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TUESDAY, APRIL 27, 2021

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# Rivercess dishes out wasted land

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## -Min. McGill tells Sen. Dillon



State Minister Nathaniel McGill

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# Continental News

## Chad army snubs rebel talks after leader's death

Chad's ruling military council has rejected an offer of ceasefire talks with rebels it has been fighting since the unexpected death of president Idriss Déby.

The military council took power earlier this week after Mr Déby was killed during clashes with rebels.

Headed by Mr Déby's son, the council said it would oversee an 18-month transition to elections.

Opposition politicians and rebels have condemned the army takeover as a coup.

Mr Déby, 68, had just won a presidential election when the army announced on Tuesday that he had been fatally wounded in a battle with rebel fighters in the northern Kanem region of the country, in Central Africa. The rebels, known as the Front for Change and Concord in Chad (FACT), swept down from the north on election day demanding an end to Mr Déby's 30-year rule. On Saturday the rebels said they

were ready to discuss a political settlement, but did not endorse the "coup" that brought Mr Déby's son, Gen Mahamat Déby, to power.

But a day later, the military council said it would not negotiate with rebels it was at war with. "Faced with this situation, that is endangering Chad and the stability of the

entire region, it is not the time for mediation or negotiations with outlaws," military council spokesman Azem Bermendao Agouna said in a statement.

"They are rebels, which is why we are bombing them. We are waging war, that's all."

Mr Agouna said some of the rebels had fled into

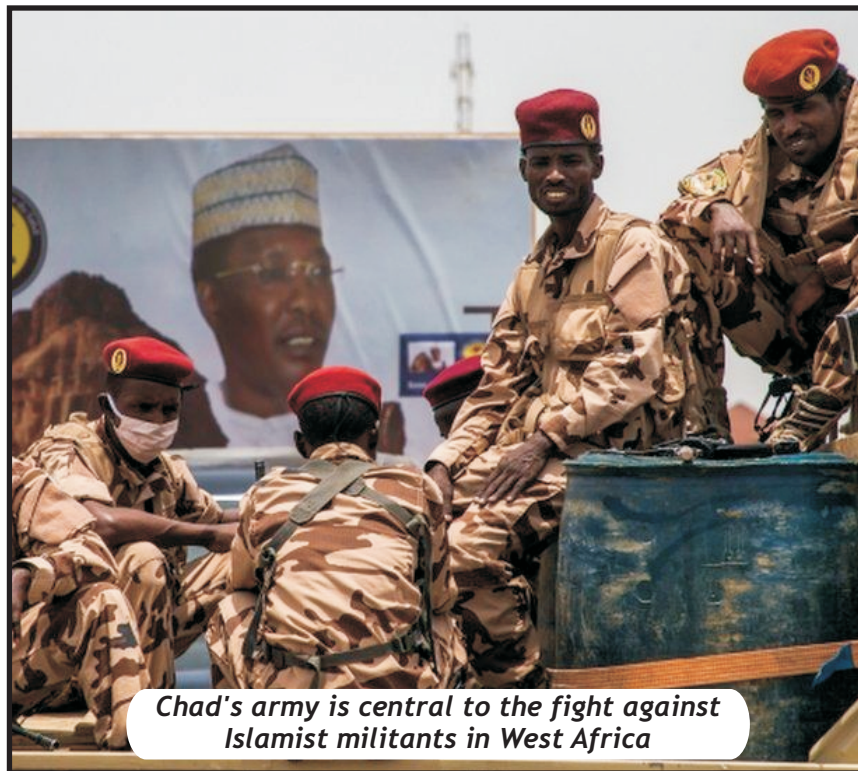
neighbouring Niger. He urged authorities there to "facilitate the capture and bringing to justice of these war criminals".

He said the leader of FACT, Mahamat Mahadi Ali, was "sought for war crimes" in Libya, where his rebel group has an active presence.

The group was formed in 2016 with the goal of overthrowing the government of Chad and has been linked to fighting in Libya's most recent civil war. The military council is under pressure to hand over power to a civilian transitional government as soon as

possible. The African Union's Peace and Security Council voiced "grave concern" about the military takeover, while France and regional powers are pushing for a civilian-military solution.

Mr Déby was buried on Friday in a state funeral attended by French President Emmanuel Macron and thousands of Chadians. An army officer by training, Mr Déby came to power in 1990 through an armed uprising. He was a long-time ally of France and other Western powers in the battle against jihadist groups in the Sahel region of Africa. BBC



Chad's army is central to the fight against Islamist militants in West Africa

## Work at Mozambique gas project halted after attack

French energy giant Total has suspended operations at a site exploring a major gas field in northern Mozambique weeks after Islamist militants attacked a nearby town.

The company said that it was withdrawing all its staff because of the "evolving" security situation.

Dozens of people were killed in the March raid on the town of Palma.

Total's \$20bn (£14.6bn) gas liquification plant is the

largest foreign investment in Africa. Its Afungi site is near Palma which has been repeatedly attacked by militants linked to the Islamic State (IS) group. During the 24 March attack, dozens of foreign contract workers and local people were besieged at the Amarula Palma Hotel.

The UN's World Food Programme said last week that the March attack had caused tens of thousands to flee the area - adding to a growing

humanitarian crisis.

The agency says many lack proper shelter, and malnutrition among children is on the rise.

The four-year insurgency in Cabo Delgado region has left more than 2,500 people dead and 700,000 displaced.

Mozambique's President Felipe Nyusi has promised to restore peace in the restive Cabo Delgado province.

On Monday Total said it "expresses its solidarity" with the government and called on the authorities to restore security.

The halting of Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) exploration is a big blow to Mozambique, analysts say.

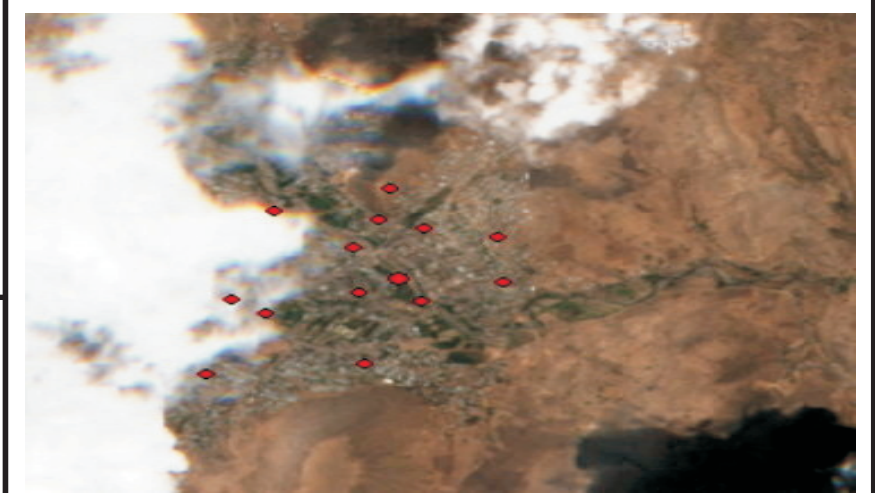
Insecurity in the region has also affected local traders - the country's main business association said small- and medium-sized firms had lost \$90 (£64m).

Hopes of transforming Mozambique's economy under threat

By Catherine Byaruhanga, BBC News Africa correspondent

The authorities in Mozambique will breathe a

## Death toll for Ethiopia's Amhara clashes 'may be 200'



Satellite image sensors from 16 April detected multiple fires in Amhara region

Ethiopia's chief ombudsman says the number of people killed in recent clashes between the country's two largest ethnic groups may be as high as 200.

Earlier reports said about 50 people had died in fighting between the Amharas and Oromos in the northern Amhara region.

The ombudsman, Endale Haile, said nearly 330,000 people had been displaced by the violence.

He said about a quarter of

the houses in the town of Ataye had been burned down.

Much of the fighting has been in a zone within the Amhara region which is mainly populated by Oromos.

Earlier in the week Ethiopia declared a state of emergency in parts of the state.

Questions are being asked about whether elections due in June will take place.

Several areas of the country are being torn apart by violence, especially the northern region of Tigray, which has been at war for the past six months. BBC



Attacks by Islamist militants have killed thousands and displaced hundreds of thousands of people in northern Mozambique

huge sigh of relief that Total has not pulled out completely but this latest development is a sobering warning of how a key investment could be delayed or lost.

It comes weeks after the company resumed exploration activities after the government said its forces were in control of Palma close to its Afungi site. The guarantee didn't last - only hours later the militants overran the town.

As well as Total's LNG project in Cabo Delgado,

there is another operated by the US' ExxonMobil estimated to be worth \$60bn. The fields could earn the southern African country some \$100bn over the next 25 years - six times the country's current budget and perhaps enough to transform its economy.

President Nyusi is under pressure to prove that he can secure the interests of international investors, keep Mozambicans safe, and reassure jittery neighbours that he can end the insurgency. BBC

# EDITORIAL

## Weah's challenge to officials

**OFFICIALS OF THE** Weah administration seem to be living deceitful lives with their people, disappointing the President each time he tours the country. Recently in Grand Cape County President Weah frowned at Senator Varney Sherman and other lawmakers of the county for not having a home or a place to host official delegation in the county they represent.

**NOW IN GRAND** Bassa County, President Weah was not just disappointed but physically upset with county officials, including superintendent and lawmakers, who were elegantly attired, for hosting him in an unkept town hall during a meeting with citizens. The President faced the unpleasant experience as he ended the third leg of his nationwide tour.

**MR. WEAH:** "LOOK at this, look at this, look at this, look around you, look at this and look at us, look at us (describing how splendidly dressed up they were as compared to the infrastructure they were sitting in and the environment). Sometimes, we should have conscience and be ashamed of ourselves. This place doesn't represent anything. You can't be representing people and bring the President and the entire government here. It is not possible."

**MOVING HIS EYES** around the hall in which the town hall meeting was being held, he lamented that the place was not fit for such gathering and that even their own dress code contradicted everything.

**OFFICIALS OUGHT TO** know that reality always contradicts pretense or false life. The fact of the matter is that the Presidents's nationwide did not come as a surprise. It had been planned for 2020, but was postponed because of COVID-19 and other official engagements.

**EVEN PRIOR TO** the start of the exercise this year, it was formally announced. So we are also surprised that county superintendents and their lawmakers would not prepared adequately to host the President and his entourage. Are Grand Bassa County Superintendent Janjay Vakpah, Senator Nyonblee Kangar Lawrence and her colleague lawmakers from the county saying they couldn't find paint in Buchanan, the provincial capital to give the town hall a facelift for President Weah's meeting with citizens? Quiet disappointing!

**LAWMAKERS SHOULD NOT** only focus on personal projects in their constituents but also the county they represent, especially, when the President is paying an official visit. He should be received and hosted in line with the esteem ascribes to the Presidency.

**LEADERS SHOULD DESIST** from dressing up and parading themselves in public shamelessly while the towns, villages, counties and people they represent remain in appalling conditions. This is not leadership but sheer hypocrisy!

**FROM RIVER GEE**, Grand Cape Mount to Grand Bassa, the story is the same: Neglect and poorly managed infrastructure that does not properly portray the places they represent as leaders. Nevertheless, members of the Liberian Legislature preside over the national budget every year and apportion the national cake, even allotting themselves bigger shares.

**IT'S TIME THEY** change their leader style by placing the people and places they represent above personal interest to demonstrate the true leadership they ought to be.

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# COMMENTARY

By Nimrod Zalk

## How Africa Should Approach Trade and Industrialization

**CAPE TOWN** - The African Continental Free Trade Area, launched on January 1, has been hailed as a "game changer." By bringing together 55 countries - with a total population of 1.3 billion and a combined GDP of \$3.4 trillion - in a single market, many believe the AfCFTA could fuel Africa's recovery from the COVID-19 crisis, spur structural transformation, and drive rapid industrialization. The World Bank estimates that trade integration could raise Africa's income by 7% by 2035, lifting 30 million people out of extreme poverty.

Those are lofty expectations. Unfortunately, lowering trade barriers alone will not enable Africa to fulfill them.

The AfCFTA will eliminate tariffs on 90% of goods and reduce non-tariff barriers. Liberalization, the logic goes, will lead to a sharp increase in continental trade, with production - especially of manufactured goods - rising to meet growing export demand. And higher exports would encourage longer-term industrialization, by bringing about more efficient allocation of resources and economies of scale.

But there is a fundamental flaw in this logic. Tariffs are not the main impediment to continental trade, faster industrialization, and structural transformation in Africa. In fact, trade tariffs are already low. Thus, much emphasis is placed on addressing non-tariff barriers, particularly infrastructure gaps and customs-related transaction costs.

AfCFTA-linked steps to streamline customs procedures and curb rent-seeking at borders will go some way toward boosting efficiency. But what is really needed is large-scale investment in physical customs infrastructure and modernization of information-technology systems. The continent's real problem is its underdeveloped production capacity.

Africa's fixed investment, share of manufacturing in GDP, and agricultural productivity lag behind other developing regions, albeit with considerable cross-country variation. Moreover, the continent's persistently low share in global exports exacerbates the balance-of-payments constraint to structural transformation, which depends on rising imports, particularly of the capital goods needed to upgrade agriculture and manufacturing.

Likewise, the mismatch between what African countries export (chiefly commodities and semi-processed goods) and import (primarily consumer and capital goods) significantly impedes continental trade. Why would Ghana trade cocoa with Ivory Coast, if neither country can process it? Why would Zambia export its copper to the Democratic Republic of the Congo, which also produces - but does not process - copper?

Thus, at least as important as the AfCFTA's

trade-related provisions are macroeconomic and industrial policies that aim explicitly to accelerate structural transformation in agriculture and manufacturing and associated infrastructure investment. Some experts, including International Monetary Fund researchers, recognize that industrial policies are needed to make the most of the AfCFTA. But these measures are regarded as ancillary, rather than a prerequisite for progress that must be accompanied by broader investment in energy, water and sanitation, and transport infrastructure (roads, rails, and ports). Only then can intraregional trade really take off. Yet, as it stands, the African Development Bank estimates the continent's annual infrastructure funding gap to be between \$68 billion and \$108 billion.

To be clear, Africa can achieve industrialization and structural transformation, despite what naysayers claim. In fact, since 1990, manufacturing's share of employment has grown in a number of African countries (though it has been accompanied by only modest value-added growth). African countries can build on their accumulated manufacturing experience to seize opportunities to produce for one another and the rest of the world.

Heavy industries like basic metals, chemicals, and cement production can benefit from proximity to regional markets. There is considerable scope for processing agricultural output into food and beverage products for the region and beyond. Global shifts and shocks create opportunities for Africa to expand its participation in value chains, from apparel to automotive assembly and pharmaceutical products.

Structural transformation is not limited to manufacturing. As three eminent Africa scholars argue, the continent must also reverse its relative neglect of agricultural output and exports and close the agricultural productivity gap with other regions. This is essential to raise incomes in rural areas, where extreme poverty is concentrated, and to boost agricultural exports (thereby loosening the balance-of-payments constraint to growth).

In particular, high-value agriculture such as horticulture is labor-intensive and has the scope for the kinds of productivity gains traditionally associated with manufacturing. Ethiopia and Kenya have already proved this with their exports of fresh flowers and vegetables, and South Africa has done the same with citrus.

For any of this to work, however, African leaders must look beyond the trade-related elements of the AfCFTA and implement a broader strategy, based on developmental regionalism, that aims explicitly to upgrade productive capacity. Only then can Africa achieve the structural transformation it so badly needs and kick-start trade in the process.

# OPINION

By Slawomir Sierakowski

## Putin's Sound and Fury

**W**ARSAW - Russian President Vladimir Putin's recent annual address on the state of his country was so ostentatiously threatening as to sound reassuring. Not only did he forbid the West from crossing red lines; he announced that he himself would determine where those lines are. He did not specify whether he would inform anyone else - as if it had always been the Creator, not politicians, marking red lines in the past.

He seemingly played chicken with himself - certainly not with the chronically listless West. Few will believe Putin when he suggests that Russia is threatened by the might of the European Union, which cannot even deal with Hungary. The same goes even for the United States. Though President Joe Biden's administration has just imposed new sanctions on Russia, these appear to be even more symbolic than those levied by Donald Trump - the president elected with Russian help. With the new sanctions, the Russian ruble depreciated for two days but then shot up in value.

Not even Russians will find Putin's threats compelling. That doesn't mean they will rush to depose him (such moves have always meant trouble, usually resulting in an even worse regime). But there is little indication that Russians will respond as they did after the annexation of Crimea, when Putin's popularity shot up.

After all, Russia's theft of Crimea and eastern Ukraine's Donbas region hasn't benefited Russia or its people. After seizing and devastating 7% of Ukraine's territory, the Kremlin now must maintain those territorial gains by financing mercenaries, building additional infrastructure (like the giant bridge from the Russian mainland to Crimea), and paying benefits to local residents unable to live and work normally.

Moreover, Russia has lost - possibly forever - the goodwill it once enjoyed in Ukrainian society, which historically functioned within the Russian cultural sphere. (The same kind of cultural "divorce" is also now underway in Belarus.) Ukrainians watched Russian TV, listened to Russian music, and bought Russian consumer goods; hardly anyone - at least east of Kyiv - was excited about Ukrainian identity. But that has all changed. No Ukrainian politician has done as much as Putin to unite Ukrainians around the idea of Ukrainian nationhood.

Russia's aggression has also led Ukraine to expand and consolidate its army, pursue deeper cultural, economic, and political integration with the West, and enact domestic reforms (albeit sluggishly). Putin has even managed to turn pro-Russian politicians like Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky into heroes of the fight for independence from Russia.

The Russian leader's next achievement most likely will come in the form of improved polling numbers for Zelensky's flagging political party, followed by his re-election. With the pro-Russian Opposition Platform - For Life party currently leading in opinion polls, this outcome seemed uncertain until recently. But Putin, that miracle worker, has all but ensured that Russian-aligned forces will lose support.

Elsewhere, Putin's expanding list of achievements includes ruining political and economic relations with the Czech Republic, which recently expelled 60 Russian diplomats. Before revelations that the Kremlin was behind an explosion at a Czech ammunition depot in 2014 that killed two people, the country's president, Miloš Zeman, was perhaps the most pro-Putin politician in Europe, and Prime Minister Andrej Babiš previously opposed extending EU sanctions against Russia. The Czech Republic has now excluded Rosatom, Russia's state nuclear energy corporation, from its public procurement tenders, too. And, following his latest round of bluster, Putin can forget about distributing the Russian-made Sputnik V COVID-19 vaccine widely in the EU.

Likewise, the Nord Stream 2 pipeline to deliver Russian natural gas to Germany via the Baltic Sea is now hanging by a thread. If the project is not completed by the time of Germany's federal election in September, it could become a mere tourist attraction for divers. The German Greens are currently leading in the polls, and both the German press and German society want the project scrapped. Even if the pipeline were to be completed, as Maxim Samorukov of the Carnegie Moscow Center notes, it is hard to believe that it would be fully used, given that its original purpose (for Russia) was to exclude Ukraine.

Though we don't know the exact costs of Russia's recent deployment of almost 150,000 soldiers, heavy equipment, and field hospitals to the Ukrainian border, there is no doubt that it came at considerable expense to an economy that is about the same size as that of New York. Russians are acutely aware of these costs. After experiencing ten years of falling real (inflation-adjusted) wages, few are still moved by Putin's fresh bursts of saber-rattling.

It didn't have to be this way. Putin's Russia could have chosen modernization, rather than murder. Putin's political lodestar, the Soviet Union, also chose the latter path, and Russia today increasingly resembles nothing so much as the late USSR, ruled at the time by a different KGB man, Yuri Andropov. Russia has achieved exactly as much in Ukraine as the USSR achieved in its 1979-89 war in Afghanistan.

Now, Russia's Minister of Defense, Sergei Shoigu, has announced that Russia will start withdrawing its armies from the Ukrainian border region. Apparently, Putin's speech really was all sound and fury, signifying that he is losing influence both inside and outside the country.

# OP-ED

By Shashi Tharoor

## India's COVID Tsunami

**N**EW DELHI - It is humbling when a columnist must retract his words soon after penning them. Just two months ago, after India rushed millions of doses of COVID-19 vaccines to over 60 countries, I praised the country's "vaccine diplomacy." India's aspirations to be recognized as a global power had been given a real boost. Now, with more than 300,000 new cases a day and the death toll evidently much higher than reported, India is no one's idea of a global leader.

In my own defense, I was worried that India had exported three times as many vaccines as it had administered domestically. The country was clearly lagging behind its own target of immunizing 400 million people by August, after vaccinating some three million healthcare workers in a campaign that began only on January 16. "[M]ounting concern about rising case numbers, the emergence of COVID-19 variants that may not respond to existing vaccines, and an economy that has not yet fully recovered," I noted, "will intensify the challenge India confronts in fulfilling its obligations to developing countries while also meeting domestic demand."

At the time, I did not realize the scale of the challenge. The number of infections surpassed 17 million in recent days, and the official death toll now exceeds 190,000. Hospital beds are now overflowing, oxygen supplies have dwindled, vaccination centers have run out of doses, and pharmacies are unable to meet the demand for antivirals. India is reeling.

How did everything go so wrong so soon after India recovered from the first wave of the pandemic last year, resumed normal life and economic activity, and started exporting vaccines? The list of errors is long.

Begin with symbolism over substance. On national television, Prime Minister Narendra Modi urged Indians to bang plates together. Two weeks later, he instructed them to light lamps at a specific moment. Superstition replaced science-based policies in confronting the pandemic.

Modi also enlisted Hindu nationalism in the fight against COVID-19. Just as the epic Mahabharata war was won in 18 days, he claimed, India would win the war against the coronavirus in 21 days. At no point was this based on anything more than wishful thinking.

Another error was ignoring the World Health Organization's advice. From the start of the crisis, the WHO recommended a containment strategy that required testing, contact tracing, isolation, and treatment. While a handful of states, like Kerala (which recorded India's first COVID-19 case on January 30, 2020), initially implemented such measures successfully, the Modi government's ham-handed response resulted in their uneven application in several states.

Then there was over-centralization. From the first nationwide lockdown, announced by Modi in March 2020 with less than four hours' notice, the central government managed the pandemic under obscure provisions of the Epidemic Diseases Act and the Disaster Management Act, which allowed it to ride roughshod over India's federal structure. Instead of delegating India's 28 state governments the authority to design strategies tailored to local conditions, the central government tried to manage COVID-19 by decree from Delhi, with calamitous results.

And, no surprise, the initial lockdown was mismanaged. State governments, the public, and even central government officials were caught unprepared. Chaos resulted, with some 30 million migrant workers, stranded without work in cities, forced to walk home, sometimes for days. It is estimated that 198 people died along the way. Some five million micro and small enterprises closed, unable to recover from the shutdown. India's unemployment reached the highest levels ever recorded.

As the crisis began to slip out of control, the central government, following then-US President Donald Trump's precedent, passed off more and more responsibilities to state governments, without adequate funding. The state governments struggled to mobilize doctors, nurses, health workers, testing kits, personal protective equipment, hospital beds, ventilators, oxygen cylinders, and medicines to fight the pandemic. The government mobilized a huge amount of funds for a new relief entity called "PM-CARES," but to this day there is no public accounting of how much money is in the opaque PM-CARES Fund and where its resources have been allocated.

When the pandemic seemed to have waned, the authorities settled into complacency, taking no precautions or preventive measures against a possible second wave that many warned could be more devastating than the first. Testing, tracking, and isolation of infected people and their contacts fell rapidly into disuse by the end of 2020. And just when people stopped following appropriate behavioral guidelines, the virus evolved an extremely infectious variant. Super-spreader events proliferated: election rallies and religious festivals packed together unmasked throngs. The contagion raged.

Although India produces 60% of the world's vaccines, the government took no steps to scale up production of the two COVID-19 vaccines cleared for manufacture in the country. Nor did it permit the import of foreign vaccines, help expand available manufacturing facilities, or license other Indian firms to produce doses. India launched its vaccination drive nearly two months after the United Kingdom, but by April, only 37% of health workers, and barely 1.3% of India's 1.4 billion people, had been fully vaccinated. Only 8% had received at least one vaccine shot.

Here, too, the authorities initially bet on centralization, and its refusal to grant emergency-use approval to vaccines from abroad led to a nationwide shortage of vaccines by mid-April. It was only at this point that the government delegated the vaccine roll-out to state governments and public and private hospitals and permitted the import of vaccines approved by the United States, the UK, the European Union, Russia, and Japan. Even then, the central government failed to distribute vaccines equitably to the various states, resulting in some of the worst-affected (like opposition-ruled Maharashtra and Kerala) running short of vaccines as cases peaked.

# MORE HEADLINE NEWS

# MORE HEADLINE NEWS

## Defense, Agriculture sign MOU

A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) has been signed between the Ministry of National Defense (MoD) and the Ministry of Agriculture (MoA) that will lead to the re-activation of

address Liberia's food insecurity challenges.

Speaking at the signing ceremony, Agriculture Minister, Hon. Jeanine Milly Cooper, expressed thrill on bringing to fruition the President's mandate of enhanced collaboration

provide job opportunities for former soldiers of the Armed Forces of Liberia.

In brief remarks, the Minister of National Defense, Daniel D. Ziankahn, expressed great desire to see the veterans playing a crucial role in solving Liberia's food insecurity problem and pledged the Ministry's fullest support in sustaining the collaboration between the MoD and MoA. "When the military is not fighting war, it should be engaged with operations other than war," he emphasized.

The MoU seeks to develop a comprehensive strategy through the establishment of vocational training program for present and future veterans. The MoU covers the areas of capacity building of present and future veterans, of aiding present and future veterans in developing economic interest in the Agricultural sector, and of renewing interest and commitment to the Agricultural sector.

According to the MoU, "The Ministries of Defense and Agriculture shall share experience and provide expertise within a framework that supports agriculture production."



the Agriculture Company of the Armed Forces of Liberia (AFL).

The MoU comes in response to President George Weah's request of establishing the AFL Agriculture Company to help

between the MoD and MoA to address Liberia's challenge of food insecurity.

She said both ministries will work along with the National Bureau of Veteran Affairs in executing the agricultural program that will further

## Ambassador McCarthy addresses Liberian medical students

On Saturday, April 24, U.S. Ambassador Michael McCarthy delivered the keynote address at the Liberia Medical Students' Association (LMSA) 48th Inauguration Ceremony.

According to the United States Embassy near Monrovia, the event took place at the A.M. Dogliotti College of Medicine (AMDCM). The Ambassador was joined by University of Liberia President Dr. Julius Nelson, Vice President for Health Sciences Dr. Bernice Dahn, AMDCM Dean Dr. Lawrence Sherman, LMSA President Diafei Giddings, and others.

A release posted on the Embassy's website says Ambassador McCarthy expressed his appreciation for being able to address the next generation of doctors, nurses, and healthcare professionals preparing to serve Liberia, adding "I applaud you on your choice of career, which you elected

knowing the hard work, responsibility, and dedication that would be required." He also noted the long history of Liberian medical practitioners impacting the profession, "Be inspired by some of your compatriots who have blazed the path of medicine before you, to better the condition of humanity."

The U.S. Embassy Monrovia hosts a number of U.S. health agencies, working alongside Liberian medical practitioners, including the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the U.S. Agency for International

▶ CONT'D ON PAGE 11



## Rep. Korlubah justifies criticism against Pres. Weah

By Lewis S. Teh

Opposition Lawmaker Yekeh Korlubah, of Montesrrodo County Electoral District 10 says his criticism of President George M. Weah is as a result of the President's bad handling of the State thereby, subjecting citizens to abject poverty.

The comment comes after the Supreme Court here instructed the House Representatives to rescind a suspension slammed against the lawmaker recently for ranting insults on President Weah.

Appearing on OK FM Monday, April 26, 2021, Rep. Korlubah said sometimes he regrets making bad utterances against the Presidency, and Mr. Weah particularly, saying "Let me say this; the day the CDC people stop provoking me, then I will refine myself and stop making bad utterances."

According to him, all his

at the house nothing happened then people expecting me to be calm, no I won't be if I must be refined then CDCians must stop provoking", the outspoken critic of the Weah administration maintains. Korlubah.

"We may come back to what I'm doing, and what I've been doing before if people want me to change than I should be left alone, it borders down on the shoulders of the government to maintain this change", he continues, and declares himself a CDCian by extension.

At the same time he refutes comments of bringing the House to public disrepute, rather, saying it's the very leadership of the House of Representatives that continues to bring that august body to disrepute.

He cites harmonization of staffers' salaries, saying imagine a House of Representatives refusing to pay a private citizen,



utterances against the Presidency are meant to stop the President's followers from provoking him. "Who say I don't miss my family, who say I don't regret my actions at times, but all those are done because I'm being provoked by CDCians."

Rep. Korlubah claims that on countless occasions, he was harassed, intimidated, and provoked, but nothing came out of it, noting the police failed to investigate those circumstances. He similarly accuses the leadership of the House of Representatives of failing to intervene, justifying these are factors responsible for his bad utterances.

"Mr. Cummings and myself nearly got killed in Grand Gedeh, nothing happened, I went to Sky FM and was attacked by CDCians, still nothing happen; people shot

who had worked, using his personal money to pre-finance the painting of our building, and the Speaker has refused to pay the young man's money; that is the clear definition of bringing the House to public disrepute.

"We need to talk, because when the opposition are weak, the ruling government will destroy the entire country, especially the case with this CDC government where President Weah is listening to very few people like [his] Ministers of State and Finance, among others' This why we can't be silent, President Weah must know that there is an opposition", says Rep. Korlubah.

He describes President Weah as his friend, and publicly assures they will settle their differences, but adds, "If they push me, I will push back harder." -Editing by Jonathan Browne



# REPUBLIC OF LIBERIA

## ENVIRONMENT PROTECTION AGENCY

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To provide consultancy to develop and validate 15-year resource mobilization strategy for the sustainability of the Environmental Knowledge Management System (EKMS)

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Project Title: Strengthening National Capacities to Meet Global Environmental Obligations with the Framework of Sustainable Development Priorities

<b>Job Title</b>	<b>National Consultant</b>		
<b>Division/Department</b>	<b>Environmental Protection Agency/EPA</b>		
<b>Programme/Project Number</b>	<b>GEF ID number: 9390 (Cross -Cutting Capacity Development Project/CCCD)</b>		
<b>Activity Result</b>	<b>Resource mobilization strategy</b>		
<b>Assignment</b>	<b>Develop and validate 15-year Resource Mobilization Strategy for the sustainability of the Environmental Knowledge Management System (EKMS)</b>		
<b>Location</b>	<b>Monrovia, Liberia</b>		
<b>Report to</b>	<b>National Project Director Executive Director, EPA</b>	<b>Consultancy Duration:</b>	<b>2 Months</b>

### 1.0 BACKGROUND

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) through the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) obtained funding from the Global Environmental Facility (GEF) to support the Cross-Cutting Capacity Development (CCCD) Project for Liberia. The project will support the Government of Liberia to Strengthening National Capacities to Meet Global Environmental Obligations within the Framework of Sustainable Development Priorities. The project has four components:

1. Integrated Environmental Knowledge Management System (EKMS)
2. Enhanced institutional and technical capacities for mainstreaming
3. Improving awareness of global environmental values
4. Updating the National Capacity Self-Assessment (NCSA)

The EPA and the UNDP through the Cross-Cutting Capacity Development Project intends to recruit the service of a National Consultant, to: Develop and validate 15-year Resource Mobilization Strategy for the sustainability of the EKMS. This project is in line with the GEF-6 CCCD Strategy objective 1, 3, and 5 which call for countries to: a) integrate global environmental needs into management information systems and monitoring, b) integrate MEA provisions into national policy, legislative, and regulatory frameworks, and c) update NCSAs, respectively. The goal of this project is for Liberia to make better decisions to meet and sustain global environmental obligations. This requires the country to have the capacity to coordinate efforts, as well as best practices for integrating global environmental priorities into planning, decision-making, and reporting processes. To this end, the objective of this project is to strengthen a targeted set of national capacities to deliver and sustain global environmental outcomes within the framework of sustainable development priorities. The project will be carried out via four linked components. Component 1: calls for the establishment of an integrated Environmental Knowledge Management System to meet global environment and sustainable development priorities, Component 2: focuses on enhanced institutional and technical capacities to mainstream, develop, and utilize policies for implementation of the three Rio Conventions, Component 3: works to improved environmental attitudes and values for the global environment, and Component 4: is the updating of the National Capacity Self-Assessment (NCSA). The project will take an adaptive collaborative management (ACM) approach to implementation, which calls for stakeholders to take an early and proactive role in the mainstreaming exercises, as well as to help identify and solve unexpected implementation barriers and challenges. By taking an ACM approach, project activities and outputs can be more legitimately modified and adapted to maintain timely and cost-effective project performance and delivery. As a National Implementation Modality (NIM) project, its management team will be seated at the EPA.

### Activity Summary

This first component of the project focuses on the establishment of an environmental knowledge management system by integrating and reconciling relevant existing systems. A key feature of this system is that it seeks to use the latest tools and innovations, including technological, to access and create new knowledge that would allow for better decisions to be made to protect the global environment. Not only will this component seek to develop this institutional mechanism, its objective will also provide for a comprehensive assessment of training needs to manage data and information is undertaken to ensure a good design of a long-term training Programme and curriculum. Particular attention will be given to training on the use of the EKMS and environmental data, information, and knowledge for integrating as a result of lessons learned through its early implementation (i.e., trainings) and is intended to be applied for post-project trainings.

### Terms of Reference for a Consultancy Service for

Develop and validate 15-year resource mobilization strategy for the sustainability of the EKMS

This TOR defines the scope and requirements of an individual consultancy service to develop a new resource mobilization strategy for the sustainability of the EKMS.

### 2. Objectives

The main objective of this national consultancy is to develop and validate 15-year resource mobilization strategy for the sustainability of the EKMS.

### 3. Scope of work

The scope of the consultancy service shall include reviewing existing documents of resource mobilization, developing an operationalization mechanism and providing technical support/guidance for resource mobilization. It will also involve preparation of a catalogue of donors (appropriate to the EKMS objectives).

### 4. Tasks to be performed

Specific tasks of the consultancy will include:

- Read documents and consult with CCCD Project team to better understand the vision, mission and focus of the Environmental Knowledge Management System and any past resource mobilization efforts (including the existing strategy), best practices, lessons learned and challenges encountered.
- Conduct a detailed analysis of potential global and local donors to map the feasibility of securing thematic funding. Map donors' strategic areas of interest, funds available, and grantees, funding windows, requirements and guidelines and interest in funding key areas. Along these lines, also explore opportunities for partnerships (and mobilizing & leveraging resources) from other partners like private sector
- Recommend how to develop and maintain strategic partnerships and engagement with key donors, (past, present and future), including preparation of a specific strategy for involvement of the private sectors.
- On the basis of the analysis from above, develop a 15 years resource mobilization strategy with priority fundraising targets, and responsibilities over the next 15 years.

- Provide coaching in the development/initial implementation of resource mobilization strategies. This includes preparation of concept notes to approach donors.

- Facilitate resource mobilization strategy validation stakeholder meeting

### 5. Duration of the task

The duration for this short term consultancy work will be for 40 working days commencing from the date of signature of the contract and the tasks will be completed by the 30 June 2021.

### 6. Supervision, Reporting and Deliverables

The consultant will be directly supervised by and will be reporting to the National Project Director through the CCCD Project team/Program Manager. The consultant is expected to provide regular updates of progress to the bi-weekly management meetings.

The following deliverables are expected from the consultant:

- A work plan showing the assignment's important processes, activities and milestones
- A comprehensive resource mobilization strategy that includes an overview of the situation, an analysis of past fundraising experience, explores future opportunities and strategies, details workflow processes and outlines a time-bound action plan
  - An annex that maps donor interests, priorities, funding windows and points to clear actions that should be taken to mobilize funds and develop/maintain relationships with these donors
  - An annex that outlines a series of fundraising materials that need to be produced to secure funding/raise for the system sustainability
  - An action plan that outlines clear time lines for the action proposed
  - A plan for building the capacity of key staff in mobilizing and leveraging resources and developing and maintaining partnerships

### 7. Qualifications and experiences required

Developing a resource mobilization strategy requires a high level technical/professional expertise and proven experiences. The Individual Consultant interested in this work is required to have at least the following qualifications:

- Education: Holder of at least a Bachelor's Degree in the social or natural sciences, economics, development studies or related field.
- Experience: At least five years' experience in the development sector, preferably in fundraising, resource mobilization and partnership building. Sound understanding and application of development management or strategic planning concepts, methodologies and tools
- Language: Fluency in spoken and written English is essential.
- Excellent interpersonal, communication, presentation and writing skills required.

### 8. Remuneration and schedule of payment

Proposals must be expressed in lump Sum Amount which must be all-inclusive. All costs that could possibly be incurred by the consultant, must be factored into the final amounts submitted in the proposal.

Payment shall be made according to the following deliverables:

- Twenty per cent (20%) after the submission and the acceptance of the Inception report;
- Forty per cent (40%) after the submission and the acceptance of the draft report.
- Forty per cent (40%) after the submission and the acceptance of the final report.

### PAYMENT MODALITIES Fees and payments

Interested consultants should provide their requested fee rates when they submit their expressions of interest, in USD. The EPA will then negotiate and finalize contracts. Fee payments will be made upon acceptance and approval by the EPA of planned deliverables, based on the following payment schedule:

Upon submission of inception report	20%
Upon submission of draft Methodology Report	40%
Upon submission of final Methodology Report	40%

### 9. Applications

Interested individual consultants satisfying the required qualification and skills are invited to submit their application in soft and hard copies (Technical and Financial proposal, and CV) with a cover letter to the contact below:

Note: The proposal should provide the following information:

- Technical proposal: Outline and methodology for undertaking the development of Resource Mobilization Strategy as well as the detailed work plan showing the assignment's important activities and milestones
- Financial proposal: including a detailed quotation for the development of Resource Mobilization Strategy showing all necessary costs.
- Contact details of three past performance references
- Updated CV of consultant, including relevant work experience and qualifications

All applications package must be attention to the below address in both soft and hard copy:

Rebecca E. Doo  
Assistant Manager, Procurement  
Environment Protection Agency (EPA)  
4th Street, Sinkor  
1000 Monrovia, 10 Liberia  
P.O. Box 4024

Or through email (rdoo@epa.gov.lr), Closing date for submission of application is 4PM, May 6, 2021. Any submission coming/received after this deadline will not be given consideration. Only submissions that meet the requirement/criteria as contained in TOR will be considered for evaluation.

NOTE: This information is also posted on the below websites: www.emansion.gov.lr, www.ekmsliberia.info., www.epa.gov.lr, and or local dailies.



# REPUBLIC OF LIBERIA ENVIRONMENT PROTECTION AGENCY



P.O. Box 4024  
4th Street Sinkor, Tubman Boulevard,  
1000 Monrovia, 10 Liberia

**CALL FOR EXPRESSION OF INTEREST**

To provide consultancy to design and print environmental awareness posters, brochures and fact sheet.

Terms of Reference

REFERENCE NO: EOI/CCCD/EPA-2021-004

Project Title: Strengthening National Capacities to Meet Global Environmental Obligations with the Framework of Sustainable Development Priorities

<b>Job Title</b>	<b>National Consultant</b>		
<b>Division/Department</b>	<b>Environmental Protection Agency/EPA</b>		
<b>Programme/Project Number</b>	<b>GEF ID number: 9390 (Cross -Cutting Capacity Development Project/CCCD)</b>		
<b>Activity Result</b>	<b>Brochures and articles on the Rio Conventions</b>		
<b>Assignment</b>	<b>Consultancy to design and print environmental awareness posters, brochures and fact sheet.</b>		
<b>Location</b>	<b>Monrovia, Liberia</b>		
<b>Report to</b>	<b>National Project Director Executive Director, EPA</b>	<b>Consultancy Duration:</b>	<b>21 days</b>

**1.0 BACKGROUND**

Liberia has undertaken numerous initiatives to address environmental issues. Despite the achievements Liberia made, Liberia continues to face important challenges to meeting environmental goals. As a Rio Convention mainstreaming project, the proposed strategy sets out to meet barriers identified in Liberia’s 2006 National Capacity Self-Assessment (NCSA), was undertaken through a consultative process and participatory approach that involved numerous stakeholders from various sectors. Through the inclusive and consultative process of the NCSA, stakeholders identified a number of areas that explain the difficulty in fulfilling the obligations of the Rio Conventions. Specific among the barriers identified was inadequate public awareness and education/training. This barrier cut across the three Rio Conventions.

Awareness raising of the global environmental value is critical to addressing the institutional sustainability of project outputs by raising an overall understanding and greater value of how addressing global environmental obligations under the Rio Convention contribute to addressing important and immediate socio-economic development priorities. This activity is critical element of the project’s strategy to ensure long-term sustainability of the capacities developed under the project. As outlined above, there is inadequate understanding of the importance that global environmental values contribution to sustainable development, and even fewer that are responsible for strategic planning, decision-making, and policy formulation.

**PURPOSE:**

EPA calls for Expressions of Interest (EOI) from national firms, who have the capacity to produce/print as detailed in the scope of work. Firms and institutions, associations and/or consortiums may express interest in all lots, individual lots or parts thereof. Firms having presence and experience within Liberia are highly encouraged to participate.

**2.0 SCOPE OF WORK**

Seeking for the services of quality printers that can design and print environmental awareness posters, brochures and fact sheets. The environmental awareness materials will comprise of a variety of material to be designed and then printed in large quantities. Specific tasks for the designer/contractor:

After receiving the final text for the publication, the designer will:

1. Design and print posters (single sided print)
2. Design and print standard size brochures (double sided print)
3. Design and print fact sheet (single sided)

While performing the different print functions the printer shall also be responsible for:

- a. Design and layout of printed materials
- b. Revise the selected layout as directed by EPA;
- c. Submit printing layouts for approval by EPA;
- d. Ensure all corrections have been inserted;
- e. Submit the print work to EPA for proofreading;
- f. Submit electronic files to obtain a final sign off from EPA before printing proofs.

**3.0 Deliverables in 21 Days**

1. Printed 2500 copies of environmental awareness Posters
2. 8000 copies of environmental brochures
3. 10,000 copies of fact sheets

**4.0 Payment Plan**

1. Payments to the consultant/service Provider shall be made upon the acceptance

of the deliverables to the client as mentioned in the Request for Expression of Interest.

2. Interested consultants should provide their requested fee rates when they submit their expressions of interest, in USD. The EPA will then negotiate and finalize contracts. Fee payments will be made upon acceptance and approval by the EPA of planned deliverables,

**5.0 Qualifications**

1. Contractor must be a printing firm with prior experience of similar task, and have the latest graphic design software and a modern printing facility;
2. Contractor must be experienced in commercial print management;
3. Contractor must have experience in designing multiple language versions;
4. Contractor must guarantee the highest quality finished printed product as per specifications;
5. Contractor must guarantee timely delivery of printed materials.

**6.0 INFORMATION REQUIRED IN THE RESPONSE**

The provision of the pre-qualification information should include all relevant documents that are essentially required for meeting the pre-qualification criteria as well as enable the project management to undertake the evaluation. Interested companies/Printing Press must provide the information and evidence that they are qualified to perform the printing services required during the course of the proposed project.

All companies/firms that wish to participate must submit his/her updated business registration certificate, tax clearance, technical and financial proposals.

1. Company Profile - presentation of your company or firm including number of staff, years in business, system for quality assurance and any experience with any UN organization and/or international organizations or local organization; (please include brochures and literatures as may be appropriate)
2. Samples of printed material in soft and/or hard form
3. Evidence of previous 3 years of experience
4. Legal registration of the company

All applications package must be attention to the below address in both soft and hard copy

Rebecca E. Doo  
Assistant Manager, Procurement  
Environment Protection Agency (EPA)  
4th Street, Sinkor  
1000 Monrovia, 10 Liberia  
P.O. Box 4024

Or through email (rdoo@epa.gov.lr), Closing date for submission of application is 4PM, May6, 2021. Any submission coming/received after this deadline will not be given consideration. Only complete submission hat meet the requirement/criteria as contained in TOR will be considered for evaluation.

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# Français

## Bientôt, d'énormes investissements pour réduire le chômage

Le président George Manneh Weah annoncera sous peu deux énormes investissements qui relanceront massivement l'emploi dans le secteur privé, à en croire le ministre d'État aux affaires présidentielles, Nathaniel McGill.

Selon le ministre Nathaniel McGill, toutes les parties, à savoir le gouvernement et les investisseurs ont déjà finalisé les accords. Il ne reste plus qu'au président Weah de faire l'annonce, ce qui sera le cas dans quelques semaines.

Au cours d'une émission sur Spoon FM (qui est aussi une télévision en ligne) le vendredi 23 avril, le ministre McGill a déclaré qu'il ne pouvait pas fournir plus de détails, car seul le président en a l'autorité.

Il s'est donc contenté de dire que l'investissement permettra à des centaines de milliers de citoyens d'avoir soit un emploi permanent ou d'être des contractuels, tout en ajoutant que cela réduira considérablement le taux de chômage et la misère

à laquelle sont confrontés les Libériens dans tout le pays.

« En tant que gouvernement, nous sommes très préoccupés par le chômage qui fait des ravages au sein de notre société. Le président est très préoccupé et il continue de tendre la main et d'encourager les investissements étrangers directs dans son pays. Dieu merci, nous devons dire ce soir que deux énormes investissements sont à venir. Ce n'est pas moi qui l'annoncerai,

mais c'est Monsieur le Président. Ces investissements changeront considérablement la donne tant pour le gouvernement que pour les citoyens », a-t-il déclaré.

Donnant les raisons du retard des investissements dans le pays depuis l'ascension au pouvoir de l'administration actuelle, M. McGill a expliqué que quand le gouvernement dirigé par la

▶ CONT'D ON PAGE 9



## Côte d'Ivoire : Voici ce que va faire le gouvernement d'ici à 2023

Ils sont désormais connus. Le programme de travail et les actions prioritaires du gouvernement Patrick Achi.

« La Côte d'Ivoire doit être propulsée au rang de pays à revenu intermédiaire de la tranche supérieure d'ici à 2023 », a déclaré le Premier ministre Patrick Achi, le vendredi 23 avril 2021 lors de

la cérémonie de clôture du séminaire gouvernemental.

Pour atteindre cet objectif, cap sera mis sur les actions à mener dans le courant de 2021. La priorité selon le Premier Ministre.

« [...] Je demande aux membres du gouvernement d'approfondir, en interne, leurs travaux afin de transmettre à la

Primature, d'ici 8 jours, un tableau détaillé des réalisations prévues en 2021, avec des indicateurs de performance chiffrés et vérifiables. », a-t-il déclaré.

Dans son programme d'actions pour l'année 2021, le gouvernement accordera un intérêt plus important aux problématiques du capital humain, de l'accès universel aux biens et services publics essentiels (l'électricité, l'eau potable, la santé, l'habitat, la mobilité, la connexion digitale).

Par ailleurs, l'équipe Patrick Achi va s'attaquer à l'amélioration du cadre de vie des populations, à la formation, à l'emploi des jeunes, à l'autonomisation des femmes mais surtout à la lutte contre la pauvreté, le renforcement de la cohésion sociale, la réconciliation nationale, la protection des droits humains, la justice, sécurité des biens et des personnes, la lutte contre la corruption et la lutte contre le terrorisme.

Ce qui sera fait dans le

▶ CONT'D ON PAGE 9



## Éditorial

### Le président Weah est dégoûté

Les fonctionnaires de l'administration Weah semblent tromper le peuple et le président qui s'en rend compte au fur et à mesure qu'il visite le pays.

Récemment, dans le comté de Grand Cape, le président Weah a été désagréablement surpris en se rendant compte que le sénateur Varney Sherman et d'autres législateurs du comté n'ont pas de domicile ou de lieu pour accueillir une délégation officielle dans le comté qu'ils représentent.

Maintenant dans le comté de Grand Bassa, le président Weah n'était pas que déçu, il était littéralement bouleversé par le fait que les responsables du comté, y compris le surintendant et les législateurs, n'avaient aucun lieu pour le recevoir à part une mairie mal tenue. Il a terminé la troisième étape de sa tournée nationale déçue.

M. Weah: « Regardez ceci, regardez ceci, regardez ceci, regardez autour de vous, regardez ceci et regardez-nous, regardez-nous (décrivant à quel point ils étaient magnifiquement habillés par rapport à l'infrastructure dans laquelle ils étaient assis et l'environnement). Parfois, il faut que nous ayons une conscience et ayons honte de nous même. Cet endroit ne représente rien. Vous ne pouvez pas être les représentants des gens et recevoir le Président et l'ensemble du gouvernement ici. Ce n'est pas possible ».

Jetant un regard autour de la salle dans laquelle se tenait la réunion, il a déploré que l'endroit ne soit pas adapté à un tel rassemblement et que même leur propre vêtements contredisait tout.

Les fonctionnaires doivent savoir que la réalité contredit toujours la fausseté. La vérité est que la tournée nationale du président n'a pas été une surprise. Elle était prévue pour 2020, mais elle a été reportée en raison du COVID-19 et d'autres engagements officiels.

Même avant le début de cette tournée cette année, elle avait été officiellement annoncée. Nous sommes donc également surpris que les surintendants de comté et les législateurs ne se soient pas suffisamment préparés à accueillir le président et son entourage. Le surintendant du comté de Grand Bassa,

Janjay Vakpah, la sénatrice Nyonblee Kangar Lawrence et ses collègues législateurs du comté veulent-ils nous dire qu'ils n'ont pas trouvé de peinture à Buchanna, la capitale provinciale, pour donner à l'hôtel de ville une cure de jouvence pour la réunion du président Weah avec les citoyens? Comme c'est décevant!

Les législateurs ne devraient pas se concentrer sur leurs projets personnels seulement, il faut qu'ils pensent aussi à leurs électeurs, il faut qu'ils pensent aussi à leur comté qu'ils représentent, en particulier lorsque le président effectue une visite officielle. Il doit être reçu et hébergé dans le respect et l'estime réservés à la présidence.

À quoi bon de se vêtir très élégamment et se promener partout pendant que les villes, les villages, les comtés et les personnes qu'ils représentent restent dans des conditions épouvantables. Ce n'est pas du leadership mais de l'hypocrisie!

River Gee, Grand Cape Mount et Grand Bassa, c'est la même histoire: négligence et infrastructures mal gérées et délabrées au point qu'on a l'impression qu'elles ne sont pas des lieux qu'ils représentent en tant que leaders. Pourtant, les membres du pouvoir législatif libérien décident chaque année du budget national et distribuent le gâteau national, s'attribuant même des parts plus importantes.

Il est temps qu'ils changent leur style de leadership en plaçant les personnes et les lieux qu'ils représentent au-dessus de leurs intérêts personnels pour démontrer le véritable leadership qu'on attend d'eux.



# Français

## Bientôt, d'énorme

Coalition pour le changement démocratique a pris la tête du pays, les soldats de maintien de la paix de l'ONU et d'autres partenaires internationaux qui soutenaient le processus de paix et d'autres fonctionnaires ont quitté le Libéria, au point que l'administration Weah n'avait aucun choix que de repartir à zéro. « Et avant que le président puisse achever la formation de son gouvernement, il y a eu la triste et célèbre manifestation du 6 juin qui a créé de graves menaces politiques et de l'insécurité pour la paix et la stabilité de l'État, effrayant ainsi les investisseurs potentiels, qu'on a adopté une attitude attentiste ».

Selon lui, alors que le gouvernement tentait de redonner espoir aux citoyens et aux investisseurs étrangers, la pandémie de la

COVID-19 a immobilisé le monde entier. « Et maintenant, au fur et à mesure que la COVID-19 diminue, des investisseurs sérieux arrivent dans le pays avec d'énormes potentiels d'investissement. Et le président Weah a accepté de s'engager pleinement dans le processus afin que les citoyens et les personnes qualifiées puissent avoir la possibilité de travailler et de mettre de la nourriture sur leurs tables respectives pour leurs familles.

Le ministre McGill, qui fut président national du CDC, a révélé en outre que des modalités sont en cours d'élaboration pour la construction d'un nouveau centre médical John F. Kennedy.

Il a dit que des experts de bord ont conseillé au gouvernement de construire un bâtiment ultramoderne entièrement équipé, car l'actuel centre médical JFK a servi pendant plus de 50 ans et doit être remplacé.

## Côte d'Ivoire :

domaine de la santé

Sur ce point, les Ivoiriens attendent beaucoup de Patrick Achi et ses collaborateurs. Pour répondre à ces attentes, le gouvernement va rendre opérationnel le service de gynéco obstétrique du CHU de Treichville, rétablir la continuité de service du CHU de Yopougon.

Dans le secteur de l'eau et l'électricité

Depuis plusieurs semaines des difficultés en approvisionnement de l'eau potable et des coupures intempestives de l'électricité sont récurrentes dans le District d'Abidjan et des villes de l'intérieur du pays.

Pour résoudre ce problème devenu un véritable casse-tête pour les populations, plusieurs actions seront menées, a rassuré le Premier ministre. Pour cette année 2021, le gouvernement va accroître la production d'eau potable et réaliser le branchement de 200.000 dans le cadre du programme « Électricité pour tous ». La gouvernance

Le gouvernement annonce la construction, la réhabilitation et l'équipement des tribunaux, la mise en place des comités régionaux et locaux de suivi de la mise en œuvre du PND et production du rapport de performance 2021.

Aussi, des actions seront entreprises pour le dénombrement sur l'ensemble du territoire

national, pour la réalisation de l'Enquête démographique de Santé en Côte d'Ivoire (EDS), l'opérationnalisation du Programme d'Appui à la Planification territoriale (PAPT), l'intensification de la mise en œuvre du Programme national d'Appui aux Réformes institutionnelles et à la Modernisation de l'État (PRIME).

Dans le domaine de l'emploi et du capital humain

Ce sont entre autres, l'intensification de la construction et de l'équipement des établissements d'enseignement secondaire (74 collèges de proximité (MCC), neuf lycées de jeunes filles dotés d'internats et 123 collèges de proximité) pour le secteur éducation formation.

Le développement de classes passerelles au profit de 4500 enfants hors du système éducatif, la prise en compte des effets induits par le nouveau décret relatif à la suppression des cotisations des Comités de Gestion des Établissements Scolaires (COGES) et la mise en œuvre du plan stratégique national d'alphabétisation seront effectués au cours de l'année 2021.

Au terme de ce séminaire de trois jours, le Premier Ministre ivoirien, Patrick Achi, a réaffirmé l'engagement du gouvernement à mettre en œuvre ces actions annoncées pour l'amélioration des conditions de vie des populations.

## COMMENTAIRE

Par Nimrod Zalk

### Comment l'Afrique doit aborder le commerce et l'industrialisation

CAPE TOWN - La Zone de libre-échange continentale africaine, (ZLECAf), entrée en vigueur en janvier, est considérée comme un événement qui change la donne. En regroupant 55 pays au sein d'un marché unique - soit une population totale de 1,3 milliard d'habitants et un PIB combiné de 3,4 billions de dollars - un grand nombre d'acteurs estiment que la ZLECAf est capable d'accélérer la reprise de l'Afrique après la crise de la COVID-19, de stimuler la transformation structurelle et de favoriser une industrialisation rapide. La Banque mondiale estime que l'intégration commerciale pourrait faire augmenter les revenus de l'Afrique de 7 % d'ici 2035, ce qui permettrait à 30 millions de personnes de sortir de l'extrême pauvreté.

Ces prévisions sont tout à fait ambitieuses. Malheureusement, la réduction des obstacles commerciaux, à elle seule, ne permettra pas à l'Afrique de les concrétiser.

La ZLECAf va supprimer les droits de douane sur 90 % des marchandises et réduire les obstacles non tarifaires. Selon ce raisonnement, la libéralisation va conduire à une forte augmentation du commerce continental, avec une augmentation de la production - en particulier des produits manufacturés - pour répondre à une demande croissante d'exportation. En outre, des exportations plus importantes sont censées promouvoir l'industrialisation à long terme et permettre une répartition plus efficace des ressources et des économies d'échelle.

Mais ce raisonnement comporte une lacune fondamentale. Les droits de douane ne sont pas le principal obstacle au commerce continental, à une industrialisation plus rapide et à la transformation structurelle en Afrique. En fait, les droits de douane sont déjà faibles. Par conséquent, l'accent est mis sur la résolution des obstacles non tarifaires, en particulier sur les lacunes dans les infrastructures et les frais de transaction liés aux douanes.

Les mesures liées à la ZLECAf visant à rationaliser les procédures douanières et à limiter les économies reposant sur une maximisation de la rente aux frontières, vont permettre de renforcer l'efficacité. Mais ce qu'il faut véritablement mettre en place, ce sont des investissements à grande échelle, à destination des infrastructures douanières physiques et vers la modernisation des systèmes informatiques. Le véritable problème du continent réside dans le sous-développement de sa capacité de production.

Les investissements fixes en Afrique, la part de la production industrielle dans le PIB et la productivité agricole sont à la traîne par rapport aux autres régions en voie de développement, mais avec des variations considérables entre les pays. En outre, la part du continent dans les exportations mondiales, qui reste faible, aggrave la contrainte de la balance des paiements sur la transformation structurelle, qui dépend de la hausse des importations, en particulier des biens d'équipement nécessaires à la modernisation de l'agriculture et de l'industrie.

De même, la disproportion entre ce que les pays africains exportent (principalement des produits de base et des produits semi-transformés) et les importations (principalement des biens de consommation et des biens d'équipement) entrave considérablement le commerce continental. Pourquoi le Ghana vendrait-il du cacao à la Côte d'Ivoire si aucun de ces deux pays n'est en mesure de le transformer ? Pourquoi la Zambie exporterait-elle son cuivre vers la République démocratique du Congo, qui produit également du cuivre, mais ne le transforme pas ?

Ainsi une question au moins aussi importante que celles des dispositions commerciales de la ZLECAf est celle des politiques macroéconomiques et industrielles, qui visent explicitement à accélérer les transformations structurelles dans l'agriculture et l'industrie, et les investissements dans les infrastructures qui y sont associés. Certains experts, dont certains chercheurs du Fonds monétaire international, reconnaissent qu'il faut mettre en place des politiques industrielles pour tirer le meilleur parti de la ZLECAf. Mais ces mesures sont considérées comme accessoires, plutôt que comme une condition préalable à des progrès qui doivent s'accompagner d'investissements plus larges dans l'énergie, l'eau et l'assainissement, ainsi que dans les infrastructures de transport (routes, rails et ports). Ce n'est qu'à cette condition que le commerce intrarégional pourra vraiment prendre son essor. Pourtant, en l'état actuel des choses, la Banque africaine de développement estime que le déficit annuel de financement des infrastructures du continent se situe entre 68 et 108 milliards de dollars.

Il est clair que l'Afrique peut réussir son industrialisation et sa transformation structurelle, en dépit de l'opinion de ses détracteurs. En fait, depuis 1990, la part de l'emploi dans le secteur industriel a augmenté dans un certain nombre de pays africains (bien qu'elle n'ait été accompagnée que d'une modeste croissance de la valeur ajoutée). Les pays africains peuvent tirer parti de leur expérience accumulée dans l'industrie pour saisir les occasions de produire à destination de leur continent et du reste du monde.

Les industries lourdes comme les métaux de base, les produits chimiques et la production de ciment peuvent bénéficier de la proximité des marchés régionaux. Il existe un domaine d'application considérable dans la transformation de la production agricole en produits alimentaires et en boissons à destination de la région et au-delà. Les changements et les chocs mondiaux créent des opportunités pour l'Afrique d'étendre sa participation aux chaînes de valeur, depuis le secteur de l'habillement, jusqu'à ceux des chaînes de montage automobile et des produits pharmaceutiques.

La transformation structurelle ne se limite pas à l'industrie. Comme l'affirment trois éminents spécialistes de l'Afrique, le continent doit également inverser sa relative tendance à la négligence dans sa production agricole et ses exportations et réduire l'écart de productivité agricole avec les autres régions. Ceci est essentiel pour augmenter les revenus dans les zones rurales, où se concentre la pauvreté extrême et pour stimuler les exportations agricoles (ce qui aura pour effet de lever la contrainte de la balance des paiements sur la croissance).

En particulier, l'agriculture à haute valeur ajoutée, comme l'horticulture, exige beaucoup de main-d'œuvre et offre un domaine d'application pour réaliser des types de gains de productivité traditionnellement associés à l'industrie. L'Éthiopie et le Kenya l'ont déjà prouvé avec leurs exportations de fleurs et de légumes frais, et l'Afrique du Sud l'a prouvé à son tour avec les agrumes.

Cependant, pour que tout cela fonctionne, les dirigeants africains doivent voir plus loin que les seuls éléments liés au commerce de la ZLECAf et mettre en œuvre une stratégie plus large, fondée sur le régionalisme du développement, qui vise explicitement à améliorer la capacité de production. Ce n'est qu'à cette condition que l'Afrique pourra réaliser la transformation structurelle dont elle a tant besoin et par la même occasion, relancer son commerce.

# Shut up

By E. J. Nathaniel Daygbor

Liberia's Minister of State for Presidential Affairs Nathaniel McGill, challenges opposition Senator Abraham Darius Dillon to substantiate his recent claim that prior to becoming Minister, he (McGill) never had a dime or owned a house.

He warns the Montserrado County Senator to prove his

as Senator of Montserrado. I want the Liberia Bar Association, Liberia Anti Commission and other independent groups to form part of it process. I got appointed by the President on January 22, 2018, look at my asset declaration form, the account still same. In fact T-Max, I want you to take your camera there. My account is with UBA (the United Africa Bank)," McGill argues.

opposition leaders' lying on public officials should stop and one of the best ways to stop it is by challenging them publicly.

"Many people think I have money, no. I don't have money. I asked business people and friends for help through which I shared with people. Their perceptions of me being rich at the expense of the Liberian people are false and I think [it] is all about hate against me," he says.

According to him, much assistance rendered to several individuals are monies he lobbied for from friends and even the President, adding; for people to classify him as being rich or corruption is totally false and another form of hate against him.

Speaking on a pending return of foreign investment to the country, he discloses the ruling Coalition for Democratic Change has discussed and concluded the return of China Union, which had an investment in the former Bong Mines in Bong County.

He also names additional investment from ArcelorMittal which is expected to be in the tune of US\$800 million, noting those investments will create more jobs for Liberians.

On question whether the CDC is prepared to retain Vice President Jewel Howard Taylor as President Weah's running mate in 2023, McGill says the CDC has a team and the team has been working together. But he quickly adds that decision lies with the President. **-Editing by Jonathan Browne**



allegation or "shut up." Minister McGill reportedly applied for a loan totaling US\$200,000 from a commercial bank in 2018 to buy a home, upon becoming Minister. However, it is not clear whether that application was approved. "I challenge Sen. Dillon to prove that I had less than US\$20,000 in personal account before becoming Minister of State for Presidential Affairs, and if that is proven, I will resign my post as Minister of State and if Sen. Dillon fails to prove that he too should resign his post

Minister McGill gave the challenge while speaking to Sky fm on Monday, April 26, in Monrovia.

But in response to the open challenge, Senator Dillon wrote on his Facebook page "All the CDC gang members that said they would resign because of me have failed to do so. None of them has summoned the faintest courage to resign! Nat McGill is the latest to talk about "resigning" because of me. And they expect me to take them seriously? Let me go do the people's job yaa. Haha!!."

McGill notes that attitudes of

## Deputy Speaker lights up six communities in Gd.Kru

Deputy Speaker Cllr. J. Fonati Koffa commits himself to infrastructure development and increased access to basic social services in District #2 Grand Kru County.

On Friday, April 23, 2021, Niplai and Allawala cities in Niplakpo and Dweken in Jloh and Forkpoh Statutory Districts were lighted with 45 solar streets light. Citizens of those communities joyfully thanked the Deputy Speaker, having witnessed street light in their towns for the first time in 37 years.

Prior to the lighting of Niplakpo and Dweken; Buah Geeken, Chenwriken, Worpluken and Tarken were lighted on Wednesday, April 21, 2021.

Speaking earlier, Niplai City Major Oliver Trueh



described the "light" as "God's sent", lauding Cllr. Koffa and urging him to intervene in the retirement of several citizens, by ensuring that they receive their just benefits or be reinstated.

Students in Niplakpo, including Jeremiah Williams, 17, said the light will help them in their studies, especially during this 3rd marking period that has lots of academic works.

## Alliance Française

Starts from back page

French-speaking countries may now do these intensive French training courses here before departure.

According to him, many other French speaking countries are proposing scholarship for Liberian students, including Morocco.

Amb. Roux also reveals that negotiations are currently ongoing to offer French training courses for the Armed Forces of Liberia, as Liberian soldiers are now involved in peacekeeping missions around the world, including the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA), and others are assigned at the various borders with Guinea and la Cote d'Ivoire, two neighboring French-speaking countries.

Also speaking, the director of Alliance Française, Father Maroun Zogheib, notes that to build a country, it suffices to promote quality education and strengthen its cultural values, adding that Alliance Française is a linguistic and cultural institution that will work in close collaboration with all stakeholders of the educational and cultural sectors in Liberia to add its stone to the edifice and support the country's efforts for development and prosperity.

According to him, the institute currently has forty (40) students and the Liberian Ministry of Education has promised to send 40 other students.

"We currently have around

40 learners taking French lessons from Monday to Saturday. And under the instructions of the Minister of Education, Professor Ansu Sonii, we will soon receive around 40 other learners to train before they join their universities in French-speaking countries".

Father Maroun Zogheib, who is also a Catholic priest and founder of Our Lady of Grace High School, informs the gathering that in addition, the Alliance Française is planning to organize series of training workshops for French teachers in Liberia as its contribution to the capacity building efforts.

He says with heaven's help, the institution will soon dedicate a media library, a Biblio-bus (a sort of mobile library that will go from school to school), as well as a translation department, adding "We are also planning to brighten up our center with cultural activities".

"I hope to invite you from time to time to share our joy at seeing the Alliance Française grows, with the construction of new premises, such as a large multipurpose room to organize: events, debates, conferences, round tables, exhibitions, movie nights and a cafeteria", he says.

The occasion was graced by few representatives of the Liberian government, including the Minister of Education, Professor Ansu Sonii, the Minister of Foreign Affairs Deemaxwell Saah Kemayah, Sr., and foreign diplomats accredited near Monrovia. **-Editing by Jonathan Browne**

Students Miatta Wreh and James Chea, both of the Dweken United Methodist School, hailed the Deputy Speaker for the gesture and argued that lights were planted for the students populace because they needed them most, while students Anthony Wesseh and Nancy Freeman of the S.S. Chie Public School agreed, nodding.

In continuation with the electrification process, Deputy Speaker Koffa committed to give five solar streets light to Buah SS Gessanken, 10 streets light to Sasstown Norkia and 20 solar streets light for Betu and Nifu. In an effort to increase access to safe drinking water, he also committed to either rehabilitate or erect new hand pumps in 21 out of the 25 communities he toured up to Saturday.

In December, the Grand Kru District #2 lawmaker is expected to break grounds for the construction of town halls in Jeboken, Jlateken and Nifu; renovate the SS Gessanken-Woloken Bridge, assess the Woloken Bridge for

rehabilitation, provide six bundle of zincs for the roofing of the Jebokens town hall and rehabilitate the roads leading from the town to main road as well as provide stipends for 102 volunteer teachers across the District.

In the area of education, the Deputy Speaker donated over 90 bags of cement for the renovation of schools, and committed to install 12 hand pumps, provide 450 rubber chairs, and

Provide photocopiers, printers and solar panels for electricity in schools in Dweken, Betu, Nifu and Bolloh Jlateken.

In an effort to make the health sector effective, meeting up with the medical needs of the people, the Deputy Speaker donated one drum of fuel to the Buah Health Center and commits to give monthly fuel among others as well as committed to fund the operations of Buah Jlateken and Bolloh Doeswen Clinics.

However, Cllr. Koffa has appointed Mr. Rabasco T. Chie as Grand Kru County District #2 Agriculture Officer, dubbed 'District Agriculture Officer.'

# Rivercess dishes out wasted land

By Othello B. Garblah

President Weah being received by Traditional leaders in Rivercess

Yarpah Town, Rivercess County: Rivercess County, one of the most impoverish and least underdeveloped regions in Liberia over the weekend doled out 1,250 acres of land to President George M. Weah in part as gift and for development during

Marcus Blah said the gift to the President is intended for him to come home.

The county which was a statutory district under Grand Bassa in 1912, and subsequently became a county on December 13, 1984 is the birth place of President Weah's mother.

Road connectivity is a major problem in the county. According to Mr. Blah the county is currently cut off from its south eastern neighbor Sinoe.

"Road is the main concern of the people of Rivercess," he said.

President Weah addressing the crowd indicated that though the county is not developed but it is still a special place to him, adding that the construction of the Rivercess Road is part of his government's plan.

"The road from Barclay'sville (Grand Kru) to Cestos and from Cestos to is also underway," President Weah disclosed.

He told his fellow compatriots to be patient and that the government which they helped put in power is working in their interest and that whatever development package there is that is unfolding in other part of the country will surely reach to them.

"We have planted the seed of development and you will reap the fruits," he told the large group of excited crowd that kept coming in their numbers.

President Weah got 85.2 % of the votes in Rivercess County.

He, however, told the people of Rivercess that for their county to be developed, it requires the sons and daughters of the county to go back and take up the initiative of developing the place by building something back home.

The promised to install street lights, and upgrade the educational system in the county. He also thanked them for voting him into office, saying that he will not let the down.

Mr. Blah and other local county officials believe that giving President Weah 250 acres of farm land will encourage him to speed up the any plan of road construction in the county.

Rivercess County District #2 Representative Byron Zahnwea also speaking emphasized the importance of road connectivity in the isolated region.



his tour of the area over the weekend.

Of the total 250 acres of land, 250 acres are to be used for the President's farm, while the remaining 1000 acres are to be used for infrastructure development in the isolated region.

Rivercess County Central District Superintendent

# Ambassador McCarthy

Cont'd from page 5

Development (USAID), and the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA).

Ambassador McCarthy noted, "Medicine is about partnerships at the local, county, national, and global levels... Our partnerships have been instrumental in the fight against Ebola and have been critical to the response to the COVID-19 pandemic."

He quoted U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken, who in reference to fighting COVID-19, said that "none of us is effectively safe until everyone in the world is vaccinated."

The U.S. Government and [her] international partners are working to distribute millions of doses of lifesaving COVID-19 vaccines to countries all over the world.

Liberia received nearly 100,00 vaccines through COVAX, of which the U.S. Government is the largest donor, and Ambassador McCarthy applauded Liberia's Ministry of Health in beginning their vaccine campaign. He called on the audience to do their part in this effort, saying "As medical professionals, you have a duty to help your community members understand how vaccines work and to correct misinformation about them when you hear it. We all want the world to get back to the way it was before the pandemic... Accomplishing this goal will be a significant challenge, but achieving greatness takes hard work, dedication, and integrity. Just like graduating from medical school!" -Press Release

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# Weah's government nets huge investments

-McGill

By E. J. Nathaniel Daygbor

Liberia's Minister of State for Presidential Affairs Nathaniel McGill reveals here that President George Manneh Weah will shortly announce two huge investments that would jumpstart massively employment in the private sector of the country.

He says all attached parties, including the government through its relevant agencies and investment stakeholders have concluded the deal already and the only thing left is for President Weah to announce it in a couple of weeks.

Appearing on Spoon FM and online television Friday, April 23, Minister McGill said he could not provide further detail on grounds that the authority squarely lies within the preview of the President.

But he adds the investment will see hundreds of thousands employed on contractual and full employment basis, noting it will greatly reduce the pressure of unemployment faced by Liberians nationwide.

"We as government are very

concerned about the unemployment among our people. The President is very concerned and he's being reaching out by encouraging direct foreign investment here. Thank God we are to say tonight that two huge



investments coming soon. I am not the one to announce it but Mr. President. These investments will greatly change the dimension for the better for both the government and the citizens," he said.

Commenting on delay for investment coming to the country since the ascendancy of the current administration, Mr. McGill explains when the Coalition for Democratic Change-led government took over the helm of authority; UN peacekeepers and other international partners who were supporting the peace process and other functionaries departed Liberia, so the Weah administration started at fresh.

He recalls that before the President could complete formation of his government, there was the infamous June 06 protest which created serious political and insecurity threats to the peace and stability of the State thereby scaring potential investors away, adopting a wait and see

posture. According to him, the government tries to restore hope in both citizens and foreign investors but then COVID-19 pandemic brought the entire world to a standstill.

He notes as the COVID-19 dust gradually settles, serious investors are now coming to the country with huge investment potentials and President Weah has accepted to engage the process wholly where citizens and qualified individuals can have opportunity to work and put food on their respective tables for their families.

Minister McGill, also former chairperson for ruling CDC further discloses that modalities are being worked out for the construction of a new John F. Kennedy Medical Center.

He says experts from aboard have advised the government to construct a state of the art building fully equipped.

He notes the current JFK Medical Center has served the country for more than 50 years, and needs replacement.

- Editing by Jonathan Browne

# Alliance Française offers new opportunities for Liberia



Officials cut ribbon to the Alliance Française

By Valery Guhena

The newly accredited French Ambassador in Monrovia, Michael Roux, says activities of the French institution here Alliance Française, will provide new opportunities for Liberian youth to study, travel, do business and work abroad in various French-speaking countries.

Speaking at the formal

launch of the new Alliance Française Center on 94 UN Drive, Mamba Point, April 22, 2021, Ambassador Roux stressed the importance of the school in Monrovia, saying, "Education is a key factor of peace and the activities of this place of learning and cultural exchanges will contribute to peace and prosperity as well as to the regional integration of Liberia."

As part of the Printemps de la

Francophonie (the Francophonie Spring) 2021 in Liberia, the Alliance Française in collaboration with the French Embassy near the Republic of Liberia dedicated the Center last week.

Amb. Michael Roux says the Alliance Française will help provide intensive French training courses for Liberian students who are interested in studying in French-speaking countries before they leave Liberia, adding that the Government of France through the Agence Francaise de Development (AFD) has sent forty (40) Liberian students to the Houphouet Boigny Polytechnic Institute in Yamoussoukro, Côte d'Ivoire, on scholarship for studies in various fields, but those students were forced to do intensive French courses for six to 12 months before starting their actual studies.

Hence, with the reopening the Alliance Française here, students who are likely to be granted scholarship to

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# Hazard ready for Chelsea reunion as Kroos returns

Real Madrid may have the European pedigree, but Zinedine Zidane has never beaten Chelsea boss Thomas Tuchel.

Zinedine Zidane has confirmed Eden Hazard is in line for a reunion with Chelsea, with Real Madrid also expecting to have Toni Kroos at their disposal for the first leg of their Champions League semi-final on Tuesday.

Real have been ravaged by injuries this season, with the



Belgian playmaker among those to have spent more time on the sidelines than anyone in the Spanish capital would have liked.

Hazard did however get 15 minutes off the bench in the Liga meeting with Real Betis on Sunday, and is now in contention to face his former employers from Stamford Bridge.

There have been suggestions that Real's involvement in the controversial Super League

proposals, which have been shelved for now, could see them banned by UEFA.

Zidane doubts that will be the case and said: "It's absurd to think that we won't be in the Champions League (next season).

"There is a lot of talk from the outside. There is going to be a lot of talk, but as we don't control it, I'm just focusing on the game.

"My opinion is that we all want to see Madrid in the Champions League."

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