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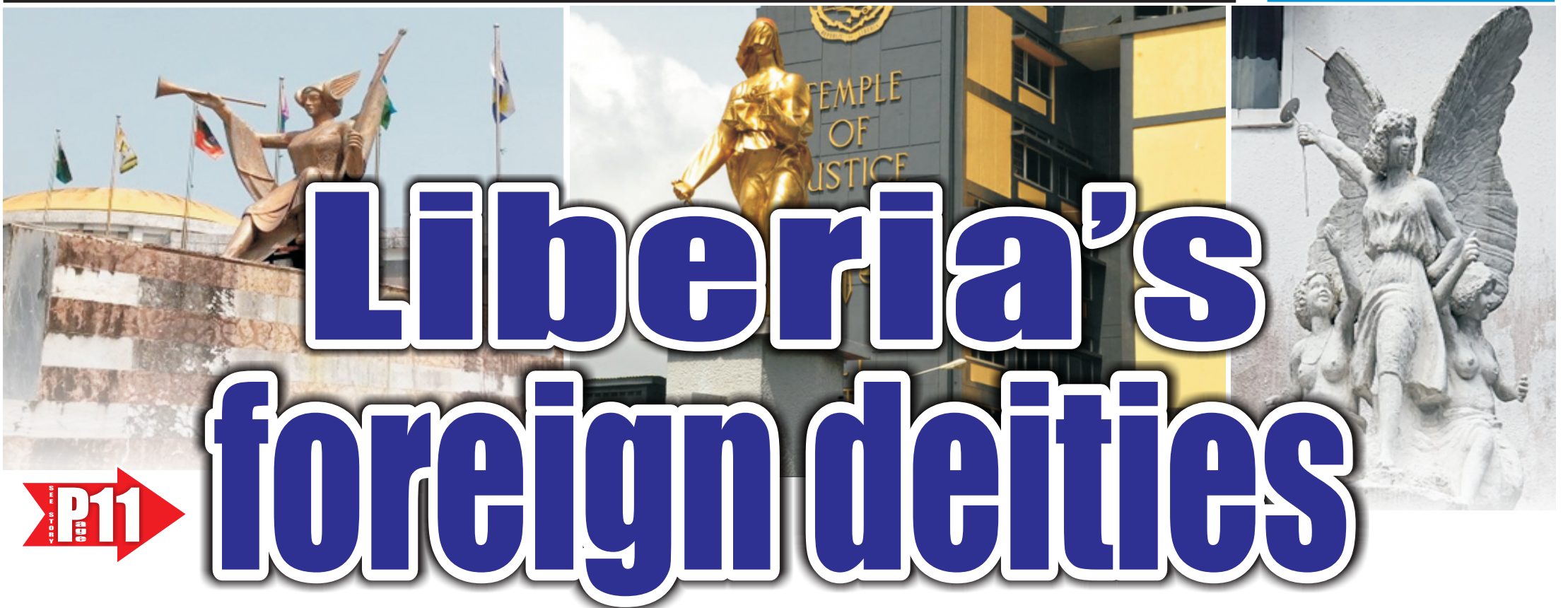
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# Liberia's foreign deities

**P11**

**-And why local religious leaders want them removed**

# Mixed views in Nimba over PYJ sanction



Senator Prince Yormie Johnson

**Christmas season na come!**

Watch out for lots of goodies from *Y'ello* Santa.





# Continental News

## Rural lifeline for Kenyans after Covid city exodus

If the coronavirus pandemic had not happened, it is likely Jack Onyango would still be living alone, working in Kenya's capital and sending money back to his wife and children in his faraway rural home.

Like so many Kenyans, he moved to Nairobi as a young man, believing that was where the country's economic opportunities lay.

But life in the capital was not easy. Mr Onyango could only afford to travel home to see his family in Kisumu county in the west of the country once a year.

He would go at Christmas time paying 2,000 Kenyan shillings (\$18; £13) for the bus journey - and he was also expected to bring goods with him, such as sugar.

When the virus struck in 2020, the authorities introduced tough lockdown restrictions and like many others, Mr Onyango found himself with no work.

While governments in other parts of the world paid

partial salaries to those who lost their jobs during the pandemic, in Kenya there was no such support. "There was nowhere to get money to pay rent and to feed my young family," he says.

Seeing no way of staying in the city, he decided to move back home to his village in July of that year.

"I was worried but I gambled," Mr Onyango says. "At home there

was no rent, there was no electricity bill or water bills, as compared to Nairobi where everything was money-oriented."

He started farming tomatoes and local greens such as African cabbage and African nightshade on 1.5 acres (0.6 hectares) of land that once belonged to his grandfather.



Geoffrey Barasa now farms in western Kenya after losing his two jobs in Nairobi

He sold the produce to neighbours and vendors, who would take it to the local market.

With birds chirping loudly in the background as he speaks to me on the phone, he tells me the unexpected move has turned out for the best.

"The money I'm getting from what I'm doing now is much more compared to what I used to get for working in Nairobi." My eldest daughter is 16 years old. I used to see them once a year. In fact, corona has been a blessing to me. "Covid-19 caught everybody by surprise," says Chris Macoloo, the organisation's Africa region director.

"Most of the people were laid off and, because they live from hand to mouth, they couldn't feed themselves, they couldn't pay rent and they

couldn't send money to their families. So quite a number migrated from cities back to their rural areas."

He says the countryside offered a lifeline for many.

"In Africa we are children of two worlds. We have one leg in the city and another one in the countryside. It helped because if we didn't have that, they would have really been in serious trouble."

Nearly 750,000 jobs were lost across Kenya in 2020, according to Kenya's National Bureau of Statistics.

A recent report by the agency said various sectors of the economy were adversely affected by Covid containment measures, and total employment, excluding small-scale farming and pastoral activities, contracted by 4.1% to 17.4 million. BBC

## Nigerian police to get pay raise and tax waiver

The Nigerian government has approved a 20% salary increase for police officers.

President Muhammadu Buhari had promised a pay increase in the wake of mass protests, known as the #EndSars, against police

brutality last year.

Police Affairs Minister Muhammad Maigari Dingyadi told reporters after a cabinet meeting on Wednesday that the salary increase was part of measures to discourage officers from taking bribes and extorting citizens.

He said this was also to

"improve the relationship between the public and the police".

The increase will take effect from January 2022, he added.

A salary tax waiver for junior police personnel has also been approved with retrospective effect from October this year.

The #EndSars protests were sparked by widespread allegations of police brutality including extortion, torture and extra-judicial killings especially by members of the police's Special Anti-robbery Squad unit known as Sars.

The unit was disbanded in the wake of the protests and various panels of inquiry have been set up in several states to investigate human rights violations by the security forces - before and during the protests.

Campaigners however say that more than one year on, officers implicated in abuses have yet to be held to account. BBC



Campaigners say abuses by the police are yet to be fully addressed

## Journalists reporting the war in Ethiopia detained



Three journalists have been detained in Ethiopia under the state of emergency laws and accused of giving publicity to a group designated by the government as a terrorist organisation.

One of those arrested is a freelance video journalist accredited to The Associated Press, Amir Aman Kiyaro.

Two local journalists, Thomas Engida and Addisu Muluneh, have also been detained.

Police say the journalists violated the state of emergency law and Ethiopia's anti-terrorism law.

AP's executive editor Julie

Pace said these were "baseless allegations".

The news agency says its journalist has been covering both sides of the war.

The Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ) condemned the arrests and called for the immediate release of all journalists arrested for their work.

The CPJ says a police spokesperson Jeylan Abdi had told them that contacting a group designated as a terrorist group was a crime under the country's anti-terror law and not an act of journalism.

Several journalists have been detained under the state of emergency laws. BBC

# EDITORIAL

## Weah government corruption wounds deepen

**LAST WEEK THURSDAY**, December 9, 2021 economic sanction imposed on a key supporter of President George Manneh Weah, Senator Prince Yormie Johnson (Nimba County) by the United States Treasury Department brings to three, the number of direct interventions by the U.S. Government against graft and uncontrollable misuse of public funds under the Weah-led government.

**UNDER ITS GLOBAL** Magnitsky Act, the U.S. Treasury records that Senator Johnson has been involved in pay-for-play funding with government ministries and organizations for personal enrichment, detailing that as part of the scheme, upon receiving funding from the Government of Liberia (GOL), the involved government ministries and organizations launder a portion of the funding for return to the involved participants. It says the pay-for-play funding scheme involves millions of U.S. dollars, and that Senator Johnson has also offered the sale of votes in multiple Liberian elections in exchange for money. Hence, Johnson is designated pursuant to E.O. 13818 for being a foreign person who is a current or former government official, or a person acting for or on behalf of such an official, who is responsible for or complicit in, or has directly or indirectly engaged in, corruption, including the misappropriation of state assets, the expropriation of private assets for personal gain, corruption related to government contracts or the extraction of natural resources, or bribery.

**SIMILARLY LAST YEAR**, on International Anti-Corruption Day, December 9, 2020, the U.S. Department of Treasury's Office of Foreign Assets Control (OFAC) sanctioned Liberia's renowned lawyer and senator, Harry Varney Gboto-Nambi Sherman, for corruption and bribery, blocking his assets.

**OFAC NOTED THAT** Senator Sherman, who chairs the Liberian Senate Judiciary Committee, offered bribes to multiple judges associated with his trial for a 2010 bribery scheme during the former Sirleaf administration, and he had an undisclosed conflict of interest with the judge who ultimately returned a not guilty verdict in July 2019.

**THEN ON THURSDAY**, September 10, 2020, the United States Government barred former Liberian passport director Andrew Wonplo and his entire family from traveling to America "due to his involvement in significant corruption."

**FORMER U.S. SECRETARY** of State under the Trump administration Michael R. Pompeo explained that in his official capacity at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Monrovia from 2018 to 2019, Mr. Wonplo was involved in passport fraud that undermined the rule of law, reduced the Liberian public's faith in the current government's management of identification and travel documents, and compromised the integrity and security of immigration processes.

"**THIS DESIGNATION IS** made under Section 7031(c) of the Department of State, Foreign Operations, and Related Programs Appropriations Act, 2020 (Div. G, P.L. 116-94)", read a statement that was published on the United States Embassy's website in Monrovia in 2020. "In addition to Mr. Wonplo, I am announcing the public designation of his spouse, Dennice Wonplo, and their minor children", Mr. Pompeo added.

**THERE ARE MORE** officials or former officials to be designated for corruption in Liberia, according to the United States Government, and Liberians are edgy to know who may be the next corruption official to get on the U.S. corruption watch list, especially so when officials at the National Port Authority from the Managing Director down to branch managers are entangled in corrupt deals that breed conflict of interest.

**THESE SELF-INFLICTED WOUNDS** under the current administration are undermining transparency and accountability in the public sector and eroding the trust of both Liberians and international partners with adverse future consequences.

**PRESIDENT WEAH SHOULD** listen now and take cue from signals coming out of Washington, DC to demonstrate leadership over the state of affairs rather than allow himself to be surrounded by cronies. In other words, the government should match words with deeds in its corruption fight. Anything short of this is nothing but mere lip-service.

**CORRUPTION IS DEPRIVING** citizens of basic social services, including health, education, safe-drinking water, electricity and security, etc. The Weah administration has a choice to heal the current wounds as a result of corruption or continue to self-destruction.

# COMMENTARY

By Barry Eichengreen

## Greening Europe's Fiscal Rules

**B**ERKELEY - The European Union is about to undergo a much-needed review of its fiscal status quo. Experts at the European Commission are considering how the EU's fiscal rulebook should be revised, and Germany's new government has quietly signaled a willingness to consider changes - though any modifications there will most likely be limited, given disagreements within the coalition and control of the finance ministry by the fiscally conservative Free Democrats.

Arguments for reform are compelling. For starters, interest rates on public debt are only a fraction of what they were in 1992, when the EU's fiscal rules were negotiated. In 1992, rates on ten-year German government bonds averaged 8%. Back then, 60% of GDP was considered a prudent limit for how much debt a government could safely service, with annual budget deficits capped at 3% of GDP. So surely the prudent upper limit today is higher.

In fact, post-COVID debt ratios have blown past the 60% ceiling for government borrowing. Eurozone-wide government debt is 100% of GDP. Greek government debt is more than 200%. A rule added in 2011 requires governments to eliminate 5% of the excess each year until the 60% threshold is reached. Thus, the Greek government is ostensibly required to run a budget surplus of 5% of GDP, assuming the economy grows as fast as 2% a year, which the International Monetary Fund deems unlikely. But continuing to run surpluses for decades would be unprecedented for a modern economy - which is to say that no one expects it to happen.

And there is no good reason that it should. The 60% and 3% reference values for debts and deficits lack any economic basis. The figure of 60% just happened to be the average debt-to-GDP ratio in 1992. Three percent of GDP just happened to be the deficit consistent with keeping the debt ratio stable at 60%, given prevailing interest rates and growth rates.

Drivers obey traffic rules that make sense; they disregard rules that are arbitrary and capricious. We have seen similar behaviors on the part of Europe's fiscal policymakers.

These are reasons enough for a rethink. Now, however, there is another: the need to make space for climate-related public investments. Cutting Europe's greenhouse-gas (GHG) emissions by 55% by the end of the decade will cost more than €5 trillion (\$5.6 trillion). Because curbing GHG emissions is a public good, firms left to their own devices will underinvest.

Moreover, where infrastructure has network characteristics, as in transportation, someone has to coordinate the relevant investments. It follows that much of this spending will be done by governments.

In the past, various governments have adopted a "golden rule" that exempts public investment from self-imposed limits on deficit spending, the rationale being that public investment pays for itself. If productive, it grows the denominator of the debt-to-GDP ratio. If very productive, it generates tax revenues sufficient for servicing and paying off the additional debt.

Investment in the green economy could qualify. Even if it does not boost economic growth, it could avert a climate-related disaster in which GDP plummets and the debt burden becomes unmanageable.

The current low level of interest rates creates a presumption that many green investment projects will meet the test. Of course, there is no guarantee that interest rates will remain low. If they rise, the case for borrowing to finance green investment will become harder.

If some green investments fail the test, that does not necessarily mean they shouldn't be made. Climate change is a moral as well as a narrowly economic issue, and how much to spend on combating it is for society to decide. But it is an argument for raising taxes or cutting other spending so that green investment can be undertaken without running deficits and jeopardizing debt sustainability.

Thus, the decision about how much to borrow, and how much to rely on taxes and cuts to other spending, should turn on forecasts of interest rates and growth rates, and of how these variables will be affected by green investments. There is uncertainty, to be sure, surrounding such forecasts. Such is life.

Indeed, wouldn't it be better if other forms of public spending were also subjected to this evaluation? European governments could systematically lay out how their various spending programs will affect GDP and tax revenues and thus how the debt ratio will evolve. They could acknowledge the uncertainty surrounding their forecasts and specify upside and downside scenarios. They could delegate responsibility for the assessment to independent national experts and the European Commission. Disputes could be adjudicated by a specialized chamber of the European Court of Justice.

But wait - these proposals are already out there! Unfortunately, they are likely to be a bridge too far for Germany's new cohort of cautious policymakers.

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## Lord, they say small children can run but they can't hide

Dear Father:

Hmmm, the say small children can run but they can't hide. Right na, na, the place my mother eh in her grave her bones are jumping all over the place scattering things. Even though she na get any fish to fry in our village matter again but at least she will be happy for once.

Um, my son what going on again in your village? That what news making your mother bones to be turning and dancing in her grave?

Oh Father, you haven't heard, Uncle Sam na fini putting da old Sojar Man under restriction, the place he eh na, he na join the Old Rooster Man.

Which old Sojar Man you talking about my son?

Oh Father, you na know that man, the scorpion king during the war time in our village. The man who forced the Concomitant people to print new money in our village during the war.

Ah, Uncle Sam na put the big thing on him, the book people can say "Sanction".

Tell me something my son!

Ooh, you think the people joking. Let them just be there they think da fun thing the people doing. This time if your village people can't punish you, the Global Village people can do it for them.

Um, then na your mother one bone rejoicing in her grave oo. Even the Sargent and all dancing-no wonder the ground in your village was shaking the whole day?

Da fun! My sef, before I heard the news I was thinking whether the climate change was attacking underground too-because the first thing that ran to my mind was earthquake. But then again, I said in my heart, that na our village portion to get earthquake. Not knowing our innocent people then were celebrating justice.

Uh, I know the place conned man eh right na, na just like he moh go under the ground.

But Father, come to think of it, da just the beginning oo. They say when you haul rope, rope can haul bush.

Um, my son as we were talking, I heard they say six more people will soon be put on the same sanction too ehn?

Yes oo, Father. I say da the beginning of the end of all this wahala in our village. Again come to think of it, how can the people who spoiled our village, make most of us mother and fatherless be the ones to be enjoying around here. Some of us loss our mothers, our brothers and sisters as well as fathers and yet the people them who slaughtered them like chickens are passing around here free. Da lie! They will pay painfully too.

Let them be there. You know what it means for you to na know your ma and pa grave? And when you add brother and sister to it-can you imagine the pain we have to live through and wish we knew?

Father, I don't care how long it takes these people will pay for what they did to us- and their generations will continue to pay for it even after they have died and gone.

And Father, me I don't care what people say, I want to see them brought to justice. Do you know what it means for you to spend your entire childhood life depending on other people's handout, sleeping in all kinds of places and doing all kinds of things because some people took away your parents? They will pay. It just starting.

# O-P-E-D

By Shlomo Ben-ami

## Tolerating a Nuclear Iran

Israel has only bad options for halting the Islamic Republic's march toward a nuclear bomb. In fact, even if global powers manage to revive the 2015 nuclear deal with Iran, diplomacy may only delay the inevitable.

**T**EL AVIV - In 1977, Israel's then-deputy prime minister, Yigael Yadin, asked Egyptian President Anwar el-Sadat, who was then on his historic trip to Jerusalem, why the Egyptian army had not proceeded to the Sinai passes during the 1973 Yom Kippur War. "You have nuclear arms, haven't you heard," was Sadat's reply.

Of course, Israel's nuclear capabilities were the stuff of rumor. To this day, Israel has never officially confirmed the existence of a nuclear program. Yet Israel's worst-kept secret has long shaped the region's politics, including by deterring Israel's enemies. But can it deter Iran?

In 1967, David Ben-Gurion, Israel's first prime minister, and Shimon Peres, who would later serve as both prime minister and president, argued for Israel to test a primitive nuclear device, in order to deter an Egyptian attack. At the time, Israel was virtually on its own in a hostile neighborhood. France - which had previously been its main arms supplier - had recently deserted it, and Israel had not yet achieved its current strategic intimacy with the United States. Ben-Gurion's position reflected his view that Israel was an intrinsically fragile entity surrounded by mortal enemies with which war was inadvisable absent the backing of a major foreign power.

Then-Prime Minister Levi Eshkol, Deputy Prime Minister Yigal Allon, and Chief of Staff Yitzhak Rabin - all principled opponents of nuclearization in the Middle East - recognized the country's precarious position but resisted the temptation to demonstrate a nuclear capability. When, during the dark days of the 1973 Yom Kippur war, Defense Minister Moshe Dayan revived the proposal, Israel's leaders again resisted the temptation to flaunt - let alone deploy - nuclear weapons.

Nearly a half-century later, Israel has fewer enemies in the region, having made peace with several of its neighbors. But it has gained a powerful new one in Iran, since that country's 1979 Islamic Revolution. And some are arguing that in order to deter Iran from pursuing its nuclear program, Israel should abandon its policy of "nuclear opacity."

But if Israel announces its capabilities, and Iran persists in its nuclear drive anyway, would Israel really mount a nuclear response against what is clearly a strategic challenge but certainly not an existential threat? Moreover, Israel's acknowledgement of its nuclear arsenal might lend legitimacy to Iran's own quest for nuclear weapons and encourage other regional powers, such as Egypt, Saudi Arabia, and Turkey, to follow suit.

The risks are apocalyptic. The kind of mutual deterrence that existed during the Cold War, or even today in the binary India-Pakistan conflict, would not work in the Middle East, a dysfunctional region where non-state actors and unstable regimes abound.<sup>1</sup>

Iran has been dogged in its nuclear efforts. It has endured years of crippling economic sanctions, ultra-sophisticated Israeli cyber warfare against its strategic infrastructure, assassinations of its nuclear scientists, and attacks on its military targets across the Middle East.

Yet Iran is now closer than ever to mastering the full nuclear fuel cycle. Moreover, it has managed to maintain its proxy armies throughout the Middle East, and to extend its strategic influence from Yemen through Iraq and Syria to Lebanon.

Israel's "Begin doctrine" - a counter-proliferation policy focused on using preemptive strikes to halt potential enemies' development of weapons of mass destruction - will not stop Iran. A decade ago, Israel spent billions of dollars on preparations for a massive strike on Iran's nuclear installations. But that strike never materialized.

Israeli air strikes did destroy Iraq's Osirak nuclear reactor in 1981 and a similar installation in Syria in 2007. But those were surgical operations. Using air strikes to destroy Iran's well-dispersed, well-camouflaged, and well-protected nuclear installations is unrealistic, and the effort would almost certainly lead to a major war.

While Israel's military capabilities are unmatched by any other Middle Eastern power, it would still face serious threats. Iran would certainly respond to an attack on its nuclear installations by retaliating against Israeli targets, and perhaps against the countries that allowed Israel to use their airspace to reach Iran.

Meanwhile, Iran's Lebanese proxy, Hezbollah, would begin to deploy its 150,000 missiles and rockets, which can reach every corner of Israel. Israel's vulnerable home front, and possibly some of its vital infrastructure, would be hit hard before its air force neutralized Hezbollah - likely razing Lebanon in the process.

An international agreement is probably Israel's - and the world's - best hope for preventing Iran from becoming a nuclear power. But while that is precisely what negotiators are currently attempting to achieve in Vienna, Iran has taken a tough bargaining position.

That is not entirely unjustified. After all, it was the United States (with Israel's complicity) that withdrew unilaterally from the 2015 nuclear agreement, even though Iran had not violated its obligations. And Europe failed to keep its promise to help Iran bypass the sanctions the US subsequently reimposed. Furthermore, Iran's interlocutors in Vienna - the countries that are preaching against proliferation - are mostly nuclear powers themselves.

The talks in Vienna can still lead to an agreement. But, with Iran's leaders largely convinced that a nuclear weapon is their best protection, the only durable way to prevent Iran from mastering the enrichment cycle and, ultimately, building an operational nuclear weapon probably lies in regime change. This was the position of key intelligence authorities in Israel a generation ago, when Iran's nuclear program was still in its infancy. Given how resilient the Islamic Republic has proven to be, it seems that the world may well eventually have to tolerate an Iranian nuclear bomb, just as it has learned to live with the Indian and Pakistani arsenals.

# OPINION

By Diego Gambetta,  
Ozan Aksoy

## Freedom in the Veil

Many European countries have placed restrictions on traditional Muslim headscarves in the name of modernization. But for some religious women, the decision to wear a veil is a way to express identity while signaling their integration into secular society.

**T**URIN/LONDON - The latest controversy over the hijab, the headscarf worn by Muslim women, erupted at the end of October. Ironically, the trigger was an anti-discrimination campaign launched by the Council of Europe.

The Council posted a short video on its social media channels comprising a series of images split in half. One side features a woman wearing a hijab, and the other shows the same woman without the head covering. At the end of the video, the text "Beauty is in diversity as freedom is in hijab" appears, followed by the hashtags #celebratediversity and #JOYinHIJAB.

The video caused an uproar in France, where government spokesman Gabriel Attal was quoted by the Financial Times as saying that "one shouldn't confuse religious freedom with the de facto promotion of a religious symbol." Attal called wearing the hijab an "identitarian" position "contrary to the freedom of conscience that France supports." The French minister for youth and sport, Sarah El Haïry, spoke out forcefully against the video and claimed credit for the Council's decision to withdraw it from circulation. Right-wing politicians such as Marine le Pen and Michel Barnier and prominent television pundits added their voices to the criticism of the campaign.

France is not the only European country that restricts the hijab. The inflow of Muslim immigrants to Europe and the threat of violent Islamist groups have made Muslim minorities a target of hostility and discrimination, and the hijab has become a visual symbol of these tensions. Of the 27 EU member states and the United Kingdom, nine have some legal restriction on veiling; there have been legislative proposals to limit the practice in five more. In countries with no national restrictions, some regions have decided independently to ban face coverings. There are only six EU countries - Croatia, Cyprus, Greece, Poland, Portugal, and Romania - where there has been no public debate so far on restricting the veil.

The supporters of restrictive measures represent a diverse range of perspectives. Many liberal politicians, staunch believers in the secular state, regard religion as a private affair to be kept out of sight. Some feminists view the headscarf as a symbol of patriarchal or religious oppression of women. But the most vociferous backers of bans have been populist, right-wing politicians who find it expedient to hide their xenophobia behind arguments that have broader ideological appeal.

Amid all the grandstanding, little heed is paid to the perspectives of Muslim women. Sociologists long have predicted that modernization would bring about a decline in religiosity and thus in the use of religious symbols such as the hijab. This prediction has been borne out in both Christian and Muslim societies, and as modernization increases, the frequency of veiling generally decreases.

But there is a crucial nuance in the interaction between prior levels of religiosity and modernization. For example, among highly religious Muslim women, the probability of wearing the hijab increases with women's participation in modern social life, particularly if they are young, educated, and single. This seems true not only in predominantly Muslim countries, but also where Muslims are a minority, as in Belgium. The more Muslim women who identify as deeply religious associate with native Belgians, the likelier they are to wear the hijab. This trend also can be seen in countries where religiosity remains high. For example, in Indonesia, the number of women who wear the hijab has shown a tendency to increase with prosperity.

Studies show that most women do not wear the hijab because of pressure from their families or communities. In fact, the practice is more widespread among highly religious women who, because of their employment status, education, income, and political participation, should be relatively better prepared to resist family pressure.

Veiling seems to be not just an expression of religiosity, but also a strategic decision. Religious women seem to wear the hijab to reconcile their life outside the home with the social norms of their community. Adopting the hijab reassures their communities that their involvement in "riskier" secular lives away from their homes should not be interpreted as an opportunity to engage in behavior contrary to their religious norms. The hijab then signals the resilient piety of truly religious women against the perils that modernization could pose to their reputations.

This understanding of veiling has implications for cultural policy. In Europe, the hijab could be a sign not of segregation, but of integration of Muslims into society. As highly religious Muslim women make more non-Muslim friends and move to neighborhoods where they are the minority, they may choose to wear the hijab as a means to safeguard their pious reputation in the face of modernity. Bans on some forms of the veil would deprive these women of a choice that allows them more freedom, not less.

If wearing the hijab were barred, a woman who wants to signal her piety and her decision to abide by the norms of her own community would be forced to seek alternatives that could be so cumbersome that she decides to stay at home. That, presumably, is not an outcome that many proponents of prohibition desire.

Not all that lies behind the veil is to be feared. The Council of Europe's slogan is, perhaps surprisingly, not far from the truth. There certainly is more "freedom in hijab" than there would be in banning it.

### UNIVERSITY OF LIBERIA

#### Section I. Invitation for Bid

(Printing and delivery of the 102<sup>nd</sup> Souvenir Program, Protocol & Invitations)

**IFB NO: UL/SP/NCB/003/20/21**

November 27, 2021

1. The University of Liberia has allotted portion of its Convocation's budget for Fiscal Year 2020/2021 and intends to apply it towards the procurement of the (printing and delivery of Souvenir programs, Protocols & Invitation) for the 102<sup>nd</sup> Graduating exercises, 2021.
2. Bidding will be conducted through the National Competitive Bidding (NCB) procedures specified in the Public Procurement & Concessions Act (PPCA), 2010 and approved by the Public Procurement & Concessions Commission (PPCC) of the Republic of Liberia.

3. Specification and quantity:

Item No.	Description	Temporary quantity	Total quantities
i.	Printing of Protocols	1	To be Determined
ii.	Printing of Souvenir program	1	To be Determined
iii.	Printing of Invitations	1	To be Determined

4. Qualification requirements include:

- a. Valid Government of Liberia (GOL) Business Registration with Code C1811
- b. Valid GOL Tax Clearance
- c. Past Performance records including the names and contact numbers of at least 4 clients who had purchased same/similar goods in the last 4 years. They will be used as references to check the performance and quality of the offered model, if necessary.
- d. PPCC Vendor Registry
- e. Current Bank statement for the past two (2) years - present with the closing balance of US\$3,000
- f. Bids will be examined for proper signature and completeness before consideration for further evaluation.

5. A set of bidding documents in English can be obtained by interested bidders for a non-refundable fee of US\$50.00 (Fifty United States Dollars) from the Procurement Department, Fendall Campus beginning November 27, 2021 - December 27, 2021 between the hours of 9:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m., Monday - Friday.

6. All bids must be accompanied by a Notarized Bid Securing declaration valid for 60 days after the opening of bids.

7. Interested Bidders are advised to visit the Procurement Department (see address below) to view samples before submitting bids.

8. Sealed bids must be delivered to the address below at or before 2:00 p.m., December 27, 2021 and will be opened in the presence of bidders' representatives who choose to attend in the Administrative Conference Room (AC1-01), Right wing of the Administrative Complex, Fendall Campus, University of Liberia. All bids should be addressed as follows: In the upper left corner of the envelop, print:

**"SEALED BID FOR PRINTING & DELIVERY OF PROTOCOLS, INVITATIONS & SOUVENIR PROGRAMS"**

**REF.: IFB NO.: UL/SP/NCB/003/20/21**


Below the bid reference number, print the bidder's address.

In the middle of the envelop, print the address below:

Procurement Department  
Administrative Complex, Right wing, 1<sup>st</sup> Floor, Room # AC1-09  
University of Liberia  
Fendall Campus, Liberia

9. Note that Electronic bids will not be accepted, and that late bids will be rejected and returned unopened.

Signed:   
Fatu Ruth Tpoteh (Mrs.)  
Director/Procurement/UL

Approved:   
Benetta Joko Tarr (Mrs.)  
Vice President for Administration/UL

**MORE HEADLINE NEWS**

**MORE HEADLINE NEWS**

# Gender Ministry welcomes sentencing of Convict Anthony Sumo to 6 years

# March for Justice to protest nationwide

By Kruah Thompson

The Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection (MGCSP) welcomes the sentencing of Anthony Sumo to six years imprisonment by the 16th Judicial Circuit Court in Bopolu City, Gbarpolu County

immediately turned over to the Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection.

With support from partners, the children's welfare, including their physical and psychosocial needs were provided by the Ministry.

Working with the Gbarpolu Legislative Caucus, the Ministry

food items to the families.

The Ministry believes that the December 14, 2021 ruling from the court is a victory for the fight against human trafficking which will serve as a deterrent to would-be traffickers.

Gender, Children and Social Protection Minister Williametta E. Saydee-Tarr confirms that the routine monitoring of the children by the Ministry will remain active. She further reaffirms Gender's commitment to achieving PILLAR 1 of the Pro-Poor Agenda for Prosperity and Development, (Power to the People) 2. 4.2 that highlights Children protection as a key priority of the Government of Liberia.

In observance of this year's celebration of World Day against Trafficking in Persons (TIP), President George Manneh Weah emphasized the compelling responsibility of not only government but every citizen and resident within our borders to exert meaningful efforts, leaving no stone unturned, in ensuring the minimization and subsequent total eradication of all forms of Human Trafficking in Liberia.

President Weah recounted his government's concerted and unrelenting efforts to

**▶ CONT'D ON PAGE 10**

By Bridgett Milton

March for Justice, a leading anti-rape campaigner threatens to protest nationwide strike if President George M. Weah does not intervene in the reported rape of a seven-year-old girl at the Liberian Embassy in Abuja, the Federal Republic of Nigeria.

Speaking in a news conference Thursday, December 16, 2021, the group warns if the Feminist-In-Chief, President George M. Weah does not intervene in 48 hours, it will mobilize thousands of young people across Liberia for a major nationwide strike.

Reading a statement on behalf of the group, Titus B. Pakalah, calls for the immediate dismissal of Liberian Ambassador to Nigeria Dr. Al-Hassan Conteh for compromising the rape case of

warns the Government of Liberia to abandon what it terms "an evil plan" to appoint Ambassador Al-Hassan Conteh as Liberia's Permanent Representative to the United Nations in New York.

"We monitored the Spoon Talk's edition of December 15, 2021 (last night) in which the panelists made this startling revelation that the CDC led-administration was or is considering sending Ambassador Conteh to replace Ambassador Dee Maxwell Kemeyah at the UN.

We need not remind anyone of the unresolved sexual scandal still at our UN Mission that we would again want to send yet another ambassador who has become a serious 'cover-up in chief' of sexual abuses", Pakalah reveals.

He says the group monitored Mr Bayjay's revelation during his



Convict Anthony Sumo

for human trafficking.

In January 2021, the convict trafficked 22 children from Gbarpolu County but was nabbed by the Liberia Immigration Service detachment in Margibi County on January 29, 2021. The children were

along with Child Protection Network (CPN) of Liberia - a body of civil society organizations on Saturday, July 3, 2021 receive permit from the Ministry of Justice to reunite the 22 children with their families.

Additionally, the Ministry presented cash, food, and non-

# Diaconia to extend outside of Monrovia

By Lewis S. Teh

The human resource officer at Diaconia MDI Liberia Mr. Erasmus J. Clarke has pledged the company's commitment to its operation outside Montserrado County to empower many struggling Liberians.

Diaconia Microfinance Deposit-taking Institution Inc. or (DMDI) is a limited liability company established in Liberia in December 2012. It is an initiative of Alliance Microfinance (AS), Norway and was set up to promote job creation through provision of microfinance services.

DMDI targets people living both in urban and rural Liberia, seeking to contribute to solving lack of financial services for the poor and the needy.

Speaking after the company was certificated as the Most Outstanding Microfinance Company of the year by the coalition of civil society organizations



Thursday, December 16, 2021 Mr. Clarke said Diaconia Microfinance will continue its work by putting smiles on the faces of Liberians.

He thanks the coalition of civil society organizations for the accolade, noting that throughout the Ebola, and COVID-19 outbreak the company didn't cut down staff due to the

enormous hardship Liberians are going through.

"Our institution is a Norwegian investment and about 99 percent of our staffers are Liberians, and it is the first in Africa, and as a Liberian it's incumbent upon us to manage the company",

**▶ CONT'D ON PAGE 10**



little Bayjay even when medical record proves that the minor was sexually abused.

Last week, the Liberian media's headlines were dominated with a shocking revelation by Mr. Nat Bayjay, father of the victim and Minister Counselor for Press and Public Affairs at the Liberian Embassy in Abuja, who reported alleged multiple sexual abuse of his seven years old daughter in the premises of the Embassy in Abuja by two teenagers who were under the guidance of another diplomat.

According to Bayjay, he has called on President Weah for his personal intervention to ensure justice for his daughter, including medication, as her mental and physical health has been declining as a result of the rape.

At the same time, the group

appearance on the Spoon Talk last week in which he disclosed that Ambassador Conteh had previously covered up another sexual molestation on the same diplomatic premises prior to his daughter's alleged abuse.

"This makes him an ambassador who specializes in covering up rape!" The group adds.

According to Pakalah, since Bayjay went public over a week ago, there has been public pressure for Ambassador Conteh to be recalled and the public has also been demanding that the reported abused child's welfare is taken care of, something Bayjay said has been abandoned by the Ambassador, guardians and parents of the alleged perpetrators as well as the government here in Monrovia.

**- Editing by Jonathan Browne**

MORE HEADLINE NEWS

MORE HEADLINE NEWS

# ArcelorMittal Liberia Offers Free Medical Services to Communities in Grand Bassa

Hundreds of residents of Compound # 3 in Grand Bassa County have begun receiving free medical services from a team of Doctors and health workers from ArcelorMittal Liberia in collaboration with the County Health Team (CHT) of Grand Bassa.

The community health outreach initiative was launched recently in Siahn, Wee Statutory District.

diarrhea, typhoid, infection, and other common sicknesses and diseases, as well as COVID, cervical cancer, and other routine vaccines, are also being provided at no cost to the communities.

Up to December 18, Dr. Williams said the outreach team will visit different communities each day.

“What we’re doing today is supporting the county health team and the government. We want to compliment the

and the port of Buchanan are at the heart of the company, and that working with them is the best way for partnership.

“When we work together, we can solve common problems and address some of the development needs and difficulties you have,” he told residents of the rail community.

He said the company will increase its community engagement activities going forward through partnerships with local community leaders.

Grand Bassa County Health Officer, Dr. Sylvester O. Wheh praised ArcelorMittal for the partnership which he said will bring significant health relief to residents of the local communities.

“We want to say thanks to the ArcelorMittal family who saw it necessary to provide these services to our people along the train tracks after every three months,” Dr. Wheh said.

A similar community health outreach initiative will kickoff shortly in Nimba, targeting ArcelorMittal Liberia communities of impact.

Over the years ArcelorMittal Liberia has continued to increase investment in healthcare and social services for communities and its workforce, with improvements in its hospitals in Yekepa and Buchanan.

The company has also been a private-sector leader at the frontlines of response pandemics such as the Ebola Virus outbreak and now COVID-19 with huge donations of essential medical supplies, and sanitation and hygiene materials.

government by reaching out to you with essential treatments and medications because ArcelorMittal believes that it has a responsibility to the communities along the rail,” he said.

Speaking about the purpose of the free medical outreach, ArcelorMittal Liberia’s Corporate Responsibility Manager, Eric Swen said the company has invested in the initiative because communities along its mining operations, rail,



According to Dr. Garfee Williams, Chief Medical Officer of ArcelorMittal Liberia, the community health outreach targets at least six communities along the railway in Grand Bassa with onsite physical examination & medical consultations, medical treatment, and referrals of special cases where necessary.

Dr. Williams said essential drugs for the treatment of

# PFMRISP certifies procurement practitioners

The Public Financial Management Reform for Institutional Strengthening Project (PFMRISP), has certificated 121 procurement practitioners from 13 implementing agencies of the public financial management reform projects. The training was conducted between September and November 2021.

The courses which were prepared based on the World Bank Procurement Regulations for Investment Project Financing (IPF) July 2016, revised November 2017, July 2018 and November 2020, were delivered in two sessions. The first session comprised 59 participants and focused on the Procurement of Goods in National Competitive Bidding and Request for Quotation while the second session was on Consultancy Services Selection Methods of

Manager, Project Management Unit who represented the Minister of Finance and Development Planning, expressed the need for more capacity building. According to Mr. Fofana, public financial management speaks about wise use of money, and the training met its target. He said many people are requesting for training, but the cost associated with that was very high for the government and partners to undertake, so need-based capacity building efforts such as these will be encouraged and supported. He also thanked the African Development Bank, the Swedish Government and European Union for their support towards building capacity public institutions, including the MFDP.

This capacity building initiative was financed by the PFMRISP which is funded by the World Bank, European Union and Swedish Government and



Consultants Qualification Selection (CQS), Individual Consultants (IC) and Direct Selection (DS) was attended by 62 participants.

Speaking at the closing program on December 3, 2021, the representative from the World Bank Office in Monrovia Mr. MacDonald Nyazvigo, Financial Management Specialist and Task Team Leader for the PFMRIIS Project said “I strongly believe that this is welcoming. I can remember when we started this training, we said that we need to develop and focus on the project, we need to ensure that the process is good and moving. You the participants, we are moving together and this is an opportunity for you and me to witness the commitment we have strived for today”.

For his part, Mr. Vee-Musa Fofana, Acting Project

benefited implementing agencies from both the African Development Bank’s Integrated Public Financial Management Reform Project phase II (IPFMRP II) and World Bank financed PFMRISP. Beneficiary entities included the Ministry of Finance and Development Planning, Liberia Revenue Authority, Public Procurement and Concession Commission, General Auditing Commission, Internal Audit Agency, Liberia Institute of Public Administration, University of Liberia, Ministry of Education, Ministry of Health, Liberia Anti-Corruption Commission, Financial Intelligence Unit, Governance Commission and Project Management Unit (PMU). The procurement training was delivered based on the recommendations of the

# Français

## Liberia : Prince Johnson et les sanctions indolores de Washington

Le Trésor américain a annoncé avoir pris des sanctions contre Prince Johnson, accusé de corruption. L'ancien chef de guerre est aujourd'hui l'un des hommes politiques les plus puissants du pays, et il y a peu de chances pour qu'il soit un jour poursuivi au Liberia.

S'il est aujourd'hui sénateur, Prince Johnson est surtout connu pour être un ancien - et redoutable - chef de guerre, qui dirigea l'Independent National Patriotic Front of Liberia (INPFL), l'une des principales factions armées active pendant la première guerre civile. Une fois la paix revenue, il a fait le pari de se lancer en politique, en se présentant aux élections sénatoriales en 2005. Il est parvenu à se faire élire et a depuis conservé son siège de sénateur.

Pourquoi est-il sanctionné aujourd'hui ? Dans son communiqué, le Trésor américain affirme que Prince Johnson a développé un

système de corruption et de blanchiment d'argent « avec des ministères et des organisations gouvernementales à des fins d'enrichissement personnel ». Il est également accusé d'avoir tout bonnement proposé de vendre des suffrages à ceux qui en avaient besoin lors des différentes élections et d'avoir reçu un salaire du gouvernement en tant que source de renseignements, alors même

qu'il ne lui en fournissait pas. « Johnson [est] payé pour maintenir la stabilité intérieure », en conclut le Trésor américain.

Graves violations des droits de l'homme

Les sanctions annoncées le 9 décembre comprennent le gel des propriétés, des intérêts immobiliers et des entités appartenant

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## La présidente de la NEC élue première vice-présidente de la ECONEC

La présidente de la Commission électorale nationale (NEC), Madame Davidetta Browne Lansanah, a été élue à l'unanimité le mercredi 15 décembre première vice-présidente du Réseau des commissions électorales de la CEDEAO (ECONEC), lors de la 7e Assemblée générale biennale en cours dans la capitale ghanéenne, Accra.

La présidente de la Commission Electorale Nationale du Libéria a été élue à l'unanimité par les présidents des commissions

électorales de l'Afrique de l'Ouest à Accra, au Ghana.

Madame Browne Lansanah, qui succède à un Burkinabé, occupera le poste de première vice-présidente de l'ECONEC pour un mandat de deux ans.

Ses élections font suite à deux élections successives majeures ici - les élections sénatoriales de mi-mandat du 8 décembre 2020 et les élections partielles récemment organisées dans quatre comtés. Les deux élections se sont avérées crédibles, effaçant les questions d'indépendance.

Selon une dépêche d'Accra,

l'élection de Mme Browne Lansanah comme première vice-présidente du Réseau des commissions électorales de la CEDEAO (ECONEC), élève le Libéria et la NEC au niveau régional pour influencer la formulation et la mise en œuvre des politiques dans la promotion des droits libres, équitables et des élections crédibles en Afrique de l'Ouest.

En tant que première vice-présidente d'ECONEC, la patronne de la NEC aura la possibilité d'influencer le renforcement de la confiance du public dans le processus électoral, la promotion des élections indépendantes et impartiales et le développement d'agents électoraux professionnels et intègres dans la sous-région.

Madame Lansanah rejoint ses collègues du Comité de pilotage de l'ECONEC pour renforcer la coopération pour l'amélioration des lois et pratiques électorales, le partage d'expériences, la rationalisation des technologies de l'information et des élections et la mise en commun des ressources pour réduire le coût de

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## Éditorial

### Les blessures dues à la corruption sous l'administration Weah s'aggravent

La semaine dernière, le jeudi 9 décembre 2021, la sanction économique imposée à un soutien clé du président George Manneh Weah, le sénateur Prince Yormie Johnson (comté de Nimba), par le département du Trésor américain porte à trois, le nombre d'interventions directes du gouvernement américain contre la corruption et l'abus incontrôlable des fonds publics sous le gouvernement dirigé par Weah.

En vertu de sa loi Global Magnitsky Act, le Trésor américain estime que le sénateur Johnson est impliqué dans un blanchissement d'argent avec un certain nombre de ministères et d'organisations gouvernementales pour s'enrichir.

Ces ministères et organisations gouvernementales, après avoir reçu un financement du gouvernement du Libéria (GOL), blanchissent une partie du financement pour le rendre aux participants, dont le sénateur Prince Johnson.

Selon le trésor américain, le programme de financement fictif concerne des millions de dollars américains.

Il reproche au sénateur Johnson d'avoir également proposé la vente des voix des électeurs lors de plusieurs élections libériennes en échange d'argent.

Par conséquent, Johnson est considéré comme responsable ou complice de, ou s'est directement ou indirectement engagé dans, la corruption, y compris le détournement de biens de l'État, l'expropriation de biens privés à des fins personnelles, la corruption liée aux marchés publics ou à l'extraction de ressources naturelles, ou les pots-de-vin.

De même l'année dernière, lors de la Journée internationale de lutte contre la corruption, le 9 décembre 2020, l'Office of Foreign Assets Control (OFAC) du Département du Trésor américain a sanctionné le célèbre avocat et sénateur du Libéria, Harry Varney Gboto-Nambi Sherman, pour corruption et pots-de-vin.

L'OFAC a noté que le sénateur Sherman, qui préside la commission judiciaire du Sénat libérien, a offert des pots-de-vin à plusieurs juges associés à son procès pour un programme de corruption de 2010 sous l'ancienne administration Sirleaf, et il a eu un conflit d'intérêts non divulgué avec le juge qui a finalement renvoyé un verdict de non culpabilité en juillet 2019.

Puis, le jeudi 10 septembre 2020, le gouvernement des États-Unis a interdit à l'ancien directeur des passeports libériens Andrew Wonplo et à toute sa famille de se rendre en Amérique « en raison de son implication dans une corruption importante ».

L'ancien secrétaire d'État américain sous l'administration Trump, Michael R. Pompeo, a expliqué qu'en sa qualité officielle au ministère des Affaires étrangères à Monrovia de 2018 à 2019, M. Wonplo a été impliqué dans une fraude de passeport qui a sapé l'état de droit, réduit la confiance du public dans la gestion par le gouvernement actuel des documents d'identité et de voyage, et a compromis l'intégrité et la sécurité des processus d'immigration.

« Cette désignation est faite en vertu de l'article 7031 © de la loi de 2020 sur les crédits du Département d'État, des opérations étrangères et des programmes connexes (Div. G, PL 116-94) », lit-on dans une déclaration publiée sur le site de l'ambassade des États-Unis à Monrovia en 2020.

« En plus de M. Wonplo, j'annonce la désignation publique de son épouse, Dennice Wonplo, et de leurs enfants mineurs », a ajouté M. Pompeo.

Il y a plus de fonctionnaires ou d'anciens fonctionnaires à désigner pour corruption au Libéria, selon le gouvernement des États-Unis, et les Libériens sont impatients de savoir qui pourrait être le prochain fonctionnaire accusé de corruption à figurer sur la liste de surveillance de la corruption des États-Unis, en particulier lorsque les fonctionnaires de l'autorité portuaire nationale, du directeur général aux directeurs de succursale, sont impliqués dans des accords corrompus qui engendrent des conflits d'intérêts.

Ces blessures auto-infligées sous l'administration actuelle sapent la transparence dans le secteur public et érodent la confiance des Libériens et des partenaires internationaux avec des conséquences futures négatives.

Le président Weah devrait écouter maintenant et s'inspirer des signaux provenant de Washington, DC pour faire preuve de leadership sur l'état des choses plutôt que de se laisser encercler par des copains. En d'autres termes, le gouvernement doit faire correspondre les paroles aux actes dans sa lutte contre la corruption.

La corruption prive les citoyens de services sociaux de base, notamment la santé, l'éducation, l'eau potable, l'électricité et la sécurité, etc. L'administration Weah a le choix de panser les blessures actuelles dues à la corruption ou de continuer à s'autodétruire.



# Français

## Liberia : Prince Johnson et les

(directement ou indirectement) à Prince Johnson aux États-Unis. En réponse, l'intéressé a déclaré que « les allégations formulées à son encontre [étaient] vagues et [n'étaient] étayées par aucun fait suggérant [qu'il a] été impliqué dans des affaires de corruption ». Il demande donc au gouvernement américain de fournir les preuves de ce qu'il avance.

En mai 2021, l'ambassade des États-Unis au Liberia avait condamné l'élection de Prince Johnson à la tête de la Commission défense et renseignement du Sénat. Elle avait aussi annoncé qu'elle refusait de travailler avec cet ancien chef de guerre accusé de graves violations des droits de l'homme pendant la guerre civile au Liberia. À la suite de cet épisode, Prince Johnson avait démissionné de son poste.

Au Liberia, de nombreux rapports font état de faits de corruption liés au gouvernement ou à des fonctionnaires. La confiance du public envers l'État et ses agences de lutte contre la corruption est également très faible. Selon le rapport 2021 sur l'état de la corruption du Centre pour la transparence et la responsabilité au Liberia (CENTAL, en anglais), neuf personnes sur dix pensent que la corruption est élevée au Liberia, et les deux tiers des personnes interrogées pensent que le gouvernement ne fait rien pour y remédier. De fait, le président George Weah a beau avoir promis qu'il lutterait contre ce fléau au plus haut niveau, la plupart des individus mentionnés dans les rapports ont échappé aux poursuites.

Tout ceci est en partie dû à la non-application des lois, même si le président de la Commission anti-corruption du Liberia (LACC en anglais) défend son bilan et rappelle qu'elle n'a pas le pouvoir

d'engager des poursuites judiciaires.

Influence

Il y a peu de chances que Prince Johnson soit poursuivi ou ait à subir les conséquences de sanctions décidées à Washington. En 2020, le Trésor américain avait en effet sanctionné un autre sénateur libérien, Varney Sherman, lui aussi accusé de corruption. Mais l'intéressé n'a jamais été poursuivi et a conservé son poste.

**ES AUTRES FERONT DÉSORMAIS ATTENTION À CE QU'ILS FONT. JE NE DIS PAS QU'ILS NE SERONT PLUS CORROMPUS, MAIS QU'ILS NE LE SERONT PLUS DE MANIÈRE ÉHONTÉE**

Sénateur du comté de Nimba, l'un des plus peuplés du Liberia, Prince Johnson demeure très influent dans le pays. Il est surnommé « le faiseur de roi ». C'est en effet le soutien qu'il a apporté à l'un ou l'autre des candidats au second tour des trois dernières élections qui leur a permis d'être élus à la magistrature suprême. Aujourd'hui, il est un allié clé de George Weah. En contrepartie, la formation au pouvoir ne présente plus de candidats face à lui dans le comté de Nimba.

« Je ne suis pas sûr de la différence que ces sanctions feront pour le capital politique de Johnson au niveau local, résume Ibrahim Nyei, chercheur et analyste politique libérien. Il a l'intention de se représenter au Sénat en 2023 [des sénatoriales et une présidentielle auront lieu cette année-là] et il est probable qu'il remportera le scrutin. » Selon lui, l'annonce du Trésor américain a néanmoins le mérite d'envoyer « un message aux autres politiciens corrompus. D'abord Varney Sherman, maintenant Johnson ». « Les autres feront désormais attention à ce qu'ils font, espère-t-il. Je ne dis pas qu'ils ne seront plus corrompus, mais qu'ils ne le seront plus de manière éhontée. »

## La présidente de la NEC élue

l'organisation des élections dans la Région.

Les autres présidents élus de l'EBM à l'Assemblée d'Accra sont de la Côte d'Ivoire, de la Sierra Leone, du Bénin, de la Guinée Bissau, du Cap Vert, de la Gambie, du Mali et du Ghana.

Selon la dépêche d'Accra, le Réseau des commissions électORALES de la CEDEAO (ECONEC) a été fondé en février 2008 pour promouvoir des élections libres, équitables et crédibles.

La création de l'ECONEC a été inspirée par la Déclaration des principes politiques de la liberté, des droits des peuples et de la démocratisation de la CEDEAO de 1991 en tant que réaffirmation pour compléter les dispositions pertinentes du Protocole de la CEDEAO relatives au mécanisme de prévention des conflits, de résolution de gestion, de maintien de la paix et de sécurité, ainsi que le protocole sur la diplomatie et la gouvernance libre.

## COMMENTAIRE

By Barry Eichengreen

## Verdir les règles budgétaires européennes

**B**ERKELEY - L'Union européenne est sur le point de subir une révision bien nécessaire de son statu quo budgétaire. Des experts de la Commission européenne réfléchissent actuellement à la manière dont les règles budgétaires de l'UE devraient être révisées, et le nouveau gouvernement allemand a discrètement signalé sa volonté d'envisager des changements - bien que toute modification dans ce domaine sera très probablement limitée, compte tenu des désaccords au sein de la coalition et du contrôle du ministère des Finances par les libéraux-démocrates conservateurs sur le plan fiscal.

Les arguments en faveur d'une réforme sont convaincants. Pour commencer, les taux d'intérêt sur la dette publique ne représentent qu'une fraction de ce qu'ils étaient en 1992, lorsque les règles budgétaires de l'UE ont été négociées. En 1992, les taux des Bunds du gouvernement allemand à dix ans étaient en moyenne de 8 %. À l'époque, 60 % du PIB était considéré comme une limite prudente quant au montant de la dette qu'un gouvernement pouvait rembourser en toute sécurité, avec des déficits budgétaires annuels plafonnés à 3 % du PIB. La limite supérieure prudente est donc certainement plus élevée aujourd'hui.

En fait, les ratios d'endettement post-COVID ont largement crevé le plafond de 60 % pour les emprunts publics. La dette publique à l'échelle de la zone euro représente 100 % du PIB. La dette publique grecque est supérieure à 200%. Une règle ajoutée en 2011 oblige les gouvernements à éliminer 5 % de l'excédent chaque année jusqu'à ce que le seuil de 60 % soit atteint. Ainsi, le gouvernement grec est ostensiblement tenu de dégager un excédent budgétaire de 5 % du PIB, en supposant que l'économie croisse aussi rapidement que 2 % par an, ce que le Fonds monétaire international juge peu probable. Or, générer des excédents continus pendant des décennies serait sans précédent pour une économie moderne - c'est-à-dire que personne ne s'attend à ce que cela se produise.

Et il n'y a aucune bonne raison qui le justifierait. Les valeurs de référence de 60 % et 3 % pour les dettes et les déficits n'ont aucune base économique. Le chiffre de 60 % était simplement le ratio dette/PIB moyen en 1992. Trois pour cent du PIB étaient simplement le déficit compatible avec le maintien d'un ratio d'endettement stable à 60 %, compte tenu des taux d'intérêt et des taux de croissance en vigueur à l'époque.

Les conducteurs obéissent à des règles de circulation qui ont du sens ; ils méconnaissent les règles arbitraires et capricieuses. Nous avons vu des comportements similaires de la part des décideurs budgétaires européens.

Ces raisons sont suffisantes pour repenser les règles européennes. Néanmoins, aujourd'hui, il y en a une autre : la nécessité de faire de la place aux investissements publics liés au climat. Réduire les émissions de gaz à effet de serre (GES) de l'Europe de 55 % d'ici la fin de la décennie coûtera plus de 5 000 milliards d'euros (5 600 milliards de dollars). Parce que la réduction des émissions de GES est un bien public, les entreprises livrées à elles-mêmes investiront trop peu dans la production de ce bien. De plus, lorsque l'infrastructure a des caractéristiques de réseau, comme dans les transports, quelqu'un

doit coordonner les investissements pertinents. Il s'ensuit qu'une grande partie de ces dépenses seront effectuées par les gouvernements.

Alors, d'où viendra la majeure partie de ces 5 000 milliards d'euros ? Les gouvernements européens devraient-ils emprunter ? Et faut-il revoir les règles de l'UE pour les y encourager ?

Dans le passé, divers gouvernements ont adopté une « règle d'or » qui exempte l'investissement public des limites auto-imposées sur les dépenses déficitaires, la justification étant que l'investissement public peut s'autofinancer. S'il est productif, il augmente le dénominateur du ratio dette/PIB. S'il est très productif, il génère des recettes fiscales suffisantes pour le service et le remboursement de la dette supplémentaire.

Les investissements dans l'économie verte pourraient être dans ce cas. Même s'ils ne stimulent pas la croissance économique, ils pourraient éviter une catastrophe climatique dans laquelle le PIB s'effondrerait et le fardeau de la dette deviendrait ingérable.

Le bas niveau actuel des taux d'intérêt crée une présomption que de nombreux projets d'investissements verts passeront le test. Bien entendu, rien ne garantit que les taux d'intérêt resteront bas. S'ils augmentent, les arguments en faveur d'emprunts pour financer des investissements verts deviendront plus difficiles.

Si certains investissements verts échouent au test de la rentabilité, cela ne signifie pas nécessairement qu'ils ne doivent pas être réalisés. Le changement climatique est une question morale ainsi qu'une question strictement économique, et c'est à la société de décider combien dépenser pour le combattre. En revanche, cela implique d'augmenter les impôts ou de réduire d'autres dépenses afin que les investissements verts puissent être entrepris sans générer de déficits ni compromettre la viabilité de la dette.

Ainsi, la décision concernant le montant à emprunter et le montant à collecter au moyen d'impôts et de réductions d'autres dépenses devrait dépendre des prévisions sur les taux d'intérêt et les taux de croissance, et de la manière dont ces variables seront affectées par les investissements verts. Il y a bien sûr une incertitude autour de ces prévisions. C'est la vie.

En fait, ne serait-il pas préférable que d'autres formes de dépenses publiques soient également soumises à cette évaluation ? Les gouvernements européens pourraient systématiquement expliquer comment leurs divers programmes de dépenses affecteront le PIB et les recettes fiscales et donc comment le taux d'endettement évoluera. Ils pourraient reconnaître l'incertitude entourant leurs prévisions et spécifier des scénarios à la hausse et à la baisse. Ils pourraient déléguer la responsabilité de l'évaluation à des experts nationaux indépendants et à la Commission européenne. Les litiges pourraient être jugés par une chambre spécialisée de la Cour européenne de justice.

Mais, attendez, ces propositions existent déjà ! Malheureusement, elles représentent probablement un pas encore trop important pour la nouvelle cohorte de décideurs prudents de l'Allemagne.

# Mixed views in Nimba over PYJ sanction

By Lincoln G. Peters

Residents of Nimba County, many of them motorcyclists have expressed mixed views over the U.S. Treasury Department's recent sanction imposed on Liberia's former feared rebel leader, now Nimba Senator Prince Yormie Johnson (PYJ).

In a recent interview conducted by this paper in the county, some residents welcomed the U.S. Treasury Department's decision, while others claimed it was a witch hunt.

Sen. Johnson was

"My brother let me make this clear, we are happy [with] the decision. It's welcoming and we are now thinking of retiring him from politics [in] 2023."

Raphael Dolopay, a resident of Nimba, told this paper that Sen. Johnson is a man with bloodstains on his hands and he deserves the punishment of the U.S Treasury Department.

"The U.S Treasury's decision is welcoming, but it's not enough because we need the war and economic crimes court in the country to make sure that all those who committed war crimes like Prince Y. Johnson [are] brought to face the law, instead

evidence against Senator Johnson about the corruption allegations brought against him.

He alleged further that Senator Johnson is a very peaceful man who fought for the county.

"All those that [are] saying negative things against the Senator are Manor people who are not truthful. We have a hill called Johnson Hill that is where Senator Johnson killed all [slain Liberian President Samuel K] Doe's soldiers with just two guns. One on his toes and another in his hands," said Zlankerseh.

He continued that the late President Doe threatened to kill everyone in Nimba County because he wanted to make his cassava farm there.

Zlankerseh claimed that it was based on the fact that Senator Johnson came in defense of Nimba.

Mr. Zlankerseh noted that if Senator Johnson had never gone to kill Doe and his men, there would have been no county called Nimba because President Doe had already made up his mind to kill all Nimbaians.

"I want to say the U.S Treasury's decision is wrong," said Zlankerseh.

He argued that Senator Johnson doesn't travel and there are other warlords in the country that the U.S. is allegedly not after.

Senator Johnson led the defunct Independent National Patriotic Front of Liberia (INPFL) that captured and killed former President Doe at the Free Port of Monrovia on 10 September 1990 during Liberia's Civil War.--*Edited by Winston W. Parley*

of just international sanction," said Dolopay.

In a counter - argument, Adolphus Zlankerseh who is said to be loyal to Senator Jeremiah Kun, explained that the U.S Treasury Department's decision is a witch-hunt because Senator Johnson is not the only warlord in Liberia.

He alleged that the U.S Government doesn't have any

slammed with economic sanction for corruption in what appears to be ongoing efforts to enclose the notorious warlord for eventual war crimes charges.

The U.S. Treasury under its Global Magnitsky Act, took the decision Thursday, 9 December 2021, in observance of International Anti-Corruption Day, officially celebrated globally. The day was also celebrated in Monrovia by the Government of Liberia.

Following the announcement of the U.S. decision, several residents of Ganta, Nimba County expressed their support for Sen. Johnson being placed on U.S. sanction.

They termed the decision to sanction Johnson as welcoming, saying it serves as a deterrence to those that are engaged in corruption.

Several motorcyclists who spoke to this paper alleged that Sen. Johnson has done more harm to the county than the little protection he always brags of providing for Nimba County.

"This same man [took part] in war and killed our people in this same Nimba County like chicken. Those who don't know are convinced by his thoughts that he protects and saves Nimba," one motorcyclist said.



# Gender Ministry

Cont'd from page 6

eradicate human trafficking.

According to the President, the Government of Liberia has passed the 2005 Act, which banned and criminalized trafficking of humans in Liberia.

The government has also established the National Anti-human Trafficking Taskforce, coupled with several key policy documents such as A Situational Analysis of Human Trafficking; The First and Second National Action Plans to fight Human Trafficking; The Standard Operating Procedures to assist victims of Human Trafficking; The National Referral Mechanism the stipulates not only the roles and responsibilities of actors but also referral programs and procedures for trafficked survivors.

The Ministry thanks the National Anti-Human Trafficking Taskforce chaired by the Ministry of Labour and Co-chaired by the Ministries of Justice and Gender, for the unending coordination and collaboration in addressing trafficking issues. The Ministry also applauds the Justice Ministry for successfully prosecuting Convict Anthony Sumo.

Meanwhile, the Ministry of Gender says it will remain engaged with court proceedings as Elizabeth McCree, a co-defendant in the case is scheduled for separate trial in January 2022. -*Editing by Jonathan Browne*

# Diaconia to extend

Cont'd from page 6

he says.

He notes that the way "we as Liberians" will manage this company will take it to Nigeria, Ghana, and Sierra Leone and "to recognize our efforts is a boost for us, we will not be content with this award."

According to him, when COVID-19 subsidies there are plans by the company to extend branches to other counties to bring more Liberians onboard.

Earlier, a member of the coalition of civil society organization Evan B. Tuku says the award to Diaconia MDI Liberia is part of the organization's annual activities in analyzing the working of institutions both in the public and the private sectors.

He says the coalition of civil society organization is a conglomeration of eight civil society actors and grouping that are united to monitor the

working and activities of institutions and individuals in the country.

"At times we criticize and proffer recommendations, and the event was as the result of their annual retreat held in Margibi County where it was agree upon to vet scores of companies from the private sector".

For his part, the chairman of the Legislative Watch Forum, Mark Chea says following the retreat in Margibi, a committee was set up to view the performance of the selected institutions.

He narrates that despite the hard economic situation that has engulfed the country, there are institutions here still making strides in the lives of people, and it's against this backdrop that they thought to recognize those for the great work they continue to do. -*Editing by Jonathan Browne*

# Edith Gongloe-Weh

Cont'd from page 6

communities where the company operates in Nimba have decried lack of social services.

The name lack of housing and health facilities, safe-drinking water, employment opportunity and school, among others, as problems they face with the company.

Meanwhile, chiefs and elders, including women groups have threatened not to support President George Weah, who is seeking reelection in 2023 if his government grants ArcelorMittal additional years.

An unknown person early

Wednesday, December 15, 2021 set ablaze the ArcelorMittal Liberia rail from Yekepa, Nimba County, impeding normal operational activities of the company.

The incident transpired at about 5AM between Zolowee and Sehyikinpa before reaching to the provincial capital, Sanniquellie.

The attacker used tires and other materials to set ablaze the rail which caused the mining company to suspend transportation of ores Wednesday. -*Editing by Jonathan Browne*

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# Liberia's foreign deities

By Othello B. Garblah

Just within the compound of the Capitol Building, the seat of Liberia's legislators is a bronze statue of a lady sitting holding in both hands what appears to be a flag and a trumpet. She is foreign.

A more critical look at her draws the resembling of the Greek goddess of War and Wisdom-Athena also known as Pallas Athenaie.

Next door to the Capitol Building is the Temple of Justice. At the entrance is Themis, the Titan Goddess of Law and Justice.

Several kilometers away from the Temple of Justice on the principal street of the nation's capital, Monrovia stands another goddess surrounded by Angels in front of the national museum. That

carved or cast in a durable material such as wood, metal, or stone.

Many statues are built on commission to commemorate a historical event or the life of an influential person. Some of these statues are intended as public art, exhibited outdoors or in public buildings.

But for some, statues are more than their material content, they carry the powers of symbolism.

In ancient Greece and Rome for example, statues of gods and goddesses were believed to be that of deities who help shape the events of people's lives on a daily basis. While they recognize these main gods and goddesses by decorating public buildings and fountains with their images, families worshipping at home also put special emphasis on the deities of their choosing.

The religious leaders believe that these statues are symbolic of deities with territorial powers that are stagnating the growth and development of Liberia.

They think the presence of these symbolic deities at public buildings and strategy public spaces in the country are indications that the country has turned away from the true Almighty God to Greek and other foreign deities and as such the nation is being punished through underdevelopment and extreme poverty.

The Chairman of the Board of Directors of the National Christian Council of Liberia Rev. Dr. Jasper S. Ndabondor named monuments erected at government buildings, including those in front of the Capitol Building, Temple of



sculpture surrounded by Angels was a sculptural work done by Sculptor Aaron S. Brown (1898-1954).

Further down between Broad and Randall Streets is a monument, which some say is a symbol of a demonic covenant reached with a Syrian god to put the country's resources into the hands foreigners.

There are other statues depicting foreign deities or images in the country which are now of concern to religious leaders here. Now they want them removed from public buildings and spaces.

So what is a statue?

According to Wikipedia, a statue is a free-standing sculpture in which the realistic, full-length figures of persons or animals are

Athena, for example, was the Greek goddess of wisdom, warfare, and handicrafts. It was the most renowned cult image of Athens. The image psychologically prepared the worshippers to address the divinity, and this was an important factor in the efforts of worshippers to communicate with the gods.

Furthermore, statues were the temple centerpieces and their production cost rivaled or exceeded that of the temple which housed them. Statues of gods in Greek culture had lived, both metaphorically and literally. The statues of gods had complex ritual lives. But they also manifested their power through the statue during an epiphany.

So why religious leaders in Liberia want them remove from public buildings?

Justice, on Randall and Broad streets, coupled with alleged demonic covenant reached with a Syrian god to put the country's resources in the hands of foreigners thus, reducing Liberians to spectators in their own economy.

The religious leaders believe that the presence of Athena in front of the Capitol Building is the source of constant conflict at the Capitol.

They say upon the removal of these statues there is a need for a national deliverance, which would provide spiritual cleansing for the country.

The removal of statues of deities from public spaces are not new, especially with the rise and spread of Christianity.

Some Christians believe that these statues which are symbolic of deities have territorial powers that shape and influence the daily lives of the people in those territories.

# The win was necessary

-Grand Bassa Coach Daniel Sasley

By Naneka Hoffman

The head coach of the Grand Bassa County football team Daniel T. Sasley says his victory against River Gee County in their second group game of the National County Sports Meet is laudable.

Sasley, who has won all two

according to his tactics.

Grand Bassa County sits atop of Group A with 6 points, 3 goals from two matches.

National County Sports Meet December 16, 2021 Results:

Montserrado 2-1 Margibi County

Grand Cape Mount 1-2



games in charge as Grand Bassa head coach, says the victories are good for him despite not scoring many goals.

The former Grand Kru county coach lauded his side following their impressive win.

Sasley has a good team and has hinted to sports Journalists that his players are playing

Gbarpolu

River Gee 0-1 Grand Bassa

Nimba 1-0 Grand Kru

River Cess County 2-2 Bong County

Grand Gedeh 1-0 Sinoe County



## PFMRISP certificates

Cont'd from page 7

Procurement Capacity Building Strategy designed to mitigate the institutional and individual gaps, including challenges identified by the capacity assessment conducted by the Project Management Unit at all of the implementing agencies.

The objectives included the building of procurement management capacity at all implementing agencies, providing a platform for clarifications on technical issues, as well as to discussing practical problems, findings and weaknesses experienced

during the implementation of the 2019 and the 2020 procurement plans.


It also sought to improve the quality and accuracy of the procurement process by speeding up preparation of bidding documents and the timely completion of evaluation of bid offers and proposals.

Certificate of participation was presented to all 121 participants on December 3, 2021 at The Boulevard Palace Hotel.

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# The New Dawn

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# Sports

With Emmanuel B. Juduh

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## Edith Gongloe-Weh alarms bribery at Capitol



Madam Edith Gongloe-Weh

By Thomas Domah, Nimba County

Former Nimba County Superintendent Madam Edith Gongloe-Weh alleges here that lawmakers of Nimba have received bribe from mining company Arcelor

Mittal to ratify the Mineral Development Agreement signed between the company and the Government of Liberia.

Under an \$800 million agreement, ArcelorMittal Liberia is seeking additional years which will enable them to operate after completion of their first 25

years signed with the Government of Liberia in 2005 but came into operation in 2006.

House of Representatives Thursday, December 16, 2021 ratified the Mineral Development Agreement with the government.

Madam Gongloe-Weh, who is currently in the United States of America, urges lawmakers of the county to return said bribery.

Writing on her Facebook page from the U.S., the former senatorial candidate also urges Nimbaians to engage national government to review the company's operations before granting it additional years to operate in the country.

The New Dawn gathers that inhabitants of affected

▶ CONT'D ON PAGE 10



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