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DATE	BUYING	SELLING
FRIDAY, MARCH 11, 2022	L\$152.9898 /US\$1.00	L\$154.7165 /US\$1.00

These are indicative rates based on results of daily surveys of foreign exchange market in Monrovia and selected cities of Liberia. These rates are collected from the Central bank, commercial banks, parallel market and the license forex bureaux. The rates are not set by the Central Bank of Liberia.  
Source: Research, Policy and Planning Department, CBL.

# The New Dawn

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# Hardship looms

*\*As Liberia records highest gasoline price in sub-region  
\*Could this affect Weah's 2023 reelection bid?*

Flashback: local retailers struggle for petroleum

# EJS Center stands with GBV victims



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Former Pres. Sirleaf

**What are we doing today?**





# Continental News

## Timbuktu's ancient documents captured online

A virtual gallery to showcase Mali's cultural history has been launched, featuring tens of thousands of Timbuktu's ancient manuscripts. The manuscripts were smuggled to safety from Timbuktu after Islamist militant groups took control of the city in northern Mali in 2012.

They contain centuries of African knowledge and scholarship on topics ranging from maths to astrology.

"Central to the heritage of Mali, they represent the long legacy of written knowledge and academic excellence in Africa," said Dr Abdel Kader Haidara, a librarian known for smuggling the manuscripts out of Timbuktu, who was also involved in the project. The collection, called Mali Magic, also captures Malian culture beyond the manuscripts. It was put together by Google, along with local and international partners.

It features a picture of the dance of the Dogon ethnic group. It also showcases art, such as that of award-winning Abdoulaye Konaté, and an image of builders plastering the Great Mosque of Djenné,

a Unesco world heritage site about 500km (310 miles) south of Timbuktu. The ancient documents were originally written in medieval Arabic but have now been translated to English, French, Spanish and modern Arabic to make them more accessible, which Google Program Manager and Digital Archaeologist Chance Coughenour told the BBC was a first.

"Making a digital record and copy of the manuscripts is very important and for the first time we're bringing the fruits of our labour after so many years," he

said.

For centuries Timbuktu was a cultural hub on the African continent, as well as an Islamic centre of learning. The city's mosques played a critical role in the spread of Islam throughout West Africa in the 15th and 16th Centuries, according to Unesco.

Over the last seven years Mali's traditional leaders, historians and digital archaeologists have been hard at work to make sure that the ancient manuscripts, some dating back to the 11th

Century, containing the country's rich history are preserved by digitising them.

The project presents an opportunity for people to learn from those who came before them, Dr Haidara said. The digitising of these manuscripts began with a call to Google by Dr Haidara in 2014.

He invited the company to visit Mali to see the renowned manuscripts of Timbuktu and to learn the story of why they were at risk. On arrival they found texts which included early Qurans and some with diverse topics including astronomy, maths and geography.

The team then had the task of not only going through hundreds of pages to make a digital record of these but to make them visually appealing online. Up to 40,000 pages will now be available online. It is a project the people of Mali have kept their eyes on for many years since Islamist militants set fire to libraries in Timbuktu

as they tried to destroy the priceless papers.

Over a period of six months, manuscripts were smuggled out of Timbuktu to Mali's capital Bamako, as time was running out to rescue and preserve the documents from near destruction.

In 2016 an alleged member of an Islamist group, Ahmad Al Faqi Al Mahdi, was found guilty of intentionally ordering attacks on religious and historic building in Timbuktu by the International Criminal Court (ICC). He was sentenced to nine years in jail and apologised.

It was the first time that the court in The Hague had tried a case of cultural destruction. This project to preserve Mali's manuscripts is not however the first attempt. The University of Cape Town launched the Tombouctou Manuscripts Project in 2003, with an emphasis on "manuscript traditions throughout the African continent", according to the website. BBC



## Ukraine returnees test Covid positive in Nigeria



About 700 Nigerian students have been repatriated from Ukraine

Nigeria's Centre for Disease Control says 60 people evacuated from Ukraine have tested positive for coronavirus.

The new cases pushed the number of new daily infections to 118, the agency said in its latest update.

These new cases were reported mainly in the capital, Abuja, and in Lagos.

Earlier Nigeria had reported only two new infections this week, the lowest daily figure ever since the outbreak

reached here in 2020.

The World Health Organization had warned that the Russia-Ukraine war may result in undetected transmission of Covid-19. More than 700 Nigerians have returned home from Ukraine as the government hopes to evacuate approximately 5,000 citizens.

Many of them reportedly crossed into Romania, Poland, Hungary and Slovakia from where they will be transported back to Nigeria. BBC

## African leaders talk to Putin about Ukraine war

Senegal's President Macky Sall, who is the current head of the African Union (AU), has spoken to his Russian counterpart Vladimir Putin to

urge a "lasting" ceasefire in Ukraine.

He is the second African leader to reveal that he has spoken to Mr Putin - the other is Egypt's President Abdul Fattah

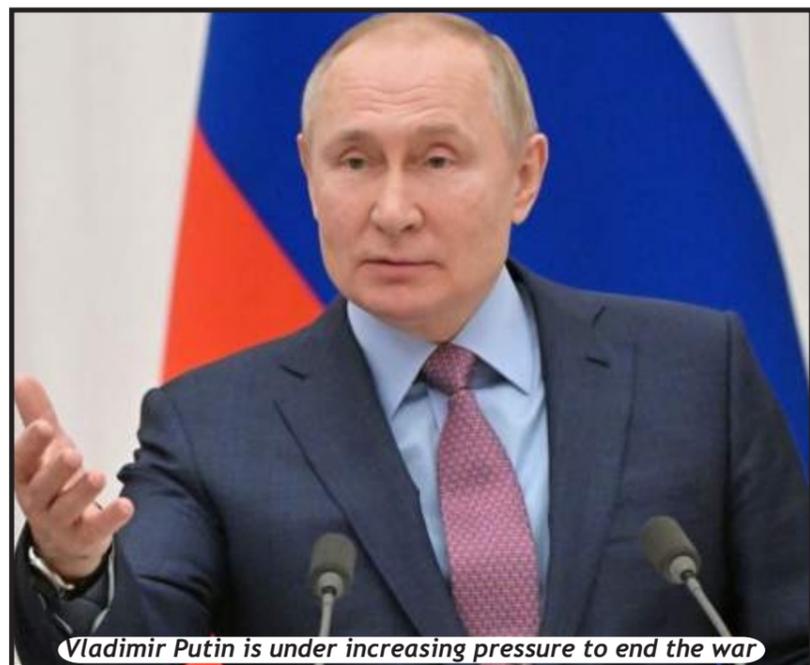
al-Sisi.

In a tweet, Mr Sall said: "As president of the African Union, I am delighted about my talk this morning with President Putin to press for a lasting ceasefire.

"I commend him for listening and for his willingness to maintain dialogue for a negotiated outcome to the conflict." Mr Sisi's office said his talks with Mr Putin focused on the Ukraine crisis, and on strengthening relations between the two nations.

After Russian troops entered Ukraine on 24 February, the AU issued a statement calling for Ukraine's territorial integrity to be respected and for international law to be upheld.

The West African regional bloc Ecowas said it condemned the invasion. BBC



Vladimir Putin is under increasing pressure to end the war

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# EDITORIAL

## Bracing for a rude awakening

LIBERIA SITS ON a timebomb that is poised to wreck the future of this nation, if concerted actions are not taken now. The issue of drug trafficking and substance abuse risk denying this country and its people of a reliable future, as thousands of youths in communities across this nation are hooked to dangerous drugs.

THE CURRENT HEAD of the Angie Brooks International Center and former foreign minister Olubanke King-Akerele has urged the Government of Liberia to “stop the ridiculous talk” and take concrete action to end trafficking of dangerous narcotics into the country and substances abuse that are ruining the youths.

SHE NOTES THAT some big hands are behind the sale of illicit drugs in Liberia and young people are being targeted as clients. Liberia is being used as transit center for trafficking of illicit substances to other parts of the world.

IN 2021, A female security officer who suspected a lawmaker of carrying dangerous drugs in his car, was intimidated, harassed and threatened into silence after she appeared before the House of Representatives to testify. She coerced to revert her statement that a member of that august body was caught in the traffic transporting drugs.

ALSO LAST YEAR, the hands of the Liberia Drug Enforcement Agency (LDEA) was caught in the cookies' jar in Grand Kru County when several LDEA officers confiscated a consignment of dangerous drugs from a woman and repackaged the substances for sale.

FORMER MINISTER KING-Akerele, who spoke at celebration of International Women Day on Tuesday, March 8, 2022 further lamented that women are involved in the sale of drugs to young people in communities, robbing them of their future potential.

THAT WOMEN AND mothers would take pleasure in selling illicit substances to children, some as old as 13, 14 and 15 is not juts disappointing, but quite frustrating. These are heartless women, whose action can be equated to nothing else but murder.

THEY LEAVE THEIR victims useless and sometimes lifeless, after leading them to addiction thru substance abuse. A major social crisis looms over this nation if sustainable programs are not put in place to fight drug and substance abuse

LIBERIA RISKS LOSING her next generation of men and women to drug abuse. It is unbelievable that substances are also sold even on school campuses!

WE MUST JOIN hands to act now: parents, community and religious leaders, school authorities and government to avert a looming social calamity and save the next generation of Liberians from self-destruction.

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# COMMENTARY

By Kenneth Rogoff

## Is the Peace Dividend Over?

CAMBRIDGE - Russia's brutal invasion of Ukraine should be a wake-up call for Western politicians, corporate leaders, and economists who advocate a green and equitable future but lack any practical or strategic sense of how to get there. Regardless of what short-term tactics Europe and the United States use in responding to the current crisis, their long-run strategy needs to put energy security on a par with environmental sustainability, and funding essential military deterrence on a par with financing social priorities.

The Soviet Union collapsed in 1991 in no small part because Russia's leaders, most of all President Boris Yeltsin and his economic advisers, recognized that the Soviet communist military-industrial complex could not afford to keep up with the West's superior economic might and technological prowess. Today, with Russia's economy less than one-twentieth the combined size of the US and EU economies, the same strategy of vastly outspending Russia on defense should be much easier to execute. Unfortunately, there is a hesitancy in many Western societies, particularly on the left, to admit that defense spending is sometimes a necessity, not a luxury.

For many decades, Western living standards have been boosted by a massive “peace dividend.” For example, US defense spending fell from 11.1% of GDP in 1967, during the Vietnam War, to 6.9% of GDP in 1989, the year the Berlin Wall fell, to just over 3.5% of GDP today. If US defense spending as a share of GDP was still at the Vietnam-era level, defense outlays in 2021 would have been \$1.5 trillion higher - more than the government spent on social security last year, and almost triple government spending on non-defense consumption and investment. Even at the level of the late 1980s, defense spending would be more than \$600 billion higher than today. The extra cost would have to be funded by higher taxes, greater borrowing, or lower government spending in other areas.

Europe's defense spending has long been far lower than that of the US. Today, the United Kingdom and France spend just over 2% of their national income on defense, and Germany and Italy only around 1.5%. Moreover, national interests and domestic lobbying mean that European defense spending is highly inefficient, with the whole being considerably less than the sum of its parts. I am amazed by how many of my otherwise well-informed friends have been asking why Europe does not mount a stronger military response to Russia's attack on Ukraine and looming threats to the Baltic states. Part of the answer, of course, is Europe's dependence on Russian gas, but the larger reason is its egregious lack of preparedness.

Thanks to Russian President Vladimir Putin, this may all change. German Chancellor Olaf Scholz's announcement on February 27 that Germany will increase its defense spending to more than 2% of GDP suggests that Europe may finally be getting its act together. But such commitments will have major fiscal

implications - and, after the large pandemic-era fiscal stimulus, these may be difficult to digest. As Europe rethinks its fiscal rules, policymakers must consider how to make enough space to deal with unexpected large-scale military buildups.

Many seem to have forgotten that wartime spikes in expenditures were once a major driver of government spending volatility. In a war, not only do government expenditures and budget deficits typically increase sharply, but interest rates sometimes go up as well. Nowadays, policymakers (along with many well-intentioned economists) have become convinced that big global economic shocks such as pandemics or financial crises will invariably drive down interest rates, and make large debts easier to finance. But in wartime, the need to front-load massive temporary expenditures can easily push up borrowing costs.

True, in today's complex world of drones, cyberwar, and automated battlefields, how governments spend their defense budgets matters greatly. Still, it is magical thinking to assume that every time defense budgets are cut, military planners will make up the difference with increased efficiency.

It would also help if the West could avoid further strategic energy-policy blunders of the sort that led us to this point. In particular, Germany, which relies on Russia for more than half of its gas needs, appears to have made a historic mistake in decommissioning all its nuclear power plants after the 2011 Fukushima disaster. By contrast, France, which meets 75% of its energy needs through nuclear power, is significantly less vulnerable to Russian threats.

In the US, the cancellation of the proposed Keystone XL oil pipeline may have been based on sound environmental logic. But now the timing seems awkward. Measures intended to protect the environment do little good if they lead to strategic weakness that increases the possibility of conventional wars in Europe - leaving aside the large-scale radioactive pollution that would result if neutron bombs or tactical nuclear weapons were deployed.

Stiff Ukrainian resistance, swift and severe economic and financial sanctions, and domestic dissent could yet force Putin to recognize that his decision to invade Ukraine was a spectacular miscalculation. But even if the current crisis subsides, the horrific attack on Ukraine ought to remind even the most committed peace advocate that the world can be harsh and unpredictable.

Everyone hopes for lasting peace. But hard-headed analyses of how countries can achieve sustainable and equitable growth requires leaving fiscal space - including emergency borrowing capacity - for the costs of guarding against external aggression.

Kenneth Rogoff, a former chief economist of the International Monetary Fund, is Professor of Economics and Public Policy at Harvard University.

## O-PED

By Mariana Mazzucato

# What If Our Economy Valued What Matters?

**L**ONDON - Care is the life-giving force that sustains health and well-being, binding together societies and ecologies. But everyday forms of care, though essential, are systematically undervalued. Most care is provided by women, whose contributions are celebrated on International Women's Day, even though they should be marked every day of the year.

The COVID-19 crisis has stretched our caring capabilities and highlighted the fundamental but underappreciated role that they play in our society. As we take stock of the pandemic's wreckage, we must use this moment to overhaul how we measure value, and thus how we organize the global economy. The goal should be to create an economy that supports the health and well-being of every person on the planet, as well as the health of the planet itself. We currently have the inverse: a system that values health only as a means to the end of economic growth.

The World Health Organization's all-woman Council on the Economics of Health for All was established to lead this paradigm shift. We believe that this year's International Women's Day is the perfect occasion for launching a radical reevaluation of care and the economy. Even though the pandemic is still taking lives and creating a political impetus for transforming economic governance structures, the window of opportunity is closing. We are in grave danger of returning to the old siloed approach, whereby only "formal" economic sectors are said to create value.

This old system is perversely beholden to indicators like GDP, an indiscriminate measure of "progress" that ends up rewarding the destruction of people and the planet. The pathological obsession with GDP has undermined what we value most: life. In 2020, global GDP grew by \$2.2 trillion as a result of governments increasing their military spending; meanwhile, the world still has not provided the mere \$50 billion needed to vaccinate the global population.

A society that spends 44 times more on war and destruction than on ending a pandemic can hardly be considered sane. What if we based our decision-making on what we truly value? We would start with the primary goal of Health for All, and then work backward from that end to determine our means of achieving it.

In the WHO Council's policy brief on valuing Health for All, we propose three principles for guiding this effort. The first is to value planetary health, by protecting the integrity of essential common goods such as water and air, and by respecting the ecological boundaries upon which human health and well-being ultimately depend. The second principle is to value the social foundations and activities that promote equity. This means championing diversity and investing in social and physical infrastructure to support those in need and enable communities to thrive. The third principle is to take human health seriously, by ensuring that every person can thrive both physically and emotionally, and by providing everyone with the tools to lead lives of dignity and opportunity in healthy communities.

What would it take to create an economy that served these objectives, and that measured what we really value? First, we must recognize that no single metric can encompass all the diverse components of Health for All, especially not a monolithic, highly distortive measure like GDP. We should move toward a global data-collection apparatus and analytical framework that abandon such simplistic indices.

Second, alternative metrics must fit together as part of a holistic approach that allows for information to be transparently debated and replicated across diverse local contexts. We don't need to reinvent the wheel. The 17 United Nations Sustainable Development Goals provide a robust foundation for building better metrics and indicators. With a mission-oriented approach, we can start to redesign industrial and innovation policies to meet grand societal challenges - pursuing concrete targets and encouraging sectors to work together to deliver policy solutions such as carbon-neutral cities.

Another promising model is WHO Council member Kate Raworth's Doughnut Economics framework, which is fast gaining traction in city governments around the world, from Amsterdam to Sydney. It encourages policymakers to aim for the sustainable ground between insufficiency (represented by the doughnut hole) and excess (represented by everything beyond the rim of the doughnut).

Any such framework will need to include detailed new metrics for valuing the goods and services that are indispensable to Health for All. Most of these are currently unaccounted for, from growing food, cooking, and cleaning to childcare and other unpaid household and neighborhood duties predominantly performed by women. As WHO Council member Marilyn Waring has long argued, time-use data can help reveal these underappreciated, unremunerated activities and begin to capture their true value.

Rethinking value is the critical first step. But for new metrics to produce saner perspectives, we also need to support strategic public finance and strengthen legal and economic policy levers across the public, private, and third sectors. As a previous WHO Council brief argued, this means broadening the tax base, introducing more progressive taxation, increasing financial literacy, broadening financial inclusion, expanding the public sector's capacity to build equitable financial frameworks, and eliminating the financial obstacles to health services.

This "whole-of-society" approach to valuing Health for All would mean little if it didn't start by empowering all stakeholders - especially the local communities most affected by health policies. Joint governance through public-private-common partnerships must be supported by a democratic process; only then will our new measures of progress be socially responsive and locally relevant.

Economics has hitherto measured the price of everything and the value of nothing. That must change. We need to measure the value of everything so that we can account for the things that truly matter. Health and well-being - and the care that sustains them - should become our principal measures of success.

*Mariana Mazzucato, Professor in the Economics of Innovation and Public Value at University College London, is Founding Director of the UCL Institute for Innovation & Public Purpose.*

## OPINION

By Slavoj Žižek

# What Does Defending Europe Mean?

**L**JUBLJANA - After the Russian attack on Ukraine, the Slovene government immediately proclaimed its readiness to receive thousands of Ukrainian refugees. As a Slovene citizen, I was not only proud but also ashamed.

After all, when Afghanistan fell to the Taliban six months ago, this same government refused to accept Afghan refugees, arguing that they should stay in their country and fight. And a couple of months ago, when thousands of refugees - mostly Iraqi Kurds - tried to enter Poland from Belarus, the Slovene government, claiming that Europe was under attack, offered military aid to support Poland's vile effort to keep them out.

Throughout the region, two species of refugees have emerged. A tweet by the Slovene government on February 25 clarified the distinction: "The refugees from Ukraine are coming from an environment which is in its cultural, religious, and historical sense something totally different from the environment out of which refugees from Afghanistan are coming." After an outcry, the tweet was quickly deleted, but the obscene truth was out: Europe must defend itself from non-Europe.

This approach will be catastrophic for Europe in the ongoing global struggle for geopolitical influence. Our media and elites frame that struggle as a conflict between a Western "liberal" sphere and a Russian "Eurasian" sphere, ignoring the much larger group of countries - in Latin America, the Middle East, Africa, and Southeast Asia - that are observing us closely.

Even China is not ready to support Russia fully, although it has its own plans. In a message to North Korean leader Kim Jong-un a day after Russia launched its invasion of Ukraine, Chinese President Xi Jinping said that China is ready to work to develop China-DPRK relations of friendship and cooperation "under a new situation." There is a fear that China will use the "new situation" to "liberate" Taiwan.

What should worry us now is that the radicalization we see, most clearly with Russian President Vladimir Putin, is not just rhetorical. Many on the liberal left, convinced that both sides knew they could not afford a full-on war, thought Putin was bluffing when he massed troops at Ukraine's borders. Even when Putin described Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky's government as a "gang of drug addicts and neo-Nazis," most expected that Russia would just occupy the two breakaway "people's republics" controlled by Kremlin-backed Russian separatists or, at most, extend the occupation to eastern Ukraine's entire Donbas region.

And now some who call themselves leftists (I wouldn't) are blaming the West for the fact that US President Joe Biden was right about Putin's intentions. The argument is well-known: NATO was slowly encircling Russia, fomenting color revolutions in its near-abroad, and ignoring the reasonable fears of a country that had been attacked from the West in the last century.

There is, of course, an element of truth here. But saying only this is equivalent to justifying Hitler by blaming the unjust Treaty of Versailles. Worse, it concedes that big powers have the right to spheres of influence, to which all others must submit for the sake of global stability. Putin's assumption that international relations is a contest of great powers is reflected in his repeated claim that he had no choice but to intervene militarily in Ukraine.

Is that true? Is the problem really Ukrainian fascism? The question is better directed at Putin's Russia. Putin's intellectual lodestar is Ivan Ilyin, whose works are back in print and given to state apparatchiks and military conscripts. After being expelled from the Soviet Union in the early 1920s, Ilyin advocated a Russian version of fascism: the state as an organic community led by a paternal monarch, in which freedom is knowing one's place. The purpose of voting for Ilyin (and for Putin) is to express collective support for the leader, not to legitimate or choose him.

Aleksandr Dugin, Putin's court-philosopher, closely follows in Ilyin's steps, adding a postmodern garnish of historicist relativism:

"[E]very so-called truth is a matter of believing. So we believe in what we do, we believe in what we say. And that is the only way to define the truth. So we have our special Russian truth that you need to accept. If the United States does not want to start a war, you should recognize that [the] United States is not any more a unique master. And [with] the situation in Syria and Ukraine, Russia says, 'No you are not any more the boss.' That is the question of who rules the world. Only war could decide really."

But what about the people of Syria and Ukraine? Can they also choose their truth or are they just a battlefield for would-be world rulers?

The idea that each "way of life" has its own truth is what endears Putin to right-wing populists like former US President Donald Trump, who praised Russia's invasion of Ukraine as the act of a "genius." And the feeling is mutual: When Putin talks about "denazification" in Ukraine, we should bear in mind his support for Marine Le Pen's National Rally in France, Matteo Salvini's Lega in Italy, and other actual neo-fascist movements.

The "Russian truth" is only a convenient myth to justify Putin's imperial vision, and the best way for Europe to counter it is to build bridges to developing and emerging countries, many of which have a long list of justified grievances against Western colonization and exploitation. It's not enough to "defend Europe." The true task is to persuade other countries that the West can offer them better choices than Russia or China can. And the only way to achieve that is to change ourselves by ruthlessly uprooting neo-colonialism, even when it comes packaged as humanitarian help.

Are we ready to prove that in defending Europe, we are fighting for freedom everywhere? Our disgraceful refusal to treat refugees equally sends the world a very different message.

Slavoj Žižek, Professor of Philosophy at the European Graduate School, is International Director of the Birkbeck Institute for the Humanities at the University of London and the author of *The Sublime Object of Ideology* (Verso Books, 1989).



## I. GENERAL INFORMATION

- SOLICITATION NO:** VA-669-22-00006
- ISSUANCE DATE:** March 3, 2022
- CLOSING DATE AND TIME FOR RECEIPT OF OFFERS:** March 24, 2022, 11:59 pm Local Time, Monrovia, Liberia
- POINT OF CONTACT:** Executive Officer, email at LiberiaHR@usaid.gov
- POSITION TITLE:** Project Management Specialist (WASH)
- MARKET VALUE:** USD \$40,344 -64,550 FSN- 11  
In accordance with AIDAR Appendix J and the Local Compensation Plan of USAID Final compensation will be negotiated within the listed market value. Note that all U.S. Embassy Locally Employed Staff are expected to observe and fulfill all tax obligations imposed by the Government of Liberia and you will be required to provide a Taxpayer Identification Number (TIN) before employment.
- PERIOD OF PERFORMANCE:** This contract will be for up to five years depending on programmatic needs, funding availability, and satisfactory performance. This is considered a permanent position and employment under any contract issued under this solicitation is of a continuing nature. Its duration is expected to be part of a series of sequential contracts; all contract clauses, provisions, and regulatory requirements concerning availability of funds and the specific duration of the contract shall apply.
- PLACE OF PERFORMANCE:** Monrovia, Liberia.
- ELIGIBLE OFFERORS:** Individuals who are Liberian citizens or non-Liberian citizens lawfully admitted for permanent residence in Liberia. Current employees serving a probationary period with the mission are not eligible to apply.
- SECURITY LEVEL REQUIRED:** Facility access.
- STATEMENT OF DUTIES**

### 1. Basic Function of Position

The Project Management Specialist – Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene (WASH), the “Specialist” leads efforts to strengthen water, sanitation and hygiene programming in line with USAID’s Global Water Strategy and the Country Development Cooperation Strategy (CDCS). The Specialist leads the design, development, and management of WASH related programs and activities for improving WASH indicators towards improved maternal and child health outcomes. WASH activities primarily target improved access and quality of water supply and sanitation services and increased adoption of improved hygiene behaviors to prevent water-borne diseases. The Specialist will guide the identification, development and management of technical strategies and activities in the area of WASH and within programs relating to health service delivery, health systems strengthening, and community-based strategies towards improved health outcomes. S/he may also contribute to efforts to improve WASH-related indicators in the context of humanitarian emergency relief, resilience-building and stabilization, food security and governance. The Specialist provides strategic and technical leadership in the design and implementation of WASH activities in the cooperating country.

The Specialist serves as a senior-level resource providing strategic and technical guidance in the design, procurement, management, and evaluation of cooperating country WASH programs. S/he will provide technical leadership and inputs related to WASH and contribute to the incorporation of WASH activities or indicators in other health-related programs. The Specialist has an understanding of global health and WASH issues, as well as the entire USAID/U.S. Government (USG) health portfolio and serves as an Agreement Officer’s Representative/Contracting Officer’s Representative (AOR/COR) or Activity Manager for selected programs/projects/activities. As an AOR/COR, the Specialist monitors program performance, progress, and compliance with USG policies, identifies implementation achievements as well as problems in performance, and initiates appropriate actions in consultation with his/her supervisor, other Health and Economic Growth Office staff, and/or the Deputy and Office Director, as appropriate.

The Specialist will represent USAID on technical working groups, coordination panels, and in other multi-donor stakeholder groups, building alliances with development partners, and providing essential communication and liaison within USAID offices and with other USG agencies. The Specialist also facilitates collaborative working relationships with high-level decision makers, as well as technical staff, in the Ministry of Health and/or Water, with USAID/Washington counterparts, with other government entities, and with other donors, development partners and non-governmental organizations working in the health sector. The Specialist delivers analytical and technical assistance services to other bilateral/multilateral agencies, cooperating country governments and civil society organizations in developing and implementing policies and programs based on WASH best practices and innovations.

The Specialist is a key member of the Health Office, WASH Team. The jobholder reports to the WASH Systems Advisor and has no formal supervisory responsibility.

### 2. Major Duties and Responsibilities

#### Program Management Technical and Strategic Leadership

- Serve as a technical advisor in the design, operationalization and execution of the cooperating country’s USAID funded activities and strategies for WASH, providing high level technical guidance and inputs in close coordination with the Mission, the cooperating country Government, and other development partners.
- Provide strategic and technical guidance and input on WASH activities and ensure that activities are appropriately integrated with Health Office and larger Mission activities in collaboration with counterparts in the Ministry of Health and/or Water and to other national stakeholders to advance USAID and USG strategic objectives related to WASH interventions.
- Work closely with other staff in the Health Office and across the Mission to optimize opportunities for cross-sectoral integration and leveraging of resources across the different program components while meeting requirements for correct attribution to funding Directives.
- Identify potential synergies and linkages between USAID program activities, relevant cooperating country government and other donor programs, and private sector activities, providing ongoing technical assistance to implementing partners, ensuring an interdisciplinary approach across USAID Health Office activities.
- Provide technical leadership in quality and performance improvement, working with key stakeholders and implementing partners to improve the quality of WASH outcomes by applying evidence-based guidelines, best practices/ approaches, and tools.
- Through literature review, research, and regular communication with local and international stakeholders, stay abreast of emerging developments in the national and global WASH landscape, and advise accordingly on how policies, strategies, and technical guidelines can most effectively be incorporated to enable the Mission to enhance USAID’s approaches.
- Effectively communicate and demonstrate technical expertise in interagency technical working groups to ensure USAID strategic priorities are represented, including participation in routine interagency technical discussions.

#### Project Management

- Lead and contribute to the design and management of new USAID programs in WASH, prepare relevant activity procurement documents, including Requests for Application (RFAs), Requests for Proposal (RFPs), and/or scopes of work for multi-year programs.
- Participate in evaluation of proposals/applications, and activity start-up including preparation of analyses and documentation required to obligate funds and initiate and/or continue strategies.
- Serve as Contracting or Agreement Officer’s Representative (COR/AOR) or Activity Manager for the Mission’s WASH activities, including:
  - reviewing and approving annual IP work plans, budgets, reports, vouchers, and other program/project tools and facilitating IP relationships and coordinating with local stakeholders (e.g. other IPs, cooperating-country government counterparts, non-governmental organizations, other donors, etc.)
  - maintaining a schedule for and conducting regular site visits to review program implementation, compliance with USG WASH requirements and policies and meet with beneficiaries, and based on the information collected during such visits, adjusting or recommending adjustments to programs/projects/activities as appropriate.
  - overseeing IP compliance with bilateral government agreements, and with performance expectations;
  - ensuring IPs are in compliance with all relevant USAID regulations, procedures and Directive requirements, communicating regularly with IPs regarding USAID rules and regulations as well as their obligations to USAID; and,
  - taking a lead role in the preparation of the strategic and operational planning processes such as the USAID Country Development Cooperation Strategy and USAID Operational Plan
- Ensure that sub-partners (sub-awards and sub-contracts) are given appropriate monitoring and oversight by Prime IPs.

#### Project Monitoring and Evaluation

- In collaboration with Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning colleagues participate in the development of innovative monitoring and evaluation approaches and tools to support measuring the impact and outcomes of WASH-related health activities.
- Contribute to data quality assessments to ensure the quality and reliability of program data
- Monitor project activities and reports and make recommendations to resolve implementation obstacles to ensure judicious and correct use of USG funds.
- Contribute to and participate in WASH-related program evaluations to document and provide recommendations for scaling up proven best practices
- Collect and analyze data needed for management, administration and evaluation of USAID’s WASH programs.

#### Representation and Reporting

- Provide technical expertise in the preparation of key annual and mid-term planning and reporting documents including the Congressional Budget Justifications, Technical Notifications, Quarterly, Semi-Annual and Annual Progress Reports and other ad hoc requests for information.
- Lead the preparation of reports and responses to a wide range of requirements including responding to requests for information from USAID/Washington and Congress.
- Promote information sharing by ensuring that USAID successes, best practices and approaches are shared widely with cooperating-country officials, private sector, civil society and other donors.
- Represent USAID at designated national, regional and international meetings that relate to WASH interventions, including regular participation in national level technical working groups, professional associations, and related committees.
- Represent USAID as needed at designated national, regional and international meetings that relate to USAID WASH interventions and strategies
- Prepare briefing papers, presentations and assist with site preparations for visits by delegations of high-level USG officials.
- Establish strategic working relationships with cooperating country partners, development partners, civil society organizations, faith-based organizations, private sector health counterparts, and professional associations to enhance regular and timely sharing of information on WASH-related issues, including changes in key policies, and legal and

regulatory environments that could affect the implementation of USAID programs.

- Supervision controls:** The Specialist will report to the WASH Systems Advisor in the Health Office in USAID. S/he is expected to work independently in carrying out responsibilities. S/he is expected to develop annual work objectives in consultation with her/his supervisor. The supervisor makes assignments in terms of overall objectives and resources available. Completed work is reviewed in terms of achievement of program/project/activity goals, effectiveness in meeting cooperating country and USAID objectives, and integration with other initiatives in the Office and Mission portfolio. Some technical direction may come from other professionals in the Office; in general, however, the Specialist will be expected to exercise considerable autonomy and best judgment in discharging the duties of the assignment.
- Supervisory Relationship:** This position has no supervisory responsibilities

## 12. PHYSICAL DEMANDS

The work requested does not involve undue physical demands.

## II. MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS REQUIRED FOR THIS POSITION

- Education:** Bachelor’s Degree or local equivalent from an accredited institution in Medicine, Public Health, Health, Social Work, International Development, Social or Behavioral Sciences, Epidemiology, Biology, Nursing, Infectious Disease, Organizational Development, Political Science or Business Administration
- Prior Work Experience:** A minimum of five (5) years of progressively responsible, professional experience in public or private sector health or water, sanitation, or hygiene-related fields. Of that experience, at least one (1) year working with or for bilateral or multilateral donors/stakeholders such as USAID, the World Bank, the Global Fund, UN agencies, or national-level public or private sector projects and ensuring compliance with U.S. Government rules and regulations. Increasingly responsible experience in the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of WASH-related health activities in developing countries and/or in generalized community health systems.
- Work/Residency Permits:** Applicants must have valid work and/or residency permits allowing work in Liberia.
- Language Proficiency:** Level IV fluency in English and in the appropriate cooperating country business language, both written and spoken, is required. Language competence may be tested.

## III. EVALUATION AND SELECTION FACTORS

The Evaluation Factors listed below will be the basis for evaluating and ranking applicants for the position. Applicants will be scored based on the documentation submitted within the application. Applicants must submit a supplemental document outlining their responses to the evaluation factor(s) in order to be considered.

### 1. Selection Process

After the closing date for receipt of applications, a committee will convene to review applications that meet the minimum requirements and evaluate them in accordance with the evaluation criteria. As part of the selection process, the most qualified candidates will be invited to an interview which will consist of both an oral and written evaluation. Reference checks will be made only for applicants considered as finalists. The applicant’s references must be able to provide substantive information about his/her past performance and abilities.

### 2. Evaluation Factors

Those applicants who meet the minimum education and experience qualifications will be evaluated based on the content of their application as well as on the applicant’s writing, presentation, and communication skills. Applicants should include their name and the announcement number at the top of each additional page. Failure to specifically address the Evaluation Factors will result in the applicant not receiving full credit for pertinent experience.

**FACTOR #1: Understanding of the WASH Sector in Liberia :** Describe in 500 words or less, the overall political, economic, and health context of the WASH sector in Liberia. What are the major challenges, and what needs to be improved?

**FACTOR #2: Experience in the WASH Sector:** Describe in 500 words or less your experience managing projects in the WASH Sector. This should include managing relationships and coordination with the government and other key stakeholders. Give specific examples of the results you achieved.

**FACTOR #3: Conflict Resolution:** Describe in 500 words or less specific instances when you have resolved conflicts during project implementation. What was your approach and what was the result?

### 3. Basis of Rating

Applicants determined to be competitively ranked will also be evaluated on their interview performance and satisfactory professional reference checks. The Applicant Rating System is as follows:

Evaluation Factors	40 points
Factor #1	15 points
Factor #2	15 points
Factor #3	10 points

#### Written Evaluation 10 points.

Candidates selected for an interview will be given a 50 minute written exercise. The purpose is to evaluate the candidate’s approach to problems, critical thinking ability and the ability to put thoughts on paper in a cogent manner.

#### Interview Performance 50 points

Interview questions will revolve around the candidate’s:

- Knowledge of and experience in the WASH sector
- Ability to design, implement, and manage WASH activities
- Ability to effectively conduct monitoring and evaluation
- Ability to communicate clearly
- Ability to manage multiple competing priorities and meet deadlines

Total Possible Points 100 points

## IV. SUBMITTING AN OFFER

Applications must be submitted electronically by email with the subject line VA-669-22-00006 – Project Management Specialist (WASH) LiberiaHR@usaid.gov

Applicants may submit an application prior to the closing date and time specified in Section I, item 3 mentioned above unless revised.

Qualified applicants must submit the following documents or their applications will not be considered for this position:

- A current curriculum vitae (CV) or resume, not to exceed 3 pages.
- A minimum of three (3) professional references with telephone and email contacts, who are not family members or relatives, with working telephone and email contacts. The applicant’s references must be able to provide substantive information about his/her past performance and abilities. At least one reference provided should be a current or former supervisor.
- A supplemental document with a written response to the Evaluation Factors.

Candidates who are applying for this position must fully meet the education requirement (graduated and degree and/or diploma already received) as specified. At the time of applications, candidates must also meet in full the work experience requirement. There is no exception to these requirements.

Short-listed candidates may be requested to provide educational documents such as transcripts for degrees, diplomas, certificates, and other pertinent documents as needed.

Any attachments provided via email must be compatible with Microsoft Word or PDF and not zipped. Note that attachments to email must not exceed 25 MB. Incomplete applications will not be considered.

The Agency retains the right to cancel or amend the solicitation and associated actions at any stage of the recruitment process.

**EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY:** The U.S. Mission provides equal opportunity and fair and equitable treatment in employment to all people without regard to race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, political affiliation, marital status, or sexual orientation.

## MORE HEADLINE NEWS

## MORE HEADLINE NEWS

# Boakai provides more defense

- for exiting CPP  
By Lincoln G. Peters

Former Vice President Joseph Nyumah Boakai says one of the key reasons that led to his withdrawal from the Collaborating Political Parties

Speaking in an exclusive interview with the Voice of America (VOA) recently, now former chairperson of the CPP noted that internal wrangling and alleged alteration of the Collaboration's framework document is something that

been hearing but he was part of the party and you hear about what is happening in the court case. We believe this was not necessary. However, Unity Party continues to work with other people, who are willing to work with UP", Amb. Boakai added.

He reaffirmed his vow to make President George Weah a one term president, noting that without the CPP, that dream still holds for Liberian to be liberated.

Mr. Boakai, who also heads the Unity Party said the ruling CDC knows better that, though they needed the CPP, Liberians will vote their choice in 2023.

"Without any disrespect, Unity Party is working with other parties that are willing to work and respect the Collaboration because that's why they continue to preach. Collaboration is people coming together toward a common goal. However, if that does not work, it does not

▶ CONT'D ON PAGE 10

# NafAA, UL to start Fisheries Science degree program



By: Naneka Hoffman

The University of Liberia (UL) and the National Fisheries and Aquaculture Authority (NafAA) have signed a memorandum of understanding to start a Bachelor of Science degree program in Fisheries at the University aimed at attracting Liberians to fishery sector here that will increase productivity and international trade through export.

The MOU was officially signed Thursday, March 10, 2022 at the Fendell Campus of the University of Liberia in Mount Barclay, outside Monrovia, bringing together officials of NafAA, including director general Emma Glassco, who signed on behalf of her institution and the President of the University of Liberia Dr. Julius J. Sarwolo Nelson, who

also signed for the UL.

The ceremony was attended by the Superintendent of the Monrovia Consolidated School System (MCSS) Dr. Isaac Saye-Lakpoh Zawolo, and the President of the Principal Association Dr. Benjamin Y. Wehy.

The MOU is going to ensure full implementation of a Bachelor of Science degree in Fisheries Science, Associate degree in Fisheries Science and certificate courses in Fisheries Science, respectively.

NAFAA director general Glassco expresses delight for the partnership with the University, and notes that Liberia is dominated by water bodies and the country has the second longest coastline in West Africa, adding "If we have trained and knowledgeable

▶ CONT'D ON PAGE 7

(CPP) is alleged alteration of the CPP framework document and forgery of signatures of leaders of constituent parties.

killed their dream of forging ahead in on one accord.

"You might call the name Alexander B. Cummings. I mean that's the name most people

# Female fishmongers hail EJF intervention

In this week of International Women's Day, some of the fishmongers, particularly women who have joined the EJF's Communities for Fisheries project have hailed the organization and explained their stories of how they have been impacted by the organization's intervention.

When EJF's Communities for Fisheries project began looking to set up Collaborative Management Associations (CMAs) across the country, the team found that finance was a major barrier for women in fishing communities, preventing them from having their voices heard.

Due to the migratory nature of fisherfolk and the seasonal nature of fishing, the EJF team found that banks are unwilling to lend money. Those who do lend demand high collateral, which most members of the community are unable to meet. In response, the EJF Liberia team said it has helped the women to set up Village Savings and Loans Associations that allow groups of women to pool their savings and take out loans for their businesses and households.

The women meet regularly, supporting each other financially and socially, but also making time and space to discuss the issues of

fisheries management that underpin their livelihoods, putting together strategies and ideas to be brought to the wider CMA.

"EJF trained us on how to keep our money and how to take loans. They even gave us all the materials we needed to start our own village bank. Today, I am really benefiting. My business has improved," Mary Browne, a member of the VSLA in Uptown, Robertsport, Cape Mount said.

"I am planning to start taking fish to other counties again to start selling. This fish is what we depend on to live so we've got to protect it and our environment," Mary added.

"When I lost my husband last year, I gave up in life because he was the only one supporting the

family with money. Our children dropped out of school, and even to eat was a problem. But the Village Savings and Loans Association helped me in a big way," she explained further.

The fishmonger stated that she started saving her money little by little and then she took a loan which she used to put her children in school.

"I can stand on my own feet and my children have a future again. We need to work hard to stop illegal fishing because [without fish] we will not have any way to make money in the future," said Oretha K. Nimley, a member of the VSLA in Buchanan, Grand Bassa County.

"To talk the truth, since



this VSLA came, my life has really changed. As for me, my husband is a fisherman, so I used to get money all the time, but I never knew about saving it," she added.

Baby Williams, a member of the VSLA of Buchanan, Grand Bassa County explained that many times, her husband used to complain about her wasting money on material things.

But now, she said with the VSLA that EJF showed to them, she can save her money and do better things for herself and her children. "Once I save enough, next year I will start building a house for my family. Now even my husband is starting to respect me more," Baby Williams said.

Theresa Bayon, Secretary General of Liberia Artisanal Fishermen Association (LAFA) said in a short time EJF has done a lot to empower her as a woman. "Just two weeks ago, I graduated from computer training school through the EU-funded Communities for

Fisheries Project," she explained.

"I have been the Secretary for the Liberia Artisanal Fishermen Association for several years now, but I had absolutely no computer knowledge."

"I used to write everything! But now I use computers for my work. For EJF, women empowerment is not just talking, they take real, concrete actions," Theresa Bayon noted.

EJF said to safeguard Liberian fisheries from illegal fishing, a clear path to good management for healthy seas is needed. And that means hearing all voices equally - including the women who make up more than half the fisheries workforce in their roles as fishmongers, processors and in some cases, canoe owners.

"It's challenging being a woman working in the fishery sector," EJF quoted Madam Emma Metieh-Glassco, Director-General of Liberia's National Fisheries and Aquaculture Authority as saying.

## MORE HEADLINE NEWS

## MORE HEADLINE NEWS

# Alliance for Transitional Justice launches 'Untold Story' of Liberian Civil War

By Lewis S. Teh

**A**lliance for Transitional Justice Liberia (ATJL) launches Untold stories of the Liberian civil war that claimed about 250,000 lives.

The first Liberian civil war which occurred as result of rebel invasion in 1989, claimed about 200,000 people and eventually led to brokering of peace by ECOWAS and the United Nations, but said peace short-lived, and another round of

Promotion of Academic and Social Change, Organization for Women and Children, and the Defense for Children International Liberia.

Mr. Dupley narrates that the mission of the alliance is to build local resilience, ownership and provoke national and international actors to adhering and comprehensively implementing the TRC Recommendation, establishing a special ordinary Tribunal on war crimes, provision of health and social services to war victims.

ATJL, and Secretary General of the National Civil Society Council of Liberia says the alliance over the past years has worked hard to ensuring that the call to stamp out impunity in Liberia becomes a reality, noting that due to political interest from past leadership, the TRC Report has been swept under the carpet.

"Today we're here not to watch a period of history, but to change the course of history and ensure that there

# ECOWAS Parliament recommits to women issues



By Bridgett Milton

**T**he Speaker of the ECOWAS Parliament Dr. Sidie Mohamed Tunis says here that the regional Parliament remains committed to women issues, and calls on peoples of the Community, irrespective of gender, age, location, occupation, religion or background to take an action towards breaking bias in homes, places of work, schools, universities and local communities. As a demonstration of his commitment and the entire ECOWAS Parliament to building a society where men and women are treated equally, Speaker Tunis presented a cake and flowers to the women of Liberia to mark celebration of International Women Day in Monrovia on Tuesday, March 8, 2022.

He says being cognizant of the global theme of this year's campaign, which is "Break the Bias", he believes that establishing a diverse, equal and inclusive society is not just the job of one individual or organization, but a responsibility that all should live up to.

Speaking at the opening of the 2022 First in-person Extraordinary Session of the ECOWAS Parliament, convening in Monrovia, Speaker Tunis expresses gratitude to the Government of Liberia for welcoming the Parliament here.

He says in five days, precisely on 13 March, they will be celebrating completion of

two successful years of the lifespan of the Fifth Legislature of the ECOWAS Parliament and he expresses joy they can do that in Monrovia.

Speaker Tunis notes that they have gathered as a Committee of the Whole to deliberate on perhaps the most important regional agenda at the moment - the Political and Security situation in the ECOWAS Region; Retrogression of Democracy and the Resurgence of unconstitutional Change of Government, with key emphasis on Mali, Guinea, and Burkina Faso. "We take due cognizance of the fact that the ECOWAS Parliament, being the representative body of the ECOWAS Region, must fully participate in the development of the region, through the promotion of peace and security, human rights and the development of a democratic culture. In order to perform these inviolable responsibilities, we must take ownership of the situations we are confronted with and exhibit leadership to the fullest", he underscores.

Speaker Tunis continues that the situations in the Republics of Mali, Guinea and Burkina Faso, exacerbated by the failed coup in the Republic of Guinea Bissau, are threatening issues that require Body's urgent attention.

"Constitutional abuse and deficit in good governance principles, the lack of transparency in the electioneering processes,

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hostilities broke out in 1999.

Alliance for Justice Liberia Vice Chairperson for Policy and Projects Mr. Adolphus W. Dupley says the group was birthed in February 2018, and by June 12, 2018 its name, vision, mission, and objective were adopted by five institutions.

He names institutions involved as Patriot Crusaders Liberia INC., United Methodist Church, through it's Human Rights Monitors, Youth United for the

"Our vision to build and sustain a society free of injuries and impunities obtained through the legal prosecution of war and economic criminals, health and social services for war victims", he says.

According to him, the strategic objective of the alliance is to fully and timely implement the TRC Report and use same to achieve lasting healing, reconciliation and accountability to foster inclusive sustainable development.

Jeremiah S. Swen, founder of

is moral consciousness that will breed in the mind of citizens", he says.

According to him, he lost his mother during the Liberian civil war from childbirth, saying "Myself I know how it feels to loss a loved one, but the thing is to bring those stories out and ensure it has a current space, and to guarantee the next generation that there will not be a reoccurrence of what happened." *Editing by Jonathan Browne*

Starts from page 6

people in the fisheries sector, we will make a boost in the world." She says the introduction of the degree program at the University of Liberia is a boost to the sectors and a win for Liberia, because it will help the country to bridge the knowledge gap in the sector by strengthening and developing human capacity of Liberians.

"The Bachelor of Science degree will provide technical knowledge and practical experience while the Associate degree will provide a hands-on practical

## NafAA, UL to start Fisheries

experience through the program. The short training certificate courses will target fishing folks in fish handling and processing. This will help us maximize in the sector and Liberia will have appreciation of its commercial fisheries valuable species" says the NafAA boss.

Madam Glassco however laments that Liberia has not been accredited as a country to export in large industrious scale because the country is yet to meet sanitary and hygienic guidelines as provided by the World Health Organization

(WHO) and other international bodies.

"This partnership will provide technical hands-on training for all those in the fisheries sector to be on par with their counterparts in the sub-region, and help attract tangible investment in the fisheries sector, and increase productivity and international trade through export."

The President of the University of Liberia Dr. Nelson expresses excitement for signing the MOU, which he describes as a beginning of a

new birth in the life of the University and the fisheries sector at large.

"Today is another great day for celebration at the University of Liberia, after several interactions, conversations and consultations, we are here today to sign a memorandum of understanding between NafAA and the University of Liberia.

Today, an alumina is working very hard to uplift where she graduated from. Madam Glassco and her team made the decision to collaborate and partner with the University to establish a fisheries of science program in the William R. Tolbert, Jr. College of Agriculture and Forestry", he explains. *Editing by Jonathan Browne*

# Français

## Les avocats de Mme Davidetta demandent un non-lieu

Les avocats représentant la présidente de la Commission électorale nationale (NEC), Mme Davidetta Browne Lansanh, ont demandé au juge T. Ciapha Carey de la Cour pénale "C" de prononcer un non-lieu dans l'affaire car la loi sur laquelle la Commission libérienne de lutte contre la corruption (LACC) s'appuie pour poursuivre leur cliente n'a pas été promulguée.

« Parce que Movant dit que le crime présumé n'a pas été promulgué et n'a pas été sanctionné en vertu de nos lois statutaires et que, par conséquent, Movant ne peut et ne doit pas plaider le crime présumé », ont déclaré les avocats de la présidente de la NEC dans leur requête déposée le lundi 8 mars.

La LACC, par l'intermédiaire de son président exécutif, Me Edwin Kla Martin, a inculpé Madame Browne Lansanh de conflit d'intérêts présumé et corruption.

Selon un rapport du

novembre 2021, la NEC, sous la supervision de la présidente Davidetta Browne Lansanh, a, lors des élections partielles du 16 novembre 2021 dans quatre comtés, loué des thermomètres à une société appelée Tuma Enterprises Inc., prétendument détenue par ses frères à plus de 180 000 \$ US, en non-conformité avec les réglementations sur les marchés publics.

Elle a été inculpée et mise en examen pour le crime présumé en violation de la partie II, section 2.2 des lois de 2008 sur la corruption établissant la LACC.

L'article 2.2 des lois de la LACC définit les actes de corruption, les pots-de-vin, le détournement de fonds, l'extorsion, la fraude, le

▶ CONT'D ON PAGE 9



## L'ancienne ministre des Affaires étrangères demande au gouvernement à lutter contre le trafic des stupéfiants

L'ancienne ministre libérienne des Affaires étrangères, Mme Olubanke King-Akerele, demande au gouvernement du Libéria de prendre des mesures concrètes pour mettre fin au trafic de drogue à travers le pays.

S'exprimant le mardi 8 mars 2022 lors de la célébration de la Journée internationale de la femme

organisée par le Centre international Angie Brooks (ABIC), Mme King-Akerele a affirmé qu'il y a de grandes mains derrière la vente et la circulation des drogues illicites dans le pays.

« La circulation incontrôlable des drogues dans la société nuit à notre jeune population. Les jeunes sont notre génération future. Nous devrions arrêter les discours

ridicules et nous concentrer sur des actions concrètes qui nous aideront à lutter contre ce cauchemar », a déclaré King-Akerele.

Selon le diplomate et homme politique libérien, il est temps que le gouvernement du Libéria et l'ensemble des citoyens cessent de parler du bout des lèvres et prennent des décisions concrètes qui atténueront l'afflux de drogues illicites dans le pays.

Elle a expliqué qu'il y a eu de nombreuses discussions sur ce problème de drogue, mais rien n'est fait du côté du gouvernement et du public pour lutter contre les drogues illicites.

Madame King-Akerele a ajouté qu'il s'agissait de l'avenir des Libériens, affirmant que quelque chose devait être fait de toute urgence pour remédier à la situation.

Elle s'est dite inquiète de l'augmentation des stupéfiants dans le pays et du rôle que les femmes jouent maintenant dans la

▶ CONT'D ON PAGE 9



Former Foreign Minister Amb. @Olubanke King-Akerele

## Éditorial

### Les gens de Nimba méritent mieux

Le sénateur Prince Johnson continue de tenir les habitants de Nimba en otage pour ses intérêts politiques égoïstes, leur refusant systématiquement la possibilité de faire des choix indépendants dans les urnes.

Prince Johnson s'est toujours fait passer pour le libérateur des habitants de Nimba pour avoir tué le président Samuel Kanyon Doe. Il estime qu'il est le seul Messie, celui que tout le monde doit saluer. Pas un autre.

Le régime Doe traquait les gens de Nimba. PYJ s'est ainsi présenté comme le libérateur de ses proches, une position qu'il utilise lors des élections pour obtenir leurs votes.

Faisant comprendre aux habitants de Nimba qu'ils risquent d'être en danger s'ils ne le réélisent pas, PYJ est resté Sénateur au cours des 18 dernières années et veut obtenir encore neuf ans supplémentaires au détriment de la démocratie participative.

Il va même jusqu'à amener des candidats à la présidence à Nimba, à lever la main et à dire aux citoyens de voter son choix en échange d'un développement qui ne vient jamais ou de promesses d'emplois qui ne sont jamais tenues.

En conséquence, un désenchantement silencieux se prépare parmi les habitants de Nimba contre ce « parrain » et « libérateur » auto-déclaré qui est devenu pour eux un demi-dieu.

L'année dernière, des jeunes du comté Nimba ont exprimé publiquement leur frustration, estimant qu'ils sont devenus l'otage du sénateur Johnson qui fait des promesses qu'il ne tient jamais.

Ils ne veulent plus être sous l'influence trompeuse de quelque politicien que ce soit. Ils veulent penser librement.

Les 18 années au cours desquelles M. Prince Johnson a été sénateur n'ont produit qu'une politique de division dans le comté de Nimba. Cela ne devrait plus durer car les citoyens commencent à se lever.

Nous encourageons les habitants de Nimba à continuer de résister pour restaurer des élections démocratiques compétitives dans le comté et de ne pas être constamment sous l'influence trompeuse d'un homme qui pense avoir le monopole du leadership.

## Advertise with us!

# Français

## Les avocats de Mme Davidetta

trafic d'influence, le délit d'initié, l'abus de biens publics confiés et l'autorité investie et tout autre crime économique et financier qui sont désormais prévus par le Code pénal du Libéria ou peuvent être définies et promulguées ultérieurement.

Ainsi, les avocats de la patronne de la NEC ont fait valoir que puisque le crime allégué n'avait pas encore été commis, le tribunal n'avait aucune compétence sur elle et devrait donc rejeter l'affaire.

Mme. Browne-Lansanah a également été inculpée et mise en examen pour avoir enfreint le Code de conduite des employés publics (conflit d'intérêts, parenté, utilisation du bureau pour des intérêts privés et divulgation d'intérêts, qui figurent parmi une liste de violations pour tous les employés publics).

Mais les avocats rétorquent que le tribunal n'a aucune compétence sur leur client en ce qui concerne la violation du Code de conduite des agents publics dans ladite affaire.

"Movant dit que le code de conduite prévoit ses propres processus disciplinaires en cas d'infraction / violation du code dans la partie XIV, section 14.1."

Ils ont défendu leur argumentation en affirmant

que la partie XII du même code de conduite prévoit la création d'un bureau de médiateur : l'article 12.1 du code de conduite stipule : « Le bureau d'un médiateur est institué en tant qu'organe autonome indépendant qui est responsable de l'application, de la surveillance, du suivi et de l'évaluation du respect du code de conduite. »

Selon les avocats, l'article 12.2 de la partie XII du code de conduite prévoit également que « le bureau de l'ombudsman recevra et enquêtera sur toutes les plaintes concernant le respect du code de conduite. Dans le cas où il y a une détermination de culpabilité et de violation du Code par des fonctionnaires privés et publics et des employés du gouvernement, ces violations doivent être soumises par le Médiateur à la Commission anti-corruption du Libéria ou à d'autres agences gouvernementales compétentes.

Les avocats approfondissent également leur argumentation en insistant sur le fait que la LACC a violé la partie XVI, section 16.1 du code de conduite lorsqu'elle s'est saisi de la plainte d'une prétendue violation du code de conduite, mené une enquête et soumis ses conclusions d'enquête illégale au ministère de la Justice pour engager des poursuites.

## L'ancienne ministre des Affaires étrangères demande

vente de drogues aux enfants.

« Il y a trop de grandes mains et de grandes personnes derrière cette affaire de drogue dans ce pays », a déclaré Mme Roi-Akerele.

Madame King-Akerele a décrit l'ensemble de la situation du trafic de drogue comme troublante et mauvaise, notant que les femmes impliquées dans la commercialisation de la drogue auprès des enfants dans les communautés devraient être dénoncées et arrêtées.

Elle a exhorté les femmes à dénoncer leurs camarades qui vendent de la drogue dans les communautés, avertissant que les protéger ferait plus de mal à la génération future, comme en témoigne la population croissante de jeunes défavorisés connus ici sous

le nom de Zogoes.

King-Akerele a en outre indiqué que les femmes envisagent d'être pleinement représentées et visibles à la table de prise de décision, ce sont des choses auxquelles elles devraient donner la priorité et s'assurer qu'il existe des lois plus strictes pour empêcher les gens d'introduire de la drogue dans le pays.

« Les enfants s'impliquent facilement dans cette affaire de drogue parce que les mères qui devraient servir de guide dans la communauté vendent maintenant de la drogue », a-t-elle déploré.

« C'est vraiment, vraiment mauvais pour notre génération et honteux de la part de nos femmes. S'il vous plaît, nous tous ici aujourd'hui, rejoignons cette campagne pour dénoncer les femmes qui vendent de la drogue dans notre communauté », a-t-elle plaidé.

## COMMENTAIRE

par Kenneth Rogoff

## Les dividendes de la paix, c'est fini ?

CAMBRIDGE - L'invasion brutale de l'Ukraine par la Russie devrait être un coup de semonce pour les responsables politiques, les dirigeants des grandes entreprises et les économistes occidentaux partisans d'un avenir vert et équitable, mais qui ne savent pas comment y parvenir. Au-delà des mesures immédiates, dans leur stratégie à long terme face à la crise actuelle, ils doivent accorder autant d'importance à la sécurité énergétique qu'à la protection de l'environnement, et au budget consacré à la dissuasion militaire qu'à celui consacré aux urgences sociales.

L'écroulement de l'Union soviétique en 1991 est dû en grande partie au fait que les dirigeants russes, avec au premier chef le président Eltsine et ses conseillers économiques, ont reconnu que le complexe militaro-industriel soviétique ne pouvait pas suivre le rythme de développement de l'Occident sur les plans économique et technologique. Aujourd'hui le PIB de la Russie représente moins de 5% de la somme du PIB de l'UE et des USA, aussi la stratégie visant à dépenser beaucoup plus que la Russie en matière de défense serait-elle beaucoup plus facile à mettre en œuvre. Malheureusement, dans nombre de pays occidentaux l'opinion publique (notamment à gauche) hésite à admettre que parfois les dépenses consacrées à la défense ne sont pas un luxe mais une nécessité.

Pendant de nombreuses décennies, le niveau de vie occidental a bénéficié massivement des "dividendes de la paix". Ainsi, rapportées au PIB les dépenses de défense des USA ont chuté de 11,1 % en 1967 pendant la guerre du Vietnam à 6,9% en 1989, année de la chute du mur de Berlin, et elles ont baissé aujourd'hui à 3,52%. Si les dépenses de défense des USA en pourcentage du PIB étaient aujourd'hui au même niveau qu'à l'époque de la guerre du Vietnam, elles auraient été supérieures de 1 500 milliards de dollars en 2021 (plus que ce que l'Etat a dépensé pour les retraites l'année dernière, et presque le triple des dépenses publiques consacrées à la consommation et aux investissements hors du secteur de la défense). Si elles étaient restées au niveau de la fin des années 1980, les dépenses de défense seraient supérieures de plus de 600 milliards de dollars à celles d'aujourd'hui. Ce coût supplémentaire devrait être financé par une augmentation des impôts, un recours accru à l'emprunt ou une réduction des dépenses publiques dans d'autres secteurs.

Depuis longtemps, les dépenses de défense de l'Europe sont très inférieures à celles des USA. Aujourd'hui, le Royaume-Uni et la France consacrent un peu plus de 2 % de leur revenu national à la défense, l'Allemagne et l'Italie seulement 1,5 %. Les intérêts nationaux et le lobbying national font que les dépenses de défense européennes sont très inefficaces, le tout étant très inférieur à la somme de ses parties. Je suis étonné de voir combien de mes amis, par ailleurs bien informés, se demandent pourquoi l'Europe n'organise pas une réponse militaire plus forte à l'attaque de la Russie contre l'Ukraine et aux menaces potentielles qui pèsent sur les pays baltes. Cela tient en partie à la dépendance de l'Europe au gaz russe, mais surtout à son manque flagrant de préparation.

Tout cela pourrait changer grâce à Poutine. La déclaration du chancelier allemand Olaf Scholz le 27 février, selon laquelle l'Allemagne va augmenter son budget militaire à un niveau supérieur à 2 % de son PIB montre que l'Europe pourrait enfin se ressaisir. Mais ce type d'engagement aura

d'énormes conséquences budgétaires. Elles pourraient être difficiles à absorber après les dépenses publiques massives destinées aux plans de secours liés à la pandémie. Alors que l'Europe réexamine ses règles budgétaires, les dirigeants politiques doivent réfléchir à la manière de dégager une marge de manœuvre pour faire face à une tension militaire inattendue et à grande échelle.

On a peut-être oublié que les pics de dépenses en temps de guerre étaient autrefois l'un des principaux facteurs de volatilité des dépenses publiques. En temps de guerre, non seulement les dépenses publiques et les déficits budgétaires augmentent fortement, mais il en est parfois de même pour les taux d'intérêt. Aujourd'hui, les responsables politiques (ainsi que de nombreux économistes bien intentionnés) sont convaincus que les grands chocs économiques mondiaux tels qu'une pandémie ou une crise financière conduisent à une baisse des taux d'intérêt et facilitent le financement des dettes importantes. Mais en temps de guerre, la nécessité d'engager des dépenses temporaires massives peut facilement faire grimper le coût des emprunts.

Dans le monde complexe d'aujourd'hui, avec les drones, les cyberattaques et les champs de bataille automatisés, la manière dont les Etats utilisent leur budget militaire est lourde de conséquences. Néanmoins, supposer que toute baisse des dépenses de défense peut être compensée par une efficacité accrue des armées relève de la pensée magique.

L'Occident ne doit plus commettre des erreurs stratégiques en matière de politique énergétique, comme celles qui nous ont conduits à la situation actuelle. Ainsi l'Allemagne, dépendante de la Russie pour plus de la moitié de ses besoins en gaz, a commis une erreur historique en mettant hors service toutes ses centrales nucléaires après la catastrophe de Fukushima en 2011. Par contre, la France qui satisfait 75% de ses besoins énergétiques grâce à l'énergie nucléaire est nettement moins vulnérable aux menaces russes.

Aux USA, l'annulation du projet d'oléoduc Keystone XL relevait peut-être d'une logique environnementale saine ; mais aujourd'hui le moment semble mal choisi. Les mesures destinées à protéger l'environnement ne servent pas à grand-chose si elles entraînent une faiblesse stratégique qui accroît le risque de guerre conventionnelle en Europe - sans parler de la pollution radioactive à grande échelle qui résulterait de l'utilisation de bombes à neutrons ou d'armes nucléaires tactiques.

Une résistance ukrainienne marquée, des sanctions économiques fortes et rapides et une opposition intérieure pourraient contraindre Poutine à reconnaître qu'il a commis une erreur spectaculaire en envahissant l'Ukraine. Même si la crise actuelle se dissipe, l'attaque cruelle contre l'Ukraine doit rappeler aux partisans les plus engagés en faveur du pacifisme que le monde peut être dur et imprévisible.

Tout le monde espère une paix durable. Mais une analyse réaliste de la manière dont on peut parvenir à une croissance durable et équitable montre qu'il y faut une marge de manœuvre budgétaire, notamment une capacité d'emprunt en cas d'urgence. C'est le prix à payer pour se protéger contre une agression extérieure.

Traduit de l'anglais par Patrice Horovitz

Kenneth Rogoff est professeur d'économie et de sciences politiques à l'université de Harvard. Il a été économiste en chef du FMI.

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## EJS Center stands with

women and girls.”

It urges the public to join the EJS Center in raising awareness of this critical issue by posting graphic contained in its press release on social media accounts with the following message:

“This International Women’s Day, we must #BreaktheBias against speaking out about gender-based violence. It’s time to end all forms of violence against women and girls. [Insert link to statement once posted] # I W D #InternationalWomensDay2022”

The EJS Center was founded in 2018 to be a catalyst for change across Africa by helping

unleash its most abundant untapped power—its women. It officially launched on International Women’s Day, March 8, 2020.

Through a unique blend of programming, advocacy, research, and exhibitions, the Center advances women’s public leadership and social development on the continent.

As the first democratically elected woman president in Africa, Nobel Peace Prize winner Ellen Johnson Sirleaf is passionate about supporting the next generation of women in public leadership.

Starts from the back

of insults on faculty members and students, Representatives Blalu said, a university president should know how to encourage his people, stressing that if what the faculty are saying is true then he (Dr. Wreh-Wilson) needs to work on his attitude.

But Dr. Wilson has denied the faculty’s claim of insulting them. “Let me say, we had series of meetings with the University administration during the previous protests by students and during that time, we informed administration about other issues but like what we are seeing now, it seems like this other situation has gone beyond control and it doesn’t send out good sign for our county”, Representative Blalu said and noted that constant go-slow presents a negative signal at the University.

He said Tubman University is not only for Marylanders or Liberians, but is universal and open to people from diverse backgrounds to pursue academic studies, saying “So where in you will have these kinds of problems at the University, it doesn’t look good

## Caucus to probe Tubman

to the outside world.”

“Let me say to you, if a professor administers exams and out of 10 students in the class 7 failed then you have to check yourself. So, we will engage the both parties in a joint meeting in order to look into their points to know who’s wrong or right.”

Rep. Blalu noted that if Dr. Wreh-Wilson is found guilty over claims by the faculty and students, he would either leave to have a smooth learning environment, but if the claims against him are false, those faculty members responsible will be asked to take their exit.

Members of the faculty association of the William V.S. Tubman University in Harper City, Maryland County staged an indefinite go-slow recently over alleged administrative management and other excesses, calling for the replacement of the University’s President, Dr. D. Elloit Wreh-Wilson.

Since February 28, 2022, normal activities at the government’s second University have been at a standstill. **Editing by Jonathan Browne**

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## Boakai provides more

VP Boakai disclosed that everybody has been following the internal wrangling in the CPP, and because of all this, they did not seem to have it right therefore, they decided to go their separate ways with the hope that in the future, somebody can cooperate.

He argued that UP is one of the biggest parties even within the CPP before exiting and the party was subjected to equal representation simply because they wanted to have a unified

position.

“Unity Party is ready, willing and has lots of friends that are willing to help. We can assure you that the dream to make President Weah a one term president is still alive and even without the CPP, that goal will be achieved through the Liberian voters who know what they want”, he concluded. **Editing by Jonathan Browne**

mean that President Weah will have a comfortable ride in 2023 elections”, the former Vice President added.

He maintains, “We are going to work with other people, who will respect our coming together and that we will make him (President Weah) a one term President.

He said the CPP was intended to be an organization that will take leadership of Liberia but it requires a lot to achieve that.

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## ECOWAS Parliament recommit

isolation, as a result of imposed sanctions, seriously undermines regional integration. Its impact appears to have consequences, mostly characterized by debates by ordinary citizens in some Member States, on the desirability or otherwise of their continued ECOWAS membership.” For his part, President George M. Weah

welcomed the ECOWAS Parliament to Liberia and for choosing Liberia as host for the session. President Weah is optimistic the session in Liberia will lead to positive response for the betterment of the ECOWAS community. **Editing by Jonathan Browne**

corruption, as well as civil unrest resulting from unplanned change in constitution, are factors to which coups d’etats have been hinged. As a result, our democratic processes appear weakened, thereby impacting negatively on the image of ECOWAS. In addition to the above, the policy of



experiences when we have the capability to stop what is happening.”

He explained that in 2019, the Domestic Violence Act was signed into law and the President thereafter declared rape a national emergency.

He added that the National Road Map was carved in collaboration with civil society organizations, but in spite of all of these pronouncements and policy documents, rape continues to increase while perpetrators go with impunity.

Boakai believes that this is therefore a call for the Coalition for Democratic Change (CDC) government to take charge and be intentional and truthful about its declaration of rape as a national emergency.

He reminded President Weah that this government took oath to protect its citizens and that includes the women and children. Giving data on SGBV in the country, Amb. Boakai said in 2021 alone, the Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection reported 1,637 cases.

Of this number, he said the ministry reported that 56% were reports of sexual violence, while 50% were child survivors with Montserrado County accounting for the

majority.

He continued that they were also informed that of the rape cases reported, indictments were drawn for 6.23% of the cases, and that 3.60% of the cases were tried while 3.12% of the perpetrators were convicted.

“These are just for the cases that have been recorded and reported,” he said, adding, “imagine if all the ones that are handled ‘the family way’ or not reported for fear of stigmatization or threats from the perpetrators were reported.”

According to Amb. Boakai, the Government of Liberia is doing nothing concrete to address and mitigate sexual and gender base- violence across the country.

“I Call on the judiciary to dispense justice without fear or favor. consider the current wave of rape cases in Liberia a matter of extreme national emergency, fast track cases, and bring the perpetrators before the law,” Boakai urged.

“I’ve come once more, joining the women of Liberia and advocates against gender-based violence, to call the attention of the Government of Liberia to the very alarming increase in the rate of sexual gender-based violence,” he noted.

## “Our women, children unprotected”

—Boakai says

By Lincoln G. Peters

Former Liberian Vice President Joseph Nyumah Boakai says women and children here are

indeed unprotected while the culture of impunity persists in a country rocked by growing gender - based violence (SGBV).

Addressing a press conference Thursday, 10 March 2022 at his Rehab residence in Paynesville,

Mr. Boakai said Liberia is an extremely difficult place for women, children, and girls under the leadership of President George Manneh Weah. Mr. Boakai said there is an uncontrollable wave of sexual and gender - based violence being carried out against women with perpetrators here walking with impunity.

“Our women and children are indeed unprotected while the culture of impunity persists!” said Mr. Boakai.

The standard bearer of the former ruling Unity Party (UP) who is seeking to battle President Weah at the polls in next year’s presidential and legislative elections, called on Liberians to rise up and demand that justice be done.

Boakai said that “it is unjust for our babies as young as three and two years old, our girls, our women and young boys to go through these kinds of traumatic



# Hardship looms

Liberians have begun bracing themselves for more hardship under the Coalition for Democratic Change (CDC) led regime days after the government announced hikes in the prices of petroleum products here.

On Monday March 7., Government announced that the price for a gallon of gasoline previously sold at a retail price for US\$4.00 is now US\$5.66, an increase in price ceiling by US\$1.66, while a retail price for diesel fuel, which was being sold at US\$4.53, is now US\$6.00, an increase in retail price ceiling by US\$1.47.

The increment comes days after Government made it clear thru a circular that there were sufficient petroleum products in the country to last for months.

On Feb.14, a vessel arrived with products and departed on Feb. 16. Another tanker vessel MT BWLYNX came in last week with 12,500 metric tons of gasoline, while another vessel DUKE brought in 2,400 metric tons-meaning there are no shortage insight for now.

In a country with an estimated 64 percent of the population living below the poverty line of whom 1.3 million live in extreme poverty (World Bank 2020 report), and nearly 70% getting their electric power from gasoline or diesel generators, the government is under immense pressure to rethink the price ceiling.

Though it would argue that Liberia has the lowest price ceiling for petroleum products in the sub-region, comparatively it is not,

rather it is the highest among its immediate West African neighbors.

With Liberia sells a gallon of gasoline for US\$5.66 (L\$875), in neighboring Sierra Leone a gallon of gasoline is sold for US\$4.12; Guinea right next door sells at US\$4.23; Ivory Coast US\$4.11 and



Ghana US\$4.50.

What does this mean for ordinary Liberians?

The effect of the government's action has been immediate with the prices of commodities now soaring on the local market just within days of the pronouncement; commercial vehicles are now charging double the previous transportation fares. For instance, commuters would now have to pay US\$2.00 (L\$300, twice more than what some live on daily), from ELWA junction to Broad Street in Central Monrovia, which was previously US\$1.00 (L\$150).

With the country's unemployment ratio (This refers to the share of the workforce that are without jobs, but are available for and seeking employment) projected to increase, it's going to have a massive effect on the population.

The country's unemployment rate for 2020 was 3.30%, a 0.41% increase from 2019, while in 2019, unemployment rate stood at 2.89%, a 0.05% decline from

2018, according to the World Bank report. Thus poverty remains widespread.

Could this affect Weah's 2023 reelection bid?

The increasing widespread of poverty, amidst allegations of corruption and the rampant display of wealth among some

officials of government in the wake of such an increase could negatively impact the second term bid of President George Weah and erode some of the gains he has made over the years for which some voters would have opted for him.

It is argued that Liberians mainly vote based on the bread-and-butter issues - meaning their ability to purchase basic needs. But with the soaring of basic commodity prices barely a year away from a major election, it's hard to say that such will not undermine president Weah's reelection bid.

Liberians, many first-time voters, who see the President as a role model, had thought that President Weah has come with a magic wand to change the status quo. However, poverty remains widespread in Liberia and the latest government action could just add to the fury and may work against the President unless there is a U-turn.

What is the government saying in defense of its action?

On Tuesday March 8, 2022, the Government emphasized that its decision to set a new price structure for petroleum products in the country was not arbitrary, but one motivated by external factors.

Information Minister Ledgerhood J. Rennie said the government acknowledges that the increment is "hard to bite down", but it is necessary to ensure the constant availability of the products on the market and stability of the price. "We are hoping that in the next month or so, we can revisit the decision and there can be a decrease", Minister Rennie said.

He explained that the government is aware that the cost of petroleum could have an adverse effect on the general price level, which is why it is planning to revisit the new price structure in the "soonest possible time". He frowned on profiteering and hoarding of the products by some unscrupulous people, warning that anyone caught in the acts will be dealt with by the full weight of the law.

The information minister said the relevant Government agencies are working to announce fixed fares for transportation to various locations within 48 hours in order to avoid hiking of the

cost. He warned commercial drivers against overcharging passengers.

What did the Petroleum Refining Company say?

The Deputy Managing Director of the Liberian Petroleum Refining Company, Adrian Hoff, said importers of petroleum products in the country operate under a Collateral Management Agreement (CMA) that allows them to order products in the country without initially paying cash to the major international suppliers. But he said, once in the country, in order for products to be lifted from the LPRC storage facility each day, and taken to the market, the Liberian importers will have to pay per consignment at the prevailing global rate - thus their clamor for an increment in price. Mr. Hoff said the Weah Administration has made tough decisions in the past to avoid increasing the cost of petroleum products by cutting levies. "We have met with the President and his biggest concern has been 'don't increase the price'".

Both men said the prices of gasoline and diesel fuel in Liberia is lower than many countries in the sub-region.

However, figures from the sub-region dispute their claims.

-Writes Othello B. Garblah

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governmental organizations in Liberia.

But the institution said it cannot celebrate the day this year due to the threat of violence that women continue to face here.

At present, the EJS Center notes, Liberia ranks 175th out of 189 countries in the United Nations Development Programme's (UNDP) Gender Inequality Index, demonstrating the significant gap between Liberian women and men.

In response to this recent surge in gender-based violence, EJS Center Founder and Former President of Liberia, Mrs. Ellen Johnson Sirleaf stated: "We cannot be celebratory when our Liberian sisters are still facing the threat of violence."

"Instead, let us break the bias in our homes, schools, universities, communities, courtrooms, and institutions that perpetuates violence against women and girls, and stands in the way of its eradication."

On 8 March this year, the EJS Center said it was celebrating its second anniversary, which also fall on the International Women's Day observed globally under the theme #BreaktheBias.

The EJS Center recalled that to celebrate International Women's Day last year, it held a panel discussion entitled Amujae Leaders: Liberia In

Focus, which focused on women's political leadership in Liberia.

It noted that this year, there are many achievements to celebrate at the EJS Center, including two of its cohorts of Amujae Leaders, the successful #HaveHerBack Campaign, and the release of its report on Mapping Progress in Liberia: The 2020 Ibrahim Index of African Governance.

The EJS Center acknowledges that some important steps have been taken over recent years to address gender-based violence in Liberia.

For example, it said, the Domestic Violence Act was signed into law in 2019 after being tabled in 2016.

The Act provides a comprehensive definition of domestic violence, which acknowledges the many forms it can take. But it suggested that more must be done to eradicate violence against women and girls in the Liberian society.

Further, the EJS Center said progress is needed through multiple channels including policymaking, legislation, grassroots engagement, advocacy, and community-led initiatives.

"Women public leaders and civil society activists should continue to steer these efforts, building on their years of work on this pressing issue. However,

# EJS Center stands with GBV victims



The Ellen Johnson Sirleaf Presidential Center for Women and Development (EJS Center) says given the recent disheartening spike in gender-based violence in Liberia, it has decided that it cannot celebrate while "our mothers, sisters, and daughters continue to face the threat of violence."

In a statement dated 8 March 2022, the EJS Center said it had planned to continue the tradition of celebrating International Women's Day with an event entitled Women in the Grassroots: Liberia In Focus, a facilitated discussion with women leading non-

# Caucus to probe Tubman University saga



**Maryland Legislative Caucus Chair Isaac Roland Blalu speaking to reporters**  
By Patrick N. Mensah, Maryland County

Amidst ongoing go-slow at the Tubman University in Harper City, Maryland County, southeast Liberia, the chairperson of the Maryland Legislative Caucus Isaac Roland Blalu says, the caucus has resolved to intervene in the crisis so the University can resume normal academic activities.

Addressing reporters during a visit to the county

recently, Representative Blalu said, members of the caucus are not pleased with the current situation engulfing the second state-run University in the southeast.

"I want to be clear here, what is happening at the University, as a caucus, we are not pleased. So, we will continue to pursue this in order to have a definite action or resolution because we need not to have an institution in the county where every time there is noise or protest", the lawmaker expressed.

He said the disturbance doesn't create a suitable learning environment for students, saying "Always break, break because of protest at this higher learning environment, it's not advisable nor conducive for the students."

"So, we the caucus will intervene strongly, if it's for Wreh-Wilson to leave or be retained, we will be left with no option but rather to do the right thing for the academic activities on the University campus to continue."

When questioned how soon, he responded, "It's some of the reasons why I am in the county."

"My colleague Brown and I had a meeting to know the nature of the issues and we have noticed that the issues are greater, so we need to step in as Legislators of the county", Representatives Blalu added.

Commenting on the University President Dr. Elliott Wreh-Wilson's alleged ranting

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