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Continental News

South African woman gives birth to 10 babies in Pretoria - reports

A South African woman has reportedly given birth to 10 babies in what would be a new world record.

Gosiame Thamara Sithole's husband says they were astonished by decuplets after scans only showed eight in the womb. "It's seven boys and three girls. I am happy. I am emotional. I can't talk much," her husband Teboho Tsotetsi

told Pretoria News after the birth.

One South African official confirmed the births to the BBC, however another said they were yet to see the babies.

Guinness World Records told the BBC it was investigating Ms Sithole's case.

A woman who had eight babies in the US in 2009 currently holds the Guinness

World Record for the most children delivered at a single birth to survive.

Last month, 25-year-old Halima Cissé from Mali gave birth to nine babies, who are reportedly doing well at a clinic in Morocco. Most pregnancies involving large numbers of babies end prematurely, says BBC Africa's health reporter Rhoda

Odhiambo.

Multiple births involving more than three babies are rare and often the result of fertility treatments - but in this case the couple say they conceived naturally. Ms Sithole, 37, previously gave birth to twins, who are now six years old.

She is said to be in good health after delivering by caesarean section 29 weeks into her pregnancy in Pretoria on Monday evening. Speaking to Pretoria News a month ago, Ms Sithole said her pregnancy was "tough at the beginning" and she had prayed for a healthy birth, with many a

sleepless night worrying about what was to come.

"How would they fit in the womb? Would they survive?" she asked herself, but was reassured by doctors that her womb was expanding. When it was thought she was carrying eight fetuses, Ms Sithole was suffering leg pains and doctors found that two of the eight "were in the wrong tube".

"That was sorted and I have been okay since then. I can't wait for my children," she told the newspaper at the time. Her husband also said he was over the moon, and felt like "one of God's chosen children. It's a miracle which I appreciate". BBC



Gosiame Thamara Sithole, pictured here a month ago, gave birth on Monday

Donald Trump hails Nigeria Twitter ban

Former US president Donald Trump has praised Nigeria's government for banning Twitter after it deleted President Muhammadu Buhari's post for breaching its rules.

"Who are they to dictate good and evil, if they themselves are evil?" Mr Trump said in a statement.

He urged other countries

to ban Twitter and Facebook for not allowing "free and open speech".

Mr Trump was banned from both platforms after the US Capitol riot in January.

His posts before and after the raid were alleged to have encouraged violence.

While Twitter made its ban permanent, Facebook announced last week that its suspension, including of the

former president's Instagram account, would last at least two years. "Congratulations to the country of Nigeria, who just banned Twitter because they banned their president," he said in a statement released on Tuesday.

He suggested that he should have banned Facebook while he was in office, but said the company's boss Mark Zuckerberg "kept calling me

and coming to the White House for dinner telling me how great I was".

Mr Trump also backed unnamed rival social media platforms, saying they "will emerge and take hold".

The 45th US president has struggled for attention since his access to Twitter and Facebook was blocked. A website he launched last month to get his word out was closed because of poor traffic. The authorities in Nigeria accused the platform of threatening the country's "corporate existence" by allowing "misinformation and fake news to spread."

The ban followed the removal of President Buhari's tweet, which referred to Nigeria's civil war four decades ago, and included a veiled threat towards those backing a secessionist movement in the south-east of the country. His government said on Saturday the tweet's removal was "disappointing", but was not the only reason for Twitter's "temporary" suspension.

Information Minister Lai Mohammed told the BBC Focus on Africa programme that the platform was being used by Nnamdi Kanu, the leader of

separatist group Ipob, to direct attacks against the government in the south-east region. "This is done consistently and wilfully without consequences," he said.

The professional body of Nigerian mobile phone operators - known as Alton - said its members had been told to block access to Twitter.

The authorities have since said they will prosecute anyone found to have breached the ban, however they have not yet announced any arrests.

A group of human rights organisations says it has filed a case with a West African regional court against the Twitter ban, saying it contravenes the right to the freedom of expression.

It has also been condemned by some Western countries and the body representing Nigeria's lawyers.

Many Nigerians, including prominent politicians, news websites and churches, are continuing to tweet using Virtual Private Networks (VPNs). Twitter said the ban was "deeply concerning".

Meanwhile, Nigeria's national broadcasting regulator, NBC, announced that it would begin "licensing all internet streaming services and social media operations in Nigeria", a government statement said. BBC



Mr Trump urged other countries to follow Mr Buhari's move to ban the US-owned social media platforms

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EDITORIAL

Reading Pres. Weah's mind about war crimes court

PRESIDENT GEORGE MANNEH Weah's response to Lofa County Representative Clarence Massaquo's concern on the need to establish a war and economic crimes court for Liberia to stamp out impunity clearly indicates the President is less interested in prosecuting people who committed heinous crimes during the 14-year civil war. This means victims of the civil crisis should not count on the Weah administration to deliver justice.

LOFA COUNTY REPRESENTATIVE Clarence Massaquo, speaking in Foya District, Lofa County over the weekend reminded President Weah that Liberians are hurt because they lost relatives, including parents, so impunity should not stand in the way of accountability and justice. The Lofa lawmaker, like many Liberians, wants the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's recommendation for prosecution implemented.

"I KNOW IT is not common to say this. But Mr. President we have the report of the TRC, whatever forms they come Mr. President, those that are in those mass graves are not here today, on their behalf, we ask for justice", he pleaded.

BUT THE PRESIDENT responded to the lawmaker in the way he spoke which indicates that war crimes court is a far-fetched discussion on his government's agenda, rather telling Liberians to live with impunity for the sake of peace.

LIBERIANS BOTH AT home and abroad are yearning for justice and rightly so, especially when warlords and other perpetrators are publicly unremorseful for atrocities they committed during the crisis that left families decimated and dreams shattered.

MOST KEY PLAYERS from the war are back in government, including the Legislature. They claim to enjoy immunity or exemption from prosecution despite being recommended by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission for trial. They include notorious warlord Senator Prince Yormie Johnson, leader of the defunct INPFL rebels, Representative Dr. George S. Boley, leader of the demobilized Liberia Peace Council rebels, Sekou Damate Conneh, leader of the LURD rebels, and Professor Alhaji G.V. Kromah, leader of the disbanded ULIMO-K rebels, among others.

IN FACT, SENATOR Johnson, a staunch political ally of President Weah, continues to brag that no war crimes court is coming to Liberia and publicly deny that he committed atrocities during the war just like his colleagues Rep. Boley and Sekou Damate Conneh say.

SO WHEN PRESIDENT Weah calls on Liberians to sit at a roundtable to discuss how to forge the country ahead rather than call for war crimes court that could return Liberia to the dark days, you can understand that justice is going to elude us continuously, as long as this administration is in power.

HOWEVER, THE HOLY Bible says the voice of the people is the voice of God. Liberians should never give up the fight. They should keep mounting pressure for the establishment of war and economic crimes court despite the apparent un-readiness by the government.

HISTORY HAS PROVEN repeatedly that the will of the people eventually prevails despite attempts to suppress their views and trample on their expressed wishes for justice, which is the fulcrum on which peace that the President talked about, development and all other positive human endeavors rest.

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COMMENTARY

By Joseph E. Stiglitz

The Inflation Red Herring

NEW YORK - Slight increases in the rate of inflation in the United States and Europe have triggered financial-market anxieties. Has US President Joe Biden's administration risked overheating the economy with its \$1.9 trillion rescue package and plans for additional spending to invest in infrastructure, job creation, and bolstering American families?

Such concerns are premature, considering the deep uncertainty we still face. We have never before experienced a pandemic-induced downturn featuring a disproportionately steep service-sector recession, unprecedented increases in inequality, and soaring savings rates. No one even knows if or when COVID-19 will be contained in the advanced economies, let alone globally. While weighing the risks, we also must plan for all contingencies. In my view, the Biden administration has correctly determined that the risks of doing too little far outweigh the risks of doing too much.

Moreover, much of the current inflationary pressure stems from short-term supply-side bottlenecks, which are inevitable when restarting an economy that has been temporarily shut down. We don't lack the global capacity to build cars or semiconductors; but when all new cars use semiconductors, and demand for cars is mired in uncertainty (as it was during the pandemic), production of semiconductors will be curtailed. More broadly, coordinating all production inputs across a complex integrated global economy is an enormously difficult task that we usually take for granted because things work so well, and because most adjustments are "on the margin."

Now that the normal process has been interrupted, there will be hiccups, and these will translate into price increases for one product or the other. But there is no reason to believe that these movements will fuel inflation expectations and thus generate inflationary momentum, especially given the overall excess capacity around the world. It is worth remembering just how recently some of those who are now warning about inflation from excessive demand were talking about "secular stagnation" born of insufficient aggregate demand (even at a zero interest rate).

In a country with deep, longstanding inequalities that have been exposed and exacerbated by the pandemic, a tight labor market is just what the doctor ordered. When the demand for labor is strong, wages at the bottom rise and marginalized groups are brought into the labor market. Of course, the exact tightness of the current US labor market is a matter of some debate, given reports of labor shortages despite employment remaining markedly below its pre-crisis level.

Conservatives blame the situation on excessively generous unemployment insurance benefits. But econometric studies comparing labor supply across US states suggest that these kinds of labor-disincentive effects are limited. And in any case, the

expanded unemployment benefits are set to end in the fall, even though the global economic effects of the virus will linger.

Rather than panicking about inflation, we should be worrying about what will happen to aggregate demand when the funds provided by fiscal relief packages dry up. Many of those at the bottom of the income and wealth distribution have accumulated large debts - including, in some cases, more than a year's worth of rent arrears, owing to temporary protections against eviction.¹

Reduced spending by indebted households is unlikely to be offset by those at the top, most of whom have accumulated savings during the pandemic. Given that spending on consumer durables remained robust during the past 16 months, it seems likely that the well-off will treat their additional savings as they would any other windfall: as something to be invested or spent slowly over the course of many years. Unless there is new public spending, the economy could once again suffer from insufficient aggregate demand.

Moreover, even if inflationary pressures were to become truly worrisome, we have tools to dampen demand (and using them would actually strengthen the economy's long-term prospects). For starters, there is the US Federal Reserve's interest-rate policy. The past decade-plus of near-zero interest rates has not been economically healthy. The scarcity value of capital is not zero. Low interest rates distort capital markets by triggering a search for yield that leads to excessively low risk premia. Returning to more normal interest rates would be a good thing (though the rich, who have been the primary beneficiaries of this era of super-low interest rates, may beg to differ).

To be sure, some commentators look at the Fed's balance-of-risk assessment and worry that it will not act when it needs to. But I think the Fed's pronouncements have been spot on, and I trust that its position will change if and when the evidence does. The instinct to fight inflation is embedded in central bankers' DNA. If they don't see inflation as the key problem currently facing the economy, neither should you.

The second tool is tax hikes. Ensuring the economy's long-run health requires much more public investment, which will have to be paid for. The US tax-to-GDP ratio is far too low, especially given America's huge inequalities. There is an urgent need for more progressive taxation, not to mention more environmental taxes to deal with the climate crisis. That said, it is perfectly understandable that there would be hesitancy to enact new taxes while the economy remains in a precarious state.

We should recognize the current "inflation debate" for what it is: a red herring that is being raised by those who would stymie the Biden administration's efforts to confront some of America's most fundamental problems. Success will require more public spending. The US is fortunate finally to have economic leadership that won't succumb to fearmongering.

OPINION

By Mohamed A. El-erian

The Return of the Finance Threat?

CAMBRIDGE - After the 2008 global financial crisis, governments and central banks in advanced economies vowed that they would never again let the banking system hold policy hostage, let alone threaten economic and social well-being. Thirteen years later, they have only partly fulfilled this pledge. Another part of finance now risks spoiling what could be - in fact, must be - a durable, inclusive, and sustainable recovery from the horrid COVID-19 shock.

The story of the 2008 crisis has been told many times. Dazzled by how financial innovations, including securitization, enabled the slicing and dicing of risk, the public sector stepped back to give finance more room to work its magic. Some countries went even further than adopting a “light-touch” approach to bank regulation and supervision, and competed hard to become bigger global banking centers, irrespective of the size of their real economies.

Unnoticed in all this was that finance was in the grip of a dangerous overshoot dynamic previously evident with other major innovations such as the steam engine and fiber optics. In each case, easy and cheap access to activities that previously had been largely off-limits fueled an exuberant first round of overproduction and overconsumption.

Sure enough, Wall Street’s credit and leverage factories went into overdrive, flooding the housing market and other sectors with new financial products that had few safeguards. To ensure quick uptake, lenders first relaxed their standards - including by offering so-called NINJA (no income, no job, no assets) mortgages that required no documentation of creditworthiness from the borrower - and then engaged in outsize trading among themselves.

By the time governments and central banks realized what was going on, it was too late. To use the American economist Herbert Stein’s phrase, what was unsustainable proved unsustainable. The financial implosion that followed risked causing a global depression and forced policymakers to rescue those whose reckless behavior had created the problem.

To be sure, policymakers also introduced measures to “de-risk” banks. They increased capital buffers, enhanced on-site supervision, and banned certain activities. But although governments and central banks succeeded in reducing the systemic risks emanating from the banking system, they failed to understand and monitor closely enough what then happened to this risk.

In the event, the resulting vacuum was soon filled by the still lightly supervised and regulated non-banking sector. The financial sector thus continued to grow markedly, both in absolute terms and relative to national economies. Central banks stumbled into an unhealthy codependency with markets, losing policy flexibility and risking the longer-term credibility that is critical to their effectiveness. In the process, assets under management and margin debt rose to record levels, as did indebtedness and the US Federal Reserve’s balance sheet.

Given the magnitudes involved, it is not surprising that central banks in particular are treading very carefully these days, fearful of disrupting financial markets in a manner that would undermine the post-pandemic economic recovery. On a financial-sector highway where too many participants are driving too fast - some recklessly so - we have already had three near-accidents this year involving the government debt market, retail investors pinning hedge funds in a corner, and an over-levered family office that inflicted a reported \$10 billion of losses on a handful of banks. Thanks to some good fortune, rather than official crisis prevention measures, each of these events did not cause a major pileup in the financial system as a whole.

Central banks’ long-evolving codependent relationship with the financial sector seems to have led policymakers to believe that they had no choice but to insulate the sector from the pandemic’s harsh reality. That resulted in an even more stunning disconnect between Wall Street and Main Street, and gave a further worrisome boost to wealth inequality. In the 12 months to April 2021, the combined wealth of the billionaires on Forbes magazine’s annual global list increased by a record \$5 trillion, to \$13 trillion. And the world’s billionaire population grew by nearly 700 from the previous year, reaching an all-time high of more than 2,700.

Policymakers would be unwise merely to hope for the best - namely, a type of financial deus ex machina in which a strong and quick economic recovery redeems the enormous run-up in debt, leverage, and asset valuations. Instead, they should act now to moderate the financial sector’s excessive risk-taking. This should include containing and reducing margin debt; enforcing stronger suitability criteria on broker dealers; enhancing assessment, supervision, and regulation of non-banking institutions; and reducing the tax advantages of currently favored investment gains.

These steps, both individually and collectively, are not in themselves a panacea for a persistent and growing problem. But that is no excuse for further delay. The longer that policymakers allow the current dynamics to grow, the greater the threat to economic and social well-being, and the bigger the risk that yet another crisis erupts - unfairly and despite a decade of promises - in the same sector as last time.

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OP-ED

By Shlomo Ben-ami

Bibi’s Poisoned Legacy

TELAVIV - Soon, Binyamin Netanyahu will no longer be Israel’s prime minister. After 12 years in power, what kind of country will he leave behind?

Netanyahu was not always the irremediable hawk that his opponents (especially outside Israel) thought him to be. He often displayed a sharp pragmatism, reflecting a keen intelligence, extensive historical knowledge, impressive economic proficiency, and a deep awareness of regional and global trends.

But remaining in power was paramount for Netanyahu, so he tended to focus more on appeasing his base than serving the national interest. That often - and increasingly - meant pitting groups against one another by appealing to people’s tribal instincts. He ruled by incitement, implementing policies that matched his ultra-nationalistic, anti-Arab rhetoric.

For example, Netanyahu backed the 2018 nation-state law, which effectively establishes Israeli Arabs as second-class citizens. And he embraced the goal of annexation of Palestinian lands - an issue over which Israeli right-wing coalitions have historically wavered - effectively taking extreme religious Zionism mainstream.

Netanyahu’s successive governments have worked tirelessly to create the conditions for annexation of the occupied West Bank. At times, he seemed to prioritize the fantasy of Judea and Samaria shared by much of his base above Israel itself, pouring billions of dollars into realizing it.

And yet, there were times when Netanyahu was not quite the energetic builder of Jewish settlements in the West Bank that his constituency wanted him to be. In 2009, he declared a ten-month freeze on new settlements that then-Secretary of State Hillary Clinton called “unprecedented” (though no restrictions were placed on the thousands of buildings already under construction to expand existing settlements).

In 2014, Netanyahu negotiated a peace framework with Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas, in which he adopted some unexpectedly reasonable positions. That said, to keep his right-wing base happy, he refused to restrain construction by Jewish settlers in the West Bank and East Jerusalem, even during the negotiations.

A similar logic lay behind Netanyahu’s exorbitant concessions to Israel’s Orthodox community, reversing his own previous efforts made as finance minister in the early 2000s to cut their parasitic dependence on state allowances. By contrast, he invested far less in improving the conditions in Israel’s poorer periphery; he trusted that his unrelenting attacks on the old liberal “elites” would be enough to maintain the support of voters there.

Netanyahu’s history of coalition-building reflects a similar focus on self-preservation. In the past, he has formed governing coalitions with left-leaning and centrist parties. After the last four legislative elections, however, he did not hesitate to govern with Jewish-supremacist factions.

This is not some reflection of a genuine ideological shift. If it was, Netanyahu would not have been willing to strike a coalition deal with Ra’am, an Islamist Party linked to the Muslim Brotherhood, this past March. This is, after all, the same man who warned in 2015 that Israeli Arabs were heading to the polling stations in droves, in order to give his party a boost in a tight race.

Netanyahu will go down in Israeli history as the politician who legitimized the participation of Arab parties in government. Anything to stay in power. This particular thing, however, may well have been Netanyahu’s undoing: the coalition that his political opponents have formed would not have been large enough to unseat him without Ra’am.

That is not the only reason the new coalition could not exist without Netanyahu. Its eight ideologically diverse parties - including leftists, centrists, right-wing nationalists, and Arab Islamists - are united by one thing: the desire to unseat him. Many are former Netanyahu allies, who were increasingly alienated by his narcissistic, overbearing, and often shameful behavior. For them, his indictment on three charges of corruption and breach of trust was the last straw.

Netanyahu’s penchant for bridge-burning can also be seen in Israel’s deteriorating image in the United States, especially among moderates and liberals, including most US Jews. By aligning himself closely with the Republican Party and former President Donald Trump, he turned support for Israel into a hyper-partisan affair.

The recent escalation of violence with the Palestinians seems to have further estranged many Americans. More fundamentally, it was a wake-up call for Netanyahu, who believed he had all but defeated the cause of Palestinian nationalism. This belief was fortified by the recent signing of the Abraham Accords, establishing diplomatic relations between Israel and four Arab states.

Netanyahu knew how to leverage regional changes to Israel’s benefit. He saw that the Middle East’s incumbent Sunni regimes feared popular uprisings akin to the 2011 Arab Spring, as well as the rise of a nuclear (Shia) Iran. This, together with the recognition that the US is losing interest in the region, created a golden opportunity for Israel to normalize relations with them - ostensibly weakening the Palestinians’ diplomatic support significantly.

And yet, as the recent violence shows, Israel’s Palestinian problem is as acute as ever, and Jerusalem remains a flashpoint that could well trigger a religious war in the Middle East. Netanyahu’s counterproductive fight against the 2015 Iran nuclear deal and his consequent failure to stem Iran’s nuclear ambitions and regional designs only exacerbate the risk of a regional flare-up.

Beyond the Abraham Accords, Netanyahu oversaw two other major strategic developments. First, building on Israel’s new status as a gas-producing power in the Eastern Mediterranean, he established a tripartite strategic alliance with Greece and Cyprus, as a counterweight to Turkey’s destabilizing aspirations. Second, he expanded Israel’s economic links with China, Japan, and India.

Yet Netanyahu’s economic legacy also leaves much to be desired. Under his strict neoliberal policies, the welfare system was hit hard, and Israel consolidated its position as one of the OECD’s most unequal countries, with 21% of the population living below the poverty line.

Ultimately, Netanyahu’s legacy is one of tension, loathing, and chaos. Israel is now more divided than it has ever been, and Israelis have largely lost hope that their country can be both Jewish and democratic. Can a government united only by its aversion to Netanyahu push back against this legacy?

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ARTICLE

ARTICLE

REFLECTIONS: My Response to Representative George Boley and Senator Prince Johnson's Threats!

By John H.T. Stewart, former Commissioner Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Liberia (TRC).
Monrovia, June 4, 2021

My first reaction to news that Grand Gedeh County Representative George Boley had recently appeared on the Ashford Garley Show and made threatening remarks against me and charged me as one of those who do not want to see peace in Liberia, was to just let it go. After all, this was not the first time that Representative Boley had castigated my character and issued veiled threats against me.

And I strongly believe he has acted and is acting on a rage of hate and vengeance for my role in standing with the Advocates for Human Rights, formerly, The Minnesota Advocates for Human Rights in exposing Boley's lies and attesting to his leadership of a rebel group that left very bloody footprints in Bong, Sinoe, Grand Bassa, River Cess, River Gee, Grand Kru and Maryland Counties.

However, Representative George Boley's recent utterances against me has propelled me to break my silence and bring these developments to public attention and let the world know what is happening. For his part, Senator Reverend Prince Johnson has also castigated and issued threats against me from his pulpit on several occasions, to all of which, I have paid no mind, at least until now.

As public demands for the establishment of a war

armed men.

It was in Freetown that I responded to a call for volunteers to return to war torn Monrovia to undertake what was then considered a dangerous mission. Prior to leaving Freetown, I along with James Fromayan and another friend ran across a former UL schoolmate, Peter Pshorr (now deceased). He had been working in Cape Mount and had come to Freetown to source food and medical supplies.

When we acquainted him with our plans to return to Monrovia, he expressed shock and disbelief. And he posed the question, "do you guys know Prince Johnson has been crazy before"? We answered no. Then he recounted the story that both he and Prince Johnson had lived in the same house located behind the Monrovia City Hall and both were classmates at the WVS Tubman High School. While in their senior year, according to Pshorr, Prince Johnson became mentally ill and had to be taken to Nimba for traditional treatment. Our friend tried his level best to convince us to change our minds but our minds were already made up.

In my case, anxiety about my family who I left behind, especially my wife who was then in an advanced state of pregnancy with our last child Gboko was the driving force pushing me to volunteer for the mission.



and economic crimes court continue to mount, so have the threats from these individuals. While it is by no means surprising that such threats would be made, one cannot lose sight of the fact that both individuals have loyalists prepared to carry out their commands. As such, they have to be considered and treated seriously. This is how my story begins with both individuals starting with Prince Johnson:

My Story with Prince Johnson

Following the formation of the Interim Government of National Unity (IGNU) in Banjul, the Gambia and its temporary relocation to Freetown, Sierra Leone, I signed up as a volunteer to undertake a risky assignment to return to war torn Monrovia to conduct a humanitarian needs assessment of the situation in Monrovia.

I had previously served as vice chairman of the Gbarnga Red Cross Chapter and deputy leader of the Liberia National Red Cross team of first responders deployed in Nimba County in March 1990, Gbarnga and then later in Monrovia from April to June 1990. Following the armed attack on displaced people of Nimba origin right at the UN Compound on Tubman Boulevard, on June 6, 1990, I made the decision to go to Sierra Leone having been prevailed upon by my family to leave for fear of losing me at the hands of

Volunteering along with me also but with different remits were, Messers Nathaniel O. Beh, James M Fromayan, Tiawan S. Gongloe and Dr. Levi Zangai who served as head of the assessment team. Both Fromayan and Gongloe were recent arrivals from the US. We would set sail from Freetown to Monrovia aboard the NNS Ambe, a Nigerian military vessel, on September 23, 1990. But meanwhile, preparations for the mission continued at pace.

Also planning and yearning for a return to Monrovia was the exiled staff of the Hotel Africa, amongst them Sam Delati who was then brimming with excitement, perhaps overjoyed at prospects of return to his beloved Monrovia.

We arrived in Monrovia and docked at the Freeport at about 5:00PM on September 24, 1990. Standing at quayside awaiting our disembarkation were two individuals Charles Bright and Jonathan Mason, dressed in khaki uniforms sporting side arms, pistols, if you like. They had been appointed by self-styled Field Marshall Prince Johnson as liaisons and were there to meet and escort us to Prince Johnson wartime headquarters, at the Taylor Major Compound in Caldwell.

Monrovia back then had a very bleak and somber look. Smoke from smoldering fires could be seen slowly rising from different sections of the city. We were later informed

that the smoke came from smoldering fires lit by the remnants of Doe forces after his capture at the Freeport by Prince Johnson, in a rather crazed attempt to burn down the city. And their slogan was "No Doe, No Monrovia".

And the city appeared like it had a death spell hovering right above it. The stench of corpses, some fresh, some partly decayed littering the streets was powerful. It was nauseating and in some parts of the city, dogs fights over dead bodies were commonplace and a common sight. Garbage, especially sugarcane waste (bagasse) mounds of it was just about everywhere on the streets of Bushrod Island. Following our arrival at the Freeport of Monrovia, we boarded an ECOMOG vehicle for the drive to the Hotel Africa where we would spend the first night. Hotel Africa at the time was a virtual displaced camp with people from virtually all walks of life gathered there for a singular purpose-safety.

But right at the last checkpoint on the side road leading to Hotel Africa, we received grim news at that ECOMOG checkpoint that placed an instant damper on all the excitement that had built up in anticipation of the planned return to Monrovia. The news was shocking beyond belief! Michael Doe, chief of security at Hotel Africa had been shot and killed by self-styled Field Marshall Prince Johnson on the 5th floor of the Hotel Africa ballroom and his body dumped over the balcony.

The mission was nearly aborted by this development owing to the effect and psychological impact on everyone else of Michael Doe's death at the hands of Prince Johnson, the man with whom we were supposed to meet and interact following our arrival in Monrovia. But the news hit Sam Delati like a fireball. He refused to disembark and insisted that he be returned to the ECOMOG vessel. The news also enraged Captain Mike Akhigbe, commander of the Nigerian Naval ship, NNS Ambe who had, since the deployment of ECOMOG, formed a personal relationship with Michael Doe. But more was to come.

The next morning, we were driven to the Prince Johnson Caldwell base to meet the self-styled Field Marshall. We were accompanied by the ECOMOG Chief of Staff, Brigadier General Cyril Iweze and Gambian Colonel Modu Gaye and Captain Jobe also of the Gambia contingent, not forgetting our INPFL minders, Charles Bright, Jonathan Mason and Sam Moses Tucker. We each had different briefs and my assigned task, given my recent experience, was to conduct a humanitarian needs assessment of the situation in Monrovia.

Its population by then had dwindled from about 250,000 people to less than 80,000 with most of them on Bushrod Island and in Mamba Point, starving and virtually surviving on scraps. Our first test of nerves would come a few days after our arrival. At the base we were met by the mercurial INPFL leader who accorded us a very warm welcome. Some of us he knew by name and he would not hesitate to refer to us as people who stood against the excesses of the late President Doe.

Surrounding the Field Marshall was a posse of armed bodyguards, all females, who followed him just about everywhere on Bushrod Island and in the Mamba Point area. He also had hostages, intellectuals and civil servants who had been rounded up and taken to his base amongst them, the late Williard Russell, David. K. Vinton, Nathaniel Patray, the late Colonel Arthur Bedell etc. who by compulsion were clad in all khaki to distinguish them from the rest of the civilians held on his base.

MORE HEADLINE NEWS MORE HEADLINE NEWS

Judicial confab to ease doing business

Day four of the 4th National Judicial Conference with theme: The Law, Public Policy and the Economy will today feature the business community. Though this is the first of its kind, the event underscores the needful relationship between an enabling business environment, one that inhibits free market opportunities and innovation, as well as the rule of law and access to justice.

It is no secret that the rule

is all encompassing and demonstrates the commitment and synergies from the three branches of government. The theme is also reflective of the marriage between macroeconomic stability, economic growth and improvement in living standards on the one hand and access to justice, the rule of law, fairness and equality under the law.

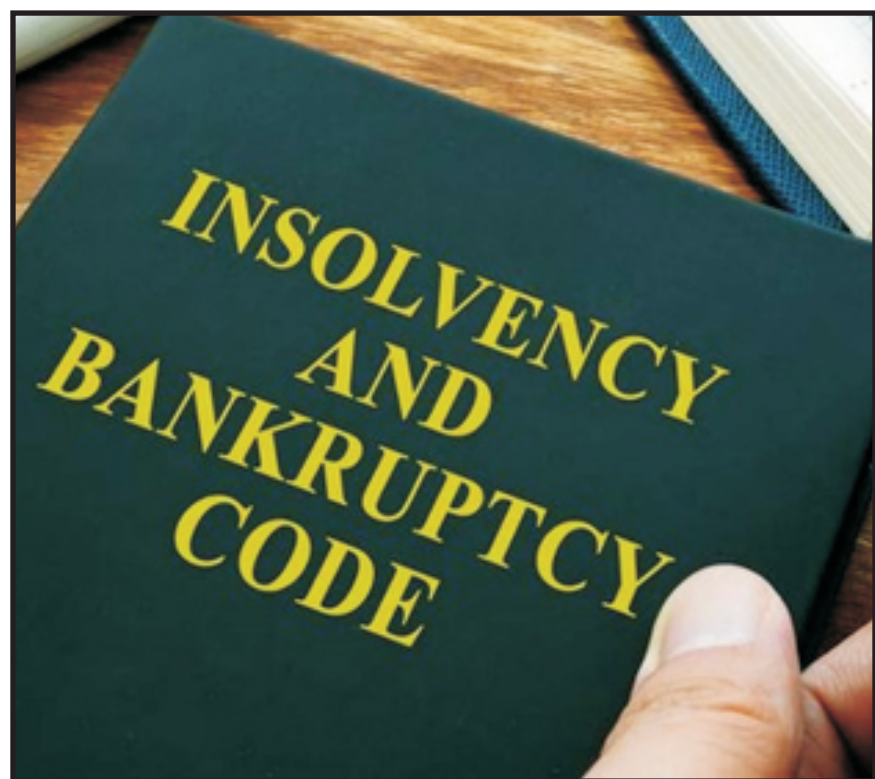
Presentations are expected to reflect the state of business activities in the country and how laws are positively or negatively

average, it takes more than 1000 days to adjudicate a arising out of resolving insolvency.

The head of the Business Climate Secretariat, P. Emmanuel Munyeneh noted that this year's conference will not showcase only problems and challenges for a conducive investment climate but rather one that will focus on finding solutions. The conference will be practical. The public and private sector will tell the Liberian people what gains they have made since 2020 and what are some of the challenges that need to be address through law and regulatory frameworks" Munyeneh noted.

In October 2018 President, George M. Weah set up the Business Climate Working Group to identify and mitigate binding constraints to the ease of doing business in the country. Since its formation, the Secretariat has had series of policy and technical meetings to identify and address some of the impediments.

The conference which starts today will also use Zoom as a means of connecting international partners and Liberians in the Diaspora as their participation and contribution will also help in finding solutions. The Fula, Indian and Lebanese communities are also expected to share their perspectives on lessons learned in doing business in Liberia. The International Financial Institution is also expected to provide perspectives on impediments to enforcing contracts and resolving insolvency in Liberia. The President of Liberia, President Weah is expected to make opening comments at the conference.



of law is an effective tool for promoting and protecting private sector growth. Same can be said that the private sector is the engine of sustained economic growth and development in any society. Without an effective judicial systems that addresses some of the problems underpinning the business environment, not much could be of jobs creation and improved standard of living.

This year's theme of the National Judicial Conference

impacting transactional relations between buyer and seller or lender and borrower alike. Critical to the discussions will be the issues of enforcing contracts, resolving insolvency and paying taxes.

Over the years, commercial banks have been raising alarm over borrowers' inability to settle their indebtedness. Using the court as a legal remedy in some cases have not been successful due to delays in legal procedures, times and cost. The recent World Bank ease of doing business report noted that on

Integrity forum vows robust compliance to improve Liberia's governance rating

The Acting Chairperson of the National Integrity Forum, Roseline Nagbe-Kowo, has vowed robust implementation of national laws or regulations to enhance national compliance across every public institution, which could help to improve Liberia's governance rating that needs continuous upliftment.

Speaking to the media on Wednesday, June 9, 2021, Attorney Kowo elaborated

that national adherence to all regulations and laws by every actor are key democratic tenets that improve every country's governance profile, with Liberia being of no exception.

According to her, all actors and institutions that are members of the National Integrity Forum are upbeat about progress in the integrity sector in Liberia.

She also mentioned that compliance should be a culture and way of life in Liberia to help reduce and discourage

unwholesome practices.

Attorney Kowo expressed optimism that if national compliance is respected void of any influence, it could put Liberia on the rightful governance trajectory and attract huge foreign supports.

"Liberia Anti-corruption Commission, Financial Intelligence Unit, National Elections Commission, Ministry of Justice, Governance Commission, Internal Audit Agency, National Elections

"We Credited Sup. Walker to buy a car"

-Rep. Womba Discloses

By: Joseph Titus Yekeryan In Bong County

Bong County District #4 Representative Robert Womba has revealed that the car Superintendent Esther Walker currently rides was purchased on bill from the county's account.

The Lawmaker's clarification comes as a result of accusation by the Assistant Superintendent for Fiscal Affairs Paul Sulunteh that the Superintendent unilaterally withdrew US \$25,000 from the county's account to purchase the car.

Speaking to Journalist in Gbarnga recently, Rep Womba stated that members of the Bong Legislative Caucus

\$25,000 USD be given to the Superintendent to buy car so that she can inspect ongoing projects in the County"

The District #4 Lawmaker did not tell Journalist when the superintendent will pay the money but said that they violated the budget law by giving the superintendent the money outside of the resolution.

This means that the county is in a debit of US\$25,000, which will be included in the next county sitting resolution.

The Bong County District #4 lawmaker in his argument further stated that he was not aware of the executive



crafted and signed a promissory; authorizing the Superintendent to credit the car on the county's account.

Even though, he acknowledged that the purchasing of car for Sup Walker is not in the 2018 county sitting resolution, Rep Womba admitted that the caucus members violated the resolution to empower the superintendent to do inspection of ongoing projects across the county; since she did not have an operational vehicle. "If there are other issues besides this, I don't know because all I know is that, the caucus agreed that

assigning a vehicle to Sup Walker; even though the Ministry of Internal Affairs assigned a Toyota Land Cruiser pick-up to Sup Walker for her operations.

"Since she was appointed as Superintendent, I am not aware that the government through the Ministry of Internal Affairs has given Sup. Walker a vehicle" he adds.

However, although Sup Walker is aware that the jeep she currently rides is owned by the county, the Superintendent inserted a private plate on the car; as though it was her private vehicle.

Commission, Public Procurement and Concession Commission, amongst other entities are members of the forum and committed to enhance compliance, which is in line with upholding the rule of law in Liberia," she noted.

Madam Kowo who is also the Executive Director of the Public Procurement and Concession Commission, has announced the introduction of an e-procurement system to reduce

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MORE HEADLINE NEWS MORE HEADLINE NEWS

“An Independent Media is an Incentive for National Growth and Development.”

- Panelists at PUL Edward Wilmot Blyden Forum Assert

Panelists at the Wednesday, June 9, 2021 edition of the Press Union of Liberia (PUL) flagship intellectual symposium, the Edward Wilmot Blyden Forum have identified an independent and strong media as a catalyst for driving national growth and development.

The PUL staged the forum in partnership with the Volunteers for Sustainable Development in Africa - VOSIEDA and the Department of Communications and Media Studies at the University of Liberia at the I-campus on Carey Street in Monrovia.

The forum was held under theme: “Strengthening Independent Media and

peace consolidation efforts. “Karneh said while recounting her own experience along with other journalists in covering the disarmament of former combatants of the country’s civil war.

“The media was all out in helping the country transitioned from war to peace and from peace to development. “Karneh added.

She however said while such an enviable role of the media is always applauded; the dignity of media practitioners cannot be overemphasized.

“Journalists need better remuneration for the job, we do. “Stressed Karneh as she addressed the audience at I-Campus in Monrovia.

“The dignity of the journalists often impact on the quality of work media practitioners deliver to the society.”



Freedom of information in Liberia “.

Serving as panelists were Mulugeta Abebe, Deputy Resident Representative of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), Tetee Karneh, Manager Spoon Communications Network, and Attorney. Alphonsus Zeon, a media specialist.

Reflecting on what she terms more ten decades of the contributions of the media to Liberia’s growth and development, Madam Karneh observed that the Liberian has always played a pivotal in helping the country in its orbit from a period crisis to a period of democratic governance and peace.

“It is without an ounce of doubt that the media has been a crucial player in Liberia’s development and

Atty. Zeon was quick to note that such efforts were being undermine by reports of persistent attacks on media practitioners by state actors; especially those in the security sector.

“The PUL has cried out to the government; complaining of attacks on its members,” Zeon explained.

“Such cries led to the setting up a special committee to investigate reports of attacks on the media. But unfortunately, nothing has been heard of the Lawrence Bropleh’s committee. “Noted, Zeon.

He however attacks on the media are not new developments; pointing to the arrest and imprisonment of the News Newspaper editorial team in the 2000s by state operatives in the Charles Taylor’s government.

“Journalists at the News Newspaper were arrested and manhandled for simply reporting that the Taylor’s government was spending huge sums on the purchase helicopters while civil servants were not being paid for several months. “ Zeon recounted.

Zeon however reminded journalists that press freedom comes with responsibility.

“Responsible journalism is reporting the facts and not making up stories and using the media to insult people. “ Zeon pointed out.

“That is why we need a national media council that will be a proactive institution to curb excesses and abuse of the media landscape. “

On the issue of the economy of the media, Zeon suggested the state’s financing of the media in ways that ensure that the media as an element of the state benefits from taxes being generated.

“The media can be supported in ways that will help address some of the challenges it is faced with. “

“This is no way intended to sell the media to the government. “ Zeon clarified.

“Support to the media is engrained in the ECOWAS protocol on governance and democracy which urges states to support the media as a partner in democratic consolidation. “ Zeon added.

For his part, UNDP - Deputy Resident Representative for operations Mulugeta Abebe encouraged the Liberian media to serve as a strategic partner in the promotion of good

▶ CONT'D ON PAGE 11

“Align ‘Country Paper’ to economic diversification”

-Tweah urges AfDB

Finance and Development Planning Minister Samuel D. Jr., has urged the African Development Bank Liberia Country office to align its strategy plan of action from 2019-2023 to economic diversification in the country.

Hon. Tweah speaking at the AfDB one day portfolio review with the government of Liberia said development partners should focus on how to expand economic diversification, add value additions to raw material and support the agriculture industry.

“We want the world bank, African Development Bank and

Mawumenyo Amu said the one day portfolio review is geared toward assessing implementation of progress made since the Country Strategy Paper was approved, assess the relevance of the strategy, focus on priorities of the CSP and propose changes going forward by considering new emerging issues and developments in the country.

According to him, the bank country strategy paper was approved by the executive board of directors of the African Development bank on the 24th of October, 2018.

“This CSP this year marks the level of implementation of the strategy and covers the five years period from 2019 to 2023”



development partners to structure resources in the way that help private sector actors to take greater roles and responsibility to expand the economy,” Tweah explained.

According to him, commodities including rubber and oil palm have huge potential, and there is a need to invest in these sectors which cannot be overemphasized.

“Rubber has huge returns as we speak today, anybody sitting here can invest into rubber and get good returns. Same for oil palm, because the oil palm is the new commodity, and there are so many products you can get from it like soap, oil, and lotion, just to name few,” Tweah added.

For his part, AfDB Country Director, Dr. Orison

he added.

He stated that the objective of the review is to assess the relevant priorities of the CSP that were agreed in 2019. “As we know this year we will focus on two major priorities-economic diversification through improving transport and energy infrastructure and improving economic governance and advancing economic development.

We also need to reaffirm which priorities are consistent with the government priorities as of today. The second objective is to assess the progress made to date, how well we implemented them, and deliver at the start of the CFP.

“If necessary to incorporate changes concerning the emergency issues and development in Liberia” says AfDB Amu. -Press release

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Français

Weah demande au parlement de débattre du rapport de la commission vérité réconciliation

Le président George Manneh Weah a exhorté les parlementaires libériens qui soutiennent l'appel à la création d'un tribunal pénal des crimes de guerre et crimes économiques à soumettre le rapport final de la Commission vérité et réconciliation au parlement libérien afin qu'il fasse l'objet d'un débat public.

Le président Weah a également appelé les Libériens à faire pression sur leurs législateurs pour qu'ils débattent des recommandations de la CVR afin d'en tirer une position définitive sur la question.

Les propos du président sont une réponse aux préoccupations qu'a exprimées la semaine dernière à Kolahun, dans le comté de Lofa, le représentant Clarence Massaquo, au sujet de la justice pour les victimes de la guerre civile libérienne. Le représentant Massaquo avait soulevé la question lors de la visite du président Weah dans

le comté.

« Tous les jours les gens demandent la création d'un tribunal des crimes de guerre. Ils demandent ceci et cela. Mais il faut qu'ils vous expliquent le détail du document. Le document est disponible. Il faut qu'ils viennent vous expliquer. C'est ce que vous voulez ? Nous avons tous mal. C'est notre pays. Ce qui nous est arrivé, ça n'aurait

pas dû arriver », a dit M. Weah.

Il a demandé au représentant Massaquo, qui était présent dans le comté de Lofa lors de sa visite, de faire en sorte que le document de la CVR fasse l'objet d'un débat afin que les Libériens puissent décider du type de

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CÔTE D'IVOIRE – Une amnistie pour Laurent Gbagbo ?

L'ancien président ivoirien, Laurent Gbagbo, attend d'être amnistié dans l'affaire dite de la casse de la Banque Centrale des États de l'Afrique de l'Ouest (BCEAO). Une affaire pour laquelle il est sur le coup d'une condamnation à 20 ans de prison avec une amende estimée à 329 milliards de

FCFA, soit 500 millions d'euros. Blanchi par la Cour Pénale Internationale, Laurent Gbagbo espère être amnistié comme c'est le cas avec ses co-accusés : le Premier ministre Gilbert Aké N'Gbo, le ministre des Finances Désiré Diallo, et le ministre du Budget, Justin Koné Katinan. L'ex-chef d'État ivoirien entre 2000 et 2011, Laurent Gbagbo,

compte sur une amnistie pour enterrer définitivement ses problèmes judiciaires qui ont été les conséquences directes de la crise post-électorale en 2010. Acquitté des accusations de crimes contre l'humanité par la CPI le 31 mars 2021, il est poursuivi pour le saccage de la Bceao. Ladite affaire, considérée comme un scandale d'État, avait conduit à l'ouverture des coffres de la Bceao en pleine crise post-électorale entre 2010 et 2011. Laurent Gbagbo et trois de ses ministres Gilbert Aké N'Gbo, Désiré Diallo, Justin Koné Katinan étaient accusés d'être derrière ces faits.

L'actuel président de la République, Alassane Dramane Ouattara, a amnistié le lundi 6 août 2018, près de 800 personnes détenues dans le cadre des heurts post-électorales. Toutefois, cette faveur ne concerne pas les militaires et les groupes armés détenus pour crimes de sang. Elle ne concerne pas non plus l'ex-chef d'État ivoirien, Laurent Gbagbo. Ses

► CONT'D ON PAGE 9



Éditorial

Ce que le Président Weah pense du tribunal des crimes de guerre pour le Libéria

La réponse du président George Manneh Weah à la préoccupation du représentant du comté de Lofa, Clarence Massaquo, concernant la nécessité d'établir un tribunal des crimes de guerre et crimes économiques pour le Libéria afin d'éradiquer l'impunité indique clairement qu'il n'a aucunement l'intention de poursuivre les personnes qui ont commis des crimes odieux pendant la guerre civile. En tout cas les victimes de la crise ne peuvent plus compter sur l'administration Weah pour que justice leur soit rendue.

Le représentant du comté de Lofa, Clarence Massaquo, s'exprimant ce week-end dans le district de Foya, dans le comté de Lofa, a rappelé au président Weah que les Libériens sont blessés parce qu'ils ont perdu des proches, y compris des parents, donc l'impunité ne devrait pas faire obstacle à la situation des responsabilités et à la justice. Le législateur de Lofa, comme de nombreux Libériens, souhaite que la recommandation de la Commission vérité et réconciliation concernant les poursuites judiciaires soit mise en œuvre.

« Je sais que ce n'est pas courant de dire ça. Mais Monsieur le Président nous avons le rapport de la CVR, quelles que soient les formes qu'elles prennent Monsieur le Président, ceux qui sont dans ces charniers ne sont pas ici aujourd'hui de leur propre gré. Nous demandons justice », a-t-il plaidé.

Mais le président, par la façon dont il a répondu au législateur, considère la question du tribunal des crimes de guerre comme une discussion farfelue sur l'agenda de son gouvernement. Il a ainsi demandé aux Libériens de plutôt continuer à vivre en toute impunité au nom de la paix.

Les Libériens, tant au pays qu'à l'étranger, aspirent à la justice et à juste titre, en particulier étant donné que les chefs de guerre et autres auteurs de crimes ne cessent de montrer publiquement qu'ils n'ont aucun remords au sujet des atrocités qu'ils ont commises pendant la crise qui a décimé des familles et brisé des rêves.

La plupart des acteurs clés de la guerre sont de retour au gouvernement, y compris l'Assemblée législative. Ils bénéficient d'une immunité totale en dépit des recommandations faites par la Commission vérité et réconciliation. Il s'agit par exemple du célèbre chef de guerre, le sénateur Prince Yormie Johnson, chef de l'INPFL, du représentant Dr. George S. Boley, chef du Liberia Peace Council, de Sekou Damate Conneh, chef LURD, et du professeur Alhaji G.V. Kromah, chef de l'ULIMO-K, entre autres.

En fait, le sénateur Johnson, un fidèle allié politique du président Weah, continue de se vanter qu'aucun tribunal des crimes de guerre ne viendra au Libéria et nie publiquement qu'il a commis des atrocités pendant la guerre, c'est aussi le cas pour le Représentant Boley et pour Sekou Damate Conneh.

Ainsi, lorsque le président Weah appelle les Libériens à s'asseoir autour d'une table ronde pour discuter de la façon de faire avancer le pays plutôt que d'appeler à un tribunal pour crimes de guerre qui pourrait renvoyer le Libéria aux jours sombres, vous pouvez comprendre que la justice va nous échapper continuellement, tant que cette administration est au pouvoir.

Cependant, la Sainte Bible dit que la voix du peuple est la voix de Dieu. Les Libériens ne devraient jamais abandonner le combat. Ils devraient continuer à faire pression pour la mise en place d'un tribunal pour les crimes de guerre et économiques malgré le manque apparent de volonté politique de ce gouvernement.

L'histoire a prouvé à maintes reprises que la volonté du peuple finit par l'emporter malgré les tentatives de réprimer leurs opinions et de piétiner leurs souhaits exprimés de justice, qui est le pivot sur lequel reposent la paix dont le président a parlé, le développement et toutes les autres entreprises humaines positives.

Français

Weah demande au parlement

justice qu'ils veulent.

Le rapport final de la Commission Vérité et Réconciliation recommande la poursuite judiciaire des acteurs qui portent une plus grande responsabilité des crimes odieux et des crimes contre l'humanité commis pendant la crise.

Le rapport contient des conclusions majeures des causes profondes du conflit et son impact sur les femmes, les enfants et la société libérienne en général, la liste des responsables des violations flagrantes des droits de l'homme et du droit international humanitaire, ainsi que du droit international des droits de l'homme. Il a été officiellement remis au gouvernement du Libéria le 9 décembre 2009 sous l'administration de l'ancienne présidente Ellen Johnson Sirleaf. « Le tribunal des crimes de guerre a un document. Ils vont le regarder. Ils sont au parlement. Dites-leur d'aller au parlement et de le rapporter et de trouver une solution au document et d'obtenir tous les partenaires internationaux qui veulent afin que nous y allions. Personne n'a peur ici », a

ajouté le président Weah.

En septembre 2019, le président Weah a envoyé une lettre au parlement pour demander aux législateurs « de donner des conseils et de fournir des orientations sur toutes les mesures législatives et autres actions nécessaires à la mise en œuvre du rapport de la Commission vérité et réconciliation, y compris la création du tribunal des crimes de guerre et des crimes économiques. » En tant que président de la République du Libéria, je m'engage à mettre en œuvre de manière globale le consensus national (recommandations du dialogue) et j'appelle par la présente note le pouvoir législatif à conseiller et à fournir des orientations sur toutes les mesures législatives et autres actions nécessaires à la mise en œuvre rapport de la CVR, y compris la création d'un tribunal des crimes de guerre et crimes économiques », a dit le président dans une lettre qu'il a adressée au président de la Chambre des Représentants Bhofal Chambers, indiquant que « la situation des responsabilités des violations flagrantes des droits de l'homme sont des ingrédients essentiels pour une paix durable et un développement inclusif », a écrit M. Weah.

CÔTE D'IVOIRE – Une amnistie

proches espèrent alors que l'amnistie soit étendue pour permettre à l'homme âgé de 76 ans de retourner au pays afin de profiter tranquillement de sa retraite présidentielle. « Le pouvoir prendrait un acte courageux en étendant l'amnistie », a déclaré Mathurin Dirabo, avocat de Laurent Gbagbo et de ses co-accusés.

En attendant de voir cette

amnistie se concrétiser, Laurent Gbagbo a prévu de rentrer en Côte d'Ivoire le 17 juin 2021 après plus de dix ans d'absence. « Je vous annonce que le retour du président Laurent Gbagbo sur la terre de Côte d'Ivoire est prévu pour le 17 juin », a annoncé AssoaAdou, secrétaire général du Front populaire ivoirien, le parti fondé par l'ex-chef d'État ivoirien.

COMMENTAIRE

Par Joseph E. Stiglitz

La fausse piste de l'inflation

NEW YORK - De légères augmentations du taux d'inflation aux États-Unis et en Europe provoquent des inquiétudes sur les marchés financiers. L'administration du président américain Joe Biden aurait-elle créé un risque de surchauffe de l'économie, en adoptant son programme de sauvetage de 1 900 milliards \$ ainsi que ses plans de dépenses supplémentaires d'investissement dans les infrastructures, la création d'emplois, et le soutien au ménages américains ?

Ces inquiétudes sont prématurées, compte tenu de l'incertitude profonde à laquelle nous demeurons confrontés. Jamais auparavant nous n'avions connu de ralentissement engendré par une pandémie, caractérisé par une récession d'une brutalité disproportionnée dans le secteur des services, un creusement sans précédent des inégalités, et une forte augmentation des taux d'épargne. Personne ne sait même si et quand le COVID-19 sera maîtrisé dans les économies développées, et encore moins au niveau mondial. Tout en évaluant les risques, nous devons nous préparer à toutes les éventualités. De mon point de vue, l'administration a déterminé à juste titre que les risques associés une action insuffisante étaient bien plus redoutables que les risques liés à une action peut-être excessive.

Par ailleurs, l'actuelle pression inflationniste résulte pour l'essentiel de goulots d'étranglements du côté de l'offre à court terme, qui sont inévitables lorsque redémarre une économie stoppée temporairement. Nous ne manquons pas de capacité mondiale dans la fabrication d'automobiles ou de semiconducteurs ; seulement voilà, lorsque toutes les nouvelles voitures recourent à des semiconducteurs, et que la demande automobile se trouve plongée dans l'incertitude (comme elle l'a été durant la pandémie), alors la production de semiconducteurs est nécessairement limitée. Plus largement, la coordination de tous les intrants de production au sein d'une économie mondiale intégrée et complexe constitue une tâche immensément difficile, que nous avons trop souvent tendance à considérer comme acquise dans la mesure où les choses fonctionnent si bien, et parce que la plupart des ajustements s'effectuent « à la marge ».

Maintenant que ce fonctionnement normal a été interrompu, un certain nombre d'accrocs seront inévitables, qui se traduiront par des augmentations de prix pour un produit ou un autre. Pour autant, il n'y a aucune raison de penser que ces mouvements alimenteront les prévisions d'inflation et généreront ainsi une dynamique inflationniste, d'autant plus en présence d'un excédent de capacité mondiale. Il convient de rappeler que plusieurs de ceux qui aujourd'hui mettent en garde sur une inflation liée à une demande excessive évoquaient encore récemment une « stagnation séculaire » résultant d'une demande globale insuffisante (même à un taux d'intérêt zéro).

Dans un pays aux profondes inégalités de longue date, mises en lumière et accentuées par la pandémie, un marché du travail serré est recommandé. Lorsque la demande de main-d'œuvre est forte, les salaires augmentent à la base, et les catégories marginalisées intègrent le marché du travail. Bien entendu, le degré exact de resserrement de l'actuel marché du travail aux États-Unis fait l'objet d'un débat, compte tenu de rapports indiquant des pénuries de main-d'œuvre en dépit d'un taux d'emploi encore nettement inférieur à son niveau d'avant-crise.

Les conservateurs attribuent cette situation à des prestations d'assurance chômage trop généreuses. Or, plusieurs études économétriques de comparaison de l'offre de main-d'œuvre selon les différents États américains suggèrent que ce type d'effets de dissuasion du travail reste limité. Et en tout état de cause, les prestations chômage étendues sont vouées

à prendre fin à l'automne, même si les effets économiques mondiaux du virus demeurent.

Plutôt que de paniquer autour de l'inflation, nous devrions nous préoccuper de ce qu'il adviendra de la demande globale lorsque les fonds apportés par les plans d'aide budgétaire se seront asséchés. Nombre de ceux qui se situent au bas de la pyramide de distribution des revenus et richesses ont accumulé d'importantes dettes - qui représentent dans certains cas plus d'une année d'arriérés de loyer, compte tenu des suspensions temporaires d'exclusion.

Il est peu probable que la réduction des dépenses du côté des ménages endettés soit compensée par celles des ménages du haut de la pyramide, qui pour la plupart ont accumulé de l'épargne durant la pandémie. Les dépenses en biens de consommation durables étant restées solides ces 16 derniers mois, il faut s'attendre à ce que les plus aisés gèrent leur épargne supplémentaire comme n'importe quelle autre rentrée d'argent imprévue : comme quelque chose à investir ou à dépenser lentement, sur de nombreuses années. À moins que de nouvelles dépenses publiques ne soient effectuées, l'économie pourrait à nouveau souffrir d'une demande globale insuffisante.

En outre, même si les pressions inflationnistes devenaient réellement inquiétantes, nous disposons d'outils pour freiner la demande (dont l'utilisation renforcerait d'ailleurs les perspectives économiques à long terme). Intervient pour commencer la politique de taux d'intérêt de la Réserve fédérale américaine. Plus de dix années de taux d'intérêt proches de zéro ne se sont pas révélées saines sur le plan économique. La valeur de rareté du capital ne s'élève pas à zéro. Les faibles taux d'intérêt déforment les marchés de capitaux en incitant à une quête de rendements conduisant à des primes de risque excessivement basses. Le retour à des taux d'intérêt normaux serait une bonne chose (même si les plus fortunés, principaux bénéficiaires de cette ère de taux d'intérêt ultra-faibles, ne seront peut-être pas de cet avis).

Bien entendu, certains commentateurs observent l'évaluation des risques effectuée par la Fed, et s'inquiètent que celle-ci n'agisse pas au moment nécessaire. Pour ma part, j'estime que les déclarations de la Fed sont intervenues aux moments les plus opportuns, et je suis convaincu que sa position évoluera si et lorsque les indicateurs changeront. L'instinct de lutte contre l'inflation fait partie intégrante de l'ADN des banquiers centraux. S'ils ne considèrent pas l'inflation comme un problème majeur auquel l'économie serait confrontée, alors vous ne devriez pas vous en inquiéter non plus.

Un deuxième outil réside dans les hausses d'impôts. Veiller à la santé de l'économie à long terme exige bien davantage d'investissements publics, qu'il faudra financer. Le ratio impôts/PIB aux États-Unis est beaucoup trop faible, en particulier compte tenu des inégalités considérables dans le pays. Une imposition plus progressive est nécessaire d'urgence, sans parler des taxes environnementales qu'il va s'agir d'augmenter pour faire face à la crise climatique. Pour autant, il est parfaitement compréhensible que beaucoup hésitent à mettre en place de nouveaux impôts alors même que l'état de l'économie demeure précaire.

Nous devons considérer l'actuel « débat sur l'inflation » comme ce qu'il est : un leurre agité par ceux qui entendent faire obstacles aux efforts de l'administration Biden dans l'appréhension de quelques-unes des problématiques les plus fondamentales de l'Amérique. La réussite exigera davantage de dépenses publiques. Les États-Unis ont heureusement la chance de pouvoir enfin compter sur un leadership économique qui ne cèdera pas à la tentation alarmiste.

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REFLECTIONS: My Response

I recall it was there I met veteran Liberian journalist Jesse Karnley who narrated his story how he was almost killed. Both he and Eric Scott were captured around the Spriggs Payne airport. by Guinean ECOMOG troops.

But what carried them there if one may ask. Charles Taylor had claimed that he was in complete control of Monrovia and had even captured and killed Prince Johnson. Jesse Karnley and Eric Scott, both being journalists were dispatched along with a team of foreign journalists to verify Taylor's accounts.

At his Caldwell base, self-styled Field Marshall Prince Johnson desperate to prove to the outside world that he was alive ordered his men to call journalists to tell his story to the world. But he was informed that the Journalist had already been tie-bayed and sent to the banks of the St. Paul River for execution. By the time Prince Johnson's men arrived on the scene, Eric Scott had already been shot and his body dumped into the river. Miraculously, Jesse Karnley was spared and he was brought before Prince Johnson where he told the world that Prince Johnson was in fact alive and well.

Rebel leader and self-styled Field Marshall Prince Johnson also had a group of young Lebanese fighters under his command. One of them would later be linked to the assassination of AFL Captain Larry Milton by grenade explosion at a drinking spot on Carey Street. They were all fully dressed in military fatigues and often carried sticks of dynamite tied in bunches. Later, when we finally informed Prince Johnson him that we would also be meeting the AFL at their BTC barracks, he began expressing unease at our suggestion, charging that the AFL had been planning to ambush him in central Monrovia.

He lashed out at the ECOMOG High Command who he accused of protecting a notorious character and death squad commander identified as NyonbluTailey. We were to later meet this character when we visited the Executive Mansion accompanied by Major-General Joshua Dogonyaro himself.

But we had been forewarned by the ECOMOG Chief of Staff, General Iweze to transact business with Prince Johnson before midday because after midday, he was a useless drunk with a killing rage. It was in such fit of drunkenness that he shot and killed Edwin Vaye, an engineer and prominent son of Nimba, and before that Michael Doe, according to accounts we received. Early one morning, Messers Charles Bright, Sam Moses Tucker and Jonathan Mason came over to the Hotel Africa to inquire from us about the "missing whereabouts of Ms. Annie Broderick.

According to information given to us by staff of the Hotel, immediately following the execution of Michael Doe, who had been placed in charge of Hotel operations by its president, Gus Kouwenhaven, self-styled Field Marshall Prince Johnson abducted Ms. Annie Broderick also at the time an employee(personnel manager) of the hotel and took her to his base and named her President of the Hotel Africa Corporation. At the time, the self-styled Field Marshall, had scores of female hostages at his base according to accounts provided us, some by victims themselves.

Our arrival in war torn Monrovia as members of an advanced team from the IGNU and the very warm reception accorded us by ECOMOG apparently may have sounded alarm bells to Field Marshall Prince Johnson.

Openly he pretended to welcome and assure us of his protection whatever that meant while secretly he plotted our elimination. But by divine providence, the late Williard G. Russell at the time a glorified hostage at his base let us in on Prince Johnson's plan. He had overheard him making loose but drunken comments about how he planned to eliminate those sent by the Interim government to spy on him.

And the spies he had reference to included our initial team and late arrivals Tom Kamara and Dusty Wolokolie. On Dusty's insistence we confronted Field Marshall Prince Johnson on what we had heard but without disclosing the source. His response was a vehement denial and almost apologetic having been caught off guard. "Dusty you know how we all suffered under Doe so I can't do things like that" was his

contrite reply. The area under the control of "Field Marshall" Prince Johnson was relatively small-Bushrod Island, Caldwell and Mamba Point. And, the Field Marshall, as if it were a ritual paid daily morning and sometime evening visits to the Hotel.

And anytime, he visited, all guests would be ordered to come out or else to be harangued by the Field Marshall, always at the time accompanied by a bevy of female bodyguards. On the morning of one of such ritual visits, he lashed out at Ms. Annie Broderick seated in the front row of the hall alongside Dr. Levi Zangai.

"What you scared for?" he blurted out, "Only criminal can be afraid of Police", he said as he continued his tirade unleashing invectives and thinly veiled threats against the young woman.

Attempting to clear his side in the killing of Michael Doe, Prince Johnson stated that he had received information that Michael Doe had been communicating with NPFL rebels who were stationed a few hundred yards away in Brewerville and who could attack him at any moment.

But the actual truth was, according to hotel workers, Prince Johnson had been pressurizing Michael Doe without success to turnover to him a huge amount of money allegedly left in the care and custody of Michael Doe.

Such funds according to them were intended to pay hotel staff arrears and provide for the upkeep of staff then displaced at the hotel until things had returned to normal.

But the apparent refusal of Michael Doe to comply with his (Prince Johnson's) wishes led to his death and that of the chief accountant on the 5th floor of the hotel's ballroom on that fateful morning of September 23, 1990.

"Michael, stand up let me kill you" he barked out to Michael Doe, according to eyewitness accounts. Michael rose to his feet, looked Prince Johnson directly in the eye and then bowed his head as if in prayer and supplication to God. Split seconds later he fired a single bullet hitting Michael in the head and killing him instantly right in the full presence of hotel staff and others. Next in line for execution was Carter Miller the chief accountant who was also shot in the head.

Their lifeless bodies dripping with blood were thrown over the 5th floor balcony followed with shouts by his men .."How the C.O look?" "Alright" came the instant reply. A former Ms. Liberia beauty queen, Ms. Annie Broderick, then serving as director of personnel according to staffer accounts was physically present when Field Marshall Prince Johnson shot and killed Michael Doe and the chief accountant and must have been shaken, like every other hotel staff.

And so, when the Field Marshall opened up that day issuing thinly veiled threats at her she apparently got the message, "flee, die or spend the rest of the time on his Caldwell base as a hostage and potential sexual slave a fate shared by other female abductees.

One evening, following that incident, we had received word that an ECOMOG vessel with food supplies for the mission had docked at the Freeport. Dr. Levi Zangai, upon confirmation of the information, asked for volunteers to go to the port to offload our supplies. Almost immediately Human Rights lawyer and advocate TiawanGongloe, James Fromayan and I volunteered to make the trip to the Freeport that night.

Earlier, during the day, we had received reports that Ms. Annie Broderick had been spotted in a minibus by INPFL fighters at a jointly manned checkpoint with ECOMOG troops. The minibus had been assigned to our team by the Field Marshall. The fighters had suspected that she was making a break for it and immediately passed on the information to the Field Marshall who according to reports at the time became very incensed with our team.

By then we had received feedback about the angry disposition of the Field Marshall. In those days anyone courting or arousing the anger of the Field Marshall was sure to pay with his life. When the realization hit Dr. Zangai, he panicked and suggested that rather than return to Hotel Africa that night, we should board the ECOMOG vessel and return to Freetown.

The truth was which we found out later, Ms. Broderick had discussed her plight with Dr. Zangai who willingly agreed to assist her get to the Freeport of Monrovia to board an ECOMOG vessel. But he had kept us in the dark.

But I insisted to Dr. Zangai that I had nothing to do with Ms. Broderick's disappearance and made it clear that I was not going to abandon the mission so I was returning to Hotel Africa come what may. James Fromayan supported my position and after haggling over the matter for a few minutes we, Zangai included, made the decision to return to face Field Marshall Prince Johnson's wrath.

We returned from the Freeport at almost 10:00pm that evening. Nothing it seemed was unusual or out of place. The downstairs lobby of the hotel was as usual crowded with people, all displaced, with some jostling for a pride of place at the bar. A few minutes later after taking a shower, I retired and went to sleep. Early the next morning at about 6:30am, Messers Charles Bright, Sam Moses Tucker and Jonathan Mason came by the hotel to inquire of us about the whereabouts of Ms. Annie Broderick.

Failing to elicit answers from us, they informed us shortly afterwards that Field Marshall Prince Johnson had demanded our presence at his base to provide explanations on the whereabouts of Ms. Annie Broderick.

That evening, our entire team led by Dr. Zangai proceeded to Caldwell to meet the Field Marshall. Accompanying us were the ECOMOG Chief of Staff Nigerian General Cyprian Iweze and Gambian Contingent Commander, Lt. Colonel Modu Gaye.

Upon arrival at his Taylor Major Compound base, we were ushered into a large room where a group of his men gathered ostensibly to witness proceedings. The Field Marshall began by throwing a question to Dr. Zangai.

"Dr. Zangai where is my president?" "I have no idea Field Marshall", Zangai blurted in response. Then the same question was thrown to TiawanGongloe to which a similar response came forth. That answer must have angered him. He then ordered the arrest and detention of Clr. TiawanGongloe on false accusations that he was complicit in the escape of his hostage Ms. Annie Broderick from Hotel Africa.

His last words as Tiawan were being escorted out of the room by armed men, "they killing Nimba man and Nimba man there".

From his rants, it became clear to me that the escape of his prized hostage was what irked him most perhaps never believing that she could have mustered the courage to successfully escape his clutches, unlike many others who were being on held his base against their will. But, thanks to the courage and persistence of General Iweze. He insisted that he would be detained along with TiawanGongloe.

But the Field Marshall realizing the dangerous implications of detaining a Nigerian General backed by thousands of well-armed troops on the ground, walked back on his plan. He would not detain the General neither would he allow Tiawan to suffer any harm. But General Iweze insisted that Tiawan be released from detention before we could proceed with any further talks. And the Field Marshall was forced to comply. There were many more encounters with Field Marshall Prince Johnson one of which included his forcing us at gun point to return to the Ducor Hotel while gun battles were raging in the streets of Monrovia between his INPFL and the AFL.

Right there in Vai Town before our very eyes, he executed a young man who had been accused of looting.

This was on December 3, 1990, two days after he had launched an unprovoked attack on the AFL despite the existence of a ceasefire and the armed presence of ECOMOG. Days prior to the December 1, 1990 launch of the INPFL attack against the AFL in Monrovia, Field Marshall Prince Johnson had been complaining to us about what he claimed were plans by the AFL to attack him. In truth as we discovered, the Field Marshall was incensed by the fact that we had included the BTC barracks and all its occupants, soldiers and civilians alike in the planned relief food distribution scheme, although the food was yet to arrive.

As a matter of fact, I led the humanitarian needs assessment exercise at the BTC. I was virtually

UL prepares for over 5,000 freshmen

By Winston W. Parley

The University of Liberia (UL) Wednesday, 9 June released results for its first entrance exams for Academic Year 2021, disclosing that 5,539 successful candidates who have made either provisional or regular pass are expected to apply to enroll at UL commencing Academic 2021/2022 first semester.

The university in May this year administered a decentralized entrance for undergraduate programs and a digitized entrance for graduate and professional schools programs, attracting over 11,000 candidates who sat the entrance.

The President of the University of Liberia Rev. Dr. Julius Sarwolo Nelson expressed gratitude to the testing committee headed by the Dean of the Louis Arthur Grimes School of Law Cllr. T. Negbalee Warner, and the Executive Director for Center

results show 49.3 percent successful or provisional pass, compared to 50.3 percent of unsuccessful candidates.

The UL president is also hopeful that by the time 2021 has ended, there may be a change in the threshold to see more students who are getting used to public exams and successfully passing the entrance to enroll at the University of Liberia.

Meanwhile, Dr. Nelson informed the public that decentralizing the university's entrance is not the first time, saying in the 70s, the university's entrance was decentralized.

He said he is happy that once again, decentralizing the university's entrance has been achieved, assuring that the process will continue to ensure that young men and women who are beyond the Monrovia, Montserrado enclave should also have the opportunity to take UL's entrance.

Dr. Nelson also expressed happiness over the digitization

made either a regular pass or a provisional pass, meaning that the Admission Office of the University of Liberia will be expecting applications from successful candidates up to 5,539 persons," Mr. Hinneh said.

Looking at the results on the basis of gender, Mr. Hinneh explained that there were 2,390 successful female candidates who either made provisional or regular passes, compared to 3,149 successful male candidates.

Overall, he said UL registered 11,299 candidates for the undergraduate colleges, StrazSinje Vocational and Technical College and the College of General Studies. Of the 11,299 candidates that registered, Mr. Hinneh said 135 of them were absent during the entrance exams; one candidate was disqualified and 11,163 candidates, making up 98.8 percent of those who registered, turned out.

He put the undergraduate entrance exam results in five categories which are provisional pass, regular pass, unsuccessful, absent and disqualified. Mr. Hinneh said the first undergraduate entrance exams administer on 1 May 2021 was decentralized while the graduate and professional schools aptitude tests administered on four different Saturdays, starting 8 May, were digitized.

He detailed further that centers in Zwedru, Grand Gedeh County; Ganta, Nimba County; Tubmanburg, Bomi County; Voinjama, Lofa County and Buchanan, Grand Bassa County were used as additional five testing centers added to the regular three centers that had always been used in Monrovia and Fendall in Montserrado County and Sinje, Grand Cape Mount County.

Additionally, Hinneh noted that other high school campuses in Montserrado County were used in addition to UL's Capitol Hill, Fendall and Sinje Campuses.

Atty. Norris Tweah, Vice President for UL Relations said the overall performance is getting better, particularly pointing to the narrow disparity between female to male.

Atty. Tweah said the university wants more and more female students to pass the entrance exams, adding that it is impressive when you are getting to see that reflected in some of the colleges at the University of Liberia.

of UL's graduate and professional schools aptitude test, disclosing his administration's plan to also make an effort to digitize the undergraduate entrance exam as well. According to him, there will be a testing center with over 500 computers that will be enrolling in the entrance exam at UL if the resources can be found.

Announcing the results on the university's Capitol Hill Campus, UL Executive Director for the Center for Testing and Evaluation Mr. Moses Hinneh said out of 11,163 candidates that sat the entrance exams last month, 4,671 candidates or 41.84 percent made a regular pass; 868 candidates or 7.78 percent of the candidates made provisional pass; 5,624 candidates or 50.38 percent were unsuccessful.

"This implies that 5,539 candidates or 49.62 percent



for Testing and Evaluation Mr. Moses Hinneh "for the successful conclusion of our first round of exams in 2021."

"We celebrate your success; we want to thank God that young men and women that were interested in coming to the university, we are now announcing the first results. We wish those who are coming in the best on their journey for tertiary education at the University of Liberia," Dr. Nelson said.

He encouraged those who didn't pass the first entrance not to give up, informing them that there is always an opportunity for them to keep trying and in the shortest possible time they will be joining the successful candidates.

According to Dr. Nelson, the rate of successful candidates from the first entrance of 2021 is higher than what the university had before, adding that the latest

Liberia to benefit

Starts from back page

Legislature ratified the bilateral agreement which President George Weah signed and was subsequently published and printed into handbill.

Kemayah asserted that the ratification further demonstrates to their Guinea counterparts that Liberia takes seriously its commitment to the full implementation of the agreement.

He believes that it's also allied with the government's agenda for development and prosperity as well as fulfills the benchmark of pillar two and three of the agenda.

Also speaking, Ibrahim K. Kaba, Guinea's Minister for Foreign Affairs said the engagement presents an opportunity to review all assets of their friendship be it diplomatic, health or security.

Minister Kaba noted that it is their desire to utilize this great project and expressed optimism that this opportunity will favor youths of Liberia and Guinea.

He added that the agreement will create

opportunity for corporation, economic development in the sub-region, hoping that the project will be successful and the realization of the dream of the two counties, something, he described as a Win-Win situation.

The agreement, which has been in the pipeline since the administration of former President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf, is being dubbed by officials of both countries as a win-win situation.

If approved, ore mined from the Guinean side of the Nimba Mountain in Liberia will be cheaper to export via the Port of Buchanan inside Liberia, generating revenue for both countries.

The mine is situated approximately 800km from Guinea's capital Conakry, and 26km from existing railway at Tokadeh in Liberia. The cost of developing the mine and building the rail line, which will traverse difficult terrain and virgin rainforest, has been estimated at close to US\$20 billion. -Editing by Jonathan Browne

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Integrity forum vows

Cont'd from page 6

face to face interactions among various actors during and after procurement process.

According to the Procurement Professional, this software which is expected to be active on the internet could make procurement processes more transparent, credible and greatly help to minimize public perception about alleged unfair practices which are talked about in the public without facts.

"This software which is being examined is expected to be rollout as a pilot project in some sectors and it could meaningfully promote decentralization, thus making access to Procurement information very accessible," she pointed out.

The PPCC boss has also disclosed that every procurement transaction and decision agreed about by the PPCC is available on the commission's website which is functional on the internet.

She renewed call for everyone and institution in Liberia to exhibit open mind regarding expression of interest in having access to all procurement information and procedures at every time.

Attorney Kowo frowned at misperception, misinformation and disinformation that some actors in the Private and public sectors are noted for broadcasting in the public space without contacting the PPCC to get hard facts about all procurement contracts.

"An Independent Media

Cont'd from page 7

g o v e r n a n c e and accountability.

Abebe noted that the media has a critical role to play in the delivery of what he called crucial social services to the people.

Abebe observed that the media can help the government and partners address the needs of the people by reporting on issues impacting their lives.

He described the media as a critical vehicle for ensuring an accountable management of resources in any society.

He also encouraged the media to promoters of peace and development; saying sustainable development is tied to peace as peace is tied to "sustainable development."

"The media helps in creating an enlightened society so the role of the media in any society

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Liberia to benefit US\$20 billion from rail corridor with Guinea



By Lewis S. The

The Government and people of Liberia are expected to benefit from US\$20 billion bilateral engagement for the development of a rail corridor to transport Guinean mining products via Liberia's port infrastructure.

An official Guinean government is in Monrovia for an international ministerial conference that is currently ongoing. The three-day forum is meant to facilitate the transport of agriculture products, people, good and

services.

The agreement represents a legal, institutional and operational framework between the two countries, meant to secure the use of current and future infrastructure and/or transport services in Liberia by Guinean mining operators. It also facilitates the importation to Guinea by mining operators of goods used for mining projects in the neighboring country.

In remarks at the formal opening session of the conference Wednesday, June 9, 2021, Liberia's Foreign Minister Maxwell Saah Kemayah said, the

conference follows intensive engagement between both monitoring committees of the Governments of Guinea and Liberia.

Minister Kemayah explained that the engagement further reflects long-sharing bond of friendship and corporation characterized by inter-marriages being witnessed and cultural ties, cross-border trade deeply rooted between the two states, dated even before Guinea's independence in 1958.

He noted that Guinea and Liberia share common borders which are hardly distinguishable and had facilitated in measures to closely monitor communities from both sides.

According to him, these interactions lay the premise for their engagement and is the major drive to improve social and economic relations of peoples of both nations.

"The Government of Liberia through the National

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UEFA suspend legal action against Super League rebels

European football's governing body UEFA has suspended legal action against Real Madrid, Juventus and Barcelona over their role in attempting to launch a breakaway European Super League.

"The UEFA appeal Body has decided to stay the proceedings until further notice," UEFA said Wednesday without specifying their reasons.

Real, Juventus and Barcelona held out when nine

of the 12 original clubs backtracked and struck a deal with UEFA last month. The six English sides involved reached a financial settlement with the Premier League earlier Wednesday worth a combined £22 million (\$31 million).

Arsenal, Chelsea, Liverpool, Manchester City, Manchester United and Tottenham announced themselves among the founder members of the competition in April, but the project quickly collapsed after widespread opposition.



They were joined by Atletico Madrid, Inter Milan and AC Milan when agreeing to forego five percent of their revenue from UEFA competitions for one season and pay a combined 15-million-euro (\$18 million) donation to support grassroots' and youth football in Europe.

UEFA then announced it was opening formal disciplinary proceedings against Real Madrid, Barcelona and Juventus, "for a potential violation of UEFA's legal framework".

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