were disregarded and an unrealistic licensing regime which does not represent the performance of the economy presented.

Madam Chair and members of the LTA Board of Commissioners, validation of the draft LTA FM Frequencies Policy will allow expert review of individual frequencies as contained in the expiration announcement of December 2019 which can be rationally aligned with the stipulation of regulatory fees consistent with the financial soundness of media entities in this case, radio stations.

The Press Union of Liberia is by this invitation drawing you away from the initial LTA's threat to terminate FM frequencies already in use without first validating the draft FM regulation policy along with stakeholders of sector.

We stressed that if the Liberia Telecommunications Authority is to continue with hostility against the broadcast sector, the policy will fail and radio stations will still be on air without government realizing a penny.

This public policy must be thoughtful of the economy of the media in Liberia and actions must be geared toward keeping the broadcast industry alive than contributing to the demise of a major tool for national development and substance of our democracy.

Moreover, the Press Union of Liberia is seeking explanation to the recent opening of new radio stations in Monrovia owned by Stewarts of the ruling Coalition for Democratic Change (CDC) and Businessman; to name a few, Bana FM, Atlantic Broadcast Corporation (ABC), Strong FM, and Spoon FM/TV while Punch FM application is being stalled.

In regard to all of the above, the Press Union of Liberia is cautioning the Liberia Telecommunications Authority to reverse its decision.

Again, the Press Union of Liberia is available for a meeting, which will set up a large stakeholders' validation conference with the aim of approving the draft LTA FM Regulation to suit the prevailing economic turbulence the entire media is enduring.

### Useful Summary:

1. Requirement for license application can be tailored in line with the interests of Liberians and transparent (i.e. the LTA must tell public exactly why it grants an independent radio license to one broadcast aspirant over another with an accompanying reason rooted in public interest)
2. A reprieve period must be scheduled to give radio stations time to continue serving the public good; that fines are not imposed retroactively knowing that LTA herself is negligent of the current broadcast frequencies confusion in Liberia (i.e. not one stakeholder is to blame for delinquency in license payment for the immediate past, etc)
3. Application process for broadcast license must be made publically transparent
4. Availability of license be made on a plan of available spectrum across the nation as well as thought for profitability in accordance with the status of the local economies (i.e. 10 licenses available in Montserrado, 8 in Bong, 3 in Grand Bassa, etc). The plan would include a frequency assignment (e.g. Monrovia FM 88.7; FM 101.5; FM97.9, etc) to ensure businesses will not broadcast on the same frequency as their competitors.

We look forward to hearing from you as part of efforts to engender guarded reform in the operating environment of the media in Liberia.

Charles B. Coffey, Jr.  
President  
Press Union of Liberia

## CDC defies NEC?

Starts from back page

Commission. The Coalition has therefore appealed to the Supreme Court", he argues.

However, in its ruling here on Monday, the NEC noted, "We conclude that the agreement informs that if a constituent party to the Coalition has a sitting Representative or Senator in the National Legislature and that the legislative seat is up for election, the right to nominate a candidate to contest the said election on the Coalition's ticket belongs solely to the that party".

The NEC's ruling followed a complaint filed by Maryland County Senator Dan Morias of the National Patriotic Party against the CDC primary, arguing that as an incumbent senator of the NPP, he is entitled to the seat in line with the framework that binds member parties of the Coalition.

The National Patriotic Party, is a constituency member of the ruling CDC.

According to the Board of Commissioners, Sen. Morais being the incumbent was elected in 2011 to the 54th Legislature on the NPP's ticket to represent Maryland County and on the basis of being a member of the NPP, the Coalition grants the NPP the right to nominate a candidate for the seat in the December 8 election

Morais argues in his complaint that the framework agreement that the three political parties submitted to the NEC has an incumbency clause that provides that a party to the agreement with seat(s) in the House of Representatives and/or the Senate shall reserve the right of nomination of the seat(s), noting that on the basis of the agreement, the right to nominate a candidate to vie for the county's senatorial seat that he currently occupies belongs exclusively to the NPP.

But the CDC counters that Senator Morais has distanced himself from the Coalition over the years without providing any support to its activities

so he does not deserve to contest on the CDC's ticket.

Meanwhile, the CDC announces establishment of a trust fund here to cater to rape victims.

Chairman Morlu addressing a news conference at the CDC headquarters Wednesday disclosed that accounts have been opened with Afriland Bank Liberia Limited for the sole purpose of catering to rape victims, who may fall prey to "wicked men."

He welcomes the formation of an inter-ministerial taskforce on Sexual Gender Based Violence (SGBV), which was constituted by President George M. Weah.

Speaking recently, President Weah rallied the combined efforts of various branches of government - the Executive, Legislature, Judiciary and civil society to stop rape in the country.

The President made the call Monday, August 31, after receiving a roadmap dossier from the inter-ministerial taskforce on SGBV at the Ministerial Complex in Congo Town.

The taskforce has been mandated to put into place a technical team comprising relevant stakeholders that will regularly discuss, consult and provide concrete and enforceable recommendations on enhancing the fight against SGBV

Chairman Mulbah Morlu says being inspired by this patriotic call, the National Executive Committee of the Coalition for Democratic Change, which convened recently at its national headquarters in Congo Town, has acted to create a trust fund to eradicate rape and boost support for victims of sexual assault.

He intimates that the trust fund accounts in both Liberian and United States dollars will create an opportunity for everyone to donate to said venture for the betterment of victims, void of political, tribal and religious connections. **-Editing by Jonathan Browne**

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## Speaker Chambers probes

Cont'd from page 6

31 percent of their salaries cut, excluding staffers.

According to him, the resolution clearly states that such adjustment shall affect Members of the Legislature, noting that salaries of representatives and senators should be affected, not staffers' salaries and benefits, as being experienced for the past one year.

Staffers at the Legislature, including the House of Representatives and the Senate, have reported cuts in salaries and benefits after a salary harmonization scheme by the Government. Recently, on the grounds of the Capitol Building, staffers of the Liberian Senate protested against cuts from their salaries and benefits covering a one-calendar-year period.



# Choose better people

By Winston W. Parley

Former Presidential Candidate for the Alliance for Peace and Democracy (APD) in the 2005 elections, Dr. Toba-Nah Tipoteh has urged Liberians to choose better people to lead the country rather than thinking of removing the government through otherwise.

Dr. Tipoteh who also contested the 2011 elections on the ticket of the Freedom Alliance Party of Liberia (FAPL), as Presidential candidate says removing a government through undemocratic means only worsen the situation.

His comments come as Liberians head to the polls in barely four months to elect 15 senators.

The veteran also made the comments when he paid tributes on Wednesday, 2 September to the late Prof. Dr. Thomas Jaye, Director,

Relating this to Dr. Jaye, the veteran Liberian politician explains that the late Dr. Jaye, recognized the importance of choosing leaders through the ballot box and therefore went out there and volunteered to raise awareness.

“And so Dr. Jaye here, realizing that in order for the situation to get better you need to have better people, you choose them through the electoral process, so he went out there and volunteered,” Dr. Tipoteh explains.

Dr. Jaye died here on 31 July at the ELWA Hospital in Paynesville and dozens of friends, academic colleagues from high school days to university level education and others paid tributes to him.

Another issued identified by Dr. Tipoteh is the problem of dishonesty that has plagued the Liberian state. He notes that there is a need to fix it.

He recalls how he gave Dr.

says.

Dr. Tipoteh is a veteran Liberian politician who in 1973 founded the Movement for Justice in Africa (MOJA), a leftist pan-African political organization which played a pivotal role in the struggle for social justice and democracy in Liberia in the 1970s.

He served as a Budget Advisor to Liberian President William R. Tolbert, in which position he expressed concerns about government waste and advocated public management reforms.

He was the first Minister of Planning and Economic Affairs (1980-1981) under the regime of Samuel K. Doe which overthrew President Tolbert, but resigned after 15 months in office, citing human rights abuses by the government as his reason for leaving.

In 1983 the Liberian People's Party (LPP) was formed as the electoral wing

# Legal reform key

Cont'd from page 7

elections, the panelists said.

Currently, the 30-member Senate has one woman-- Senator Nyongblee Karnga-Lawrence of Grand Bassa. In the House of Representatives, there are seven women. Karnga-Lawrence is one of five women vying for the senatorial election.

Madam Julia Duncan-Cassell said it might be too late to recruit more for women for the December election, but she stressed the need to begin preparing now for 2023. Women, she said, should support each other through fundraising, advocacy, developing policy agenda and on the campaign trail.

In addition, women need to get out of the “women’s wing” box relegated for them by political parties and play leading roles in how political parties select candidates they submit to the National Elections Commission, she said.

When women are campaigning, they need to focus on a policy platform that will improve conditions for women instead of emphasizing projects such as building schools, clinics and other infrastructure, Duncan Cassell said.

“How many clinics do we need,” she said. “Can we work with the existing clinic or school, instead of trying to build new structures when there are no doctors, nurses and teachers to run them?”

To improve their chances in winning elections, women aspiring for office need to develop clear and consistent messages in their engagements with voters, said Frances Greaves.

Representative Shaack alluded to Section 4.5 of the new election law which states that political parties “should endeavor” to have no less than 30 percent of the list of candidates submitted to the National Elections Commission.

The electoral reform law proposes that the section should read: “A list of candidates submitted to the NEC for an election shall have no less that 30 percent of the candidates from each gender.”

“There is nothing binding in the current election law that compels political parties to have 30 percent of both genders,” Shaack said. “We have to create an enabling environment for women to enter politics.”

Electoral violence is also another barrier facing women in politics, Schaak said.

In response to the attacks

on Cornelia Kruah-Togba and Telia Urey during by elections in 2018 and 2019, respectively, political parties signed a Memorandum of Understanding to desist from violence during elections. Urey ran in August 2019 to replace the District 15 seat left vacant by the death of Representative Adolph Lawrence; and Kruah-Togba ran in November 2018 in District 13, to fill the seat vacated by Senator Saah Joseph.

“Women are targeted more than men in elections,” she said.

Legal reform is the best option for obtaining gender equity in the political space, said Facia Harris.

“For us to vote the first time in Liberia, it had to be through a referendum,” she said, citing the 1946 referendum that granted women in urban areas the right to vote and own property. In 1955, women in rural areas won the right to vote.

We must think about the legal framework,” Harris said. “We have to push for the passage of laws that will help us attain equity.”

Lena T. Cummings, program director and acting executive director of WONGOSOL, thanked USAID LAVI for providing the opportunity for women to discuss the challenges they face in pursuing gender parity. The lack of women representation in the political space requires urgent attention, she said.

“We need more advocacy and discussion on women’s representation,” Cummings said.

### About WONGOSOL:

The Women NGO Secretariat of Liberia (WONGOSOL) is a Civil Society Organization and an Umbrella organization of more than 100 women organizations including CSOs, CBOs, FBOs and community women groups in Liberia. WONGOSOL was established in 1998 as an organ for coordinating the activities of women NGOs and groups. WONGOSOL has the mandate to bring women and other disadvantage groups together to formulate and present their independent views on political and socio-economic issues directly affecting them and that may have serious negative implications. WONGOSOL’s thematic areas: advocacy, information dissemination and capacity building.



Institute of Research and Policy Studies at the University of Liberia (UL).

Dr. Tipoteh, also the founder of the Movement for Justice in Africa (MOJA) warns that rebelling against a regime or choosing to remove it from power because of its failure to deliver is not the right path to thread.

“Some people say oh, the government not worth, too many poor people here so let move the government. Move the government, what happens? The situation gets worse,” says Dr. Tipoteh.

Dr. Tipoteh notes that protests the holding of peaceful protests here is “because we have institutionalized the peaceful way of saying two plus two won’t have five, you shall have four.”

Jaye US\$5,000 out of money collected to travel to get people to raise awareness, but the deceased surprisingly returned US\$3,000, saying he used US\$2,000 to do the work.

“Mr. President of the university, why are you having such difficulties today? Because somebody is chopping something that the university supposed to have. Let’s fix that,” he states.

In fixing the problem, Dr. Tipoteh cautions that the way to go is not to abuse the person’s mother, [but to find a workable solution to the problem].

“Now despite the fact that people have been put in jail, people have been killed, deliberately killed, put in jail to stop them from telling the truth, but what has happened? They say truth prevails,” he

of MOJA. In Liberia’s 1997 elections Tipoteh ran as the presidential candidate of the LPP, winning 1.61% of the vote. In the 2005 elections, Tipoteh was the candidate for the Alliance for Peace and Democracy, an alliance of the LPP and another veteran opposition movement, the United People’s Party (UPP), winning 2.3%.

In 2011, he was the candidate of the Freedom Alliance Party of Liberia (FAPL). After being knocked out in the first round, he endorsed Ellen Johnson Sirleaf for the second round, saying in a statement that his party’s decision followed observation and evaluation of the two parties in the run-off, based on the issue of societal transparency. -Edited by Othello B. Garblah



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# Sports

With **Emmanuel B. Juduh**

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# CDC defies NEC?



CDC chairman Morlu



Senator Dan Morais

delegated tasks and obligations in line with the party's victorious agenda towards the December polls.

"We call on all our partisans to continue field work across the country supportive of all the Coalition candidates duly certificated as a result of the Coalition primaries conducted," CDC chairman Mulbah Morlu insists.

He assures partisans, supporters and sympathizers, especially in Maryland that only Coalition members are eligible to contest on the Coalition ticket in the pending senatorial election.

"Whilst the Elections Commission did not specifically name any individual as having right to the seat, the Coalition for Democratic Change excepted to the ruling on grounds that said ruling contradicts the framework agreement that binds the three parties and earlier rulings of the Elections

**▶ CONT'D ON PAGE 10**

By **E. J. Nathaniel Daygbor**

Despite Monday's ruling by the Board of Commissioners of the National Elections Commission that the governing Coalition for Democratic Change (CDC) acted illegally in conducting

primary in Maryland County and electing Mr. James Biney as its candidate for the December 8, 2020 midterm senatorial elections, the Coalition has instructed its partisans across the country to remain focused and fully engaged with all

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# Man Utd sign Ajax star Van de Beek in £35m deal

Manchester United have completed the signing of Donny van de Beek from Ajax, having agreed to pay £35 million (£39m/\$46m) plus £4m in add-ons for the Netherlands international midfielder.

The 23-year-old joins on a five-year deal with the option to extend for an additional season.

He will wear the No.34 at Old Trafford, a tribute to former Ajax team-mate

Abdelhak Nouri, who was in a coma for more than two years after suffering a cardiac arrest during a match in 2017.

Terms of the deal were agreed on Sunday between the clubs, and the transfer has now been made official by the Old Trafford side after they reached an accord over personal terms with the player, who has also passed a medical.

Van de Beek, who was not involved as Ajax tackled Eintracht Frankfurt and Union



Berlin in friendlies over the weekend, has therefore become United's first signing of the 2020 summer transfer window.

Speaking to Man Utd's official website, the Dutchman said: "I cannot begin to explain how incredible an opportunity it is to join a club with such an amazing history.

"I would like to thank everyone at Ajax. I grew up there and I will always have a special bond with the club.

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