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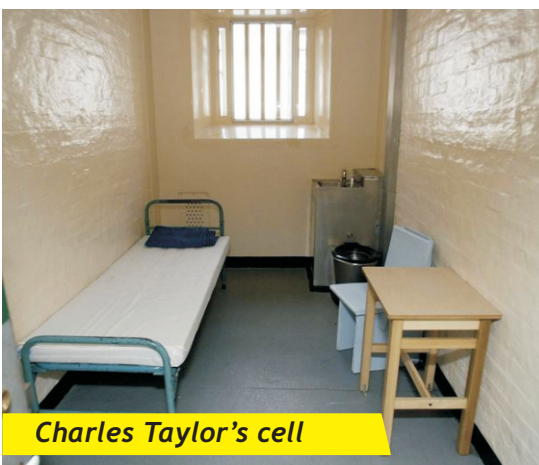
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# Continental News

## Ethiopia conflict spreading as rockets hit Eritrea

The 12-day conflict between Ethiopia's government and forces in the country's Tigray region has escalated.

The Tigrayan forces fired rockets across the border into neighbouring Eritrea, after claiming Ethiopian soldiers were using an Eritrean airport to attack Tigray.

Ethiopia's prime minister appeared to deny the accusations in a tweet.

But analysts say the latest attacks mark a major uptick in a conflict which has displaced thousands of civilians. Ethiopia has been through big changes since Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed came to power in 2018. He was awarded the Nobel peace prize last year after reaching out to make peace with neighbouring Eritrea, with whom Ethiopia had fought a bloody war two decades ago.

But the widespread reforms he pushed through sidelined the Tigrayans of the Tigray People's Liberation Front party (TPLF) who had long dominated the political scene - and in recent weeks, tensions between the party and the federal government seriously escalated.



"We fled from death and murder"

Animosity between the government in Tigray and Eritrea goes back a long way, according to the BBC's Africa regional editor Will Ross, who says much of it stems from that border war of 20 years ago which left tens of thousands of soldiers dead.

On Sunday, the Ethiopian Human Rights Commission said gunmen had killed at least 34 people on a passenger bus on Saturday night in the western region of Benishangul-Gumuz.

The region has seen other acts of violence recently and there has so far been no known link with the Tigray region. On Saturday night, residents of Asmara - Eritrea's capital - reported hearing loud explosions, amid reports of rockets landing near the city's airport. No casualties have been reported yet.

Tigrayan leader Debretsion Gebremichael has suggested that his forces have been fighting 16

divisions of the Eritrean army on several fronts for the past few days.

The Tigrayans have also accused Eritrean forces of crossing into Ethiopia to back federal forces there.

On Sunday, in a tweet, Mr Abiy appeared to deny that Ethiopian national forces were working with Eritreans, saying that Ethiopia was "more than capable of attaining the objectives of the operation by itself".

But while Eritrea and Ethiopia have denied co-operating in the conflict, our

regional editor says reports of fighting along the border, and of Ethiopian soldiers being treated in Eritrean hospitals, suggest the opposite is true.

Hundreds have died in Ethiopia since the fighting began, with reports of a civilian massacre emerging this week. Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed has accused forces loyal to Tigray's leaders of carrying out the mass killings, while the TPLF has denied involvement. Ethiopia's human rights commission said it would send a team to investigate. BBC

## Head of a major Algerian media group jailed



Protesters forced Algeria's president to resign and subsequently many of his friends were jailed

The head of a major Algerian media group has been jailed for five years.

Anis Rahmani was close to the president who was forced from power after mass protests in 2019.

He is the latest in a series of powerful figures in the ousted president's entourage to have been given prison sentences.

He was accused of recording and broadcasting a phone conversation with a senior intelligence officer without his consent.

Rahmani, whose real name is Mohamed Mokaddem, admitted to recording the conversation but denied any criminal wrongdoing, reports AFP news agency.

The charges Rahmani faced included "defamation of the army".

The head of Ennahar TV, which calls itself the first news channel in Algeria, will be joining many associates of the former president in jail.

In 2019, Abdelaziz Bouteflika was forced to resign as president by mass protests against him after he announced he intended to stand for office for a fifth term. Subsequently, an investigation into corruption during Mr Bouteflika's time in office led to a string of his associates being jailed.

Ex-ministers, a former police chief and the rumoured secret child of Mr Bouteflika have all been jailed. BBC

## Nigerian army denies firing live rounds at protest

The Nigerian army has rejected claims it killed unarmed protesters at a rally in Lagos in October, saying its soldiers were firing blank bullets.

Brigadier General Ahmed Taiwo presented video evidence to back up his claims made to a panel of inquiry.

Amnesty International says 12 people were killed when soldiers opened fire on a

protest about police brutality in the wealthy Lagos suburb of Lekki.

Multiple eyewitnesses have told the BBC they saw soldiers shoot people.

Some 1,000 protesters had gathered at the Lekki toll gate on 20 October to prevent cars using a major motorway. Soldiers were reportedly seen barricading the protest site moments before the shooting

started.

In video footage shared on social media at the time, shots could be heard as protesters sat down, locked arms and sang the national anthem together. Live footage was also streamed from the scene showing protesters tending to the wounded. The attack had followed days of protests against the much-hated police unit, the Special Anti-Robbery Squad (Sars), which had morphed into greater calls for better governance. Brig Gen Taiwo told the judicial panel investigating alleged historic abuses by Sars there had been "a lot of misinformation" about his troops. Their "only crime was to report for duty to protect us all". He pointed to video showing what appeared to be soldiers at the scene. "You can see they are firing in the air, and firing blank ammunitions."

Responding to a claim that a witness had seen a dead

body at the scene, he said "the casualty she saw had been overcome by shock", AFP news agency reports. It is not clear if he will respond to the many other accounts from eyewitnesses. Since the shooting those involved in the protests say they are being targeted by the government, the BBC's Mayeni Jones reports. A number of protesters and companies say their bank accounts have been frozen and others have been arrested. The passport of a lawyer who organised legal aid for the protesters was seized

as she tried to leave the country, although it has now been returned to her. Nationwide protests erupted on 8 October calling for an end to the Special Anti-Robbery Squad, which had been accused of widespread human rights violations, including illegal detention, torture and extrajudicial killings. President Muhammadu Buhari disbanded the squad a few days later, but the protests continued with demands for more changes in the security forces and reforms to the way the country is run. BBC



Brig Gen Ahmed Taiwo vigorously defended his troops against accusations they killed unarmed protesters

# EDITORIAL

## We need party agents in polling centers

COMMISSIONER BOAKAI DUKULY of the National Elections Commission stressed the need for party agents to be present at various polling centers across the country during the December 8, 2020 special senatorial election to monitor the polls. He made the call last Friday, 13 November at a Training of Trainers Workshop for political parties, alliances, coalition and Independent Candidates, ahead of the special senatorial election.

COMMISSIONER DUKULY FURTHER noted the role of political party agents during elections is critical to legitimacy of election results throughout the country, as their presence during voting significantly help in validating free, fair, credible and transparent election.

WE WHOLEHEARTEDLY AGREED with the NEC Commissioner that candidates, parties, alliances and or coalitions vying in the December poll should do everything necessary in having their agents deployed at various polling centers across the country to monitor the elections. This is important to avoid wild or unsubstantiated claims of electoral fraud that could undermine the process.

IN OTHER WORDS, claims of electoral malpractices coming from the pending elections should be backed by facts or documentary evidence to authenticate their validity.

OVER THE YEARS, we have observed repeatedly with great disappointment that most political parties and or Independent Candidates failed to send agents or representatives to polling centers to observe both casting and counting of ballots. Yet, they are the first to alarm about malpractices, which does not demonstrate good intentions.

WHILE THE NATIONAL Elections Commission is statutorily and constitutionally responsible to conduct free, fair and transparent elections in Liberia, the Commission is not perfect in all of its activities because they are carried out by human beings, who may err or who may what to do something selfish.

HOWEVER, IF AGENTS of various political parties, alliances, coalition and Independent Candidates are present to watch the polls, they may quickly raise concerns and bring them to NEC's attention for prompt redress.

COMMISSIONER DUKULY CHALLENGED party agents to be truthful and to report exactly what they see but also to be careful in handling complaints arising out of the elections. And this is very important because if complaints are not carefully handled by parties or candidates involved, they may have the propensity to spark violence, which is counterproductive in a democratic process.

THE SUPREME COURT of Liberia has assured Liberians that it would remain fully active during and after the polls, ready to receive and address all electoral complaints in the interest of justice and peace. Political actors should learn from late Cllr. Charles Walker Brumskine, ex-leader of the opposition Liberty Party, who mustered courage and complained to the High Court during the 2017 presidential election. That was demonstration of leadership at its highest level!

EMULATING CLLR. BRUMSKINE'S style of politicking by using the law would surely go a long way in not just strengthening our growing democracy, but setting good example for our respective followers and zealous loyalists other than choosing means of violence.

# COMMENTARY

By Josep Borrell

## European Strategic Complacency Is Not an Option

*It is now more clear than ever that Europe must take its security, broadly understood, into its own hands. Doing so will not only secure the European Union's proper place on the world stage, but will also ensure a healthy transatlantic partnership in the years ahead.*

**B**RUSSELS - Joe Biden's election as the next president of the United States has raised hopes in Europe of putting the transatlantic relationship back on track. But there can be no simple return to the past. Facing so many domestic and international challenges, the US will value the transatlantic relationship only insofar as that relationship delivers actual value. A stronger Europe that shoulders a greater share of global responsibilities can ensure that it does.

There has been much talk of achieving "European strategic autonomy," but what does that mean in practice? Autonomy should not imply total independence or isolation from the rest of the world. Rather, it refers to an ability to think for oneself and to act according to one's own values and interests. The European Union needs to achieve this kind of autonomy, while at the same time strengthening our alliances and preserving our commitments to multilateralism and openness.

The EU is facing serious strategic challenges in today's antagonistic international environment, where geopolitical rivalries and great-power competition are on the rise. That is why, as German Chancellor Angela Merkel once bluntly put it, "We Europeans truly have to take our fate into our own hands." We must stand on our own feet.

For a long time, the debate about strategic autonomy focused mainly on security and defense. Some saw the discussion as an attempt to create alternatives to defense cooperation within the North Atlantic Alliance; and some even took it to mean that America's commitment to Europe had been called into question, and that a greater decoupling might be on the way.

But there is no question that NATO has played an indispensable role in European security. Any consolidation of Europe's security capacity should be pursued within the alliance. As successive US leaders have emphasized, Europe needs to increase its own contribution to defense, to militate against the perception that America alone is paying for transatlantic security. Although the Biden administration will bring a change in tone and a less confrontational approach, on the question of defense spending it will expect the same from Europe as its predecessors. America's core geopolitical interests will not change.

Fortunately, the EU is already working on several tracks to strengthen the transatlantic partnership. Under the Permanent Structured Cooperation (PESCO) efforts, European NATO members are helping to address gaps in the alliance's capabilities, and are working toward fulfilling by 2024 their commitment to spend 2% of GDP on defense. Equally

important, the creation of a new European Defense Fund (EDF) represents an important step toward improving the capabilities of Europe's military industry.

But Europe's security challenges go beyond NATO's traditional remit. From the Sahel and Libya to the Eastern Mediterranean, there is no shortage of crises that demand a strong European response. The task for the EU is to define a common position from which it can act in the interest of maintaining regional stability.

To succeed, Europe must develop its own framework for monitoring and analyzing threats, so that it can move quickly from threat assessment to operationalization and response. That is why we are now developing a Strategic Compass.

It is crucial for the strategic-autonomy discussion to expand far beyond the issues of defense and security. As the COVID-19 crisis has shown, issues such as public health and economic interdependence are no less important.

Strategic autonomy is the conceptual framework that Europe needs to understand these issues and how they relate to one another. Viewed in isolation, face masks and medicines are not strategic products. But the strategic calculus changes when the production of such items is concentrated in just a few countries. The same applies to the sourcing of rare metals, social-media and other digital platforms, and technologies such as 5G.

To help member states navigate these and many other issues, the European Commission has proposed a series of new instruments, such as the mechanism that went into force last month to screen foreign investments in the EU. But achieving strategic autonomy also will require intensive leveraging of the power of Europe's single market. With its vast size and scope, the single market offers many instruments for safeguarding European interests with respect to critical infrastructure, foreign investment, state subsidies (from which certain foreign investors benefit), or dual-use (military and commercial) exports.

For example, we have become increasingly aware of the vulnerabilities introduced by an increasingly unbalanced economic relationship with China, so we have made reciprocity a core objective in our negotiations on an investment agreement. Europe has no problem with China's own economic development and the benefits this has delivered to its citizens. But we cannot allow China's international expansion to occur at the expense of our own interests and values. That is why we have settled on a dual approach, treating China as an important partner, but also as a competitor and a systemic rival.

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O-PED

By Gordon Brown  
& Robert Skidelsky

# Job Creation Is the New Game in Town

*Even if a successful rollout of a new COVID-19 vaccine causes the current health crisis to recede by next spring, the unemployment crisis will remain. That is especially true in the United Kingdom, where fiscal stimulus is urgently needed to avert a lost decade - if not a lost generation - of growth.*

**E**DINBURGH/LONDON - In the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic, both the US and European economies are gearing up for large-scale job creation. US President-elect Joe Biden has pledged to invest \$700 billion in manufacturing and innovation, plus \$2 trillion in a "Biden Green Deal" to combat climate change and promote clean energy. Meanwhile, Germany has abandoned years of thrift by backing a €750 billion (\$887 billion) European Union recovery fund and, like France, will maintain its own national job retention and job creation program throughout 2021.

By contrast, the United Kingdom's chancellor of the exchequer, Rishi Sunak, has fallen behind the curve. Back in March, many expected that Britain would experience a V-shaped recovery. As this prospect faded, it became clear that Sunak's rescue operation needed to be matched with a viable recovery plan.

The consensus view is that both the UK and the global economy will be smaller in 2021 than they were in 2019. The International Monetary Fund predicts that the global economy will be 6.5% smaller than was forecast before the COVID-19 crisis, with a legacy of unemployment at least double the pre-pandemic norm.

These gloomier forecasts have prompted international calls for the reinstatement of active fiscal policy, with the IMF urging rich-country governments to start large public investment programs. In its latest Fiscal Monitor, the Fund says that increasing public investment by 1% of GDP could boost GDP by 2.7%, private investment by 10%, and employment by 1.2%.

The IMF's call to action is particularly important, because the Fund was a champion of fiscal retrenchment during the 2008-09 global financial crisis, despite the obvious need for stimulus. Its earlier macroeconomic model, like those of most other economists and policymakers at that time, was based on the flawed theory that market economies have a natural tendency to reach full employment. This ignored the truth, most persuasively articulated by John Maynard Keynes, that in the absence of government stimulus, economies can remain naturally stuck in recession for a long time.

The Bank of England, too, has changed its tune. The BOE is about to inject an additional £150 billion (\$198 billion) into the UK economy, in addition to the more than £200 billion it already has pumped out in 2020, and now realizes that it cannot do all the heavy lifting. Businesses will not invest, no matter how low the cost of capital, until they see a market. That is why the BOE has now joined the US Federal Reserve and the European Central Bank in calling for fiscal stimulus.

Before COVID-19, monetary policy seemed to be the only game in town. Now, if we are to avoid mass unemployment and the consequent loss of demand in the economy, job creation must become the overriding priority after the lockdown.

To its credit, the UK government brought forward £8 billion in infrastructure spending this past summer. But that is a mere fraction of what is needed. The government is now frontloading its £40 billion, five-year investment plan into the next two and a half years, and giving priority to big environmental projects and social housing. Retrofitting homes and local amenities could quickly create many jobs, with immediate multiplier effects.

Regional and local job and training schemes are essential to the longer-term task of reallocating work and skills toward the labor market of the future. The lesson of the UK's 1998 New Deal for Young People and the 2009 Future Jobs Fund is that such programs must offer not only training and work experience but also assistance with job searches and incentives for employers to hire people on a permanent basis.

We estimate that one million young Britons under the age of 25 are neither working nor in training or education. But the government's Kickstart job-creation scheme, which was launched belatedly earlier this month, has offered job placements to young people only for six-month periods.

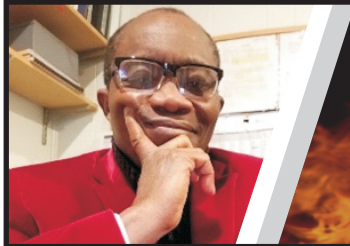
The government expected that Kickstart would secure placements for 300,000 young people, but perhaps only around 100,000 will be enrolled in the scheme by the end of 2020. Ministers assumed that 5% of UK employers would take on young people, but outside of the retail and logistics sectors, thousands of firms are instead planning redundancies and will almost certainly not offer employment on anything like the hoped-for scale in the coming months.

If we are to assist the other 900,000 or so under-25s in need of help and create the estimated 1.5 million youth placements that will be required over the next year, the public sector will have to become the employer of last resort. So, rather than passively responding to a rise in unemployment, fiscal policy should aim to replace Karl Marx's "reserve army of the unemployed" with a buffer stock of state-supported jobs and training schemes that expands or contracts with the business cycle.

What we need above all from UK policymakers is an updated full-employment commitment in the spirit of Keynes and US President Franklin D. Roosevelt. An essential condition for this is the coordination of monetary and fiscal policy. The BOE should retain its anti-inflation mandate, but policymakers should not use this to cut off necessary fiscal stimulus.

Earlier this month, the BOE echoed then-ECB President Mario Draghi's famous 2012 pledge to save the euro by stating that it "stands ready to take whatever additional action is necessary" to boost the economy. To boost the credibility of such forward guidance, the government could give the BOE a dual mandate to fight both inflation and unemployment, while the bank could state that it will not tighten monetary policy until unemployment falls below its pre-crisis level of 4%.

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With Jones Mallay

fredrickdiamondm@yahoo.com

LIBERIA POLITICAL

HOT-FIRE

## Should ECOWAS Court Legal Jurisprudence Override the Liberian's Justice System?

**T**he Economic Community of West African States was born in 1975 by 15 African countries, commonly referred to as ECOWAS. In 1975 an ECOWAS Treaty included a mandate for the establishment of a Community Court of Justice (CCJ) to adjudicate disputes related to the interpretation and operation of Human Rights violations. The CCJ was officially launched in 1991 and became operational in December 2000. The CCJ has seven judges, each serving a five-year term. No two judges can be nationals of the same state. The CCJ is located in Abuja, Nigeria.

West Africa has experienced a series of conflicts and judicial killings starting with Nigeria the headquarters of the CCJ where Boko Haram operates above the Justice system of CCJ. Most of the states like Liberia, Ivory Coast, Sierra Leone, etc. have seen civil wars as well as ethnic and religious clashes leading to the deaths of thousands and thousands of innocent citizens. What has the CCJ don't about that? Corruption and bad governance have ravaged ECOWAS countries, leading to the death of massive innocent people which is also part of CCJ's Human Rights issues, what has CCJ done about that?

Col. Muammar Muhammad Abu Minyar al-Gaddafi was captured and killed by former President Obama's government and the European Union, October 20, 2011, which is also part of the gross Human Rights abuses, what did the CCJ do about that? There are doubts over the CCJ's definition of Human Rights and its selective in ECOWAS. The Jen'nah case seems to be a special interest case that is unprecedented by any legal standards.

The basic lawful core of the duties and responsibilities of the CCJ is definitively to delve into human rights violations in ECOWAS countries. This dream is yet to be fulfilled. For example, Boko Haram, an Islamic terrorist group operating under the nose of the CCJ has continued to massacre thousands and thousands of Nigerians and non-Nigerians what is the CCJ doing about such human rights' grave violation? The killing of over 150000-innocent Liberians in its then 16-years civil wars what did CCJ do about that and the Jen'nah LURD rebel movement contributed to these deaths, did the CCJ ask the former Associate Justice about that?

The killing of hundreds and hundreds of demonstrators in Guinea by the Guinean Government what did CCJ do about that? There is a growing judicial killing of innocent citizens in West Africa by West African leaders where is the CCJ on that? Nonetheless, the CCJ is deeply troubled over the impeachment of former Supreme Court Associate Justice Jan'neh's impeachment case.

What is ironic is the fact that the CCJ has had sleepless overnight duties looking into an impeached Associate Supreme Court Justice Jan'neh case who cried foul over his impeachment and filed a lawsuit to the CCJ through his Counsel Femi Falana for miscarriage of justice in his impeachment trial in which he is claiming an amount not less than twenty-five million United States Dollars US\$25,000,000.00 (Twenty Five Million United States Dollars) as compensation and an Order directing the Republic of Liberia to restore Mr. Jan'neh's as Associate Justice of the Supreme Court of Liberia!

CCJ should begin to operate within its legal confines rather than interferes in the internal affairs of the Liberian government. The impeachment of KabinehJan'neh, who was once a former spokesperson of a rebel movement, LURD was done under clear and transparent legal guidance. His impeachment was opened to the general public and all legal proceedings were assured. The CCJ should learn how to respect lawful decisions made by a duly constituted government of Liberia.

The CCJ will need to revamp its human rights priorities and benchmark approaches. The CCJ should focus on the human aspects of human rights that deal exclusively with the killing of innocent citizens in the various member countries, rather than wasting its pressure time and energies on the removal of a former rebel spoke person Jen'neh from the Supreme Court bench. The CCJ will need to confront Boko Haram, an Islamic terrorist group in Nigerians, and bring them to justice.

It is with grave disappointment, to witness the CCJ imposed a fine on the Guinean government for killing its citizens for demonstration. Why the CCJ should imposed a monetary fine on a government for taking the lives of its innocent citizens when the government of Guinea should be taken to the Huge for persecution. The CCJ will need to understudy the constitution of the Republic of Liberia and learn how its judicial system works before jumping to a conclusion regarding decisions reached by the government of Liberia.



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

- ISSUANCE DATE: 11/04/2020
- CLOSING DATE/TIME FOR RECEIPT OF OFFERS: 11/25/2020 at 17:30 Monrovia time
- POSITION TITLE: Acquisition & Assistance Specialist
- 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.

- 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.

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

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

- SECURITY LEVEL REQUIRED: Facility and computer access

- 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

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.

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### 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 analyses, 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.

- "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.

- Entry Level (FSN 9) Relevant Education qualification plus a minimum of four years of progressively responsible, professional experience in any of the following relevant areas: procurement, development assistance, law, paralegal, research, business, or accounting. Preferably at least two years of this experience should have been with an international organization, government, or non-government organization.

- Mid-level (FSN-10) Relevant Education qualification plus a minimum of five years of progressively responsible, professional experience in any of the following areas: procurement, development assistance, management, law, paralegal, business, or accounting. Preferably at least three years of this experience should have been with an international organization, government, or non-government organization.

- Full performance level (FSN-11) Relevant Education plus minimum of five or more of progressively responsible work in acquisition and assistance is required. As this position is part of a recognized and established career ladder, a minimum of two years of this experience must have been gained working with the USAID Contracting/A&A Office, with at least one year at the next lower, FSN-10 grade level.

### Post Entry Training:

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.

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:

- Analytical, writing, and computer skills (15 points)
- Reference checks (15 points)
- Experience (35 points)
- Oral and interpersonal skills (15 points)
- 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:

- A clearly typed application letter which briefly summarizes why you believe you are qualified for this position.
- Resume
- 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.
- 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

# ECOWAS engages stakeholders

The ECOWAS Commission has begun an in-country engagement meeting with stakeholders to promote the domestication and implementation of the African Union (AU) Kampala Convention for the protection and assistance of Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) in West Africa.

The engagement, which is being piloted in the three West African States of Burkina Faso, Mali and Nigeria, was flagged of virtually on the 11th of November, 2020 with sensitization and advocacy on the domestication and implementation of the Convention in Nigeria.

have been recorded by Member States in signing and ratification of the Convention leading to its coming into force in 2012.

Pledging the continuous support by the ECOWAS Commission for the convention process, she reminded that the West African region has seen much more internal displacements than most parts of Africa in the last decade with over 3 million IDPs, and stressed that Nigeria is once again expected to take the lead in the domestication and implementation of the Convention.

She reiterated the ECOWAS Commission's call on "all stakeholders in Nigeria to bring

The Nigerian Minister for Humanitarian Affairs, Disaster Management and Social Development Hajiya Sadiya Umar Farouq who spoke through a ministry official Mr. Charles Nwanelo, pledged Nigeria's commitment to the process and efforts at domestication of the convention which she disclosed, are at various stages of completion. She also stated that the country was now focusing on "transition and nexus".

Nigeria's Federal Commissioner, National Commission for Refugees, Migrants and IDPs (NCFRMI) Senator Basheer Mohammed commended ECOWAS for bringing together the various stakeholders. While looking forward to the technical session's recommendations, he expressed deep appreciation for the sacrifices made by "humanitarian actors and frontline workers" who constantly put their lives at risk for a safer and stable society.

Maintaining that the collaboration between her organization and ECOWAS has endured for about two decades, the UNHCR Representative MsChansaKapaya held that going forward, progress and consolidation of the existing partnership depend on the ability to adapt to new trends and challenges. Speaking in similar vein, the UN special rapporteur for rights of the IDP Cecilia Jimenez-Damary affirmed that the global body will continue to remain available to support Nigeria's efforts at promoting the domestication of the Kampala Convention.

The various presentations and interventions during the technical sessions of the meeting are expected yield an outcome that would be in aid of the domestication and implementation of the Kampala convention in Nigeria.

Africa is host to a third of the world's IDP; four million of which are in West Africa while only Niger has completed the processes of signing, ratification and domestication of the Kampala Convention. Eleven Member States have signed and ratified but yet to domesticate. Two others have signed but have not ratified, while another two have yet to either sign or ratify the Convention.

# Refugees' influx worrisome

## -Civil group alarms

By E. J. Nathaniel Daygbor

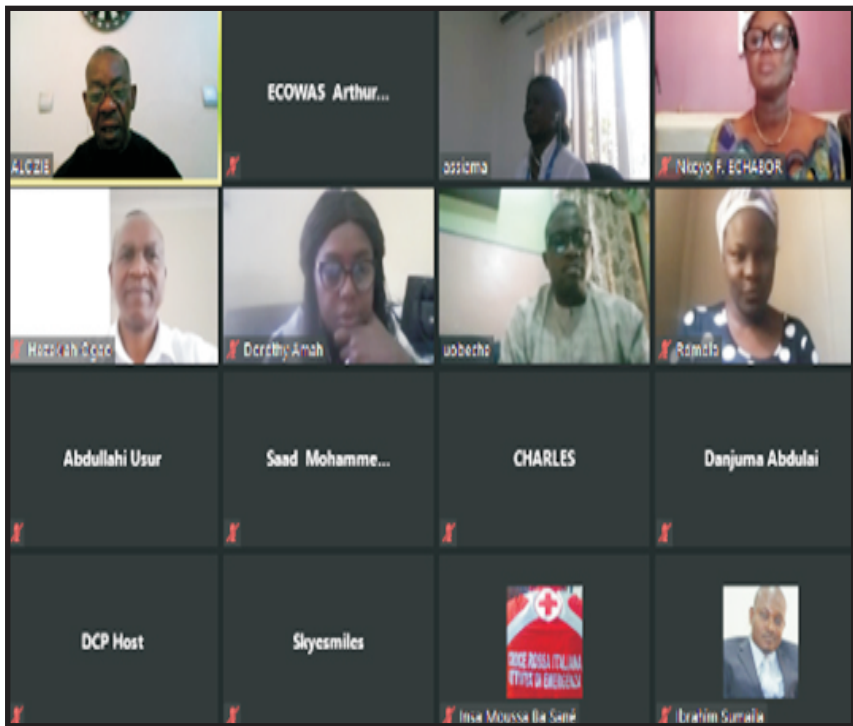
A civil society group in the country describes the influx of Ivorian refugees here as worrisome and scaring, particularly as Liberians gear up for special senatorial on December 08, 2020.

The COVID-19, Election Monitoring, Violent Prevention Situation Room (CEMVIP-SR) notes there is an influx of Ivorian refugees that are entering Liberia through Loguatu border near Nimba County and other areas due to escalating tensions from the recent presidential election Ivory Coast.

"The situation has caused immediate attention of the Liberian government through the Liberia Refugees Repartition and Resettlement Commission (LRRRC), and the Internal Affairs Ministry. A high level joint fact-finding mission

The group notes that on October 28, this year, violent clash took place between supporters of Senator Henry Yallah and Deputy Speaker Prince Moye in Gbarnga, Bong County over a venue for political activities, while on October 29, 2020, citizens of Sakonedu Town, Quardu Gboni District, Lofa County expressed dissatisfaction over the replacement of voter's cards and the subsequent exhibition process carried on by the National Elections Commission in the district.

It further recalls that on November 10, 2020, it was reported that Rep. Edwin Melvin Snowe and supporters were allegedly attacked by political rivals that led to injuries of seven persons, who are currently seeking medication at a local hospital. "We would like to condemn this act of violence and call for civility in the practice of



The Convention addresses internal displacement caused by armed conflict, natural disasters and large-scale development projects and provides, among others, protection for IDPs.

In her welcome address at the meeting, the ECOWAS Commission's Commissioner for Social Affairs and Gender Dr. Siga Fatima Jagne restated the uniqueness of the convention given its legally binding status.

She noted that whilst the West African region may not have made significant progress in the area of domestication and implementation of the Convention, landmark strides

forth their experience, expertise and political will to enable this process to thrive and succeed"

In the same vein, Commissioner Jagne charged participants to come up with enduring conclusions that will lead to the speedy domestication of Convention in the Federal Republic of Nigeria, noting that its implementation in the region's most populous country, will alleviate the suffering of the internally displaced population, while enhancing their social and economic empowerment and in the long run, create an enabling environment to close up the humanitarian-development nexus.



headed by the Minister of Internal Affairs is currently touring Nimba and other locations of interest to assess the refugees' situation and explore means for interventions to address their plights," the group said in a press statement issued over the weekend.

CEMVIP-SR at the same time applauds the Government of Liberia and partners for current intervention, but calls for measures to ensure the presence of the refugees would in no way impact the pending senatorial election or disturb the peace and stability of Liberia.

It points that there are daunting concerns over political tensions linked to use of public facilities by candidates for rallies and voters trucking.

democratic rights at all levels. These could have led to the threats of peace and security of the citizens and residents in those parts of the country," the statement reads.

Meanwhile, CEMVIP-SR observes the government, thru the National Public Health Institute of Liberia (NPHIL) and the Ministry of Health has reported an increase in the number of confirmed COVID-19 cases to 21 persons as of October 26, 2020. The increase of confirmed cases from 1,393 to 1,416 shows a 6.6 percent increase in total case fatalities, with Montserrado County as the seat of national government remaining the epic center of the outbreak. The sharp increase of new confirmed cases of the novel Corona Virus disease is

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MORE HEADLINE NEWS MORE HEADLINE NEWS

**NEC stresses role of political parties' agents**

One of the seven Commissioners of the National Elections Commission (NEC) has underscored the importance of party agents in the electoral process adding, the role of political party agents is critical to the legitimacy of election results throughout Liberia.

Commissioner Boakai Dukuly said the role of Party

candidates' Training of Trainers (TOT) workshop in Monrovia.

Commissioner Dukuly, who has oversight for Political Parties said to ensure this is achieved, party agents must be adequately trained, and serve as election ambassadors to ensure peace and reconciliation throughout the country even after the poll.

The NEC Commissioner challenged party agents to be

Institute (NDI) with funding from the United States Agency for International Development (USAID).

More than 400 representatives from political parties, Alliances, Coalitions, and Independent Candidates participated with a focus on a comprehensive look at the 2020 Polling and Counting Manual, including reconciliation and Sorting of SSE ballots, general principles for determining valid and invalid ballots, political party, Independent Candidate Campaign Committee Agents, including referendum ballot and elections monitoring deployment, among others.

The second phase of the Political Party TOT workshop will take place in Ganta, Nimba County. It will be followed by two others in Tubmanburg, Bomi County and Buchanan, in Grand Bassa County, respectively.

In a related development, the Independent Disputes Hearing Office of the National Elections Commission will today, Monday, 16 November 2020 conduct a two-day workshop on adjudicating electoral complaints for all 19 Elections Magistrates of the Commission. A statement from NEC issued on Friday, 13 November 2020 says the Elections Magistrates Adjudication workshop is in collaboration with the United Nations Development Program and Electoral Support Project in Liberia. - *Editing by Jonathan Browne*



NEC Boss, Davidetta Browne Lansanah

Agents in ensuring free, fair, credible, and transparent elections is critical in ensuring a violent free Special Senatorial Election (SSE) on 8 December 2020.

He spoke on Friday, 13 November 2020, on behalf of the Chairperson of NEC, Davidetta Brwone Lansana at the commencement of the first in a series of political parties and independent

truthful and to report exactly what they see but also to be careful how to handle complaints arising out of the elections.

The TOT workshop is being conducted by the NEC in collaboration with the United Nations Development Program (UNDP), Liberia Electoral Support Project, the Government of Germany, and the National Democratic

**Young Liberian women acquire vocational skills**

Act To Impact-Liberia, a local group has graduated more than 20 young women after vocational skills training in hotel management, catering, pastry, interior decoration and fashion designs, facial makeup, hair dressing and cosmetology.

Executive Director Morris G. McCarthy, said ati-Liberia is an organization intended to empower underprivileged young Liberian women with vocational skills to help

women with vocational skills will go a long way to strengthening families economically across the nation.

Director McCarthy maintained that technical and vocational skills training for Liberian youth are critical toward the transformation of Liberia's development drive.

Eerier, the Political Leader of the Movement for One Liberia (MOL), Macdella Cooper said, Liberian women



transform their livelihood in society.

Director McCarthy stated that the organization also champions the fight against domestic violence, rape, drug abuse among the women, youth and children.

He stressed that the organization prioritizes skills training for young people to empower them for Liberia's socio-economic development.

He noted that empowering underprivileged youth especially, young Liberian

should prepared themselves technically, vocationally and academically to compete with their male counterparts in every sector of the Liberian society and globally.

Madam Cooper stated that despite the current situation confronting the nation, young women should embrace the storm and equip themselves adequately to be competitive in the job market, political arena and private sector.

▶ CONT'D ON PAGE 11

**Global Fund Board commits to sustaining the fight against HIV, TB, malaria while supporting the global response to COVID-19**

The Board of the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria met virtually for the 44th Board meeting this week to discuss the organization's response to the COVID-19 pandemic, development of the next Global Fund strategy and progress in the fight against HIV, TB and malaria.

Held in the midst of the global COVID-19 pandemic that has caused more than 50 million cases and 1.27 million deaths, the Board commended the Global Fund's rapid and thorough response to the COVID-19 crisis while at the same time protecting progress on the fight against HIV, TB and malaria. Peter Sands, Executive Director of the



Global Fund, stressed the need to increase funding and expand the response to fight COVID-19, reinforce systems for health, and get back on track to end

HIV, TB and malaria as epidemics by 2030.

"At the moment, COVID-19 is killing roughly the same number of people every week

as HIV, TB and malaria combined," said Executive Director Peter Sands in his opening address to the Board. "We did, I think, avert the immediate worst-case scenario of impact on HIV, TB and malaria. But we should have no illusions: There has been a significant impact, and over time the failure to contain COVID-19, and its financial and economic consequences, will further erode our ability to fight the three diseases. There is no scenario that we make the progress we want against HIV, TB and malaria while COVID-19 is unchecked."

The Global Fund is playing a leading role in the global

response to the pandemic and is a founding partner of the Access to COVID-19 Tools (ACT) Accelerator, a global collaboration of organizations and governments working to accelerate the development, production and equitable access to new COVID-19 tests, treatments and vaccines - once available.

Roslyn Morauta, Vice-Chair of the Board, echoed the views of other Board members in stressing the importance of community involvement and leadership in the fight against COVID-19 and the role the Global Fund has played to support civil society engagement in the ACT-Accelerator coalition.

# Français

## Contentieux pré-électoral : l'audience est prévue pour lundi à la cour suprême du Libéria

Après le rejet de la demande de suspension des activités électorales par un juge de la cour suprême, le tribunal de grande instance du Libéria a prévu d'entendre la plainte de l'opposition libérienne concernant le processus électoral. La plateforme de l'opposition avait porté plainte contre la commission électorale nationale (NEC).

Selon un communiqué rendu public le mercredi 14 octobre, la Cour suprême a fait savoir l'audience aurait lieu le lundi 19 octobre à 14 heures.

La Collaboration des Partis Politique (CPP), une plateforme de l'opposition, accuse la commission électorale d'avoir refusé de procéder à un nettoyage complet de la liste électorale de 2017. Elle a récemment adressé une requête à la Cour suprême, demandant l'émission d'une ordonnance portant suspension des activités de la Commission électorale nationale (NEC) relatives aux élections sénatoriales spéciales du 8 décembre prochain.

Selon la CPP, au mépris insensible des conséquences, « la NEC néglige et refuse de procéder au nettoyage de la liste électorale comme l'avait ordonné la Cour suprême et l'ont recommandé le Sénat libérien, la Chambre des représentants et la Communauté économique des États de l'Afrique de l'Ouest (CEDEAO).

Elle avait donc demandé à la Cour d'émettre une ordonnance pour suspendre le processus électoral jusqu'à ce que la liste électorale finale de 2017 soit entièrement nettoyée avant la tenue des élections sénatoriales du 8 décembre 2020, car cette liste, selon l'opposition, a déjà créé de graves tensions politiques principalement dans le comté de Montserrado et dans d'autres comtés entre l'opposition et le parti au pouvoir il y a quelques mois, lors des élections partielles. Mais la requête avait été rejetée par l'un des juges de la cour suprême.

Cette décision avait provoqué la réaction de l'ancienne présidente Ellen Johnson Sirleaf qui, dans un tweet, avait écrit : « La récente décision de la Cour suprême du Libéria de rejeter l'appel de l'opposition pour un nettoyage de la liste

électorale est une atteinte à notre démocratie durement gagnée ».

Outre la réaction de Mme Sirleaf, L'Association nationale du barreau du Libéria (LNBA) a rappelé à la Cour suprême les graves troubles que le Libéria a eu à subir par le passé ont été causés pour la plupart par des élections frauduleuses. Le barreau libérien a exhorté la Haute Cour de justice à faire preuve d'équité dans le cadre des décisions relatives à tous les contentieux électoraux.

S'exprimant lors d'une cérémonie marquant la rentrée judiciaire de la cour suprême le lundi 12 octobre, le président de l'Association nationale du barreau libérien, Me Tiawon Gongloe, a dit à la cour suprême qu'il suffit de jeter un regard rétrospectif sur l'histoire récente du Libéria

Donnant une perspective historique des conflits électoraux au Libéria, Gongloe a indiqué : « Au-delà des divergences d'opinions sur le résultat d'un référendum pour la prolongation du mandat du président et sur le moment de la tenue de la prochaine élection présidentielle, feu le président Charles D.B. King a été violemment renversé et le premier gouvernement intérimaire du Libéria a été établi.

À partir de 1927, l'élection qui a amené le président Charles D.B. King au pouvoir pour un autre mandat a été considéré comme l'élection la plus truquée au monde et reste toujours inégalée, selon le World Guinness Book of Records.

L'histoire montre que bien

nombreux dirigeants politiques de l'opposition sous l'accusation de sédition et à l'évasion de D. Tweh, le candidat présomptif à la présidence de l'UPP.

En 1985, le dépouillement des bulletins de vote par un comité de 50 personnes créé sur la base d'aucune disposition de la Constitution libérienne, de la loi électorale en vigueur ou de quelque statue que ce soit, a sapé la confiance dans la commission électorale spéciale et le rejet public du résultat des élections par la plupart des Libériens », a-t-il rappelé.

Selon Gongloe, le désenchantement de masse créé par le rejet de ce résultat électoral a conduit à de multiples actions rebelles et réactions du gouvernement qui ont abouti à un conflit

traiter avec le plus grand soin les questions relatives au processus électoral au Libéria », a ajouté Me Gongloe.

Selon lui, parmi les fonctionnaires élus et nommés des trois pouvoirs de l'Etat, ce n'est que pour les membres du pouvoir judiciaire que la Constitution du Libéria a fait état de probité moralité comme l'une des conditions requises.

« Pour être juge à la Cour suprême du Libéria, l'article 68 stipule que la personne nommée doit être un citoyen libérien et de bonne moralité », a rappelé Me Gongloe.

Plus tôt dans son discours, le juge en chef Francis S. Korkpora rassuré Libériens, partis politiques et associations ou organisations que pendant les élections sénatoriales prochaines et toutes les autres élections ici, la Cour suprême continuerait à être juste dans ses actions et ses décisions.

« Pour décider des élections ou d'autres affaires, la Cour n'a ni ami ni ennemi et procède sans crainte ni faveur, quels que soient les éléments ou les personnes impliqués », a déclaré le juge en chef Korkpor.

D'après lui, la Cour n'a besoin de l'approbation de qui que ce soit pour rendre ses décisions et ne se laisse pas influencer par les sentiments publics quand il rend son verdict.

« Nos actions et nos décisions sont les nôtres et les nôtres uniquement. Elles sont basées uniquement sur nos convictions intérieures guidées par des principes de droit bien établis », a-t-il dit.

Évoquant les revendications des membres du personnel du pouvoir judiciaire concernant leurs salaires en dollars libériens, le juge en chef Korkpor a dit que les manifestants se font l'illusion que les déductions faites sur leurs salaires sont déposées sur le compte du juge en chef et des juges associés de la Cour Suprême.

« Lors d'une précédente réunion avec des fonctionnaires du ministère des Finances de l'Agence de la fonction publique, les employés du pouvoir judiciaire ont été informés de ce que les réductions des salaires affecteraient tous les employés de tous les secteurs de l'administration. Ce qui se passe actuellement ne



pour se rendre compte que « sa gouvernance constitutionnelle a été négativement affectée surtout par des contentieux électoraux ».

L'avertissement de Me Gongloe fait suite au rejet par la Cour suprême d'un recours des partis politiques de l'opposition visant à interrompre le processus électoral jusqu'à ce que la liste électorale finale soit nettoyée « techniquement et professionnellement ».

L'ancienne présidente Ellen Johnson Sirleaf, réagissant à la décision du tribunal dans un tweet le samedi 10 octobre, a écrit que « La récente décision de la Cour suprême du Libéria de rejeter l'appel de l'opposition pour un nettoyage de la liste électorale est une atteinte à notre démocratie durement gagnée ».

qu'il y ait moins de 15 000 électeurs inscrits, M. King du parti True Whig a été déclaré avoir remporté l'élection présidentielle avec 243 000 voix, contre 9 000 voix pour son opposant T.J.R. Faulkner du Parti populaire ».

« À la suite de la crise électorale créée à la suite des élections frauduleuses de 1927, M. King et son vice-président ont été contraints de démissionner de leurs fonctions.

Au début des années 50, la crise s'est développée suite à l'incapacité de la Cour mensuelle et des successions du comté de Montserrado à homologuer l'article d'association du Parti populaire uni, dirigé par D. Tweh. La crise a finalement conduit à l'arrestation et à l'emprisonnement de

armé à grande échelle.

La LNBA a dit avoir pris note de la promesse faite par le tribunal de grande instance. « Le Barreau prend également note des assurances de la Cour selon lesquelles, " pour décider des élections ou d'autres affaires, il n'a ni ami ni ennemi ". Elle a dit qu'elle procéderait sans crainte ni favoritisme, quels que soient les participants ou les personnes concernés », a-t-il dit.

« Alors que les membres de l'Association nationale du barreau du Libéria espèrent que ces assurances seront concrétisées par les ordonnances et les jugements de cette cour dans les deux prochains mois, il va sans dire que cette cour n'a d'autre choix que d'être juste et impartiale en tout. Et de



# Français

## Contentieux pré-électoral :

constitue pas un rassemblement pacifique tel que prévu par la loi. La violation des droits d'autrui dans une tentative d'affirmer ce que vous croyez être le vôtre est illégale », a-t-il dit.

Selon lui, les autorités du pouvoir judiciaire sont constamment en contact avec le ministère des Finances pour trouver une solution durable qui sera à l'avantage des employés.

« Le pouvoir judiciaire est un terrain neutre où les parties plaidantes vont

chercher réparation dans le cadre de la loi. Les protestations, les manifestations et les actions de grève, etc., perturbent les procédures judiciaires et privent les parties plaidantes d'un droit d'accès sans entrave à la justice ; ceux-ci sont en violation de la loi et ne peuvent pas continuer », a-t-il dit.

Une manifestation était en cours à l'extérieur lors de la cérémonie à la Cour suprême, les employés du pouvoir judiciaire exigeant le paiement de leurs salaires en entier.

## La société APM Terminals condamnée à des services communautaires !

La société APM Terminals s'est vue condamnée par le Sénat libérien à des travaux communautaires au lycée William V.S. Tubman.

La sanction du Sénat contre la société est tombée lors d'une audience spéciale pour outrage à l'autorité sénatoriale. La direction de la société et son équipe juridique dirigée par Me Golba Elliot du cabinet d'avocats Sherman & Sherman ont présenté des excuses au Sénat au sujet de leur comportement récent devant la plénière du Sénat libérien.

infraction de la société APM Terminals et de son avocate et a également décidé d'appliquer... des sanctions minimales. La décision du Sénat concernant cette affaire sera rendue publique à la fin de la semaine prochaine », a ajouté le président temporaire du Sénat.

Me Golba Elliot, dans une lettre, a déclaré que les actions de la société n'ont en aucun cas constitué un manque de respect envers le sénat libérien, encore moins une perturbation du fonctionnement de cet organe. « Notre patron, l'avocat



Mais annonçant les sanctions, le président temporaire du Sénat libérien Albert T. Chie a déclaré que la direction de la société APM Terminals et son avocate ont été jugés coupables d'obstruction et d'atteinte aux fonctions du Sénat par la plénière.

« Sur la base de l'article 44 de la Constitution, les actes sont méprisants et sont passibles de sanctions raisonnables », a dit M. Chie.

« La Plénière du Sénat a également déterminé qu'il s'agissait de la première

principal Me H. Varney Sherman est également membre du Sénat libérien. Alors, si nous manquons de respect à cet organe, cela signifie également que nous lui manquons de respect, ce qui n'est pas le cas ici », a-t-elle dit.

« Si vous concluez que notre réunion avec la commission sénatoriale du travail était inappropriée et irrecevable, ainsi que la réunion que nous avons eue avec la plénière récemment, nous nous excusons sincèrement pour nos actions », a écrit l'avocate.

## COMMENTAIRE

Par Josep Borrell

## La paresse stratégique n'est pas une option pour l'Europe

**B**RUXELLES - L'élection de Joe Biden comme prochain président des États-Unis a fait naître en Europe l'espoir de remettre la relation transatlantique sur les rails. Mais il ne peut y avoir de simple retour au passé. Confrontés à tant de défis nationaux et internationaux, les États-Unis ne joueront le jeu de la relation transatlantique que dans la mesure où cette relation apporte une valeur ajoutée réelle. Une Europe plus forte, qui assume une plus grande part de ses responsabilités mondiales, peut y répondre.

Il est beaucoup question ces derniers temps de parvenir à une "autonomie stratégique européenne", mais qu'est-ce que cela signifie en pratique ? L'autonomie n'implique pas nécessairement indépendance totale ou isolement du reste du monde. Elle renvoie plutôt à la capacité à penser par soi-même et à agir en fonction de ses propres valeurs et intérêts. L'Union européenne doit parvenir à ce type d'autonomie, tout en renforçant nos alliances et en préservant nos engagements en faveur du multilatéralisme et de l'ouverture sur le monde.

L'UE est confrontée à de sérieux défis stratégiques dans l'environnement international d'aujourd'hui, où les rivalités géopolitiques et la concurrence entre grandes puissances se renforcent. C'est pourquoi, comme l'a dit la chancelière allemande Angela Merkel, "nous, Européens, devons vraiment prendre notre destin en main". Nous devons nous débrouiller par nous-mêmes.

Pendant longtemps, le débat sur l'autonomie stratégique, s'est principalement centré sur la sécurité et la défense. Certains y ont vu une tentative de créer des alternatives à la coopération en matière de défense au sein de l'Alliance de l'Atlantique Nord ; et d'autres y même vu le risque d'une remise en question de l'engagement américain envers l'Europe, pouvant entraîner à terme un découplage.

Mais il ne fait aucun doute que l'OTAN joue un rôle indispensable dans la sécurité européenne. Toute consolidation de la capacité de défense de l'Europe doit être poursuivie au sein de l'alliance. Comme l'ont souligné les dirigeants américains successifs, l'Europe doit accroître sa propre contribution budgétaire à sa défense, pour lutter contre l'impression que l'Amérique est la seule à payer pour la sécurité transatlantique. L'administration Biden devrait conduire à un changement de ton et une approche moins conflictuelle, mais, sur la question des dépenses de défense, elle attendra de l'Europe la même chose que ses prédécesseurs. Les intérêts géopolitiques fondamentaux de l'Amérique ne changeront pas.

L'UE travaille déjà sur plusieurs pistes pour renforcer le partenariat transatlantique. Dans le cadre de la coopération structurée permanente (CSP) en matière de défense, les membres européens de l'OTAN contribuent à combler les lacunes des capacités de l'alliance et font en sorte de respecter d'ici 2024 leur engagement de consacrer 2 % de leur PIB à la défense. Parallèlement, la création d'un nouveau Fonds européen de défense (FED) représente une étape importante dans le

renforcement des capacités de l'industrie européenne de défense.

Mais les défis auxquels l'Europe est confrontée en matière de sécurité vont au-delà des attributions traditionnelles de l'OTAN. Du Sahel à la Libye en passant par la Méditerranée orientale, les crises ne manquent pas qui exigent une réponse européenne forte. L'UE doit devenir capable de définir une position commune permettant d'agir ensuite dans l'intérêt du maintien de la stabilité régionale.

Pour réussir, l'Europe doit développer son propre cadre de surveillance et d'analyse des menaces, afin de pouvoir passer rapidement de l'évaluation de ces menaces à une réponse opérationnelle. C'est pourquoi nous sommes en train de développer un « Strategic Compass », une boussole stratégique.

Il est indispensable que la discussion sur l'autonomie stratégique aille bien au-delà des questions de défense et de sécurité. Comme l'a montré la crise COVID-19, des questions comme la santé publique et l'interdépendance économique ne sont pas moins essentielles sur ce plan.

L'autonomie stratégique est le cadre conceptuel dont l'Europe a besoin pour situer ces questions et comprendre la manière dont elles sont liées les unes aux autres. Considérés isolément, les masques et les médicaments ne sont pas des produits stratégiques. Mais l'appréciation stratégique change lorsque la production de ces articles est concentrée dans quelques pays seulement. Il en va de même pour l'approvisionnement en métaux rares, les médias sociaux et autres plateformes numériques ou encore les technologies telles que la 5G.

Pour aider les États Membres de l'Union à s'y retrouver dans ces domaines et dans bien d'autres, la Commission européenne a proposé une série de nouveaux instruments, comme le mécanisme entré en vigueur le mois dernier pour examiner les investissements étrangers dans l'UE. Pour atteindre l'autonomie stratégique, il faudra tirer parti du pouvoir que nous donne le marché unique européen. Du fait de sa taille et de son organisation, le marché unique offre de nombreux instruments utiles pour sauvegarder les intérêts européens en matière d'infrastructures critiques, d'investissements étrangers, de subventions publiques (dont bénéficient certains investisseurs étrangers) ou encore d'exportations à double usage (militaire et commercial).

Nous sommes ainsi devenus de plus en plus conscients des vulnérabilités introduites par une relation économique déséquilibrée avec la Chine, et nous avons donc fait d'une réciprocité effective un objectif central dans nos négociations sur un accord d'investissement. Le développement économique de la Chine ne nous pose aucun problème, pas plus que les avantages qu'il a apportés à ses citoyens. Mais nous ne pouvons pas accepter que l'expansion internationale de la Chine se fasse au détriment de nos propres intérêts et valeurs. C'est pourquoi nous avons adopté une double approche à l'égard de la Chine : elle est pour nous à la fois un partenaire important, mais aussi un concurrent et un rival systémique.

## FEATURE

## FEATURE

# Liberia's Youth Opportunities Project makes headway

## -World Bank reports

The World Bank says Youth Opportunities Project in Liberia helps empower poor and vulnerable youth to improve their income-generating potential.

The Bank notes that as of December 2019, over 10,000 youth, half of whom are women have received life-skills and business training, agro-inputs and tools, in addition to labor subsidies to engage in communal farming.

"The beneficiaries are mostly located in hard to reach rural parts of the country. This support allowed them to have productive employment, engage in other income-generating activities, and contribute to the development of their communities", according to a Tuesday, November 10, 2020 on the World Bank official website.

### Challenge

The report says that while Liberia's economy has not fully recovered to pre-war levels (prior to 1989), its population of about 4.8 million continues to grow at a high rate. As a result, the country is faced with the twin challenge of a particularly large youth population (over 70 percent are below the age of 35), and a pervasive lack of job opportunities.

It cautions that this leads to high level of vulnerability among youth, as only 3.5 percent of youth ages 15-24 have stable jobs in the formal sector, while the majority are employed in the informal sector, either as unpaid family workers or self-employed. Moreover, it notes rural areas face an additional challenge of persistent food insecurity, and that in this context, providing young people with access to productive employment is critical to ensure economic recovery and stability in the country.

### Approach

The Youth Opportunities Project aims to increase access to income generation opportunities for young people in Liberia. The project uses a community-based productive inclusion approach to provide economic and empowerment opportunities for youth living in both rural and urban areas.

The project has a strong emphasis on women economic empowerment. Additionally, one of the project components specifically aims to promote productive inclusion of rural youth, while supporting them with life and business skills training, improved agriculture techniques, labor subsidies and farm

input grants (to procure seeds and tools).

"This approach has helped many extremely poor youths living in rural communities become self-sufficient while at the same time contribute to the development of their communities", says the Bank, and adds they now work together to develop farms, grow and sell their produce, save proceeds for their own businesses, and support their communities in the process.

In urban areas, the project facilitates transition to productive employment for youth who would like to open their own business and successfully transition into the labor market.

### Results

Meanwhile, the report says key results from the Youth Opportunities Project interventions to date include: 12,000 youth in rural and urban areas received life and business skills training such as socio-emotional regulation, health and hygiene, money management, among others.

These trainings have helped youth farming groups to properly manage their farms and identify appropriate markets for their produce in rural areas, as they also



*Youth farmers tending their 35-acre cassava farm.  
Photo: Mack CapehartMulbah/World Bank*

helped urban youth with developing their business plan proposals and managing the small business established with support under the project.

10,000 youth living in rural communities received farming inputs and labor subsidies to engage in community-based farming. The youth have also been organized into over 350 youth farming groups, which have enabled them to cultivate larger land area, leading to higher yields further contributing to the sustainability of the groups.

Youth supported with farming inputs and labor subsidies by the project, according to the report, cultivated 12,000 acres of land with rice and cassava, contributing to food security in Liberia. They also produced vegetables and other non-staple crops for additional earnings.

An additional 120 young beneficiaries received agro-processing machines to offer services to farmers in their communities.

### World Bank Group Contribution

Total funding for the Youth Opportunities Project is \$13.5 million dollars, of which \$10 million is International Development Association (IDA) funding approved by the World



*Community members waiting outside the village power station while their phones are charged.  
Photo: Mack CapehartMulbah/World Bank*

Bank in 2015, while \$3.5 million dollars was provided as additional financing from Sweden through the Liberia Improving Access to Income Generation Opportunities for Youth Multi-donor Trust Fund, set up by the World Bank in 2019.

### Partners

The Youth Opportunities Project is being implemented by the Ministry of Youth and Sport and Liberia Agency for Community Empowerment. The project is co-financed by the Government of Sweden through the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency. There is strong collaboration between the World Bank and the Embassy of Sweden in Liberia around this project. Periodic progress review meetings are also held between Sida and World Bank teams to identify and agree on areas for strengthening support to the project.

### Moving Forward

Meanwhile, the Bank say a follow-up operation to the Youth Opportunities Project is currently under consideration. The operation will scale up successful interventions such as grant and business skills training support to small businesses, as well as support to rural youth to engage in communal farming. New activities will also be added to the operation based on emerging needs. The follow-up operation will increase support to restoring informal sector employment lost due to COVID-19.

### Beneficiaries

FatumataBility, a young mother of two children, and 27 other beneficiaries of the Wankannedu youth farming group in QuarduGboni District, Lofa County, used proceeds from their farm produce and parts of their labor subsidy to undertake a solar electrification project for their village of 194 inhabitants. Fatuma says she feels proud to be part of a group that worked hard to bring such development to her community.

"We know that there are more than 28 youths in this community, but everyone could not benefit from the project at the same time. So those of us who benefitted at this time thought we should do something for our entire community," she said.

The solar power project provides electricity to 64 homes in the village, streetlights, and power for the village meeting hall that is being used as night school for women and entertainment center for the entire village. Beneficiaries were also able to procure satellite TV service and a TV set that the whole village benefits from.



*Night view of Wankannedu village with power on.  
Photo: Mack CapehartMulbah/World Bank*

# Charles Taylor could get early release if...

By Othello B. Garblah

Former Liberian President Charles Taylor currently serving 50 years sentence in the United Kingdom for war crimes committed in neighboring Sierra Leone could be eligible for an early release upon serving two-thirds of his prison time in jail.

Taylor has spent 8 years in prison, and if the court were to consider his 6 years in detention, would by now be counting nearly 15 years against his 50.

Under the Residual Special Court (RSCSL) Statute, convicted persons are eligible to apply for conditional early release after they have served two thirds of their sentences, and if the President of the RSCSL determines that they have fulfilled a number of conditions, including

tried to cross the border into Cameroon through the border town of Gamboru in northeastern Nigeria.

Upon his arrival at Roberts International Airport in Harbel, on a special flight, Taylor was arrested and handcuffed by the Liberia National Police and immediately transferred to the United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL) for custody. He was immediately escorted aboard a UN helicopter to Freetown, Sierra Leone, where he was delivered to the United Nations backed Special Court for Sierra Leone (SCSL)

In a statement issued by the Residual Special Court on the conditional early release of prisoners convicted by the Special Court for Sierra Leone, the Court notes that the release or transfer of prisoners is a judicial decision only, made by the President of the Residual Special Court in line with the

Rwanda. He completed his 15 year sentence in May 2018.

It further notes that Allieu Kondewa, another convict, has completed two thirds of his 20 year sentence and is currently serving out the remainder of his sentence on conditional early release.

Augustine Gbao was approved for conditional early release this September after he served two thirds of his 25 year sentence. Before being released, Augustine Gbao is undergoing a three-month training geared to his understanding of and acceptance of responsibility for the harm he inflicted by his crimes.

Five other persons, including Taylor at HM Prison Frankland in the UK, have not yet served two thirds of their sentences and so are not yet eligible to apply for conditional early release.

They are being held in accordance with international standards, with their sentences supervised by the RSCSL and prison conditions monitored by international human rights organizations, including the International Committee of the Red Cross.

RSCSL indicates that it has been compelled to issue this statement on early release of prisoners due to the misinformation that is being spread online and in particular by some prisoners.

"We take these attempts at disinformation seriously because of their potential to interfere with the administration of justice. Under Rule 77 of the RSCSL Rules of Procedure and Evidence, "The Residual Special Court, in the exercise of its inherent power, may punish for contempt any person who knowingly and willfully interferes with the administration of justice by the Special Court or Residual Special Court".

A conviction for contempt is punishable by a sentence of up to seven years in prison, a fine of up to 20 million Leones, or both," the RSCSL opines.

The Residual Special Court for Sierra Leone is responsible for the ongoing legal obligations of the Special Court for Sierra Leone, which concluded its mandate in December 2013. These include supervision of prison sentences, witness protection and support, maintenance and preservation of the archives, and assistance to national prosecution authorities.



conducting themselves properly while in prison.

Once found eligible, the Court will investigate to establish that they are not a danger to the community in which they intend to reside, or to the witnesses who testified against them. The convicted person may then be allowed to finish serving his sentence in that community, subject to strict conditions and monitoring.

Taylor 72, was 64 as at the time of his conviction in April 2012 and was sentenced to 50 years in prison the following month on May 30, 2012.

The former Liberian president with indictment hanging over his head, was arrested on March 29, 2006, barely 24 hours after the Liberian Government requested his extradition. Taylor was arrested as he

RSCSL Statute and the Rules of Procedure and Evidence.

It said neither the United Nations nor the Government of Sierra Leone has a role in these decisions. "It is important to remember that these prisoners were convicted by an international court, with each chamber having a majority of international judges," the court's statement read.

"The length of their sentences is based on the seriousness of the crimes for which they, as individuals, were found guilty. The prisoners are serving their sentences outside of Sierra Leone, in Rwanda and the UK, to avoid the risk of jail breaking," it added.

The RSCSL explains that Moinina Fofana was granted conditional early release in 2015 after serving two-thirds of his sentence at Mpanga Prison in

# Politics ripping

Starts from back page

emulate endeavors of the 2019/2020 Graduating Class of the Graduate School.

"What that means to me profoundly it represents what you are trying to do here today; we are in an age - in a culture - and in a time when everyone looks to government to do everything. And when I said government, I mean the embodiment of those who attached with the responsibility to manage the state, parastatal of it and other institutions and organizations such as yourself. But the most telling of who we are as a people, is those things and those times, when we reached to the bottom of what we believe and the wealth of our own individual problems and our own individual difficulties, and reach out to help our country and our countrymen."

In his inaugural address, the newly elected president of the Graduate School outgoing class, B. Geeplaye Nyenswah commended the University of Liberia Administration for the level of collaboration and coordination enjoy at the university.

Reflecting on the impact and challenges of the global pandemic, Nyenswah encourage his colleagues and Liberians in general to continue to follow all preventive measures and health protocols in order to avoid further spread of the virus in the Country.

He lauds those he terms as frontline soldiers (Doctors,

Nurses, Health Workers) who are working tirelessly in the field to save lives in the wake of the pandemic.

Though the virus has greatly affected the world of which Liberia is no exception, he says there is still room and hope for improvements.

Nyenswah at the same time pledges his leadership continuous support, coordination and cooperation with the University of Liberia Administration for the success of project and other meaningful programs and activities in the future.

"Trust, respect, constructive advocacy and many others for which we were all elected to seek your interest and to ensure that your dreams and aspirations will be realized will be fulfilled to the core", he assures his colleagues.

He expresses optimism for a US\$25,000 modern computer lab project for undergraduate and graduate students of the University of Liberia upon full completion soon.

Meanwhile, UL President Dr. Nelson encourages Liberians to embrace the culture of peace. His brief message was in concurrence with Cllr. Koffa.

Meanwhile, those who were inducted into offices were: B. Geeplaye Nyenswah - President, Zayzay Miller - Vice President, Lulu Sheriff Kparteh Secretary General and Matidan Badio - Financial Secretary. Others are Mawah Verdier - Treasurer and Joseph Mehdeh Chaplain.

# Refugees' influx

Cont'd from page 6

alarming and worrisome.

"In view of this situation, we call on the government to reinforce the observance of health protocols related to the prevention and control of the COVID-19 pandemic, especially ensuring that

citizens and residents of Liberian wear nose masks in public places, including supermarkets, stores, market places and at all public gatherings, amongst others."

# Young Liberian

Cont'd from page 7

She urged the graduates to remain focus to implement the skills acquired for the growth and development of the country.

She noted that the generation of Liberian women should change the narrative of their mothers and grandmothers who were marginalized over the years by men dominant, noting that what men can do, women can also do.

Madam Cooper stressed

that the Macdella Cooper Foundation will partner with the ati-Liberia to provide vocational training for more young Liberian women to improve their livelihood in the country.

The first commencement convocation of the ati-Liberia was held at the Mount Olivet Bible Church over the weekend in Paynesville City, outside Monrovia. -Editing by Jonathan Browne

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# Politics ripping Liberia

## -Cllr. Koffa



**G**rand Kru County Electoral District #2 Representative Cllr. J. Fonati Koffa is warning Liberians to make healthy

choices and curb the politics of self-destruction which is ripping apart the social fabric of society and by extension, democracy.

Serving as keynote speaker during induction ceremony of newly elected officials of the 2019/2020 Graduating Class of the University of Liberia Graduate School last Friday on the main campus of the university on Capitol Hill, Rep. Koffa, who also chairs the House Judiciary Committee said social media is destroying society and pushing patriotism to its lowest ebb.

"You know, we are also at the time, when patriotism in our country is at its lowest ebb. And I say that because the most popular thing in Liberia today, and forgive me for those who may be offended, is the politics of self-destruction. We are more excited to go on the internet and on social media to see what is being said negatively about our countrymen, to enjoy what is being negatively portrayed about them, from our leaders to our friends," Cllr. Koffa laments.

He urges Liberians to

**▶ CONT'D ON PAGE 11**

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# Arsenal's Shkodran Mustafi linked with surprise Barcelona

**B**arcelona are being linked with a shock move for Arsenal centre-back Shkodran Mustafi.

The 28-year-old has been regularly linked with a transfer away from the Gunners in recent times, but nothing materialised during the summer and he ended up staying at the Emirates.

The player's contract is set to expire in June, and this is widely expected to be

Mustafi's last season in north London. And in a surprising report in Spanish outlet Diario Sport, they claim Barcelona may be interested in signing Mustafi in January as a short-term option.

The Catalan giants are somewhat short in depth in the centre-back position, with just Gerard Pique, Clement Lenglet and Ronald Araujo currently battling for a place in the starting line-up.

Their manager Ronald



Koeman is said to be desperate to strengthen in defence, and is still hopeful of completing a move for Manchester City's Eric Garcia in the near future.

But City are proving to be tough negotiators, and Mustafi is believed to be on Koeman's shortlist if a deal for Garcia falls through to cover as a backup from January until the end of the season.

Mustafi has barely featured for the Gunners in the current campaign.

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