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President George M. Weah delivers Annual Message

# Time to review and recalibrate

## -Pres. Weah

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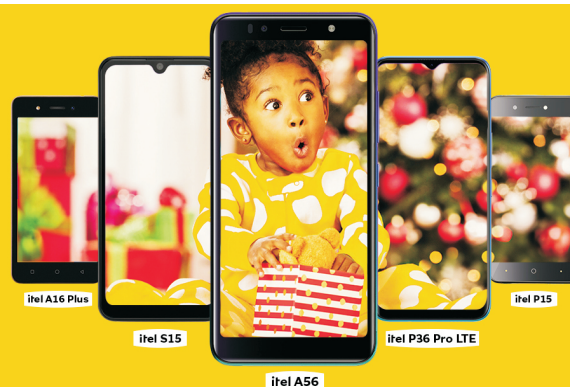
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# Continental News

## Uganda ordered to end Bobi Wine's house arrest

**A** Ugandan court has ordered the military and police to leave the home of opposition politician Bobi Wine.

He has not left his house in the outskirts of the capital Kampala since voting in the presidential election 11 days ago, in which he was declared runner-up to President Yoweri Museveni.

Monday's ruling by the High Court in Kampala comes after a petition by Bobi Wine's lawyers.

The state argued it needed to prevent him organising protests.

But the High Court has now ruled that Bobi Wine's detention was unlawful, with Justice Micheal Elubu telling the court it was also an "an infringement on his personal liberties".

The court said if Bobi Wine had committed any offence, he should be taken to an authorised detention centre. The army said it would respect the ruling, but has yet to withdraw its troops or nearby road blocks.

Dozens of people were killed during campaigning - many were shot by security

forces. Bobi Wine alleges that the election, in which he won 35% of the vote as National Unity Platform leader, was rigged.

Uganda's Electoral Commission said the vote was peaceful, but the EU, United Nations and several rights groups have raised concerns. Aside from an African Union mission, no major international group monitored the vote. In a phone interview with the BBC

World Service days after the poll, Bobi Wine, a popular singer, 38, whose real name is Robert Kyagulanyi, said he was "worried about my life and the life of my wife". The BBC's Patience Atuhaire in Kampala says armed police and soldiers have been stationed outside the musician-turned-politician's residence, not allowing anyone in or out.

Several more have been

patrolling the neighbourhood. If the security forces withdraw immediately, Bobi Wine still has at least four days to file a court petition challenging the result of the vote.

If he takes that route, the court must hear and rule on the petition within 45 days.

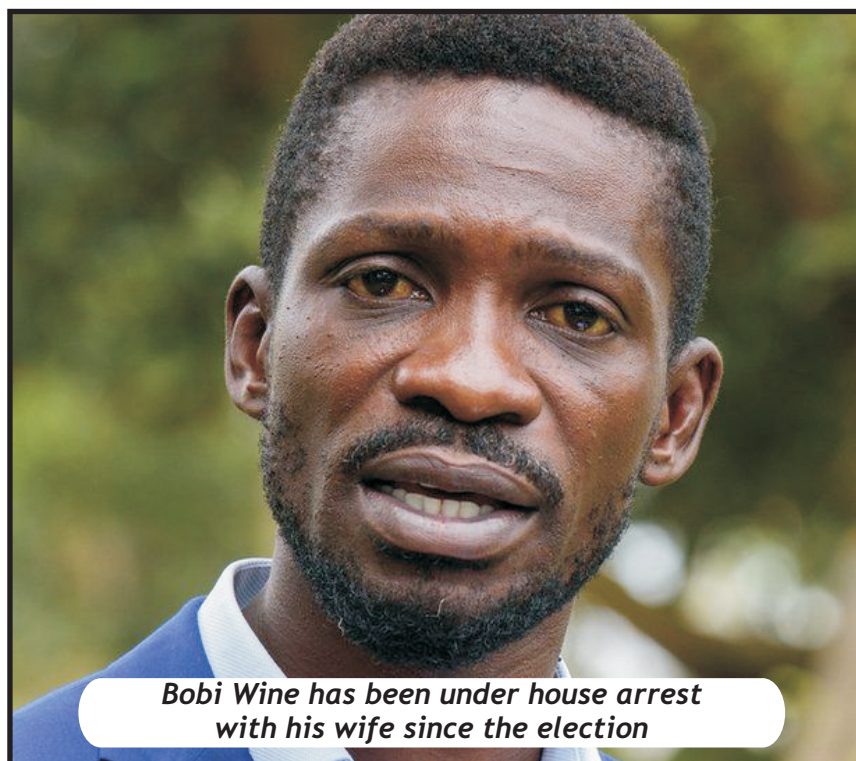
National Unity Platform officials had told the BBC that a way forward had not been mapped, as they were unable to access their party president.

In a Facebook Live address on Friday, Bobi Wine said that

Ugandans had a right to protest if they so wished, though he did not outright call on his supporters to take to the streets.

He is not the first Ugandan opposition leader to be kept under home confinement. Kizza Besigye was kept under house arrest for more than two months after the 2016 election.

Following the 2011 election, Dr Besigye launched a series of walk-to-work protests, rather than challenge the poll result in court. They were all violently broken up by the security forces. BBC



Bobi Wine has been under house arrest with his wife since the election

## Malawi blocks ex-president's access to his bank account

**T**he High Court in Malawi has refused to allow former President Peter Mutharika access to his bank accounts which were frozen by the country's anti-corruption body pending trial.

Mr Mutharika's bank accounts, as well as those of

for his legal fees in the case.

The court dismissed his application on a technicality after it transpired that the day on which the application was made, 25 November 2020, the court order he was challenging was not valid.

Judge Rowland Mvundula



Mr Mutharika lost a repeat presidential election last year

his wife, Gertrude, were frozen last August by the Anti-Corruption Bureau (ACB) which accuses him of benefiting from a \$6.6m (£4.2m) cement scandal.

The former president denies wrongdoing and has applied to the High Court to allow him access his accounts to, among other things, pay

said the former president had made an application at a time when he was actually able to access his bank accounts.

However, the ACB has managed to obtain an extension to the original court order, which means the former president remains restrained from accessing his bank accounts. BBC

some Zimbabweans have noted that, because of lockdown restrictions, the country's political elites are no longer able to rush abroad to seek medical treatment as former President Robert

Mugabe once did so routinely. Instead Zimbabwe's rulers

## Zimbabwe apologises for 'medical assassins' slur

**A** spokesman for Zimbabwe's government who called doctors in the country "medical assassins" has apologised.

In comments posted to Twitter, Nick Mangwana had suggested that four cabinet ministers who died in recent months of coronavirus had in fact been "eliminated".

Zimbabwe's medical association reacted with fury.

They insisted their staff were working hard, with few resources and little pay, to fight the pandemic. Following the backlash, Mr Mangwana stated on Twitter that he "had no intention to offend", and said he hoped Zimbabweans could move on and "not be distracted from work at hand".

He since appears to have deleted all his posts on the matter from the social media platform.

More than 28,000 people in Zimbabwe are known to have contracted the virus in Zimbabwe since the outbreak began, of whom more than 800 have since died, including Foreign Minister Sibusiso Moyo last week. The BBC's Africa correspondent Andrew Harding says the virus has overwhelmed the country's chronically underfunded health system.

Our correspondent says



Nick Mangwana enraged frontline medical staff with his comments



# EDITORIAL

## Senators should say what they mean

MEMBERS OF THE Liberian senate last week voted overwhelmingly to invite Justice Minister, Cllr. Frank Musa Dean, to explain why Nigerian-born Cllr. A. Ndubuisi Nwabudike still serves as Chairman of the Liberia Anti-Corruption Commission despite failing to substantiate his Liberian citizenship.

THE DECISION FOLLOWED heated debate by senate plenary Thursday, January 21 on why Cllr. Nwabudike still chairs the LACC, a post exclusively reserved for a Liberian citizen.

NIMBA COUNTY SENATOR Prince Yormie Johnson, a close political ally of President George Manneh, his colleagues in the Senate and the full plenary of the Liberian Senate to summon President Weah to give reasons why he should not be held in contempt for keeping the Nigerian in the post.

WE HOPE THIS time around, the senate is serious about this issue that has not only brought the integrity institution to public ridicule, but exposed the weakness of our national system.

RIVER GEE SENATOR Conmany Wesseh said Cllr. Nwabudike has managed his way criminally through all sectors of the Liberian government including the judiciary, executive and legislative branches and later duped the Liberia National Bar Association into being inducted as a member, having graduated from the Louis Arthur Grimes School of Law, University of Liberia.

HOW COULD A man born in Nigeria unto Nigerian parents come to Liberia, obtained fictitious naturalization document including Liberian Passports with inconsistencies in his date of birth, presents himself as a Liberian citizen is appointed by President George Manneh Weah and confirmed by the Liberian before being detected as a con artist? What does it say about the strength of our national system?

SENATOR PRINCE YORMIE JOHNSON thinks the only option left is to summon President Weah to answer why he keeps the 'controversial' LACC chairman in the post even after Cllr. Nwabudike failed to defend his Liberian nationality during confirming hearing before the Liberian Senate, though this very body had confirmed him to the post.

HE ARGUED THAT since the senate took the decision to reject Cllr. Nwabudike, the President should have mounted courage enough to fire him or make him to resign, but for Mr. Weah to ignore everyone is something the senate should not take lightly.

THE EXECUTIVE MANSION has persistently countered that Nwabudike's nationality document has not be challenged in a court of competent jurisdiction to warrant withdrawing his Liberian citizenship despite clamor for his removal.

# COMMENTARY

By Shlomo Ben-ami

## The End of Liberal Diplomacy

*While Joe Biden is right to reject many aspects of Donald Trump's toxic presidency, he should avoid throwing out the baby with the bathwater. Only by recognizing the weaknesses of liberal diplomatic norms can the Biden administration advance the innovative, effective diplomacy the world so desperately needs.*

TEL AVIV - On December 11, then-President Donald Trump proclaimed that the United States would recognize Morocco's sovereignty over the disputed Western Sahara, an apparent reward for the country's decision to establish diplomatic relations with Israel. The move was swiftly condemned as a blatant violation of diplomatic norms. But, with his facile approach to protracted conflicts, Trump inadvertently made an important point: the emperor - the prevailing diplomatic approach - has no clothes.

To be sure, Trump has himself stood naked on the world stage, as when he claimed to have reached a breakthrough with North Korea or touted his administration's implausible Middle East "peace proposal." But none of his predecessors - in the US or elsewhere - resolved these conflicts either, despite adhering to revered diplomatic norms.

Those norms are inextricably linked to the liberal world order that emerged after World War II. The "responsibility to protect" (R2P) doctrine - the world's commitment, adopted unanimously by the United Nations General Assembly in 2005, to protect populations from genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing, and crimes against humanity - exemplifies this liberal diplomacy.

But, in the last couple of decades, it has been all downhill for this vision. In Libya - the first case where the UN Security Council authorized a military intervention based on R2P - UN envoys come and go, but the country's future is decided by foreign powers acting unilaterally. And, with the Security Council deadlocked, R2P hasn't been invoked to justify military intervention since, despite several notable mass atrocities perpetrated by people's own governments.

The repeated failure of the UN's collective security system can be partly attributed to the decline of the liberal world order itself. Long before Trump, America had become increasingly reluctant to act as the order's guarantor (in Libya, President Barack Obama vowed that the US would "lead from behind"). Add to this Russia's aggressive revisionism, China's abandonment of its "peaceful rise," and the European Union's preoccupation with its own survival.

But many of the world's biggest diplomatic challenges - from the Israeli-Palestinian conflict to the dispute over Western Sahara - predate these factors. Even at its peak, liberal diplomacy could not resolve them, not least because it too often treated statecraft as an expressive art, detached from an ever-changing reality.

Since then, the situation has changed drastically. Western Sahara is one of the most sparsely populated territories in the world, with only about 70,000 inhabitants in 1975, and perhaps 550,000 today, living in an area half the size of Spain. Two-thirds of the population are Moroccans, many having moved there after annexation.

In this context, the case for Western Sahara's self-determination is dubious. A more appropriate approach, which reflects the reality on the ground, is to grant Western Sahara autonomy within the Kingdom of Morocco - exactly the plan endorsed by Trump. (In 2013, Obama backed the same approach in a joint statement with Morocco's King Mohammed VI.)

Securing political control of an occupied territory by changing its demography is nothing new. Some 600,000 Israelis now live in the West Bank, alongside 2,750,000 Palestinians. Iran has been repopulating vast areas of Syria with Shia Muslims. Nearly 46 years after Turkey invaded Northern Cyprus, settlers from mainland Turkey comprise about half the territory's population.

Such behavior should never be endorsed. But pretending it is not happening will not help, either. When actors are in a protracted state of diplomatic limbo, disregard for the actual balance of power or the duration of the conflict perpetuates a fait accompli favoring the stronger side. This is as true of the Morocco-Western Sahara dispute as it is about the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, where infatuation with the deceptive two-state paradigm has made peace all but impossible.

In fact, when Arab states have rejected deals with Israel, they have usually ended up with less. The Palestinians did this on at least two occasions. Likewise, Syria is worse off for rejecting Israel's offer in 2000 to return the Golan Heights: In 2019, the Trump administration officially recognized Israeli sovereignty.

While Trump's move was unjustifiable under international law (even if one believes Israel was justified in its use of force during the Six-Day War in 1967), there is no denying that the prolonged failure of liberal diplomacy made it possible. And it is part of a larger pattern of unilateral annexations.

For example, the recent eruption of the decades-old conflict between Armenia and Azerbaijan over the enclave of Nagorno-Karabakh ended with a Russia-brokered deal that legitimized Azerbaijan's annexation of a significant amount of territory. Russian peacekeeping forces were dispatched to enforce the deal. The UN was nowhere to be found.

Trump has much to answer for, diplomatically and otherwise. But the fact is that the diplomatic norms he disregarded weren't producing results in many of the world's longest-running conflicts. And, as reckless as his actions often were, they could well bring about progress on seemingly intractable conflicts - most notably, the century-old Arab-Israeli conflict.

After all, because of Trump, Morocco, Bahrain, the United Arab Emirates, and Sudan have joined Egypt and Jordan in normalizing relations with Israel. (Trump offered Indonesia billions of dollars in aid to do the same, but the country rejected the deal.) Trump also brokered peace among Arab rivals in the Gulf seeking to counter Qatar's deepening relations with Iran and Turkey.

**The New Dawn**  
TRULY INDEPENDENT



O-PED

By Mohamed A. El-erian

# England's Lockdown Lessons

*Although some remain inclined to point the finger at the UK government's missteps in tackling the COVID-19 pandemic, the explanation for its evolving approach is more complex. It also holds important lessons for managing future crises.*

**C**AMBRIDGE - UK Prime Minister Boris Johnson's recent warning that the lifting of England's current third lockdown will be no "great open Sesame," despite the fall in infections and the encouraging progress of the country's COVID-19 vaccination program, should come as no surprise to anyone who has been following the underlying dynamics of the virus. So, why did Johnson's government not take this approach during the country's first two lockdowns?

Although some remain inclined to point the finger at the government's missteps, the explanation is more complex. It also holds important lessons for managing future crises.

After England's initial lockdown last spring imposed a sudden and powerful brake on social interactions and significantly damaged the economy, the UK government was keen to restore dynamism to particularly hard-hit sectors. For example, it launched an "Eat Out to Help Out" scheme, which offered discounts on meals in restaurants, pubs, and cafes during August. Although the government was less permissive when the country exited the second lockdown in December, it did allow a certain amount of social and economic interaction and eased the restrictions further in much of the country for Christmas.

In both cases, the government subsequently had to hit the brakes hard as COVID-19 infections and hospitalizations rose. Interim efforts to develop a compromise approach through a regionally differentiated "tier system" of restrictions proved problematic - especially because limiting the movement of people was difficult. That in turn triggered a robust blame game, with many initially taking issue with frequent changes in government policy and the inevitably confused messaging that ensued.

But since Johnson imposed a third lockdown on January 5, the government has repeatedly signaled that, despite the game-changing nature of vaccine deployment, the eventual exit will be gradual, slow, and subject to many reviews based on science and evidence. From the reopening of schools to resumption of normal commerce, the government is consistently and prudently managing expectations.

The best explanation of how the government arrived at its current approach draws on information gaps, risk methodologies, mis-sequencing, behavioral tendencies, and the political (and human) desire for early wins.

Regarding information, the enormous efforts of scientists and health-care workers during the past year have significantly expanded our understanding of COVID-19 and the SARS-CoV-2 virus that causes it. This has enabled restriction policies to undergo a de facto evolution, with a simple "on-off" framing giving way to a focus on the management of "risk budgets."

Such knowledge proved useful in the transition from post-Lockdown I to post-Lockdown II. For example, it enhanced policymakers' understanding of the tradeoffs involved in keeping schools open (a top priority, given that closures pose highly unequal threats to educational attainment) versus bars and restaurants. More recently, it has improved our understanding of how new, more contagious coronavirus variants substantially reduce society's overall risk budget in trying to balance public health, resumption of economic and social interactions, and respect for individual rights and freedoms.

Mis-sequencing may also have played a part. The unsustainability of the UK government's earlier reopening approaches was compounded by lack of sufficient progress on key pandemic-response measures such as testing, tracking, and self-isolation. The low infection rates achieved at a considerable cost during the first two lockdowns thus could not be sustained, quickly putting renewed pressure on hospitals and health-care workers.

Many have argued that indecisive leadership aggravated the government's resulting policy flip-flops. But the U-turns in fact owe much to classic behavioral traps that are especially treacherous during times of radical uncertainty.

Deliberation inertia often materializes in the initial phases of a highly fluid situation, as does the subsequent great temptation simply to revert quickly to previous comfort zones. Both omission and optimism biases increase the challenges, especially if the overall framing is partial - as was the case with the narrow "lives versus livelihoods" narrative that initially dominated much of the world's lockdown debate.

Johnson's reverence for individual rights may have also contributed to the excessively fast reopenings. A final, and largely inevitable, factor was political short-termism. This has repeatedly tripped up many governments' policies that need to play out over time, including essential structural reforms whose significant long-term benefits are often preceded by short-term adjustment costs.

Politicians' understandably strong temptation to seek early wins often leads to premature declarations of "mission accomplished." When US President George W. Bush announced on May 1, 2003, to great fanfare aboard the USS Abraham Lincoln that the United States had completed its major combat operations in Iraq, the fighting was in fact far from over.

Making consistently good decisions in a crisis and under radical uncertainty is very hard indeed. Rather than a decisive big-bang approach, it requires a number of iterations and mid-course reactions in response to fast-moving developments on the ground. The strong desire to avoid any mistakes often proves difficult to fulfill. Meanwhile, those suffering from the crisis face a number of challenges, including inevitable "rule fatigue."

The UK's evolving response to the COVID-19 pandemic is following a pattern seen in several previous crises around the world. It highlights the need to maintain an open mindset, think analytically in terms of risk budgets, distinguish carefully between recoverable and non-recoverable mistakes, and take active early steps to minimize common behavioral traps. The more we take note of these issues in real time, the greater the opportunity to improve our crisis-management approaches in the future.

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Republic of Liberia

CIVIL SERVICE AGENCY (CSA)

"Ensuring Merit and Efficiency in the Public Service"



## Invitation for the Position of Auditor General of the Republic of Liberia

### Background

Established by an Act of the National Legislature in 2014 ("the Act"), the General Auditing Commission (GAC) supports Legislative oversight of the management of public resources. As the independent constitutional external auditor of Liberia, the GAC serves the people of Liberia by conducting quality and timely financial, compliance and performance audits. Headed by the Auditor General of the Republic of Liberia, the GAC is mandated to periodically conduct professional audit of all government ministries and agencies, and reports audit results and recommendations to the Legislature with copies to the President.

According to Section 2.1.5, the Auditor General shall hold office for a term of seven (7) years and shall not be eligible for reappointment. Consequently, given the tenure of the current Auditor General is nearing expiration, the Government of Liberia, in compliance with Part 2, Section 2.1 of the ACT, is recruiting to fill the position of Auditor-General of the Republic of Liberia.

### The Duties and Responsibilities of the Auditor General:

- a) The Auditor General shall be the auditor of the public accounts and public funds of the Republic of Liberia. Subject to sub-section (b) below, the Auditor General shall carry out such audits and inquiries as he/she considers necessary of public entities and funds owned or controlled by the Government to enable reporting as required by the General Auditing Commission Act of 2014.
- b) Notwithstanding the generality of sub-section (a) of this Section:
  - (i) the Auditor General shall carry out the annual audit of the Government's annual consolidated financial statements; and
  - (ii) the scope of audits by the Auditor General for the Judicial Branch of Government shall exclude matters relating to court decisions and for the Legislative Branch of Government shall exclude matters relating to the merits of legislation.
- c) The Auditor General shall have the right to determine which audits are to be carried out, to select the type of audit to be carried out, when to carry them out and report the findings.
- d) In the performance of his/her operational duties as set out in sub-section (c) above, the Auditor General shall not be subject to the direction or control of any person or authority.
- e) The Auditor General and the staff of the General Auditing Commission shall carry out audits, but shall not be involved, or seen to be involved, in any manner, in management's responsibilities of the organizations being audited

### Qualification for Selection and Appointment

A person shall be appointed as Auditor General only if:

- (i) the person is a Liberian citizen;
- (ii) the person possesses at least one professional certification such as a CPA, CA, or ACCA from a recognized professional accountancy body;
- (iii) the person possesses at least a Bachelor degree in accounting, audit, business, finance or a related field;
- (iv) the person possesses a minimum of fifteen (15) years of relevant work experience, including an understanding of the role of a Supreme Audit Institution; and
- (v) the person is of a high moral character, with integrity and impartiality, and who has neither been convicted of any criminal offence nor judgement or been declared bankrupt, in any jurisdiction.

### SUBMISSION OF INTENT

To be considered for inclusion in the recruitment process, please submit your CV, Cover Letter, and all relevant Credentials to:

**In Person Delivery:** Civil Service Agency (CSA)  
Ministerial Complex, Congo Town  
Monrovia, Liberia

**Via Email:** [agapplication@csa.gov.lr](mailto:agapplication@csa.gov.lr)

### Deadline for Application:

Friday, February 12, 2021 @ 4 O'Clock P.M. (GMT)

Ministerial Complex  
Congo Town, Monrovia, Liberia

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# Annual Message Delivered By His Excellency Dr. George Manneh Weah

ANNUAL MESSAGE  
TO THE  
FOURTH SESSION  
OF THE  
FIFTY-FOURTH NATIONAL LEGISLATURE  
OF THE  
REPUBLIC OF LIBERIA  
DELIVERED  
BY  
HIS EXCELLENCY DR. GEORGE MANNEH WEAH  
PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF LIBERIA

THE CAPITOL BUILDING  
CAPITOL HILL  
MONROVIA, LIBERIA

25 JANUARY 2021

Madam Vice President and President of the Senate;

Mr. Speaker;

Mr. President Pro-Tempore;

Honorable Members of the Legislature;

Your Honor the Chief Justice, Associate Justices of the Supreme Court and Members of the Judiciary;

The Dean and Members of the Cabinet and other Government Officials;

The Doyen, Excellencies and Members of the Diplomatic and Consular Corps;

His Excellency, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General of the United Nations in Liberia;

The Officers and Staff of the United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL);

The Chief of Staff and Men and Women of the Armed Forces of Liberia (AFL);

Former Officials of Government;

Traditional Leaders, Chiefs and Elders;

Political and Business Leaders;

Religious Leaders;

Officers and Members of the National Bar Association;

Labor and Trade Unions;

Civil Society Organizations;

Members of the Press;

Special Guests;

Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen;

Fellow Liberians:

In fulfilment of my official duty under the mandate of Article 58 of the Constitution of Liberia, I am here again to present the Administration's Legislative Program for the ensuing Fourth Session of this Honorable Legislature, and to report to you on the State of the Republic.

I am further mandated to present the overall economic condition of the Nation, which should cover both expenditure and income.

I want to congratulate all new Senators and Representatives who were elected to this august body from the Senatorial and By-elections held on December 8, 2020.

Some of you have retained your seats, while others are new to the Capitol Building. I want to urge each of you to diligently perform the task for which our people

have elected you. I pledge my commitment to working with all of you so that together, with our collective efforts, we will serve the Liberian people well.

Welcome back from your Annual Recess as you begin this Fourth Session of constructive dialogue and deliberation in the supreme interest of the Liberian people. I look forward to working with you in the spirit of collaboration and cooperation that we have always enjoyed.

However, before I proceed further, I would like to offer my sincere condolences to you for the sad and untimely passing of two of your members during your recently ended Third Session, namely: Hon. Munah E. Pelham of District 9, Montserrado County, and Hon. J. Nagbe Sloh of District 2, Sinoe County.

Let us pause and observe a moment of silence in their honor.

[ PAUSE ]

May their souls rest in perfect peace, and may light perpetual shine upon them.

Mr. Speaker:



I would like to applaud this Honorable Body for the collaboration that we enjoyed during your Third Session, which culminated in the passage of Twenty-six (26) pieces of legislation, twenty-five (25) of which were signed by me in support of the Pro-poor Agenda for Prosperity and Development (PAPD).

Thank you also for your ratification of several financing agreements, which seek to revitalize our economy and create jobs for our people, while at the same time strengthen our relationship with our multilateral partners.

Our Administration also issued six (6) Executive Orders to address national concerns during the period under review. In the interest of time, a listing of these new Acts, Agreements, and Executive Orders is attached as an Appendix to this Annual Message.

Mr. Speaker:

We want to remind you that there are Bills pending before you that are important to the developmental agenda of the Government. As you begin this Fourth Session of the 54th Legislature, we urge you to kindly consider their timeous passage:

1. The Whistle-Blower and Witness Protection Bill;
2. The Anti-Money Laundering, Terrorist Financing, Preventive Measures, and Proceeds of Crime Act, 2019;

3. A Revised Public Health Law of Liberia;

4. The Convention of Mutual Administrative Assistance in Tax Matters;

5. An Act to Establish the Liberia Standards Authority;

6. An Act to Establish the Civil Service Commission;

7. The Revised and Re-stated Charter of the University of Liberia;

8. The International Solar Alliance (ISA) Framework Agreement;

9. Maritime Zones Act 2020; and

10. An Act to Endorse the National Youth Policy of Liberia: An Agenda for Action.

Honorable Members of the 54th Legislature,  
Distinguished  
Ladies and Gentlemen:

In an effort to upgrade the national anti-corruption framework, broad consultations are on-going with stakeholders such as the Liberia Anti-Corruption Commission, the General Auditing Commission, the Ministry of Justice, and the Judiciary Branch of Government.

I will therefore be submitting Bills to amend certain restrictive judiciary laws, as we have realized that there are processes which not only require the actions of the Legislative Branch, but also require the cooperation and agreement of the Judiciary Branch, mainly the Supreme Court of Liberia. To adequately address corruption cases, laws providing for the Terms of Court may have to be amended to allow for extended Terms, and for the Grand Jury to be seated for the full Terms of Court.

I will also submit a Bill to amend the Domestic Violence Act and other laws, to provide enhanced protection for victims of sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV). Additionally, a Bill will be submitted to you to empower young people in an effort to improve their skills through a TVET program.

I will also forward for your urgent attention and subsequent ratification, the African Continental Free Trade Agreement (AfCFTA) which was signed in Kigali, Rwanda in March of 2018. This agreement is a milestone achievement for Africa in terms of the promotion of trade amongst citizens of the African Union.

Madam Vice President and President of the Senate, Mr. Speaker, Mr. President Pro-Tempore and Members of the 54th Legislature:

I am mandated by the Constitution to report to your august body on the state of the Liberian economy, which shall cover expenditure as well as income.

Accordingly, total revenue received for the calendar year under review was \$653.9 Million US dollars. This amount comprises \$475.5 Million US dollars in domestic revenue and \$178.4 Million US dollars in external resources from our development partners. Total expenditure for the same period amounted to \$606 Million US dollars.

In the period under review, the National Legislature recast the 2019/2020 National Budget twice: first to address perceived revenue challenges, and secondly to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic. The first recast took the National Budget from \$525.9 Million US dollars to \$505 Million US dollars. The COVID recast subsequently increased the National Budget to \$518 Million US dollars. The Government spent the amount of \$518 Million US dollars for the Fiscal Year 2019/2020 and carried forward the cash amount of \$7.0 Million US dollars for enactment in the 2020/2021 National Budget, which the National Legislature subsequently passed at an amount of \$570 Million US dollars.



MORE HEADLINE NEWS MORE HEADLINE NEWS

# U.S. Amb. McCarthy presents Credentials to President Weah

The newly accredited Ambassador of America to Liberia Michael A. McCarthy has presented his Letter of Credence and thanked President George Manneh Weah for his gracious letter to U.S. President Joseph R. Biden expressing congratulations on his inauguration, noting it was

release, at a ceremony held over the weekend within the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Monrovia, President Weah conveyed his appreciation to the Biden Administration for extending DED (Deferred Enforced Departure) status until June 30, 2022, noting that this action will provide time and relief to Liberians who have been in the

LTC Matt Alden, Ambassador McCarthy highlighted the excellent collaboration between U.S. government agencies and Liberian health authorities in fighting COVID-19 and expressed confidence the disease will be stamped out in Liberia with continued vigilance. He also noted the U.S. commitment to complete the new National Reference Laboratory as a state-of-the-art facility for infectious disease testing and research.

Both President Weah and Ambassador McCarthy agreed on the importance of nurturing Liberia's youth and helping Liberia's next generation of leaders meet their full potentials. Ambassador McCarthy noted that Peace Corps, USAID, and State Department educational and outreach programs will continue to support our countries' historic and important relationship, moving forward together.

Ambassador McCarthy thanked His Excellency President Weah and members of his cabinet including Minister of Foreign Affairs Dee-Maxwell SahKemayah, Acting Minister of State Trokon A. Kpui, and Minister of Information, Cultural Affairs, and Tourism Ledgerhood J. Rennie for the warm welcome accorded to him and his family and noted his eagerness to work with the President and his cabinet in advancing the enduring and strong U.S.-Liberia relationship. **-Press Release**



President George M. Weah, received the credentials of U.S. Ambassador to the Republic of Liberia, Michael A. McCarthy at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

one of the first such messages from an African country.

Ambassador McCarthy underscored the honor of serving as U.S. Ambassador to Liberia, a country with which the United States shares a storied history and cherishes enduring bonds of friendship, partnership, and family.

According to a press

United States for many years. Ambassador McCarthy for his part, hailed the extension as a sign of the longstanding partnership and friendship between the United States and Liberia.

Accompanied by his wife Sandra Acevedo McCarthy, Deputy Chief of Mission Alyson Grunder, and Defense Attaché

# Homes disorganized

Start from back page

daughters because it is through hanging out that they provide daily bread.

But Dr. Whapoe encourages mothers to realize that their daughters, some of whom are just 18 years old, are going through hell by having to hang out with grown up men before returning home at 2am just to get daily bread for the family.

"Can you imagine a 51 years old man like me, I have been in sexual activities for more than 30 years, suppose you see your daughter who is 18 [or] 19 years old and myself in that room, you think who's suffering? That's your daughter suffering," he says.

He says because of poverty, "we encourage our children not to hang up with their peers [any] more," adding that they hang out with grown ups just so that they can put food on the table.

The VOLT political leader continues whether he wins the presidency in Liberia or not, his dream is to make sure that the last child whose parents cannot afford will go to bed with hunger no more.

Further, he notes that as a citizen of Liberia, it is his dream to ensure that medical services are provided for women who cannot afford hospital bills, and that money is made available for fatherless kids who cannot afford school fees to be sent to school, among others.

Addressing the graduating class, Dr. Whapoe challenges them to leave a hallmark in their communities and the

nation, reminding them how some of them only made it in school out of money earned by their parents from selling in the markets on a daily basis.

Dr. Whapoe notes that the parents of these graduates, their communities and the country need them for their meaningful contribution for the upliftment of the country.

He challenges the graduating class as well as every child within the community to strive to leave a hallmark so that as a citizen of Liberia, when they are dead and gone, they can be remembered by society.

Sharing with the audience his perspectives on how Liberia can take steps to feed itself, Dr. Whapoe argues that the country only needs US\$24m to transform its agriculture sector and to be able to feed itself.

Dr. Whapoe says he loves the agricultural revolution, disclosing that this year, Liberians will be proud to go to the market and see bags of rice from his farm with inscription 'produced and made in Liberia.'

"And this year, you will be proud to go on the market [and] see a bag of rice on the market [that has on it] produced and made in Liberia. It will be coming from my farm," he says.

Following his speech, Dr. Whapoe awarded two years scholarship each to the valedictorian, student George Dolo, and student Deddeh P. Flomo who had introduced him as the guest speaker. Further, Dr. Whapoe offered to pay the activity fees of six other students at the school.

# "Glory Night" returns

Start from back page

this will set the pace, and put Liberia on the right path as we all wants it to be.

He reiterates the significance of Glory Night is to pray for the country, because it is the spiritual that establishes the physical, and that without the spiritual the physical can't hold, so it's against this backdrop that we're dealing with the spiritual; we're gathering at the Antoinette Tubman Stadium or ATS just for a single night and invoke the spirit of God.

For his part, the Bishop of the Jubilee Praise and Worship Center located in Old Road community, currently head of the Liberia Airport Authority or (LAA) Bishop Allen Klayeesays the entire world is faced with lots of troubles and Liberia is no exception to these challenges.

"The whole world is pregnant with troubles, and Liberia is of no exception, and I think the only way we can get off these troubles is when the church

stands", he says while noting that people often ask what the church is doing.

He says Glory Night is going to leave an embedded mark



Bishop Francis Thomas

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on Liberia and at such, the event is the fifth edition.

According to the clergyman the annual gathering is one of Liberia's best as it relates to Christian gathering, saying, "I believe that when we gather, something supposed to happen as a people of God."

"We strongly believe that when the church gathers, it's the nation that gathers, it doesn't matter how many people show up, we all know the mark this event has left, and will leave will be so huge in our circle and we feel it's necessary at this time to host the event to bring God's people together and pray for the nation."

Meanwhile, Madam Nyama Ruth Carr extols the organizers of the Glory Night event for thinking about Liberia to organize the one-day event

aimed at offering prayers to God to help in delivering Liberia from the many calamities confronting the nation.

"We want to thank all our husbands for coming together to organize this event on behalf of the women who are in the back making things happened, we too need to get on our knees and pray for the good of this country".

The event is expected to pay host to several key clergymen in Liberia, including Bishop Francis Thomas of the World Resurrection Ministries International who is the host, Evangelist Christian Dakadu, Bishop George D. Harris, Bishop James Smith, Apostle Samuel B. Carr, Bishop Allen Klayee, Bishop John Kunkun, and Ambassador Sammy David among others. **-Editing by Jonathan Browne**



**MORE HEADLINE NEWS**

**MORE HEADLINE NEWS**

**LONESTAR CELL MTN's new regional vice president sees an increase in the use of digital services amidst the covid-19 pandemic across AFRICA**

The new Vice President for the West and Central Africa region, Ebenezer T. Asante, arrived in Monrovia on Monday, January 25, 2021, to meet with senior officials of the Liberian Government.

Mr. Asante is in the country for a one-day working visit

In a statement, Mr. Asante said that across all markets, it's imperative that there be a focus on increasing growth and innovation.

With some countries across Africa continuing to see increases in Covid-19 cases, Mr. Asante expects an increased adoption of digital services and

According to him, Africa is in a unique position to turn a new normal in how the use of technology to solve some of the everyday basic needs are used.

Before becoming the Vice President of MTN's WECA region, Mr. Asante was the CEO of MTN Ghana for the last seven years. Prior to joining the company, he spent over a decade at Unilever working across various positions, notably Managing Director for Zambia and Customer Development Director and member of the Unilever Ghana Board.

Mr. Asante, a native of Ghana, holds a BA (Hons) degree in Economics and Statistics from the University of Ghana, a Postgraduate Diploma in Management from Henley Management College.

He took over the position on 1 January from Vice President Karl Toriola of Nigeria. Mr. Toriola successfully lead MTN subsidiaries in the West and Central region during the height of the COVID-19 pandemic. He enjoyed his time working in West Africa and especially in Liberia where he loved the country and its people. He is especially proud of Lonestar Cell MTN.



that forms part of a nine-country regional tour. While in Liberia, the new MTN Vice President will team up with Lonestar Cell MTN to drive MTN's mission to impact consumers and support the development agenda of Liberia.

application by a factor of three or more.

His projection comes from research that supports the fact that the number of people using the internet on the continent, could double in the next five years while the volume of internet used per capita could double every two years.

**Father of deaf child cries for help**

By Emmanuel Mondaye

It was a very sad scene over the weekend in Paynesville City outside Monrovia when the father of a deaf and dumb child Mr. Emmanuel Sackie burst in tears for the fate of his child's education at the offices of the Organization for the Social Integration of Liberian deaf.

Mr. Sackie, who arrived at the OSILD headquarters situated along Police Academy Road in Paynesville City, said he was there to inquire from the organization whether its boarding school classes were still in progress.

However, upon being informed by authorities on the ground that the institution was only accepting deaf students for tutorial study, Mr. Sackie shared tears, lamenting that he was very discouraged that his son, who is growing up without any formal education, has been beating on him each time he sees his peers dressed in uniforms and going to school.

According to Sackie, he is

worried because if his son does not have a formal education and become grown-up man tomorrow, he would not be able to adequately communicate with people and contribute to society.

He continues that the child not being in school was something serious and calls on government to increase support to OSILD, the organization that provides direct care, including education, housing and medication to deaf children and adults.

"I have been taking my son all over Monrovia, looking for deaf school to place him in but everywhere I visited, there is no sign of any deaf school besides the one operated by OSILD", he narrates.

Emmanuel Sackie, who did not disclosed the name of the child, stressed that the situation has placed him in a confuse state of mine, not knowing what to do next about the boy's education, describing the situation as frustrating.

Meanwhile, the National Director of OSILD Mr. Adrian Sandi has assured Mr. Sackie that the institution is doing everything humanly possible to ensure that all deaf children in Liberia acquire sound education following relocation of the institution's boarding school in Todee District, Lower Montserrado County. -Editing by Jonathan Browne

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**President Weah to dedicate Transco line of 246 megawatt soon**

President George Weah is expected to commission the Liberian line of the Transmission Company (TRANSCO) CLSG (Cote d'Ivoire, Liberia, Sierra Leone and Guinea) project next month which comes with initial 243 megawatt electricity from neighboring Ivory Coast.

The electrical line runs from Ivory Coast through Liberia, Guinea and Sierra Leone with a capacity of carrying over 225KV high voltage, affordable and uninterrupted electricity, powering heavy manufacturing and production industries.

TRANSCO CLSG General Manager Mohammed M. Sherif has told reporters during a tour of the CLSG's Mount Coffee substation over the weekend.

He has been inspecting CLSG project sites including the transmission line and substations for readiness of commissioning next month.

the socio-political crises that affected Liberia and Sierra Leone leading to the destruction of the public electric power infrastructure of the countries—and owing to the low levels of investment in the sector in recent years, the power infrastructure has become obsolete with the attendant outcome of extremely poor quality of service.

The construction of this line is part of the backbone of the Mano River Union countries and the priority projects of WAPP's Master Plan.

The project, according to Mr. Sheriff, will help establish a dynamic electric power market in the West African sub-region and secure power supply for participating countries which has a comparative advantage in importing power rather than producing it at high costs using their national systems.



The TRANSCO CLSG project is an initiative of governments from the four West African countries during former President Ellen Johnson - Sirleaf's administration, with support from international partners, including World Bank, African Development Bank, German Development Bank and others.

The project was birthed by the West Africa Power Pool (WAPP) which intends to integrate the power systems of the West African region.

The CLSG electricity networks interconnection project involves the construction of a 1,357km-long double circuit high voltage (225 kV) line to connect the national networks of the four countries and it comes with estimated overall cost of US\$500 million.

The need assessment of the project brought into the fore

Launching in February, Liberia's portion will be added to the already generating capacity of the Mount Coffee Hydro (88MW) which will be totaling 334 megawatt—thereby driving down the price of electricity significantly.

Mr. Sherif disclosed that significant progress has been made in the construction works of the CLSG project, with an actual overall completion rate of 90%.

He added that the progress of the transmission line section from Man (Cote d'Ivoire) through Liberia to Yiben (Sierra Leone) is almost complete. He added that three out of five substations in Sierra Leone and four out of five substations in Liberia have reached completion stages.

Mr. Sherif also inspected the Man substation in Cote d'Ivoire



# Français

## Bilan de la présidence de l'ancien international de football George Weah à mi-parcours

Ce vendredi 22 janvier, cela fait trois ans que l'ancien international de football George Weah est devenu président. Âgé de 54 ans, il lui reste encore trois années à la tête de ce pays ouest-africain de moins de cinq millions d'habitants, marqué par la guerre civile de 1989-2003 et l'épidémie d'Ebola de 2014-2016. Bilan de la présidence Weah à mi-parcours.

Avec son programme pour les pauvres et sa promesse d'une politique prenant en compte les besoins de la jeunesse, George Weah avait suscité des espoirs immenses en accédant au pouvoir en janvier 2018. Trois ans plus tard, cependant, la situation reste très difficile pour la majorité des Libériens.

La pandémie de Covid-19 a frappé une économie déjà fragile. Sur le plan sanitaire, le nombre de cas officiellement recensés est très bas mais les mesures de confinement et l'absence de touristes ont contribué à une contraction de l'activité économique en 2020. Le PIB s'est contracté de 3 % en

2020. Le confinement a aggravé l'insécurité alimentaire. Selon les derniers chiffres du CDC Africa, le pays connaît un taux de mortalité du coronavirus plus fort que la moyenne mondiale car le système de santé n'est pas en capacité de faire face à la hausse de cas graves.

5 promesses sur 87 concrétisées

Il y a un an, en janvier dernier, des manifestations

organisées pour dénoncer le manque de résultats du président Weah. En trois ans, seules 5 des 87 promesses de George Weah ont été concrétisées selon Naymote. Cette ONG soutenue par OSIWA évalue les réalisations du président libérien.

Daniel Finnan, journaliste à la rédaction en anglais de RFI revient sur le bilan de mi-

▶ CONT'D ON PAGE 9



## Législatives en Côte d'Ivoire : tour d'horizon des forces en présence

En Côte d'Ivoire, les candidats aux législatives du 6 mars avaient jusqu'au vendredi 22 janvier pour déposer leur dossier. 255 sièges sont en jeu pour un scrutin qui marque le retour dans la bataille électorale du FPI pro-Gbagbo, après dix ans

de boycott de toutes les élections.

C'est l'image de cette soirée de vendredi à la CEI : le directeur exécutif du RHDP Adama Bictogo et le président de la plateforme pro-Gbagbo EDS Georges Armand Ouegnin se saluant du coude, ironisant sur

leur future victoire respective.

Le RHDP a aligné partout des candidats, parmi lesquels plusieurs membres du gouvernement, le Premier ministre en tête. Hamed Bakayoko est candidat à Séguéla dans le nord-ouest du pays.

Côté opposition, ces dernières semaines auront été houleuses. EDS et le PDCI se sont entendus sur une répartition des circonscriptions pour mettre toutes les chances de leur côté. EDS présente 95 candidats dans 23 des 33 régions et districts, en évitant les régions d'implantation traditionnelle du PDCI.

Une centaine de candidats EDS

A Abidjan la plateforme pro-Gbagbo concentre le feu sur Youpougon ou elle convoite 4 des six sièges. Y sont notamment candidats, le président d'EDS Georges Armand Ouegnin, et Michel Gbagbo, le fils de l'ancien

▶ CONT'D ON PAGE 9



## Éditorial

### Qu'attend le gouvernement pour payer les travailleurs électoraux ?

Les agents électoraux enrôlés dans le cadre de l'organisation des élections sénatoriales et du referendum constitutionnel n'ont d'autres choix que de protester afin d'espérer entrer en possession de leurs émoluments plus d'un mois après la fin des élections. C'est triste et très honteux.

En tout cas, nous avons du mal à comprendre pourquoi le ministère des Finances et de la Planification du développement n'a jusque-là débloqué les fonds afin que la commission électorale puisse payer à ses travailleurs les miettes (50 USD, 75 USD ou 100 USD) qu'elle leur doit.

On se souvient qu'à la veille des élections en décembre 2020, les agents électoraux du comté de Montserrado avaient exigé leur argent avant d'être déployés. La situation laide qu'ils essayaient d'éviter les a maintenant rattrapés. Les élections sont terminées, mais, ils ont du mal à recevoir leur argent. Quant à quand ils recevront cet argent, seul le ciel le sait.

La présidente Davidetta Browne Lansanah, s'adressant aux agents électoraux en colère qui s'étaient rassemblés devant le siège de la commission électorale à Sinkor, Monrovia, le jeudi 14 janvier tôt le matin, avait déclaré que la Commission, par l'intermédiaire de sa section des finances, était en discussion quotidienne avec le ministère des Finances et de la Planification du développement pour décaisser rapidement les cinq millions de dollars américains restants pour couvrir toutes ses dettes, non seulement envers les agents de vote, mais aussi les fournisseurs qui ont également rendu des services liés aux élections, notamment la location de voitures, les imprimeries et les médias.

Madame Lansanah a plaidé auprès des agents électoraux pour donner au moins une semaine à la NEC, le temps de finaliser les accords de paiement avec le ministère des Finances, en particulier pour ceux qui n'ont jusqu'à présent pas reçu de salaire depuis les élections du 8 décembre 2020.

Mais la présidente Browne-Lansanah aurait dû savoir depuis que quand son budget de 17 millions de dollars américains a été réduit de 4 millions de dollars américains, elle aurait des problèmes, car aucun de ses prédécesseurs n'a organisé des élections nationales avec un maigre budget de 13 millions de dollars.

Nous pensons qu'elle a commis une erreur en acceptant d'organiser les élections sénatoriales couplées avec le referendum constitutionnel et deux autres élections législatives avec un si maigre budget.

Mme Browne-Lansanah aurait peut-être eu du mal à convaincre les législateurs et le ministère des Finances et de la Planification du développement pour accepter le budget opérationnel de 17 millions de dollars pour les élections. Elle a ramené la barre si bas au point que la Commission sombre maintenant dans les dettes.

La contribution de l'Etat du Libéria aux élections sénatoriales du 8 décembre 2020 n'a pas dépassé 5 millions de dollars. Nous, Libériens et gouvernement, voulons toujours que les autres fassent pour nous ce que nous devons faire pour nous-mêmes, en tant que nation.

Bien que le gouvernement soit confronté à une pénurie de liquidités dans les banques, une question cruciale comme les élections ne doit pas être prise à la légère. Il faut une planification et un financement adéquats pour que les résultats soient couronnés de succès.

Le ministère des Finances et de la Planification du développement devrait déployer tous les efforts possibles pour fournir des fonds à la Commission électorale nationale afin de s'acquitter de ses obligations financières envers les fournisseurs, les médias et le personnel pour les services qu'ils ont rendus pendant le scrutin.



# Français

## Bilan de la présidence

mandat de George Weah  
Parmi les réalisations toutefois à mettre à son actif : la gratuité de l'université publique, des constructions de routes et des travaux de rénovations de certains bidonvilles. Des projets toutefois ternis par des soupçons de corruption et de fraude.

Sur le plan politique, les résultats définitifs du scrutin du 8 décembre n'ont toujours pas été annoncés. Des sénatoriales couplées à un référendum modifiant la Constitution. Selon les résultats partiels, le parti au pouvoir a perdu des sénateurs et le non au référendum est

majoritaire. Le texte prévoyait notamment une réduction du mandat présidentiel. Les opposants craignaient qu'avec cette réforme, George Weah s'offre la possibilité de briguer un jour, lui aussi, un troisième mandat.

Chaque année, il y a deux saisons, la fête de l'indépendance en juillet et à Noël, pendant lesquelles il y a un rush sur les banques, avec une pression sur les réserves en billets de banques. Mais là on voit que c'est plus profond, ça a commencé avant Noël, il y a trois ou quatre mois.

A Monrovia, les habitants confrontés à un manque de liquidités.

## Législatives en Côte d'Ivoire :

président. Toujours à Abidjan, Justin Koné Katinan et Damana Pickass, tous deux toujours exilés au Ghana, essaieront de conquérir des sièges respectivement à Port Bouet et Marcory. Les deux hommes devraient donc faire leur retour dans les jours qui viennent.

Parmi les autres têtes d'affiche, l'ancien ministre de la Fonction publique de Laurent Gbagbo, Hubert Oulaye est candidat à Guiglo, l'ancien ministre de la Défense, Moïse Lida Kouassi à Lakota, et Laurent Akoun à Alépé. A Gagnoa commune, Dano Djedje briguera l'un des deux sièges en jeu. Quant à Marie Odette Lorougnon, elle est candidate à Gagnoa sous-préfecture. Elle aura face à elle le sortant et numéro 2 du PDCI, Maurice Kakou Guikahué, seule anicroche dans l'alliance entre les deux partis.

Pour le reste en effet les pro-Gbagbo laissent le centre du pays à leurs alliés. Aucun candidat à Yamoussoukro ni dans la région du Belier qui entoure la capitale politique. Pas de candidat non plus à Daoukro ou dans les régions de l'Iffou, du Moronou ou du N'zi. Enfin EDS ne se risque pas dans les régions du nord,

fief traditionnel du RHDP, à part à Korhogo ou la plateforme brigue deux des 4 sièges.

Une alliance qui passe mal  
Mais cette alliance PDCI-EDS a fait des mécontents. Vendredi, l'URD, petit parti d'opposition a dénoncé cette entente bilatérale, au détriment des autres formations. « Oubliées les listes communes... Sous l'impulsion hégémonique des deux grands partis, [...] les alliés sont écartés sans ménagement, avec beaucoup de mépris », déplorait sa présidente Danièle Boni Claverie.

En début de semaine, le FPI de Pascal Affi N'Guessan formulait les mêmes critiques. Le FPI a donc décidé de faire cavalier seul dans ces élections et d'aligner une soixantaine de candidats, dont son président Pascal Affi N'guessan à Bongouanou dont il est député sortant.

Quant aux soroïstes, ils sont plusieurs à se présenter en indépendants alors que leur mouvement, GPS, officiellement ne participe pas à ce scrutin.

La Commission électorale a jusqu'au 31 janvier pour examiner ces candidatures, avant de les soumettre au Conseil constitutionnel pour validation.

## COMMENTAIRE

By Shlomo Ben-ami

## La fin de la diplomatie libérale

**T**ELAVIV - Le 11 décembre dernier, le président Donald Trump a déclaré que les États-Unis reconnaissent la souveraineté du Maroc sur un Sahara occidental très disputé, en récompense semble-t-il de la décision du pays d'établir des relations diplomatiques avec Israël. Cette démarche a rapidement été condamnée car considérée comme une violation flagrante des règles diplomatiques. À travers son approche simpliste des conflits de longue date, Trump a toutefois mis en lumière malgré lui un point important : l'empereur ne porte plus d'habit dans l'approche diplomatique dominante.

Sur la scène internationale, cette nudité de Trump est apparue évidente, notamment lorsque le président américain a prétendu avoir obtenu une avancée majeure avec la Corée du Nord, ou vanté l'improbable « proposition de paix » de son administration pour le Moyen-Orient. Pour autant, aucun de ses prédécesseurs - aux États-Unis ou ailleurs - n'est jamais parvenu à résoudre ces conflits, même en adhérant aux normes diplomatiques généralement reconnues.

Ces normes sont inextricablement liées à l'ordre mondial libéral d'après-guerre. La doctrine de la « responsabilité de protéger » (R2P) - engagement mondial adopté à l'unanimité par l'Assemblée générale des Nations Unies en 2005, visant la protection des populations contre les génocides, crimes de guerre, épurations ethniques et crimes contre l'humanité - est l'illustration de cette diplomatie libérale.

Or, au cours des dernières décennies, cette vision a considérablement décliné. En Lybie - premier cas dans lequel le Conseil de sécurité des Nations Unies a autorisé une intervention militaire fondée sur la R2P - les envoyés spéciaux de l'ONU vont et viennent, mais le futur du pays est bel et bien décidé par des puissances étrangères qui agissent unilatéralement. Par ailleurs, le Conseil de sécurité se trouvant dans l'impasse, la R2P n'a plus été invoquée depuis pour justifier une intervention militaire, en dépit d'atrocités de masse perpétrées par certains gouvernements contre leur propre population.

Les échecs répétés du système collectif de sécurité de l'ONU s'expliquent en partie par le déclin de l'ordre mondial libéral lui-même. Bien avant Trump, l'Amérique était déjà devenue de plus en plus réticente à agir en tant que garante de cet ordre (en Lybie, le président Barack Obama a choisi un « leadership en retrait » de la part des États-Unis). Ajoutez à cela le révisionnisme agressif de la Russie, une Chine qui rompt avec son « ascension pacifique », ainsi qu'une Union européenne préoccupée par sa propre survie.

Nombre des plus grands défis diplomatiques de la planète - du conflit israélo-palestinien aux revendications sur le Sahara occidental - sont toutefois antérieurs à ces facteurs. Même à son apogée, la diplomatie libérale n'a pas su les résoudre, notamment parce qu'elle est trop souvent considérée comme un art d'expression, détaché d'une réalité toujours changeante.

Depuis, la situation a considérablement changé. Le Sahara occidental est l'un des territoires les moins peuplés de la planète, avec environ 70 000 habitants en 1975, et autour de 550 000 aujourd'hui, sur une superficie représentant la moitié de l'Espagne. La population est composée pour deux tiers de Marocains, dont beaucoup se sont installés après l'annexion.

Dans ce contexte, le droit à l'autodétermination au

Sahara occidental pose question. Une approche plus adaptée, qui reflète la réalité du terrain, consiste à accorder au Sahara occidental une autonomie au sein du royaume marocain - ce qui correspond précisément à la proposition de Trump (en 2013, Obama avait soutenu la même approche dans une déclaration conjointe avec le roi du Maroc, Mohammed VI).

L'exercice consistant à consolider un contrôle politique sur un territoire occupé en transformant sa démographie n'est pas nouveau. Quelque 600 000 Israéliens vivent aujourd'hui en Cisjordanie, aux côtés de 2 750 000 Palestiniens. L'Iran a repeuplé de vastes régions de Syrie via la présence de musulmans chiites. Près de 46 ans après l'invasion du nord de Chypre par la Turquie, les colons de Turquie continentale composent désormais environ la moitié de la population de l'île.

Ces comportements ne doivent pas être cautionnés. Pour autant, prétendre qu'ils n'existent pas ne permet pas non plus d'avancer. Lorsque des protagonistes se trouvent dans un état prolongé d'enlèvement diplomatique, la négligence de l'équilibre réel des puissances ou de la durée du conflit vient perpétuer un fait accompli en faveur du camp le plus fort. C'est vrai dans le cas de la dispute Maroc-Sahara occidental comme dans celui du conflit israélo-palestinien, dans lesquels le désir d'un paradigme trompeur à deux États rend la paix presque impossible.

En effet, lorsque les pays arabes ont refusé des accords avec Israël, ils en sont généralement sortis perdants. Cela a été le cas des Palestiniens au moins à deux reprises. De même, la Syrie est sortie perdante de son refus de la proposition israélienne de restitution du plateau du Golan en l'an 2000, l'administration Trump ayant officiellement reconnu la souveraineté d'Israël sur ce territoire en 2019.

Bien que la décision de Trump soit injustifiable au regard du droit international (même si l'on considère qu'Israël était en droit d'user de la force lors de la guerre des Six Jours en 1967), force est de constater qu'elle est le résultat de l'échec de la diplomatie libérale, et qu'elle s'inscrit dans un phénomène plus large d'annexions unilatérales.

Prenons l'exemple de l'irruption récente d'un conflit long de plusieurs décennies entre l'Arménie et l'Azerbaïdjan autour de l'enclave du Haut-Karabakh, à l'issue duquel un accord mené par la Russie est venu légitimer l'annexion par l'Azerbaïdjan d'une importante partie du territoire. Les forces russes de maintien de la paix ont été déployées pour mettre l'accord à exécution. Aucune trace de l'ONU en l'occurrence.

Trump devra répondre de nombreux aspects, en matière diplomatique ou autre. Mais le fait est que les normes diplomatiques qu'il a décidé d'ignorer ne produisaient plus aucun résultat dans le cadre des conflits les plus anciens de la planète. Aussi hasardeuses qu'aient pu être ses démarches, elles pourraient bien aboutir à des avancées autour de conflits a priori insolubles - en premier lieu desquels un conflit israélo-arabe vieux d'un siècle.

C'est en effet en présence de Trump que le Maroc, le Bahreïn, les Émirats arabes unis et le Soudan se sont joints à l'Égypte et à la Jordanie dans une normalisation de leurs relations avec Israël (Trump a également proposé à l'Indonésie une aide de plusieurs milliards de dollars pour qu'elle en fasse de même, mais le pays a refusé l'offre). Trump a également obtenu la paix entre pays arabes rivaux du Golfe désireux de contrer l'approfondissement des relations du Qatar avec l'Iran et la Turquie.

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# Annual Message

The United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and the Government of Liberia signed a Development Objective Grant Agreement of \$640 Million US dollars that will be programmed to support various projects that the Government of Liberia and USAID will agree on as priority areas of need over the next five (5) years. These resources are supporting key sectors and will be critical to sustain growth, going forward.

Also during the period under review, a total amount of \$399 Million US dollars was announced and committed to various projects as Official Development Assistance to the Government and people of Liberia

Additionally, the amount of \$178.6 Million US dollars was received as total budget support, which came from both traditional and non-traditional partners, including the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund, the European Union, the African Development Bank and the United States Government through the United States Agency for International Development (USAID).

Honorable Members of the 54th Legislature:

A major feature of the year under review was a support program which was approved by the International Monetary Fund. In December 2019, a Memorandum of Economic and Financial Policies was signed with the IMF to address various issues of our macroeconomy.

The program aimed to transform fiscal and monetary policy and improve public sector governance. The first and second reviews of the program have now been concluded and results show that macroeconomic stability is being restored under the program.

In approving the recent disbursement of \$48.8 Million US dollars to the Government of Liberia under the IMF-supported program, the Executive Directors of the IMF praised the Government of Liberia for the effective measures that have been undertaken so far to transform fiscal and monetary policy and restore macroeconomic stability.

In their comments, the IMF Executive Directors noted and I quote:

“The Liberian authorities are committed to fiscal discipline and further improvements in cash management, transparency and accountability in spending, and domestic revenue mobilization to finance their development agenda. The monetary policy stance is appropriately aligned with the inflation objective, and significant progress has been made in strengthening central bank independence.” [UNQUOTE]

Mr. Speaker:

The year under review has also shown our commitment to continue to improve governance and our determination to fight against corruption. In September of 2020, integrity institutions convened an anti-corruption conference which deliberated and presented a clear anti-corruption roadmap. The roadmap recommends that the Government amends the Act of 2008 creating the Liberia Anti-Corruption Commission, to give the LACC top-rate prosecutorial powers and the mandate to administer the Asset Declaration regime across the three branches of Government.

With this amendment, the LACC will no longer need to await the Ministry of Justice to take cases under investigation to court. The amendment relating to the asset declaration regime would also give LACC the authority to ensure compliance.

The roadmap further recommends amending the Judiciary Law to create a dedicated Corruption and Related Financial Offences Court, to be known as CRIMINAL COURT “F”. Finally, the roadmap stresses the importance of passing both the Whistleblowers and Witness Protection Acts.

Mr. Speaker, these are the key recommendations that came out of the stakeholder consultations on the fight against corruption. I appeal to the Honorable National Legislature to endorse these recommendations and act swiftly. These actions and legislation will advance the

institutional fight against corruption to which our administration remains fully committed.

Honorable Members of the 54th Legislature,  
Distinguished  
Ladies and Gentlemen:

Liberia's total stock of public debt at the end of 2020 amounts to \$1.580 Billion US dollars. Of this amount, domestic debt amounts to \$643.39 Million US dollars, while external debt amounts to \$940.93 Million US dollars.

At end December 2019, the total stock of public debt stood at \$1.28 Billion US dollars, of which domestic debt amounted to \$419.8 Million US dollars, while external debt amounted to \$862.87 Million US dollars.

This increase in domestic debt stock is mainly because of the restructuring and consolidation of the Government's debt to the Central Bank of Liberia. It includes \$170.63 Million US dollars that was contracted by the previous administration but never included in official debt statistics. This irregularity has now been corrected.

The repayment on our domestic debt stock has been structured under the current IMF-supported economic program. The Government is now working to validate the stock of other domestic debt. While this work is ongoing, payments on domestic debt have commenced as a means of stimulating the economy. The Government remains committed to servicing domestic debt as a clear strategy toward stimulating growth.

Mr. Speaker:

In the wake of low public confidence in the Central Bank of Liberia, and by extension the banking system, the Board of Governors and Management of the Bank were re-constituted by me during the year under review.

Additionally, the Amended and Re-stated CBL Act of 1999, which was passed by the National Legislature in October 2020, has strengthened the operational independence of the Bank, and improved transparency and accountability in its operations.

HONORABLE MEMBERS OF THE 54TH LEGISLATURE,  
DISTINGUISHED LADIES AND GENTLEMEN:

The year 2020 was challenging for the Liberian economy. Real GDP growth projection was further revised downward to negative three (-3.0%) percent for 2020, from the earlier projection of negative two point five (-2.5%) percent, reflecting a decline in economic activity, largely due to prolonged lockdowns at home, restrictions on international travels, disruptions in supply chains and international trade, and the second wave of the pandemic now seen in several countries, including Liberia's major trading partners.

Although the impact of the pandemic on the mining and manufacturing sectors was limited, the service sector, especially the hospitality sub-sector, was severely hit due to the lack of international travelers.

This year, the economy is projected to grow by three point two (3.2%) percent, on account of expected growth in all major sectors of the economy, as well as favorable global developments. But recovery of the economy will depend on the persistence, or otherwise, of COVID-19. However, recent news about production of vaccines for the prevention and treatment of the pandemic is a positive development which will fast track global post-COVID recovery.

Mr. Speaker:

During the course of the year, the policy of my government was significantly focused on protecting the purchasing power of our low-income population by aggressively fighting inflation, which reduced from about thirty (30%) percent at end December 2019 to about twelve (12%) percent at end December 2020. We continue to work aggressively on the goal of price stability so that our people will feel the benefits of macroeconomic reforms.

In the last quarter of 2020, developments in the foreign exchange market were relatively favorable as

the Liberian dollar recorded persistent appreciation compared to other countries in the ECOWAS region, whose currencies widely depreciated.

Despite the printing and delivery of L\$4billion Liberian dollars in July 2020, the economy was challenged by difficulty to access Liberian dollars in the financial sector, largely reflecting about forty (40%) percent rate of mutilation of the existing Liberian dollar banknotes in circulation.

In addition, the liquidity pressure on the Liberian dollar was aggravated by increasing demand for the local currency, induced by many players in the economy such as mobile money agents, large numbers of ATM card holders, and foreign exchange bureaus.

In view of this situation, the Central Bank of Liberia has informed me that it is seeking authority from the National Legislature to print a new family of banknotes. As it is the responsibility of this august body to grant such approval under the advice of the Central Bank, I respectfully call upon you, Honorable Ladies and Gentlemen, to act swiftly to resolve the situation before the next season of high demand for cash.

In the face of this liquidity situation, and while we endeavor to encourage our citizens to sustain the wider use of mobile money for transactions, the Executive will intensify consultation with the National Legislature to pursue currency reform, with the aim of promoting monetary policy credibility and enhancing confidence in the economy.

In the current environment in which the CBL does not have control over the more than ninety (90%) percent of Liberian dollars which are outside the banking sector, the effectiveness of monetary policy is undermined. Our goal is to reset the foundation of monetary policy.

Given the importance of the Central Bank to our economy, we will further implore the National Legislature to help to strengthen its institutional independence, in line with internationally accepted norms.

Madam Vice President and President of the Senate, Mr. Speaker, Mr. President Pro-Tempore and Members of the 54th Legislature:

The most significant factor that negatively impacted the Liberian economy during the year under review was the Coronavirus pandemic, which has afflicted tens of millions of people in all nations.

Liberia has not been spared the impact of this global pandemic, which started in late 2019 and spread across the world in 2020. Liberia recorded its first case in March 2020 and as of today's date we have confirmed 1,927 total cases with 1,722 recoveries and 109 active cases. We have also recorded 84 deaths, with only 13 deaths occurring in treatment facilities.

In honor of the memory of those who have fallen to the pandemic in our country and of the millions who have perished around the world, it is only fitting that I propose a moment of silence.

[SILENCE]

May their souls rest in perfect peace.

Honorable Members of the 54th Legislature,  
Distinguished  
Ladies and Gentlemen:

The three branches of Government have coordinated quite well to deliver a strong National Response to COVID-19. It can be recalled that I established a Special Presidential Committee on COVID-19 (SPACOC), which brought together the Ministry of Health, the National Public Health Institute and other development partners and stakeholders to drive the fight against COVID-19.

Prior to its first case of Coronavirus, Liberia was probably the first country in Africa to begin to quarantine travelers from COVID-19 infected countries. The health authorities also launched massive testing and contact tracing programs that have proven quite successful. To date, Liberia has 1637 infections, and more than 1,360 persons have recovered from COVID-19, with 13 persons dying in a treatment facility. These numbers represent one of best COVID-19 responses in the world.

To be Cont'd



# Time to review and recalibrate

By E. J. Nathaniel Daygbor

President George Manneh Weah says his administration has entered its third year and it was time to review, recalibrate and deliver considerable progress, noting still more needs to be achieved.

The grounds of the Capitol Building was graced by officials of government, partisans of both ruling establishment and the opposition, members of the diplomatic corps, international partners, Liberians, members of the

stage following playing of the national anthem by the band battalion of the Armed Forces of Liberia.

Speaking before members of the Liberian Legislature in the William Richard Tolbert Joint Chambers at the Capitol Building, Mr. Weah said his administration is enjoying its third year of national governance and it's time for the government and employees to enforce the Pro Poor Agenda for Prosperity and Development for the betterment of the country and ordinary people.

According to him, with the

economy was also faced with shortage of Liberian dollars against its United States counterpart.

He narrated further that 40 percent of the Liberian dollars were mutilated and unusable for commodity purposes thereby putting users at a disadvantage point.

He recommended that to avoid reoccurrence of such bleak picture, the Liberian Legislature and the Executive branch of government will work closely in giving additional authorities to the Central Bank of Liberia for proper control and management.

He maintained that the Central of Bank of Liberia needs to be strengthened through legislations for proper financial management and handling of financial-related issues.

Commenting on the fight on corruption, President Weah said government is working with authorities of the Liberia Anti-Corruption Commission to create Criminal Court 'F' to exclusively try corruption cases.

He stated that the Liberia Anti-Corruption Commission needs extra prosecutorial power to prosecute cases and individuals who fall squarely within purview of the commission for prosecution.

He announced that his office will soon forward a bill in the quest for the creation of the specialized criminal court and extra prosecutorial power to the LACC to make it effective in combating corruption.

President Weah said will also submit a bill, seeking protection for gender and sexually abused victims. He added the bill is intended to protect people reportedly being sexually harassed, abused, or intimidated.

# Weah wants new money printed quickly

By Jonathan Browne

In the wake of shortage of local banknotes in the country, President George Manneh Weah asks members of the 54th Liberian Legislature to quickly approve printing of new family of Liberian banknotes for the economy before another peak in high demands for local currency.

The high demands for Liberian banknotes is usually around Christmas and New Year holidays when transactions are usually at high levels with commercial banks being unable to meet demands thus, restricting daily withdrawals.

Liberia continues to experience acute cash

various financial institutions, including ATM services at banks and forex bureaus.

However, most of the newly printed banknotes all in LRD500 denomination did not reach the market, leaving ordinary citizens and some officials asking with no direct answer up to now.

Turing to the economy, President Weah reports that total revenue generated during the period was over US\$6 million and that expenditure for the same period hit US\$606 million.

He acknowledges low public confidence in the Central Bank of Liberia and the entire banking system which led to



Liberian Legislature and authorities of the Judiciary branch to listen to President Weah's 4th Annual Message, which covers revenue and expenditure for the year ended, and the legislative agenda for the coming period.

Despite huge protocols and high presence of security, local entertainers were busy providing melodious voices, while traditional dancers trilled foreign guests.

President Weah in a relaxed mood mounted the

limited time at hand, there is no room for errors, urging heads of agencies and ministries to take note and act properly.

Reflecting on the immediate past year 2020, President Weah said it was challenging especially, with the battle against the global COVID-19 that saw the economy dropped drastically and that Liberia was not the only country hit with the downturn economy but the world at large.

The Liberian leader pointed out that despite the COVID spread and devastation, the



shortage since the Weah administration came to power with major depositors preferring to keep their money outside the bank.

Delivering his 4th Annual Message to the 54th Legislature in joint chambers Monday, 25 January at the Capitol in Monrovia President Weah pleaded, "I appeal to you to act quickly in resolving this issue before the next period of high demand for local currency."

He recalls that the printing of additional 4 billion of the current Liberian banknotes last year by the government was primarily aimed at easing the liquidity challenge in the economy brought about by increasing demand from

restructuring the CBL Board of Governors but discloses that real Gross Domestic Product (Real GDP) earlier projected at -2.5 percent rose to -3 percent.

However, President Weah thinks agriculture will bring turnaround in revising the economy, saying it is time to review and recalibrate. He says to achieve food security, Liberians must return to the soil.

"We have the land, we have the labor and we have the climate to produce, so let us go back to the soil", he rallies and vows: This is a task that is already on the way. The activities in the agricultural sector will receive my personal support.

Cont'd from page 7

# President Weah to dedicate



and the Yekepa substation in Liberia. The Man substation is key as it is the main source of the energy transmission.

Liberia's electricity tariffs was at an all-time high at 54 cents per Kw/hr before the commission of the mount Coffee hydro. This situation impeded economic development, and posed many challenges to the survival of many small and medium size businesses. Shortly after the powering of Mount Coffee, electricity tariff of electricity dropped from 54 cents per Kw/hr to 39 cents and later to the current 35 cents.

But Mr. Sherif noted that with the coming of the TRANSCO line, the tariff on

electricity will reduce significantly. "This will help to improve our economy and also help in many other aspects.

The project will electrify about 115 communities located along the power line and supply

electric power to 70 schools, 30 health centers, and approximately 1,500 small handicrafts, commercial and industrial businesses, 25% of which are operated by women.

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# Homes disorganized

**-Dr. Whapoe cites 'role reversal' as problem**



Dr. Jeremiah Z. Whapoe

By Winston W. Parley

The political leader of the opposition Vision for Liberia Transformation Party (VOLT), Dr. Jeremiah Z. Whapoe says 'role reversal' in the Liberian society has led to homes, communities being disorganized, urging parents to take back parental roles from children because disorganized communities make a nation disorganized.

"When there's a role reversal in every home, the home is not organized. And when the home is not organized, the community is not organized; when the community is not organized, the nation is not organized," Dr. Whapoe said Saturday, 23 January in Paynesville.

Serving as the keynote speaker at the 8th graduation ceremony of the Morris Farm Public School in Paynesville, Dr. Whapoe indicated that today,

the children are the ones doing the job that their parents should be doing, equating that to "role reversal" in the home.

"I see it on a daily basis. We need to take this country from the young people's hand and put it into the parents' hands. And it's very important because when the parents are in control of the home, that home is organized," he says.

While coming up as a child, Dr. Whapoe says he didn't learn the language called zogoe, a Liberian way of referring to wayward folks. But today, he says because the parents are no more in charge, zogoes can be found even in remote places in Liberia.

"The parents are not more in charge, it is now time to talk and think about Liberia," he says.

He laments that girls are knocking doors on their parents at 2am and the parents accept that condition to open the door for their

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# "Glory Night" returns at ATS soon

By Lewis S. Teh

Glory Night, a night-long gathering of Christian leaders to pray for Liberia's peace, stability and economic prospects is being planned here for February.

The head of the World Resurrection Ministries International located on Gurley Street in central Monrovia, Bishop Francis Thomas says this year's Glory Night event scheduled for 26th of February at the

Antoinette Tubman Stadium in Monrovia will definitely save and redeem Liberia from its backwardness.

"From every indication we can't all agree that Liberia as a country is going in the right direction when it comes to economic, social and political issues; that's why this is being organized to save, and redeem our beloved country".

He made the disclosure Monday January 25, 2021, at the church edifice during a joint news conference with Bishops of



Bishop Francis Thomas

various churches, where he said Glory Night is a one-night event that will bring the whole nation together to pray for Liberia to take her place among nations of the world.

Bishop Thomas says the event is being hosted under the auspices of the World Resurrection Ministries International in collaboration with the Body of Christ, saying, though we haven't done for sometimes due to the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic, but

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