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# Continental News

## Ethiopian PM rejects Tigray peace talks

The Ethiopian prime minister, who was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 2019, has rejected a request for peace talks as the conflict in Tigray deepens.

The Tigray President Debretsion Gebremichael wrote to the African Union (AU) last week to request talks. But PM Abiy Ahmed said in a tweet that there would be no dialogue "until our efforts to ascertain the rule of law are achieved".

Hundreds have died since the conflict erupted last week. Last Wednesday, Mr Abiy ordered a military offensive after an army base in Mekelle was taken over by forces loyal to the regional government of Tigray. On Friday Mr Debretsion wrote to the AU asking for help. The chairman of the African Union Commission, Moussa Faki Mahamat, on Monday urged the federal government and the Tigray state authorities to engage in dialogue. But on Tuesday Mr Ahmed said in a series of tweets that he wanted "to assure Ethiopians again" that there will be no dialogue until after rule of law is achieved.

He added: "Our law



Mr Abiy said he would not enter dialogue with Tigray leaders until the rule of law is restored

enforcement operations in Tigray are proceeding as planned: operations will cease as soon as the criminal junta is disarmed, legitimate administration in the region restored, and fugitives apprehended & brought to justice - all of them rapidly coming within reach. "It is difficult to say but reports indicate hundreds of deaths on both sides.

The national armed forces have killed 550 Tigrayan People's Liberation Front (TPLF)

fighters, the state broadcaster in Ethiopia has said. The claim has not been independently verified. Residents have fled Tigray.

Officials in Sudan, which is on the border with the Tigray region, say at least 6,000 Ethiopians have arrived in the country. The Sudanese authorities are preparing for a further 200,000 people to cross in the coming days. On Tuesday, Mr Debretsion

accused the neighbouring Eritrean government of launching attacks on the Tigrayan state.

The accusation was denied by both the Eritrean government and the Ethiopian national army. The leaders of Tigray dominated Ethiopia for many years but Mr Abiy curbed their influence after winning power in 2018 on the back of anti-government protests.

The situation began to deteriorate last year after Mr Abiy dissolved the ruling coalition.

It was made up of several ethnically based regional parties which he merged into a single, national party, the Prosperity Party, which the TPLF refused to join. Tigrayan leaders say they have been unfairly targeted by purges and allegations of corruption,

and say Mr Abiy is an illegitimate leader, because his mandate ran out when he postponed elections due to coronavirus.

The simmering row boiled over in September after the TPLF defied the nationwide ban on elections, and held a vote which was declared illegal by the central government. Mr Abiy won the prize in 2019 for his role in resolving the border conflict with Eritrea.

Ethiopia and Eritrea fought a bitter border war from 1998-2000, which killed tens of thousands of people.

Although a ceasefire was signed in 2000, the neighbours technically remained at war until July 2018, when Mr Abiy and Eritrea's President Isaias Afwerki signed a peace deal. BBC

## UN urges Mozambique to probe massacre

The UN has urged the authorities in Mozambique to investigate reports that militants massacred at least 50 villagers and beheaded women and children in the restive northern region of Carbo del Gado.

A statement from the

organisation said Secretary General António Guterres was "shocked" by the reports.

In a recent attack, Islamist militants turned a football pitch in a village into an "execution ground", where they decapitated and chopped bodies, other reports said.

The beheadings are the

latest in a series of gruesome attacks that the militants have carried out in gas-rich Cabo Delgado province since 2017.

Up to 2,000 people have been killed and about 430,000 have been left homeless in the conflict in the mainly-Muslim province.

The militants are linked to the Islamic State (IS) group, giving it a foothold in southern Africa.

The group has exploited poverty and unemployment to recruit youth in their fight to establish Islamic rule in the area.

Many locals complain that they have benefited little from the province's ruby and gas industries.

Rights group Amnesty International has accused Mozambican soldiers of committing atrocities during a crackdown on the violence, but the defence ministry dismissed the reports, saying militants regularly impersonated soldiers. BBC



## Rising Political Tensions in Ivory Coast Send Thousands Fleeing



The U.N. refugee agency reports a significant increase in the number of people fleeing Ivory Coast to neighboring countries in the wake of the country's controversial October 31 presidential election.

More than 8,000 Ivoirians have fled rising political tensions in Ivory Coast. That is up from 3,200 in just one week. The U.N. refugee agency says it fears the number will continue to grow as ongoing violence shows no signs of abating.

UNHCR spokesman Babar Baloch says 7,500 refugees have fled to Liberia. The others, he says, have sought refuge in Burkina Faso, Ghana, Guinea and Togo.

"Over 60% of arrivals are children, some of whom arrived unaccompanied or separated from their parents. Older people and pregnant women have also fled, most

carrying just a few belongings and little to no food or money at all." Baloch said.

Alassane Ouattara won a third presidential term by an overwhelming margin of 94%. Opposition parties boycotted the election, calling his bid for a third term illegal under the constitution's two-term limit. Ouattara has argued the two-term limit does not apply to him under a new constitution adopted in 2016.

Dozens of people reportedly have been killed in election-related violence.

Baloch told VOA fear of violence is driving the current exodus. "This brings back bad memories from 2011 of the presidential election then, which claimed the lives of 3,000 people and forced over 300,000 to flee. So, these people who are coming, they are not mentioning currently being targeted...or them being attacked. But it is the fear of violence," he said. VOA

# EDITORIAL

## Rekindling Liberia-America strong relationship

PRESIDENT GEORGE MANNEH WEAH seems very passionate to strengthening traditional and historical ties with the Government of the United States especially, under the administration of U.S. President-elect, Joe Biden.

AT LEAST THAT'S what Mr. Weah said Sunday, 08 November in an Executive Mansion press release issued in Monrovia. "As Liberia's traditional ally, we stand ready to further enhance and rekindle our long, historic and unique bilateral relations," President Weah is quoted as saying.

WHILE IT IS Expected of governments around the world Liberian being no exception to seek ways to enhancing bilateral relations with America, the world's greatest democracy, the Weah administration should understand that such commitment are not mere words, but should be demonstrated based on share-core values.

RESPECT FOR RULE of law, democratic rights, human rights and critical opinions, including free speech, accountability and pluralistic media, among others are foundations upon which such cooperation grows, particularly with the United States.

IF UNFOLDING DEVELOPMENTS between this administration and the Government of the United States especially, under outgoing President Donald Trump in the past three years are anything to gauge by, the Weah administration needs to work overtime to restore absolute confidence.

FIRSTLY, THE UNSCRUPULOUS handling of Liberian diplomatic passports under President Weah that saw deviant individuals particularly non-Liberians with internationally questionable characters parading the world as diplomats from Liberia, which led Foreign Secretary Mike Pompeo imposing travel restriction on former Liberian passport director Andrew Wonplo and his immediate family in September "due to his involvement in significant corruption" is one issue that needs to be addressed in its entirety to restore trust.

SECONDLY, MYSTERIOUS DEATHS in the past one month coupled with political violence on the way to senatorial election in December are unpleasant situations that attract global attention and beam spotlight on a country's governance process.

PRESIDENT WEAH SHOULD know that mere assurances from the lip would not make any significant difference in U.S.-Liberia relations unless these fundamental concerns are addressed in a transparent manner. More demonstrated actions would be required in the years ahead if Washington would open its doors with red carpet as it did for Mr. Weah's predecessor.

OFF COURSE, FORMER President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf came from the Washington bureaucracy and she understands its twist and turns with a female face. But Paul Kegame of Rwanda came from the jungle with his RPF rebels and became a darling of the West, so is President Yoweri Museveni of Uganda, who has been a key ally of America since 1986. But why did Charles Taylor fail in wooing the United States? We all need to read between the lines.

PRESIDENT WEAH WOULD need to watch his steps and friends as he tries to get America's attention that he desperately needs to make a mark on the world's stage of global leadership. This means he would have to listen enough not just to people around him, but from afar to understand early warning signals and be able to adjust in time in order to keep pace with Washington.

# COMMENTARY

By Kent Harrington

## America's Alliances After Trump

*Donald Trump's reckless contempt for America's allies has weakened the country and created a far more dangerous world. President-elect Joe Biden will need a deft pair of hands to repair Trump's wanton destruction.*

ATLANTA - America's allies should be forgiven if they are confused about where American foreign policy is headed. Who isn't, given the go-it-alone recklessness of Donald Trump's presidency? Over the past three years, Trump has sowed strategic chaos, and his foreign policy, if one can call it that, brought new meaning to incoherence. President-elect Joe Biden will be better almost by default. But has Trump changed America so much that the world cannot count on it ever being normal again?

Not only did Trump pursue a love affair with North Korea's nuclear-armed dictator and remain smitten with Russian President Vladimir Putin - a man waging political war on the West. He also championed Brexit and badmouthed America's European allies, when he was not undermining them outright. At the annual Munich Security Conference in 2020, French President Emmanuel Macron and German President Frank-Walter Steinmeier both acknowledged that Trump had fundamentally damaged the transatlantic alliance. Their message was clear: If Trump won a second term, the historic partnership that has long constituted the geopolitical "West" would never be the same. Prudent world leaders were doubtless preparing for even more instability and uncertainty had Trump been re-elected.

France and Germany, of course, have many reasons to disagree with the United States, be it on trade relations, Macron's outreach to the Kremlin, or both countries' relatively less confrontational approach to China. Macron, who last November called NATO "brain dead," has made no secret of whom he holds responsible for the alliance's decay and the broader sense of disarray among US partners and allies.

But in Paris and Berlin, as elsewhere in Europe, the reaction to Trump was not just about his bullying, trade tactics, or divisiveness. Europeans saw his administration charting a course that rejected the transatlantic security relationship and its central role in US global engagement more generally. Biden will ditch the unconstrained unilateralism. But even with a new approach, the damage Trump has done won't be repaired easily, or alter views among European leaders that the continent increasingly will need to fend for itself.

Trump's treatment of US allies in Asia has given Europeans ample warning to be prepared for more deterioration in the security relationship. Despite the North Korean nuclear threat and China's growing power, Trump tried to turn America's crucial alliances with South Korea and Japan into pay-as-you-go relationships. Fortunately, Biden understands what Trump doesn't: that US defense pacts with those two countries have underpinned East Asia's stability for 70 years and paid off handsomely for the US. Trump viewed both relationships as "bad deals," and Biden will need to persuade Americans to turn away from his transactional diplomacy.

Moreover, Trump wasn't the first US president to lean heavily on jingoistic rhetoric, and putting the MAGA genie back in the bottle may not be simple for Biden. Both South Korea and Japan can attest to the fact that "America First" was no

mere slogan. With the Host Nation Support Agreements that determine the details of America's presence in each country up for renegotiation this year, Trump repeatedly threatened to withdraw US forces from both countries unless they paid more for what he called American protection. Biden will have to work hard to restore Japanese and Korean trust as he seeks to renew these agreements.

In fact, South Korea and Japan already share mutual defense costs, and have underwritten the US military presence in Northeast Asia for decades. South Korea pays more than 40% of the operating costs of US forces stationed there; it also covered 92% of the US command's \$10.7 billion move to new facilities outside of Seoul, and it purchases billions of dollars' worth of US military hardware. For its part, Japan provides \$2 billion per year to support 54,000 US troops; it purchases 90% of its military hardware from US companies, and it has furnished \$19.7 billion (77% of the total costs) for the construction of three major bases.

For nearly a year, Trump administration officials have demanded that their South Korean counterparts quadruple their country's current \$1 billion in financial support. Add to that leaks describing possible US troop withdrawals and the announcement in July that 12,000 US forces would leave Germany. Clearly, Biden's administration will need not only to devise a new negotiating strategy, but also to reboot the US security guarantee.

Even with Biden in charge, the currently testy political relationship between South Korea and the US (which walked out on the earlier base talks) means negotiations won't be easy. In Japan, formal talks began last month, and the government has until March 2021 to renew its agreement. Trump's defense officials told their Japanese counterparts to expect the same treatment as South Korea. Biden will certainly change that script as well. But Japan's new prime minister, Yoshihide Suga, likely still expects arduous negotiations, albeit without the take-it-or-leave-it attitude that raised questions about the durability of America's security guarantees.

A simple return to treating allies like allies should go a long way for Biden. Trump demonstrated no concern for his policy's political fallout in Seoul and Tokyo, or for its impact on the political fortunes of South Korean President Moon Jae-in and former Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe. In the interest of security, both leaders tried to pander to Trump's "stable genius" over the last three years, with little to show for it but domestic political embarrassment. Biden's election undoubtedly brought sighs of relief in Seoul and Tokyo.

Sadly, Trump's malignant legacy will survive his departure. With everything from health care to climate change begging for Biden's attention, foreign policy is certain to take a backseat to domestic priorities. For US allies, patience will remain a virtue. Righting the wrongs of the Trump years will take time. As he has said at least since 1990, Trump wanted to reshape America's defense arrangements and radically alter its role in the world. Trump may be a pathological liar, but he kept his word on this issue.

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

## O-PED

By Enrico Giovannini

## How Italy Can Green “La Bella Vita”

The European Union's new COVID-19 recovery fund gives Italy an opportunity to build a stronger and more resilient post-pandemic economy. But realizing this potential will require fundamental changes in economic policymaking and implementation, underpinned by Italians' broad consensus in favor of fast and deep decarbonization.

**R**OME - Italy was the first European country to implement a COVID-19 lockdown, and subsequently it managed the summer months relatively well. But we are now seeing the effects of a second wave, similar to that in other European countries, and we cannot let our guard down.

Italians are doing their best to deal with this deadly crisis, wearing masks everywhere and, for the most part, respecting restrictions. We cannot let our sacrifices go to waste by returning to our pre-pandemic normality.

Italy now has an opportunity to build a stronger, greener, and more resilient post-pandemic economy, buoyed by higher employment and improved public health. By emphasizing the health and well-being of its people, the country can continue to set a global example as it prepares to assume the G20 presidency and co-host the United Nations' COP26 climate summit in Glasgow in 2021.

Whether Italy achieves this goal will depend on how it uses the €209 billion (\$248 billion) stimulus from the European Union's new COVID-19 recovery fund. A new report by more than 30 Italian economists and analysts, coordinated by energy consultancy REF-E, estimates that if Italy spends 80% of the EU funds on reducing carbon dioxide emissions - and not on expanding its gas infrastructure - its GDP could be one-third higher by 2030 than it would have been without the money. Moreover, the working-age employment rate would increase from 57% today to 68% by 2030, benefiting young people in particular.

Alternatively, Italy's recovery money could become stuck in the gargantuan and fragmented decision-making processes that have hamstrung the economy's low-carbon transformation for years. Should that happen, the country will face another decade or more of lackluster GDP growth, and worsening risks related to climate change and exposure to viruses.

The choice should be a no-brainer. The Italian economy could shrink by 9% this year, with investment falling to just 16% of GDP - from 18.4% in 2019 - hitting jobs and incomes, increasing inequality, and prompting people to save rather than spend. At the same time, Italy's greenhouse-gas emissions are expected to decline by 7.5% in 2020, setting a baseline from which we could continue cutting pollution rather than bouncing back to pre-pandemic levels.

Italians want to pursue a greener, healthier future - even more so than people in the United States, the United Kingdom, the Netherlands, France, and Poland, according to a recent survey commissioned by the More in Common initiative. Seventy-seven percent of Italians surveyed expressed support for a European “Green Deal” involving “large-scale government investments to make our economy more environmentally friendly,” while 81% agreed that the decrease in CO2 emissions during the COVID-19 lockdown “shows that we can reduce our impact on the environment if we really want to.” But nearly two-thirds of Italians said the government is not doing enough to fight climate change.

Achieving a sustainable future will therefore require fundamental changes in Italy's economic policies and implementation, underpinned by a broad consensus that fast and deep decarbonization goes hand in hand with growth, health, stability, and resilience. Our inability to approve and develop green projects until now reflects the lack of a coherent political vision and strategy. But as our battle against COVID-19 has shown, Italians can successfully unite to fight a common threat.

Building a more resilient green economy requires the right investments, with priority given to low-risk carbon-free projects that guarantee long-term employment, health, and equity. Renewables, energy-efficiency schemes, electric-vehicle charging stations, and clean modes of transport will advance these goals; new gas pipelines will not.

Green hydrogen, made from renewable energy, could be a game changer for hard-to-abate sectors such as steel and long-distance freight transport. Europe's largest steel complex, in the southern Italian city of Taranto, is currently struggling to stay afloat, but could secure a long and sustainable future by becoming the poster child for zero-carbon steel.

Such investments make clear economic sense. Italy spends €19 billion per year on fossil-fuel subsidies and spent a net average of €44 billion annually on fossil-fuel imports over the past decade. In 2018, more than half of all loans from Italian banks - 14% of their total assets - were tied up in carbon-intensive sectors, according to the Bank of Italy. With the low-carbon transition already underway, and financial institutions and firms worldwide committing to decarbonize and divest from fossil fuels, these banks risk being left with stranded, devalued assets unless Italian policymakers help to accelerate the shift.

A faster green transition will also save lives. The European Environment Agency estimates that about 76,000 Italians died prematurely in 2016 as a result of air pollution, one of the highest rates in Western Europe. As of 2020, five northern Italian cities are among Europe's top ten for average health costs from air pollution, including premature death, medical treatment, and lost working days, according to a new study. Recent research suggests that people exposed to air pollution are more at risk of suffering the worst effects of respiratory illnesses like COVID-19. Moreover, the Mediterranean region, including Italy, will likely be more affected than other parts of Europe by global warming and the migration that it fuels.

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## OPINION

By Tlaleng Mofokeng

## A Safe Retreat from the War on Drugs

*The threat of punishment and discrimination doesn't drive people to quit or avoid drugs, but rather to hide their use, including from their doctors. There is a better way, and jurisdictions like the US state of Oregon may have found it.*

**J**OHANNESBURG - While the world has been fixated on the results of the presidential election in the United States, less attention has been paid to another outcome of last Tuesday's vote: significant steps toward decriminalization of drugs in several US states. One state - Oregon - is now set to abolish criminal penalties for possession of small quantities of all illegal drugs, from heroin to methamphetamine. This approach should be applauded - and adopted far more broadly.

According to 2018 data, about 269 million people around the world use illicit drugs, including 11 million who do so by intravenous injection - a method that carries additional risks. Nearly half of those who inject drugs are living with hepatitis C, and a staggering 1.4 million are living with HIV. According to the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, in 2017 alone, more than a half-million people died as a result of drug use.

This is an entirely preventable tragedy, fueled by the cruel and counter-productive approach exemplified by the so-called war on drugs. Launched in the 1970s by US President Richard Nixon, drug possession today is a criminal offense in most countries, and users face severe social stigma.

The war logic is simple: the risk of harsh punishment will act as an effective deterrent, causing drug use to diminish. But this isn't what happens at all. Despite increasingly punitive approaches, global drug sales and use continue to increase, causing more overdoses, HIV, hepatitis C, and tuberculosis.

The threat of punishment and discrimination doesn't drive people to quit or avoid drugs, but rather to hide their use, including from their doctors. By discouraging those who use drugs from engaging with health systems, criminalization and stigmatization - as well as racism, which compounds drug-related discrimination - contribute to negative health outcomes for individuals and communities that extend far beyond the drugs themselves.

There is a better way. Rather than attempting to force people to forswear all drug use, we should be attempting to minimize its negative impact on their health and well-being. So-called harm-reduction interventions include needle-exchange programs, whereby people can access sterile needles and syringes; drug-consumption rooms, where people can safely use drugs without risking an overdose; opioid agonist therapy, such as methadone replacement; and housing and employment initiatives.

Decades of research and practice prove that harm-reduction interventions work and are cost-effective. For example, opioid agonist therapy decreases the likelihood of overdose. And needle-exchange programs substantially reduce the spread of hepatitis C and HIV among people who inject drugs, thereby helping to decrease transmission overall. In Portugal, HIV rates have plummeted since possession of all drugs was decriminalized and harm-reduction interventions were ramped up almost 20 years ago.

The good news is that, as the latest report from Harm Reduction International (HRI) reveals, significant progress has been made in the provision of such services. Over the last few decades, 86 countries have implemented needle and syringe programs, and 84 provide some form of opioid agonist therapy. But much more remains to be done.

As the HRI report shows, there are still enormous gaps in access to harm-reduction services, even in places that offer them, such as Australia, Canada, and Western Europe. For example, there are few services tailored to women and gender non-conforming people. And harm-reduction services consistently fail to meet the needs of the groups that have borne the brunt of punitive drug policies for decades, such as people of African descent including African-Americans and indigenous people around the world.

Moreover, the services that are needed are often concentrated in cities, making them difficult to access for those in rural areas. And incarcerated people, who are at a higher risk of contracting HIV and hepatitis C while in prison - and of overdosing when they are released - usually have no access to them at all.

According to HRI, progress in expanding access to harm-reduction programs has been stalled for more than five years. As long as limited resources are being allocated to law enforcement, rather than harm reduction, significant further gains will remain elusive.

When people who use drugs suffer and die, they are often reduced to statistics and dismissed as “criminals” or “lowlifes.” But they are our friends and families, neighbors and colleagues. They are human beings, who have a right to health, equality, and respect, regardless of their gender, sexuality, race, nationality, legal status, or drug-use habits or histories.

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SOLICITATION NUMBER: VA-669-20-00012

ISSUANCE DATE: 11/04/2020  
CLOSING DATE/TIME: 11/25/2020 (17:30 local time)

SUBJECT: Solicitation for the Acquisition & Assistance Specialist (OAA), Cooperating Country National Personal Service Contractor (CCNPSC)

Dear Prospective Offerors:

The United States Government, represented by the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), is seeking offers from qualified persons to provide personal services under contract as described in this solicitation.

Offers must be in accordance with Attachment I, Sections I through III of this solicitation. Incomplete or unsigned offers will not be considered. Offerors should retain copies of all offer materials for their records.

This solicitation in no way obligates USAID to award a PSC contract, nor does it commit USAID to pay any cost incurred in the preparation and submission of the offers.

Any questions must be directed in writing to the Point of Contact specified in the attached information.

Sincerely,

/s/

Marc Griego  
Executive Officer

## ATTACHMENT I

### I. GENERAL INFORMATION

SOLICITATION NO: VA-669-20-00012

1. **ISSUANCE DATE:** 11/04/2020
2. **CLOSING DATE/TIME FOR RECEIPT OF OFFERS:** 11/25/2020 at 17:30 Monrovia time
3. **POSITION TITLE:** Acquisition & Assistance Specialist
4. **MARKET VALUE:** CCN-11: \$40,344 - \$64,550 (Full Performance)  
CCN-10: \$35,104 - \$56,160 (Mid-level)  
CCN-09: \$27,502 - \$44,008 (Trainee level)

In accordance with AIDAR Appendix J and the Local Compensation Plan of the US Embassy in Monrovia, Liberia. Final compensation will be negotiated within the listed market value.

5. **PERIOD OF PERFORMANCE:** Initial contract will be for one year (with optional years included for extension, not to exceed five years), based on the programmatic needs, funding availability, and performance. This is considered a permanent position.

Employment under any contract issued under this solicitation is of a continuing nature. Its duration is expected to be part of series of sequential contract; all contract clauses, provisions, and regulatory requirements concerning availability of funds and the specific duration of the contract shall apply.

6. **PLACE OF PERFORMANCE:** Monrovia, Liberia with possible travel within the country and overseas.

**NOTE: ALL ORDINARY RESIDENT APPLICANTS MUST HAVE THE REQUIRED WORK AND TRAVEL PERMITS ALLOWING WORK IN LIBERIA BEFORE BEING ELIGIBLE TO APPLY.**

7. **SECURITY LEVEL REQUIRED:** Facility and computer access

8. **STATEMENT OF DUTIES:**

#### BASIC FUNCTION OF POSITION

The Acquisition and Assistance Specialist is located in the Office of Acquisition and Assistance, USAID/LIBERIA. The function of the Office is to provide Acquisition and Assistance (procurement) support to Mission Technical Offices and to Development Objective (DO) and Assistance Objective (AO) Teams in the Mission and in any Regional Offices that may be supported by the Mission. The primary purpose of this position is to review and recommend approval or revision of requisitions in the Global Acquisition and Assistance System (GLAAS); review and recommend approval or revision of Scopes of Work (SOW); perform complex cost and price analysis; analyze proposals and/or quotes received; review contracts and contract modifications; analyze contractor-proposed budgets; recommend revisions to various contract provisions; write Memoranda of Negotiation; and, prepare other required documentation. The Specialist maintains up-to-date contract files and supports award closeouts. As required, the Specialist provides guidance to on related administrative award modifications. The Specialist is responsible for carrying out day-to-day activities in an independent manner.

This position represents the full performance level of a career ladder, beginning at FSN-09. Attainment of this grade level represents that the Specialist has successfully completed substantial training, met agreed-upon objectives and milestones, and has performed at the Fully Successful (or equivalent) level. At this level, it is anticipated that the Specialist will play a significant role in mentoring lower-level trainees, and others, by identifying knowledge gaps and training needs.

#### MAJOR DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

##### I. Pre-Award

The Specialist provides professional-level procurement planning advice and guidance to USAID/LIBERIA Technical Offices, (DO and/or AO Teams including advice on procurement policy and procedures in the design and implementation of Mission activities. The Specialist coordinates the development of procurement objectives for assigned portfolios in terms of potential implementing partner (IP) organizations, competitive issues, and socioeconomic issues, and identifies and constructs appropriate contract and/or grant instruments.

The Specialist reviews GLAAS Requisitions (REQs) requesting acquisition/assistance for major and complex programs/project/activities and/or services. The Specialist analyzes requirements, and determines instrument selection or procurement approach, if SOWs or other program documents are complete, and if the request meets FAR, ADS, AIDAR, and/or other mission, Agency, or USG policies; ensures that necessary Mission clearances have been obtained, and that waivers and other supporting documentation are complete; recommends revisions regarding SOWs, budgets, classification of terms, reporting requirements, and any special conditions, and ensures that required performance indicators are developed and included in the initial Request for Proposal of Request for Application; and, develops solicitation documentation in accordance with all appropriate regulations, selects and includes correct clauses, and transmits solicitations for proposal using internet-based technology. The Specialist responds to offeror questions during the proposal submission phase, and determines the need for and prepares, clarifying amendments as required for solicitation documents. As necessary, the Specialist holds pre-bid or consultative meetings with partners to fully explain the Agency and counterpart's needs, and to discuss solicitation documents. The specialist applies a high degree of judgement and analysis when deciding among and between competing and often conflicting regulations and objectives, where the activities involved include multi-million-dollar issues, often with significant political and/or legal implications.

##### II. Proposal Evaluation and Negotiation

The Specialist evaluates applications and offers for responsiveness to particular solicitations, and documents the relative strengths and deficiencies of each proposal; guides DO/AO Teams in the practice of 'best value' selection, and in performance-based technical approaches; and, obtains reports and references, ensuring that past performance of the offeror is relevant and of a high quality. The Specialist ensures that offerors have adequate management, accounting, personnel, and procurement systems, and appropriate corporate leadership, resources, and quality control systems to satisfactorily carryout contracts. The Specialist requests audit reports or pre-award surveys from the Office of the Inspector General, and/or the Defense Contract Audit Agency, and obtains clearance from the Department of Labor and/or the Small Business Administration on a variety of

EEO and workplace issues. The Specialist analyzes cost proposals and technical scores from technical evaluation committees; and based on the analysis, establishes the competitive range, and presents documentation for signature to the Contracting Officer/Regional Contracting Officer. The Specialist performs analysis of cost issues, considering economic conditions and factors of material, labor, and transportation costs; examines cost and pricing data submitted by offerors, to substantiate direct and indirect costs and profit; determines reasonableness of costs submitted; ensures data provided is consistent with USAID requirements on eligible geographic sources, and that salary structures are consistent with Agency policy; and, identifies circumstances that may require a waiver. The Specialist coordinates issues of technical weakness and excessive cost with DO/AO Teams prior to commencement of negotiation; and, clarifies and, as necessary, instructs the members of the Team, host-country counterparts, and other Mission staff on the USAID procurement process. The Specialist designs the negotiation strategy; identifies areas subject to negotiation, and consults with technical specialists concerning data submitted by offerors, conducts extensive negotiations on cost and technical issues prior to contract award, presenting USAID issues of concern, and persuading offerors to upgrade technical deficiencies and reduce costs where appropriate; requests submission of Revised Final Proposals, and prepares appropriate contract or grant instruments for award; coordinates the last stages of selection with DO/AO Teams and/or the technical evaluation committee(s); negotiates and awards grants and cooperative agreement with US-based and indigenous PVOs and NGOs, colleges and universities, and other non-profit organization, analyzes transactions to ensure compliance with Agency cost-sharing and registration policies, as well as local laws governing status, and coordinates contracting activities with other government agencies, frequently negotiating and drafting interagency agreements. The Specialist presents award decisions of ultimate contractor/recipient to the Contracting Officer, with all the appropriate supporting documentation, including the development of appropriate performance indicators, in conjunction with DO/AO teams, and, organizes and conducts orientation meetings with selected contractors, to ensure that mobilization efforts will be conducted effectively, and that all terms and conditions of procurement instruments are clear and well-understood by all parties. The Specialist provides support debriefings to unsuccessful offerors.

##### III. Contract Administration

The Specialist monitors contractor performance in relation to the completion schedule required by the contract or assistance instrument, ensures timely submission of technical progress reports, making periodic visits to contractor work sites, and representing the Office at performance-based meetings held by other Mission Offices, assists any client Missions to development appropriate indicators for work plans, and contract documents, ensures contractors are fully compliant with performance standards contained in the Contract, and seeks corrective action in cases of non-compliance; expedites Change Orders or revisions when circumstances require; and, issues 'show cause' or 'cure notices' and/or recommends termination of contracts for default or for convenience, and negotiates termination settlements.

The Specialist analyzes, and takes action to resolve, audit finding, such as cost items questioned and unresolved; supports recommendations with detailed analysis of each cost, category, or element as necessary; prepares necessary documents to resolve all aspects of audits, questioned or ineligible costs, and accounting issues; and, presents documentation to the Contracting Officer/Regional Contracting Officer for signature. The Specialist reviews completed (after full performance) contract files to determine that all contractual actions are satisfied, and that there are no pending administrative actions to be

resolved; ensures that all documents are signed, that there are no litigation actions pending, and that the contract is complete in every respect and ready to be closeout, and, ensures that contracts nearing annual anniversaries or final completion have a completed performance report from the COR/AOR, and submits reports to the Contractor for comment.

The Specialist provides guidance and mentoring to junior-level staff, trainees, procurement technicians, and the clients on basic principles of USG and USAID acquisitions, general procurement management, procurement policy direction, new/changed procurement policies, etc. as required.

As required, the Specialist may be called upon to provide information an advice to the Contracting Officer/Regional Contracting Officer and/or his/her designee on critical procurement issues, or on the effect of new or revised USG, USAID, or host-country requirements. The Specialist attends key mission meetings on the Office as assigned.

9. "Cooperating country national" ("CCN") means an individual who is a cooperating country citizen, or a non-cooperating country citizen lawfully admitted for permanent residence in the cooperating country.

#### 10. PHYSICAL DEMANDS

The work requested does not involve undue physical demands.

#### 11. POINT OF CONTACT:

All application packages are to be submitted:  
**Acquisition & Assistance Specialist, (OAA)**  
by email to: [LiberiaHR@usaid.gov](mailto:LiberiaHR@usaid.gov)

#### QUALIFICATIONS REQUIRED FOR EFFECTIVE PERFORMANCE

Possession of a Baccalaureate Degree or the equivalent of a four-year US College/university (or equivalency accreditation if a non-US institution) degree in Accounting, Law, Business, Finance, Contracts, Purchasing, Economics, Industrial Management, Marketing, Quantitative Methods, or organizational management is required.

#### Post Entry Training:

**To be hired at FSN-9 trainee/entry level,** the incumbent must have met the required educational qualifications, work experience and demonstrated the capacity to develop the skills to perform at the full performance level.

**To be promoted to FSN-10 level,** the incumbent must have (a) successfully completed all FAC-C training level I and USAID basic training courses covering (i) Assistance and (ii) Simplified Acquisition and (b) have 3 years of related USAID A&A work experience completing at least 50% of the on-the-job Procurement Training Program (PTP) actions contained in the employee's IDP and agreed to work with his/her supervisor through performing on the job actions. Some of the promotion requirements may be waived at the discretion of the OAA Office Director. The incumbent must meet all education and work experience requirements to be promoted to FSN-10.

**To be promoted to FSN-11 full performance level,** the Specialist must have demonstrated mastery of the full range of skills by: (a) successfully completed mandatory Federal Acquisition Certification - Contracting (FAC-C) Level II course in accordance with a formal individual development plan (IDP). Or equivalent class hours of other advanced A&A trainings approved by the supervisor in writing, (b) successfully completing 90% of the Procurement Training Program (PTP) actions contained in the IDP and agreed to with your supervisor through performing on the job actions; (c) having completed five years of USAID A&A related experience; (d) attaining at a fully successful performance evaluation.

#### Language Proficiency:

Level V (Fluent) English and local language proficiency both oral and written, is required.

**Knowledge:** Understanding of US Federal and USAID Acquisitions Regulations, and knowledge and understanding of how to execute and administer a complex acquisition and assistance portfolio is required, particularly as it relates to acquisition through methods of negotiation, small purchase procedures, and that result in standard and established contract types. A good knowledge of host-country and regional markets pertaining to programs/projects/activity requirements for services and commodities, and a good knowledge and understanding of US market and pricing methods is desired.

**Skills and Abilities:** The ability to plan and administer large acquisition activities and provide adequate acquisition assistance and support for agency programs/project/activities in a timely manner. The ability to apply governing contracting regulations, procedures, and policies to individual complex acquisition and assistance program is required. An ability to deal effectively with high-level representatives of the US and Regional business community, and with colleagues in USAID Missions and/or host governments is required. Skill in the use of most elements of the Microsoft Business suite is required.

#### Knowledge:

Understanding of US Federal and USAID Acquisitions Regulations, and knowledge and understanding of how to execute and administer a complex acquisition and assistance portfolio is required, particularly as it relates to acquisition through methods of negotiation, small purchase procedures, and that result in standard and established contract types. A good knowledge of host-country and regional markets pertaining to programs/projects/activity requirements for services and commodities, and a good knowledge and understanding of US market and pricing methods is desired.

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Good analytical, negotiating, and time management skills, along with strong proofreading skills and attention to detail, are required. The ability to work calmly and effectively under pressure is essential, as well as the ability to maintain strict CONFIDENTIALITY, and meet all STANDARDS OF CONDUCT/ETHICS STANDARDS in accordance with US law throughout all phases of acquisition and assistance procurement processes.

#### POSITION ELEMENTS

**Supervision Received:** The Acquisition and Assistance Specialist works under the general guidance of the Contracting Officer and his/her designee, who makes assignments in terms of the broad range of procurement actions the Specialist will perform. The Specialist works with considerable independence, initiating necessary coordination with requesting Mission CORs/AORs, Technical Offices, and DO and AO Teams, providing policy and strategic guidance on how to best fulfill requirements, and with the OFM and RLO, the staffs of other agencies, and with awarders. The Specialist keeps the Contracting Officer or his/her designee updated through periodic status reports, and through verbal briefings. Completed work is reviewed from the overall standpoint of providing a viable procurement approach for the results achieved, in meeting delivery schedules, and in the selection of appropriate contract methods.

**Supervision Exercised:** The incumbent may be assigned as a group/team leader but will not serve as a full supervisor. The incumbent is expected to serve as mentor to lower-level trainees, and others, by identifying knowledge gaps and training needs, and providing work guidance to lower-level acquisition staff, and trainees.

**Available Guidelines:** Guidelines include the Federal Acquisition Regulations (FAR), USAID Acquisition Regulation, (AIDAR), the Automated Directives System (ADS), Contract Information Bulletins (CIBs), US Department of State Standardized Regulations (DSSR), Federal Travel Regulations (FTR), Office of management and Budget (OMB) Circulars, other Mission Orders, and grant format requirements.

**Exercise of Judgement:** At the full-performance level, the incumbent is expected to apply a high degree of judgement in all aspects of Acquisition and Assistance actions, in particular when advising CORs/AORs and Mission staff, and when interacting with IPs to resolve complex issues arising during program/project/activity implementation. The incumbent exercises good judgement in dealing with visitors and callers; in the analysis of cost, financial, and other characteristics of prospective contractors and grantees; and in deciding what questions need to be asked of technical officials and DO and AO Team representatives and proposed contractors/grantees, in order to ensure achievement of the acquisition objectives on contract, grant, or other assistance instruments. Highly unusual decisions and matters of policy are discussed with the Contracting Officer and his/her designee prior to making a final decision.

**Authority to make Commitments:** The incumbent independently holds discussions and negotiations with potential contractors and grantees to reach agreement on complex situations and often helps to develop strategies on managing budgets. The incumbent has the authority to conclude complex negotiations and to structure the final terms and conditions of major USAID acquisition and assistance instruments. Upon completion, agreements are approved and signed by a warranted Contracting Officer and/or his/her designee, in order to obligate funds.

**Nature, Level, and Purpose of Contacts:** The incumbent is in daily contact with staff throughout the Mission, technical office staff, DO and AO Team Leaders, CORs/AORs; grantees, potential grantees, visitors, mid-to high-level officials, VIPs from both the public and private sectors, international organizations and donors, NGOs and IPs in order to exchange and/or collect information, and to provide advice relating to program implementation.

**Time Expected to Reach Full Performance Level:** One year.

#### SELECTION CRITERIA

The following are the selection criteria:

- 1) Analytical, writing, and computer skills (15 points)
- 2) Reference checks (15 points)
- 3) Experience (35 points)
- 4) Oral and interpersonal skills (15 points)
- 5) Education and Training (20 points)

#### Additional Selection Criteria

Management will not allow nepotism, conflicts of interest, monetary considerations, or visa status to be a determining factor in the selection of a successful candidate.

#### Selection Process

After an initial screening of applications, qualified applicants will be invited to take an analytical, writing, and computer skills test. After the test, candidates will be reviewed, and the most highly scored candidates invited for interviews.

#### How to Apply

Interested candidates for this position should submit the following:

1. A clearly typed application letter which briefly summarizes why you believe you are qualified for this position.
2. Resume
3. The names and contact details of three references that can attest to your professional qualifications, work experience, and/or volunteer experience. The references must include phone number, titles, and an explanation of their relationship to the applicant.
4. Documentation (e.g. copied of certificates, awards, degrees) that address the minimum requirements of the position.

**EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY:** The U.S. Mission provides equal opportunity and fair and equitable treatment in employment to all people without regard to race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, political affiliation, marital status, or sexual orientation.

**MORE HEADLINE NEWS**

**MORE HEADLINE NEWS**

**Several charged for US\$250,000 theft**

By Ben P. Wesee

Six suspects including Maria Morgan Luyken who was recently held for allegedly kidnapping several kids and a former Montserrado representative candidate Reginald Taylor have been charged and sent to court, this time for allegedly duping about 500 victims of a combined total of US\$250,000.

The the Liberia National

others in the courtyard, some of whom appeared to be victims of the alleged dubious networking program, family members or friends.

Police charge sheet reveals that the charges were brought against the defendants based on a complaint filed by Mr. MadelaZayzay and others, in which it is alleged that about 500 members were duped out of USD\$250,000.00 by way of a networking program run by the

members registered with the amount of US\$500.00.

The victims claim that at the end of every four to six weeks, the organization was obligated to pay the amount of US\$2,000 to each member.

To the victims' dismay, the general overseer of the purported organization Maria Morgan Luyken in collaboration with her cohorts allegedly criminally conspired and breached the initial agreement made to the detriment of the members.

In collaboration with her cohorts or accomplices in persons of Reginald Taylor, Bismarck Appleton, Amos Benjamin, Ralp Johnson and MeattiaYancy, defendant Maria Morgan Luyken is accused of criminally conspiring and breaching the initial agreement made to the detriment of members.

She and her cohorts allegedly reduced "The Love Gift" (the amount each member is expected to receive US\$2,000.00) without notifying the entire membership which brought about chaos among them.

The police point out that during the investigation, the defendants allegedly admitted voluntarily of being the official members of the purported Circle of Life Fellowship organization.

Further, the police say it was established during investigation that the Circle of Life Fellowship is not officially registered with the requisite government agencies of Liberia as a business entity.--*Edited by Winston W. Parley*

Circle of Life Fellowship.

Those charged with criminal conspiracy, theft of property and fraud include General Overseer Maria Morgan Luyken, Reginald Taylor, Bismarck Appleton, Amos Benjamin, Ralp Johnson and MeattiaYancy.

According to the complainants, they allegedly joined the organization in separate months of this year, and that each of the 500



Madam Maria Morgan Luyken

Police (LNP) took the accused to court Wednesday, 11 November under the charges of criminal conspiracy, theft of property and fraud in relations to duping about 500 persons by way of a networking program through a purported organization named "The Circle of Life Fellowship.

Their appearance in court Wednesday drew scores of

**Civil Society group defends Farmington Hotel**

The Executive Committee of the Civil Society Network of Liberia (CSNL) has termed as baseless and malicious, allegations of physical assault levied against the General Manager of Farmington Hotel, Dominique Virard.

It says some unscrupulous individuals have in recent days, been feeding the public with garbage that Mr. Viard beat on a local prostitute at Farmington while the lady was demanding payment for a sexual service rendered a man believed to be a foreign customer of the hotel.

The CSNL, in a release issued Wednesday in Monrovia, said its investigation has proven that the allegations against Mr. Virard are unfounded and are only designed to tarnish his

hard-earned reputation and by extension, the good image of Farmington Hotel, a giant in the hospitality industry of Liberia and the West African region.

The CSNL release further quotes its Executive Director,

**▶ CONT'D ON PAGE 7**



**Gov't to speak**

Cont'd from page 10

Handling down the judgment Tuesday November 10, Justice Edward Amoako Asante further ordered the Liberian Government to restore and pay to Cllr. Ja'neh all his withheld entitlements, including salaries, allowances and pension benefits from the date of the his impeachment to the date of notification of the court's judgment.

Cllr. Janeh was removed as an Association Justice of the Liberian Supreme Court through an impeachment process that he challenged as unconstitutional.

Ja'neh argues that under Chapter VII, Article 72 (B) of the 1986 Liberian Constitution, he was guaranteed the holding and protection of office as Associate Justice during good behavior until the age of 70.

However, lawmakers here brought charges against him to the contrary and hence his removal from office which he is now challenging.

One of the cases which triggered Associate Justice Ja'neh's impeachment trial in Liberia related to a land dispute involving him and one Madam Annie Yancy Constance.

He was accused by lawmakers for abuse of power, using his influence as Associate Justice to secure a ruling in his favor at the Supreme Court to take possession of the land.

But Ja'neh's lawyers maintained that the claim that their client allegedly manipulated the Supreme Court to rule in his favor in the property case questions the credibility of Chief Justice Francis S. Korkpor who served as the head of the Supreme Court and also signed the ruling.

In the suit he filed before the ECOWAS Court, Ja'neh through his Counsel, Mr. Femi Falana alleged that his removal violated his human rights to fair hearing and impartial trail, right to work and dignity of person guaranteed by the African Charter on Human and Peoples rights.

He also claimed violation of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, as well as the Liberian Constitution by the purported impeachment, trail, conviction, removal and his replacement.

Further, he alleged that he was subjected to impeachment proceedings with no Prescribed Rules of Procedure, thereby depriving

him of his fundamental right to fair hearing as stipulated in the 1986 Liberian Constitution.

According to former Justice Ja'neh, when the impeachment trial commenced at the Liberian Senate on 13 February 2019, he filed a motion to recuse asking that the Chief Justice should not preside over the impeachment trial since he signed the Judgment of the Supreme Court in a case that was listed as one of the grounds for his impeachment.

He submitted that allowing the Chief Justice Francis Korkpor to preside would be tantamount to a conflict of interest with the possibility of bias. His contention was that Chief Justice Korkpor was involved in several facets of the impeachment proceedings and was expected to recuse himself in order to adhere to the tenets of justice.

He stated that to his surprise, the Chief Justice denied his application and instead proceeded to preside over the impeachment trial.

In the 73 page judgment, a panel of three judges of the Court led Justice Asante said the Court found the matter admissible and within its Jurisdiction contrary to the argument of the government, stating that it has clearly established violation of the Applicant's right to fair hearing and right to work.

His allegation of bias against Chief Justice Francis Korkpor who presided over the impeachment trial at the Liberian Senate was dismissed by the court as unsustainable.

But the Liberian Government, represented by the Solicitor General, Cllr. SaymaSyreniusCephus denied violating the human rights of the former Associate Justice and claimed that the impeachment of the proceeding was done through a political process which also followed the due process of law as laid down in Section 43 of the 1986 Constitution of Liberia.

The State urged the Court to declare that the application is inadmissible because the Community Court is incompetent to review, interpret and apply the national constitution and domestic laws of Member States.

However, the ECOWAS court has given the Liberian Government up to six months to report on the enforcement of its judgment.

**MORE HEADLINE NEWS**

**MORE HEADLINE NEWS**

# LRD35bn needed

By E. J. Nathaniel Daygbor

**A**midst current shortage of Liberian dollars in circulation, causing commercial banks here to restrict daily withdrawal, an opposition lawmaker from the Collaborating Political Parties wants government to print additional LRD35 billion to ease daily business transactions in the country.

The Central Bank recently requested the printing of 7.5 billion Liberian Dollar bank notes, but the Legislature only approved L\$4 billion, that amount is said to be insufficient and now request for additional printing is being made.

Montserrado County District#16 Representative Hassan Kiazolu says if printed, LRD27 billion of the amount should be placed in circulation immediately and the balance kept at the Central Bank of Liberia.

Speaking to reporters following a technical financial meeting with authorities of the Central

crisis.

However, he disagrees with critics that say government is deliberately hoarding the Liberian dollar to force drastic fall of the United States dollar, instead, he some members of the community for the current shortage of local currency.

According to him, it does not make sense for the government to hoard Liberian banknotes against local usage but that some small and medium business tycoons might had engaged in the practice because most businesses disburse raw cash to partners at the end of the year.

“Since it is a known fact that at the end of every year, more foreign currency [United States dollars] hits the country, business people are creative in holding the local cash to reduce the exchange rate at the level that will suit them and give them the leverage of generating more United States dollars in the short period,” the Lawmaker suspects.

He discloses the leadership of the House headed by Speaker

end of November. One of the pending issues before the committee, according to information, is printing of additional local currency to help stabilize the current shortage and that can only be achieved when legislators, currently on annual break, are recalled to the Capitol.

This paper is gathering that due to the crisis, members of the Liberian Legislature are expected to return shortly for the sole purpose of initiating bate for the printing of additional banknotes.

Yesterday morning, during the appearance of Liberia’s Finance and Development Planning Minister Samuel Tweh on a pro-government radio station - Freedom FM in Monrovia, said the legislature will resume in the soonest possible time, but felt short of saying for what purpose.

Currently, the exchange rate between the United States dollars to the Liberian dollar is US\$1 to LRD150. But at the same time, prices of both locally produced and



Bank of Liberia on Wednesday, 11 November at the Capitol, Rep. Kiazolu, also a financial expert and former comptroller general of Liberia during the administration of ex-president Ellen Johnson Sirleaf explained the meeting was intended to brief the leadership of the House of Representatives and financial experts at the Liberian Legislature in finding short-term remedy to the financial

Bhofal Chambers constituted a think-tank committee to work with authorities of the Central Bank of Liberia in finding a short-term solution before the Christmas festive seasons when business transactions usually surge characterized by increase in remittances from abroad.

The committee comprises financial experts, economists, accountants and veterans in fiscal and monetary policies.

Rep. Kiazolu continues that the team is to deliver before

imported goods remain the same.

Meanwhile, Rep. Kiazolu encourages the Government of Liberia to adhere to ruling of the ECOWAS Court, calling for reinstatement of impeached Associate Justice Kabineh Ja’neh.

Justice Ja’neh had challenged his impeachment early last year and sought intervention before the regional court.

Kiazolu cautions the government should not renege in honoring the ruling of the regional court on grounds that ECOWAS has been a great partner to Liberia especially, during the country’s 14 years of civil war.

# “We are vetting police aides”

**P**olice spokesman Moses Carter has dismissed reports of the Liberian National Police secretly training about 200 new recruits to serve as a

an addition to the police recruitment exercise.

He denied speculations that most of those he described as police aides, were former rebel fighters who did not



special election squad targeting opposition politicians and critical voices during the December 8, 2020 Senatorial elections.

Instead, Mr. Carter said those in training are police aides who are being vetted to replace about 200 plus officers who are about to be retired.

He says currently those police aides are undergoing a vetting process at the Police Academy located in Paynesville, outside Monrovia.

Carter says, the next stage would be public recruitment, something he notes will be advertised for interested persons to apply.

The police spokesman further explains that the Police is also encouraging graduates from the AME Zion University that have degrees in Criminal Justice to be part of

undergo proper Disarmament, Demobilization, Rehabilitation, and Reintegration (DDRR) Program in 2004 after the Liberian civil war ended.

Fighter of the country’s warring factions on 15 April 2004 were placed under the DDRR program.

The DDRR program was completed on October 31, 2004, with 101,496 combatants and their “associates” disarmed and demobilized. Serious attempts were made to involve women in the process, including criteria for entry that allowed for group disarmament. The UN Mission which spearheaded the program here reports that 22,370 women were disarmed and demobilized.

# Civil Society group

Cont’d from page 6

Mr. SenseeKiadii as describing Mr. Viard as a decent and law-abiding businessman who is contributing to the economic viability of Liberia through the creation of much-needed job opportunities for Liberians.

Kiadii also termed the allegations against Mr. Viard as the work of evil and visionless agents whose sole intent is to taint the good reputation of Mr. Viard and Farmington Hotel and thereby undermine its

meaningful contribution to the growth of the Liberian economy.

The group clarified that Mr. Viard recently intervened in a quarrel between some foreign customers and two ladies believed to be sex workers, with the aim of bringing whatever disagreement to an amicable resolution but committed no physical assault contrary to what is being spewed to the public by some evil geniuses.

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# Français

## Le Libéria compte désormais 2,4 millions d'électeurs, selon la NEC

Environ deux millions quatre cent quatre-vingt-trois mille et trois cent cinquante (2 483 350) Libériens ont été enrôlés pour voter lors des prochaines élections sénatoriales et du référendum du 8 décembre, a fait savoir la commission électorale nationale (NEC).

Animant un point de presse le vendredi 6 novembre, la présidente de la NEC, Davidetta Browne Lansanah, a révélé que ce chiffre représente l'ensemble de toutes les personnes enrôlées

sur la liste électorale, y compris les deux cent quatre-vingt-dix-neuf mille neuf cent soixante-neuf (299, 969) nouveaux inscrits.

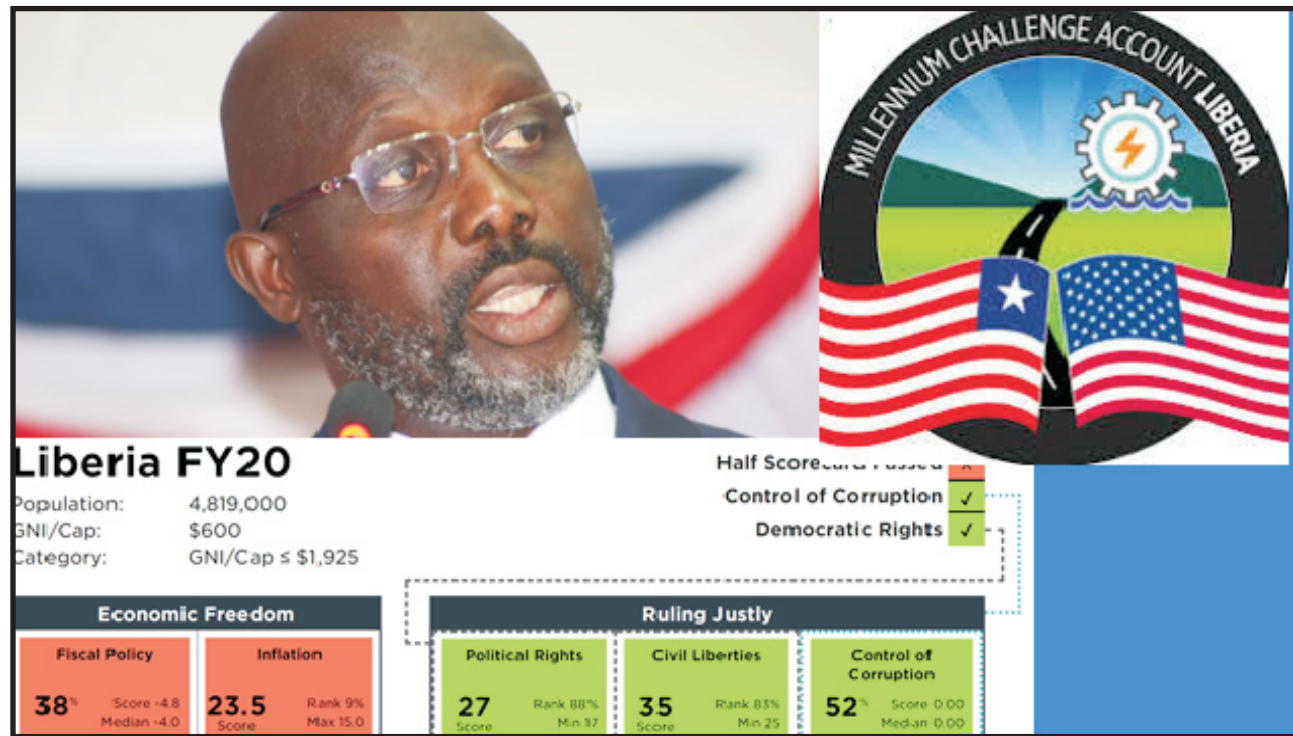
Elle a déclaré qu'avant l'opération de mise à jour de la liste électorale, le nombre d'électeurs inscrits dans le centre de données du NEC était de deux millions, cent, quatre-vingt-trois mille trois cent quatre-vingt-un (2, 183, 381).

La patronne de la NEC a expliqué que c'est le nombre obtenu après le nettoyage de la liste électorale de 2017,

comme mandaté par la Cour suprême.

On peut rappeler qu'en 2017, au terme du premier tour de l'élection présidentielle, le Liberty Party qui était alors dirigé par feu Me Charles Brumskine, avait déposé un recours à la Cour suprême du Libéria, dénonçant des irrégularités graves et des fraudes électorales, suite à sa troisième défaite consécutive depuis 2005.

▶ CONT'D ON PAGE 9



## La tempête cause des dommages à la faculté de médecine de l'UL

La faculté de Médecine de l'Université du Libéria (UL) a été sévèrement touchée par le gros orage qui s'est abattu sur la ville de Monrovia le vendredi 6 novembre.

Selon les autorités de l'université, des documents essentiels, des ordinateurs et

d'autres appareils électriques ont été détruits par l'eau. Elles se sont toutefois dites convaincues que les dégâts n'arrêteront pas le semestre académique.

Les dégâts ont principalement touché la direction sur le campus à Congo

Town, y compris la salle de conférence.

Le président de l'Université du Libéria, le révérend Dr Julius Sarwolo Nelson, s'est rendu sur le campus vendredi matin pour évaluer l'impact des dégâts. Le directeur des opérations du plan de l'université, M. Jefferson Walker, s'y est également rendu.

Selon Mme Fati Walters Zeaglor, assistante exécutive de la faculté de médecine de l'Université du Libéria, les dégâts ont été causés par l'orage qui s'est déchainé tôt vendredi matin sur la capitale économique et politique du Libéria.

Elle a exprimé l'espoir que l'administration interviendra le plus rapidement possible pour procéder à la réparation de l'équipement électronique et qu'il n'y aura aucun délai, car il y a peu de chance que les documents détruits par la pluie soient récupérés.

"J'espère et je pense que ce sera une réparation

▶ CONT'D ON PAGE 9



The late student Mohamed N. Kamara

## Le Président Libérien George Weah félicite le Président élu Américain Joe Biden



Le président George Manneh Weah a félicité le président élu américain Joe Biden après sa victoire à la récente élection présidentielle de ce pays, disant que « le Libéria est prêt à renforcer ses relations bilatérales historiques avec les États-Unis ». Avant sa victoire historique, Biden fut vice-président de l'ancien président Barack Obama.

M. Weah a également félicité la sénatrice Kamala Harris, qui a été élue première femme et première noire vice-présidente des États-Unis. Il s'est dit convaincu que l'élection de la vice-présidente élue Harris servira d'inspiration à toutes les femmes et personnes de couleur pour qu'elles puissent devenir ce à quoi elles aspirent avec détermination, engagement et travail acharné.

Le président Weah a déclaré que le président élu américain assumera la direction des États-Unis à un moment très difficile, alors que le monde est confronté à une crise sanitaire sans précédent. Il a appelé les Américains à continuer à

promouvoir « la paix et l'unité ». Le chef de l'Etat faisait ainsi allusion à l'environnement politique qui s'est polarisé du fait de la période électorale.

« En tant qu'allié traditionnel du Libéria, nous sommes prêts à renforcer et à raviver nos relations bilatérales longues, historiques et uniques », a déclaré le président Weah. Les deux pays entretiennent une relation spéciale de longue date qui remonte aux années 1800, lorsque l'Amérique a joué un rôle crucial dans la fondation du Libéria.

Le renforcement des liens entre les deux pays ces dernières années a donné lieu au soutien américain aux institutions libériennes, comme moyen de contribuer à la consolidation de la démocratie libérienne. Mais il y a également eu une coopération dans d'autres domaines, notamment l'éducation, la santé et les infrastructures.

M. Weah est parmi tant d'autres dans le monde à avoir déjà félicité le président élu des États-Unis.

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# Français

## Le Libéria compte désormais 2,4

La Cour suprême, dans son jugement, avait demandé que la liste électorale fût nettoyée avant l'organisation des élections subséquentes. Récemment, la Collaboration des partis politiques (CPP), une plateforme des quatre principaux partis de l'opposition (le Parti de la liberté (LP), le Parti de l'unité(UP), le Parti libérien (ALP) et le Congrès national alternatif (ANC)) a déposé une requête en mandamus devant la Cour suprême pour l'annulation de l'opération de mise à jour de la liste électorale. Mais le recours a été rejeté par la haute cour de justice.

« Nous sommes heureux d'annoncer la fin de l'opération de mise à jour de la liste électorale de 2020 », a déclaré Mme Browne-Lasannah. Selon elle, le nombre total de femmes inscrites nouvellement est de cent, dix-huit mille neuf cent vingt-trois, (118, 923), soit environ 39,6% du total des inscrits, contre cent, quatre-vingt-un mille quarante-six (181, 046) hommes, c'est-à-dire 60,4%.

Cependant, ce nombre, a-t-elle indiqué, n'est que provisoire et qu'il pourrait changer en raison de l'opération de nettoyage de la liste électorale qui est toujours en cours.

« Nous sommes également heureux d'informer le peuple libérien que l'exposition des listes électorales s'est achevée le 31 octobre 2020 comme prévu et que les

résultats de cet exercice sont en cours de traitement par le centre de données », a déclaré le président du CEN.

Madame Lansanah a également profité de ce temps pour annoncer que le programme d'appui électoral des Nations Unies et les experts en données de la CEDEAO dans le pays travaillent en étroite collaboration avec la commission pour assurer un nettoyage professionnel et technique de la liste.

La patronne de la NEC a souligné que ces experts en données soutiennent actuellement le personnel du centre de données de la NEC pour améliorer la qualité de la liste électorale en vue des prochaines élections, dont le référendum constitutionnel de 2020.

« L'équipe travaille depuis deux semaines maintenant et a fourni des informations préliminaires aux partis politiques et autres parties prenantes sur l'état de votre liste électorale et le travail qu'ils accomplissent, avec l'équipe du centre de données de la NEC, pour préparer la liste électorale pour les élections du 8 décembre. C'est un plaisir pour moi d'annoncer que les experts de l'ONU et de la CEDEAO ont donné beaucoup de crédit aux responsables de la base des données de la NEC vu le niveau d'expertise et de professionnalisme dont ces Libériens ont fait preuve avant même l'arrivée des experts internationaux », a-t-elle déclaré lors de la conférence de presse.

## La tempête cause des dommages

immédiate parce que le président de l'université était ici ce matin pour venir évaluer lui-même les dégâts », a déclaré Mme Zeaglor.

M. Jefferson Walker, directeur des opérations de planification à l'Université du Libéria, a déclaré que son équipe évaluait les dommages pour savoir de quoi ils s'agissait.

M. Walker a indiqué que « quand la pluie diminuera,

mon équipe fera une petite estimation qui, je l'espère, aura été effectuée le jour même de l'incident ». Au cours des travaux de l'équipe, M. Walker a déclaré que les occupants des bureaux touchés devront être transférés dans un autre bâtiment.

L'orage du vendredi a fait beaucoup de dégâts matériels dans la capitale. Des toits entiers des maisons ont été arrachés, des gens sont devenus sans abris.

## COMMENTAIRE

Par Kent Harrington

## Les alliances des États-Unis après Trump

**A**TLANTA - Les alliés des États-Unis doivent être pardonnés s'ils affichent une certaine perplexité quant à la direction que suit la politique étrangère américaine. Qui ne le serait pas, étant donné que la présidence de Trump a essentiellement consisté à faire cavalier seul de la manière la plus imprudente qui soit ? Il a engendré un chaos stratégique et sa politique étrangère, si on peut l'appeler ainsi, a donné une nouvelle dimension au terme incohérence. Le président élu Joe Biden fera mieux, si ce n'est que par défaut. Mais Trump a-t-il à ce point changé les États-Unis qu'on ne puisse pas s'attendre à ce que le monde retourne à la normale ?

Trump a non seulement entretenu une histoire d'amour avec le dictateur Kim Jong-un de la Corée du Nord, un pays doté de l'arme nucléaire, et s'est entiché du président russe Vladimir Poutine - un homme qui mène une guerre politique contre l'Occident. Il s'est également fait le champion du Brexit et a dénigré les alliés européens des États-Unis, quand il ne leur mettait pas directement des bâtons dans les roues. Lors de la conférence de Munich sur la sécurité de cette année, le président français Emmanuel Macron et le président allemand Frank-Walter Steinmeier ont tous deux reconnu que Trump avait fondamentalement affaibli l'Alliance transatlantique. Leur message était clair : si Trump remportait un second mandat, le partenariat historique qui sous-tend l'Occident géopolitique depuis plusieurs décennies serait à jamais altéré. Les dirigeants mondiaux prudents se préparaient certainement à un regain d'instabilité et d'incertitude en cas d'une réélection de Trump.

L'Allemagne et la France ont bien entendu de nombreuses raisons d'être en désaccord avec les États-Unis, qu'il s'agisse des relations commerciales, de la politique d'ouverture de Macron envers le Kremlin, ou de leur approche relativement moins conflictuelle vis-à-vis de la Chine. Macron, qui avait en novembre dernier affirmé que « Ce qu'on est en train de vivre, c'est la mort cérébrale de l'OTAN », n'a nullement caché qu'il tient pour responsable de la désagrégation de l'Alliance et du sentiment plus général de désarroi au sein des alliés et partenaires des États-Unis.

Mais à Paris et à Berlin, comme ailleurs en Europe, les dirigeants ne réagissent pas seulement aux méthodes agressives de Trump, à ses tactiques commerciales unilatérales ou à sa politique génératrice de dissensions. Les Européens estiment que son administration a tracé une voie menant au rejet des relations sécuritaires transatlantiques et plus généralement, du rôle central que joue l'Organisation du traité de l'Atlantique Nord (OTAN) dans l'engagement des États-Unis dans le monde. Biden abandonnera cet unilatéralisme débridé. Mais même une nouvelle approche ne suffira pas pour réparer aisément les dommages infligés par Trump, pas plus qu'elle ne modifiera le point de vue des dirigeants européens qui pensent que le Vieux Continent devra de plus en plus assurer seul sa propre défense.

Le traitement réservé par Trump aux alliés des États-Unis en Asie a fourni aux Européens de multiples avertissements, qui auraient dû les préparer à une nouvelle détérioration de la relation transatlantique. Malgré la menace nucléaire posée par la Corée du Nord et la montée en puissance de la Chine, Trump a tenté de transformer les alliances cruciales des États-Unis avec la Corée du Sud et le Japon en des relations mercantiles. Heureusement, Biden comprend ce que Trump n'a pas saisi : les traités de défense mutuelle avec ces deux pays sous-tendent la stabilité en Asie de l'Est depuis 70 ans et servent directement les intérêts des États-Unis. Trump percevait les deux relations comme des « mauvais accords » et Biden devra persuader les Américains de se détourner de cette diplomatie transactionnelle.

Par ailleurs, Trump n'a pas été le premier président américain à largement user d'une rhétorique chauvine et il est possible que Biden éprouve des difficultés à faire oublier le mantra « Rendre sa grandeur à l'Amérique ». Tant la Corée du Sud que le Japon

peuvent témoigner du fait que « l'Amérique d'abord » n'a pas été un simple slogan. Dans le contexte d'une renégociation cette année des accords sur les mesures spéciales (Host Nation Support Agreements) qui définissent les détails de la présence américaine dans ces deux pays, Trump a menacé à plusieurs reprises de retirer les forces américaines à moins que la Corée du Sud et le Japon ne contribuent davantage au coût de ce que Trump appelle la « protection américaine ». Biden aura fort à faire pour rétablir la confiance des Sud-Coréens et des Japonais lors du renouvellement de ces accords.

En réalité, la Corée du Sud et le Japon partagent déjà les coûts de la défense mutuelle et souscrivent à la présence militaire américaine en Asie du Nord-Est depuis des décennies. La Corée du Sud assume plus de 40 pour cent des coûts relatifs au soutien opérationnel du contingent américain stationné dans ce pays ; Séoul a également financé 92 pour cent des 10,7 milliards de dollars liés au déménagement du commandement des forces américaines vers une nouvelle base au sud de la capitale et achète chaque année des équipements militaires américains à hauteur de plusieurs milliards de dollars. De son côté le Japon verse environ 2 milliards de dollars aux États-Unis pour compenser le coût que représente la présence de 54.000 militaires américains dans l'archipel, achète plus de 90% de ses matériels militaires auprès de sociétés américaines de l'armement et a fourni 19,7 milliards de dollars (77 pour cent du total) pour la construction de trois importantes bases militaires américaines dans ce pays.

Pendant près d'un an, l'administration Trump a demandé au gouvernement sud-coréen qu'il quadruple sa contribution financière, qui s'élève actuellement à 1 milliard de dollars par an, une exigence à laquelle s'ajoutent des fuites concernant l'éventuel retrait de troupes de Corée du Sud et l'annonce en juillet dernier du retrait de quelque 12.000 soldats d'Allemagne. Il est évident que l'administration Biden ne devra pas seulement définir une nouvelle stratégie de négociation, mais également réinitialiser la garantie de sécurité américaine.

Même après l'entrée en fonction de Biden, l'aigreur qui prévaut actuellement dans la relation entre la Corée du Sud et les États-Unis (qui ont rompu les discussions initiales au sujet de la nouvelle base) signifie que les négociations ne seront pas aisées. Au Japon, les pourparlers officiels ont été entamés le mois dernier et le gouvernement a jusqu'en mars 2021 pour reconduire l'accord. Les responsables de la Défense américains ont averti leurs homologues japonais de s'attendre au même traitement que les Sud-Coréens. Il est toutefois très probable que Biden réécrive également ce scénario. Le nouveau Premier ministre japonais, Yoshihide Suga, s'attend sans doute à des négociations difficiles, mais sans l'attitude « à prendre ou à laisser » qui a soulevé des doutes quant à la pérennité des garanties de sécurité américaines.

Recommencer à traiter les alliés comme des alliés devrait considérablement aider Biden. Trump ne s'est nullement préoccupé des répercussions que pouvait avoir ses actions à Séoul et Tokyo, ou de leurs effets sur l'avenir politique du président sud-coréen Moon Jae-in et de l'ancien Premier ministre Shinzo Abe. Dans l'intérêt de la sécurité, tous deux ont tenté de se plier au « génie stable » de Trump au cours des trois dernières années, sans autre résultat qu'un certain embarras politique au plan national. L'élection de Biden a sans aucun doute été un grand soulagement dans les deux capitales asiatiques.

Malheureusement, l'héritage délétère de Trump survivra à sa défaite électorale. Biden devra consacrer toute son attention à la crise sanitaire et au changement climatique et la politique étrangère sera reléguée au second plan des priorités nationales. Pour les alliés des États-Unis, la patience restera de mise. Réparer les dégâts des années Trump prendra du temps. Comme il le dit depuis 1990 au moins, Trump souhaitait revoir les dispositions relatives aux garanties de sécurité américaines et radicalement modifier le rôle des États-Unis dans le monde. Le président sortant a beau être un menteur compulsif, sur ce sujet il a tenu parole.

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## ARTICLE

## ARTICLE

# “Circle of Secrecy” Children, Sexual Abuse, and the Catholic Church in Africa

*Thus, when others impose the image of their deity upon you while you abandon your Gods, and accept theirs, you inevitably become their spiritual prisoner – Dr. John Henrik Clarke*  
*From the desk of Dr. Bamidele Adeoye, November/December 2020.*

In every culture, there is a belief in a supernatural being (Almighty), and the relationship between humans and God requires worship and sacrifice. And, in any recorded human history, humans practiced some form of cultural religion – spirituality, so, culture cannot occur without education, while education is impossible without some form of societal culture.

From the time in antiquity, religion comprised of regular ceremonies centered on a belief in a higher supernatural power (God – the unknown) that created and maintained the order of things in the universe. Over a period, religions focus on the spiritual aspect of God, creation, human, life after death, eternity, and how to escape suffering or to be adjudicated afterlife. That is the reason why every culture made Gods in its image, similarity, and representation in their cultural space.

There is nothing more important in any culture or life than the worship of something. The only question is whether the worship is the right One, done in the right way. However, every religion believes that they are the right One, worship the right way, and their God is best in their cultural space.

Hence, the essence of worship is to establish and maintain a relationship between human beings and their God within their cultural space. Thus, worship can be defined as an extreme form of love, unthinking devotion and adulation for a God. When God is an exaggerated worship of the cultural self. And, God is as the wind, which touches anything and everything. For that reason, religion can be restrictive, repetitious, show regard for something sacred within an organized system of beliefs and practices, leading to a supernatural spiritual experience.

Therefore, the concept of God is an attempt to forge an identity in confrontation with a limited understanding of the unknown universe. That is why Leeming, David Adams attested that the existence of God fulfills a significant human needs. While Gods are symbols of ultimate reality, and their existence provides a sense of significance in an otherwise random universe. So, religion or worshipping is not a European invention introduced to Africa.

Are human traditions and practices hypothesis or scientific, and how can one discover the reality of religion instead of the true religion?

In consequence, the term religion is a nineteenth-century experience and derived from within the history of Christian thought itself, rendering the use of the word to describe other forms of thinking, practice, and ritual performance outside the known Christian West. And these rankings have their roots in a history of European interaction with non-European “others” that stretches back to late antiquity – Encyclopedia.com

Religion is the most potent binding force possible that encompasses a people's outlook, traditions, culture, and philosophy of life. In other words, a moral and ethical compass of people in their cultural space.

Subsequently, there is no right or wrong culture nor religion because every culture or religion has a logic of philosophy guiding it. That is why, Critias, an ancient Athenian political figure and author, claimed that religion was created by men to control other men. So what makes one religion superior and another inferior is not vital to the religious practices or beliefs themselves. Instead, such designations are a reflection of the ranking of different religious practices in the world was conjured in a way that met the social needs of Europeans preoccupied with managing a rapidly

expanding colonial enterprise. For example (Quirke, 1992:162):

Egyptian Book of the Dead: “I have not committed adultery; I have not lain with men.”

Exodus 20:14: “Thou shalt not commit adultery.”

Book of the Dead: “I have not stolen.”

Exodus 20:15: “Thou shalt not steal.”

Europeans think they have a monopoly of culture, history, intelligence, religion, such that they refuse to acknowledge otherwise and arrogantly label others as inferior. Yet, every race or tribe of people in the world has its spirituality and religions, except for Africa, which gradually dissipated in shame during and after the foreigner's intrusion on the continent.

Every religion is true when thought of metaphorically and less flexible, while you do not have to believe in anything, yet Christianity requires that you believe there was a Christ. When conferring to Hindu philosophy, no one can worship a God but a God. You have to see in yourself some element of the God and what the God represents to you to worship the God. Similarly, to see the goodness in things, we must see God in things. To see the God in things, we must see goodness – Egyptian Book of the Dead.

According to the 2020 Census; Anuario Pontificio (Pontifical Yearbook), the number of baptized Catholics in the world was about 1.33 billion at the end of 2018. The global Catholic population is projected to grow to 1.63 billion in 2050.

As such, it is the largest Christian ecclesiastical body in the world. Based on this, it is important to have some understanding of the Roman Catholic Church's brief historical philosophies. The Church was split in two by the Great Schism of 1054, dividing Christians between the western, Latin-speaking Roman Catholic Church and the eastern, Greek-speaking Eastern Orthodox Church.

This break gave rise to two fundamental doctrinal contradictions. One was the role and authority of the Pope, while the other was the filioque clause (“and from the Son”) of the Nicene Creed. The western Catholics believe that the Holy Spirit proceeds from the Father and the Son while the Eastern Orthodox believe that the Holy Spirit proceeds only from the Father.

The Roman Catholic Bible contains 66 books, the Eastern Orthodox Bible 78 books, while the Protestant Bible has 77 books, and the Slave Bible contains only 14 books. Yet, one Christian God, varied books. The Bible did not arrive by fax from heaven. The Bible is a creation of man. Man, not God, writes history, and history is always from the perspective of the conqueror, not the conquered – Dr. Martyn Percy.

What happened to the lost books of the bible and the forgotten books of the Eden?

In Christianity, worship is the act of attributing reverent honor and homage to God, meaning to bow down to God with total submission.

“O come, let us worship and bow down: let us kneel before the LORD our maker” Psalm 95:6.

Christianity key points are; (a) Belief in God the Father, Jesus Christ as the Son of God, and the Holy Spirit, (b) The death, descent into hell, resurrection and ascension of Christ, (c) The holiness of the Church and the communion of saints and (d) Christ's second coming, the Day of Judgement and salvation of the faithful.

The Christian theology is to abide by the holiness of the church, and preach the gospel of “TRUTH”, yet the



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Catholic church did not preach the gospel of truth when it comes to the sexual abuse of children across the world, until forced to do so. They resisted at all levels. Rev. Barton Gingerich noted that, notwithstanding, it is appropriate for any Christian to know the Roman Catholic beliefs and history, if for no other explanation than the church's size and influence. Is the Catholic church about the gospel of Christ (truth) or the gospel of reputation and finance at the expense of children?

What happened to the gospel of truth in the children's sexual abuses by Catholic priests?

A Gospel of Shame, by Frank Bruni and Elinor Burkett, documented sexual abuse in the Catholic church, which was initially published in 1993 and proved that the church hierarchy knew about child molesters for at least a decade. It documents the failure of prosecutors, judges, psychologists, and reporters to monitor bishops, who spend millions of dollars, to protect the Church's image rather than its believers.

Without indicting the Church, Burkett and Bruni argued that the demands of the priesthood and the hierarchical structure decreed by Rome foster a climate perilous to the young. They explained clearly such matters as how obedience to clergy prevented the congregation from going public with accusations earlier; why cops, newspapers, and mental-health professionals haven't pursued priest-molesters as vigorously as other pedophiles; and the loss of faith felt by parishioners who have been reportedly lied to by the Church.

According to Jeremiah 8:8, “How can you say, “We are wise, we have the law of the LORD,” See, that has been changed into falsehood by the lying pen of the scribes?”

The 2014 U.N. human rights panel concluded and issued a report stating that the Vatican aided and abetted priests to sexually abuse tens of thousands of children worldwide over the decades. An investigation reveals that thousands of Catholic priests accused of sexual abuse, most have become the priest next door. That is the modus operandi of the Catholic church in covering up these atrocities.

Father Greeley estimated that at least 2,500 Catholic priests in the United States have victimized 100,000 children in the last two decades, and author Jason Berry opined that, between 1982 and 1992, sexual abuse cases cost the Catholic Church \$400 million in settlements,

# “Circle of Secrecy”

Cont'd from page 4

legal expenses, and medical treatment of clergy. A more conservative figure of 2,600 (CBS News 2019) priests molested and abused children in America. In just 20 years, the scandal had cost the church \$1.3 billion. However, according to Jay Report (2004), commissioned by the US Bishop, says more than 4,000 US Roman Catholic faced sexual abuse allegations in the last 50 years, in cases involving more than 10,000 children - mostly boys.

“They have acted shamefully; they have done abominable things, yet they are not at all ashamed, they do not know how to blush. Hence they shall be among those who fall; in their time of punishment, they shall stumble, says the LORD.” Jeremiah 8:12.

Information published by the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) as of May 31, 2019, indicated that 7,002 (5.9%) of the 118,184 priests who worked from 1950 through June 30, 2018, were accused of sexual abuse of minors. The American church alone has paid out an estimated \$3 billion in awards and settlements.

What is the scale or scope in Africa?

In 2018, Sheehan, Andy exposed part of the 884-page document: “All victims brushed aside, in every part of the state (US), by the church leaders who preferred to protect the abusers and their institution above all. The main thing was not to help children, but to avoid the scandal.” Priests were raping little boys and girls and the men of God who were responsible for them not only did nothing: they hid it all.”

“They have treated lightly the injury to the daughter of my people. “Peace, peace!” they say, though there is no peace.” Jeremiah 8:11.

Bishops and other leaders of the Roman Catholic Church in Pennsylvania covered up child sexual abuse by more than 300 priests over a period of 70 years, persuading victims not to report the abuse and law enforcement not to investigate it, according to a searing report issued by a grand jury.

A delegate of the Roman Catholic Church at the Stockholm congress declared that exploitation of children is the “most heinous of crimes” and a “result of profound distortion and the breakdowns of values.” “A United Nations representative said it “is an assault on children on all fronts . . . , is totally vile and is the most contemptible violation of human rights imaginable.” Yet, the Catholic Church has been severely affected by such practices among its own clergy – Awake! 1997

Child abuse can significantly deteriorate the children’s sense of dignity, identity, and self-esteem is demoralized, and their ability for trust is withdrawn. Their physical and emotional health is at risk, their rights violated, and their futures are jeopardized.

How many Catholic priests victimized children in Africa, or were they swept under the rug?

Betrayal, a book by a team of Boston Globe reporters revealed how the Boston Archdiocese of the Catholic Church re-assigned a pedophile priest to different parishes for over a decade, despite knowing he had abused children. The explosion of the scandal led to 176 priests over 28 states of the US to resign or be removed from their post. And John J. Geoghan, a formal priest was accused of molesting an estimated two hundred Boston-area children, he was later sentenced to 9 - 10 years in prison.

How many priests have been brought to justice, and found guilty in Africa?

Nearly 1,700 priests and other clergy members that the Roman Catholic Church considers credibly accused of child sexual abuse are living under the radar with little to no oversight from religious authorities or law enforcement, decades after the first wave of the church abuse scandal roiled U.S. dioceses, an Associated Press investigation reported.

Marcy Hamilton, who runs the Philadelphia-based think tank CHILD USA, a nonprofit working to end child abuse, said the church clearly knew the consequences of letting former priests move on quietly after abuses were reported but did so to shield the church and

protect its image. “They cover it up, they run the statute of limitations, and then they wash their hands of them. It’s like they had a firecracker and they threw it into the public square.”

Jason Berry’s book, “Lead us not into Temptation”, posited that the Catholic church is a haven for homosexual, and in one particular archdiocese, forty percent were gay, forty percent straight, and twenty percent nonsexual. The system of law operated by the Vatican has allowed serious sex offenders to escape punishment and must be abandoned, says a prominent US lawyer.

What is the case in Africa?

So far, 29 U.S. Catholic dioceses and religious orders have filed for bankruptcy protection during the ongoing sexual abuse crisis in the Catholic church, 26 dioceses, and 3 religious orders according to BishopAccountability.org (2020), which tracks sexual abuse cases in the church.

How many Catholic churches went out of service or commission in Africa?

That is the state of Africa’s religiosity, spiritual prisoners to foreign gods. Hence these abuses were muted by Africans and African States due the false benefits from the Catholic missions. While countries all over the world challenged the children sexual abuses in their countries, Africa muted because Africa is a beggar state, thus, Africa has become an abused state of people sexual, spiritually and physically. Even though we are defined by courage and redeemed by character rather than religion, when God is an exaggerated worship of the cultural self. Africa still holds on to this foreign religion to the detriment of her children.

When will Africa stand up to the reality of these abuses?

Archbishop Abel Gabuza of Durban in South Africa vied that sexual abuse is taking place in African families is “one of the best kept secrets” and not talked about. Archbishop Abel Gabuza emphatically stated that there should be a willingness to do away with cover-ups, and let go of the silence, confront perpetrators, while serious steps taken to eradicate such an abuser from the priesthood.

In line with Sister Hermenegild Makoro, the secretary-general of the South African Catholic Bishops’ Conference (SACBC), 35 cases of clerical abuse of minors have been reported in South Africa since 2003, but only seven were being investigated by the police.

What happened in the early days, from the dawn of the intervention of the Catholic mission in Africa?

As far back as the mid-60’s, a priest in a secondary school in Ijebu Ode, Nigeria, sexually abused boys under his care as the principal of the school. There are several Catholic schools and missions in Nigeria, how many other children were victimized in those institutions by their priests?

What happened to the Catholic priests, the boys, and justice for the priests’ crimes in Nigeria?

Agreeing with Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., justice delayed is justice denied. Your silence will not free you. Africa became the dumping ground for rogue priests from the West, since Africans are spiritual prisoners without voice and respect for their people, couple with the enclosure of the mind syndrome, in other words, spiritual inferiority complex, and mental deficiencies. Yet, Africa has diversities of superior religions unharnessed.

Is there any tracking done in Africa to monitor the Catholic priest’s raping little boys and girls? If not, why not?

These are the pertinent questions to be asked by Africa and the Catholic church. What provisions and implementations are in place to combat and discourage abuse by these rogue priests? What support systems and compensations are available to the abused and their families? How is the church monitoring their system of records to know if any newly posted priest is not an abuser from their previous locations? Are there any comprehensive background checks on newly posted priests to Africa? Is there an international and national system of records (database) for rouge priests?

When did Pope Francis abolished the highest level of secrecy used to protect pedophiles within the Catholic Church and changes to what the Vatican considers child pornography? In accordance with the pope’s ruling, information on abuse cases must be protected by church leaders to ensure its security and integrity. But the high degree of confidentiality imposed by pontifical secrecy no longer applies.

In another ruling, Pope Francis raised from 14 to 18 the age that pictures of individuals can be considered child pornography for purposes of sexual gratification by whatever means or using whatever technology.

The Vatican told bishops around the world to report cases of clerical sex abuse to civil authorities even where local laws don’t require it – a step that abuse victims and their advocates have demanded over the decades in which the scandal has roiled the Roman Catholic Church. But the new instructions are not binding and were not enshrined in the church’s canon law, prompting criticism that the Vatican still gives bishops too much leeway in judging the conduct of their priests.

“An you shall know the truth, and the truth shall set you free.” John 8:32

Christopher White of Crux publication posited that as the number of African Catholics continues to soar, one Kenyan nun warns African Catholics that they must first “clean house on abuse” when it comes to the issue of clergy sexual abuse before exhibiting greater leadership in the global Church. She argued that personal trauma begets institutional trauma, the self-woundedness, must be acknowledged so that the cycle of abuse does not continue.

Are the bishops willing to expose these abusers, particularly in Africa, in light of Africa’s religiosity, culture of silence and respect for foreign religions?

What a questionable and disturbing comment by Archbishop Abel Gabuza of Durban in South Africa, who admitted that it is not easy for a bishop to denounce one’s priest who engages in such behavior? What are the challenges of reporting the truth, when the truth is its own defense?

For the past thirty years, it has been an uphill battle both from Africans and the secrecy of the Catholic institutions (churches and schools) educating Nigeria and Africa about these atrocities. However, according to Jim Rohn, the more you tell your story, sooner or later, it will fall on the right ears.

Yet, these issues persist in the country and on the continent at large. And who would rise up for those invisible voices? The answer is blowing in the wind, to borrow the lyrics of Bob Dylan. Likewise, the answer is in the womb of time.

Thus, the goal of the “circle of secrecy” is a wakeup call for Africa on the issue of Catholic sexual abuses and the atrocities on Africa’s children by the priests who were supposed to protect them.

However, until Africa raises her voice against children’s sexual abuse, Africa will always be victimized by the Catholic Church.

In conclusion, the greatest sin (tragedy and atrocity) Africa perpetuated on the African States was the acceptance of foreign languages and religions. It has devastating effects on Africa’s psyche and caused irreparable effects on what makes Africa and her Africanness. Therefore, Africa must repent and ask for forgiveness, be-re-introduced to her Gods, and languages for redemption. If not regained soon, it will cause irreversible damage for generations to come, and Africa will eventually cease to exist as we know her today.

To know is to understand. To praise Gods, we must praise life. To honor Gods we must make of the world something good. To be Gods, we must hold goodness in each pore – The confession, Egyptian Book of the Dead.

Being decent, orderly, religious is helpful to others and pleasing to one’s God, and to worship with excellence, however, it must be undistracting excellence. People go to worship to give God glory, meet with God, and to receive blessings from God, instead of being brutalized, abused, and deceived, under the veil of the “Man of God” banner.

How long can Africa remain in denial and hold the Catholic church accountable for these atrocities?

Are human customs and practices hypothesis or scientific, and how does one find the truth of religion, rather than the true religion should be the fundamental question? And, Africa must learn to unlock the potentials of her Gods.

# Gov't to speak on Ja'neh's verdict today



Former Associate Justice Kabineh Ja'neh

The Liberian Government is expected to speak on the 73 pages ECOWAS ruling which ordered it to reinstate impeached Associate Justice Kabineh Ja'neh today.

Liberia's Solicitor General Cllr. Sayma Syrenius Cephus told this paper Wednesday he

had just received the verdict and was going through it to provide some clarity in the ruling to the Liberian public.

He indicated that there some sections of the ruling that needed to be clarified to the Liberian public and that the Liberian Government has up to three months to respond to the sub-regional body's court

ruling.

He explained that one of the basic issues the government will be looking at is the claimed made by Ja'neh that his human rights was violated during the impeachment process.

Justices sitting at the ECOWAS court in Abuja, Nigeria on Tuesday November 10, ordered the Liberian Government to reinstate Associate Justice Kabineh M. Ja'neh or grant him the right to retire with full pension.

And not only that but also pay him USD200, 000 (two hundred thousand dollars) in reparation for the moral prejudice he suffered for the violation of his rights.

Earlier release from the court had indicated that the impeached Associate Justice of the Supreme Court had sought the Liberian Government to cough out US\$25 Million in compensation.

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# Shortened NBA season to start on 22 December

The NBA season will begin on 22 December after an agreement was reached with players over scheduling, salary figures and free agency dates.

The usual season-start date in October was pushed back because the coronavirus pandemic caused delays to the 2019-20 campaign.

But the NBA and its players' union have agreed a new date and a 72-game season - a

reduction on a usual campaign.

The NBA draft will take place on 18 November.

From 20 November, free agents can start negotiating with teams and will be able to sign deals from 22 November.

The 2020-21 salary cap has also been set at \$109.1m (£82.8m).

The 2019-20 season was halted by the coronavirus pandemic in March and concluded in a 'bubble' environment in Orlando on 11



October, four months later than the season typically ends.

The Los Angeles Lakers ended a 10-year wait for their 17th NBA title, with LeBron James leading his team to a 4-2 Finals win over the Miami Heat.

With such a short time between the conclusion of the play-offs and the start of next season, there have been reports that some players - such as James - could miss the start of the new campaign in order to rest more.

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