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CENTRAL BANK OF LIBERIA
MARKET BUYING AND SELLING RATES
LIBERIAN DOLLARS PER US DOLLAR

DATE	BUYING	SELLING
WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 10, 2022	L\$152.6689/US\$1.00	L\$154.3714/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.

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McGill: I was speaking in context

P11

Mr. McGill

Lawmakers return to Capitol Monday

P11

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Continental News

Blinken Africa trip: The world should not dictate to the continent

Mr Blinken addressed African reservations that the continent is sometimes used as a pawn in international relations: "Time and again, they have been told to pick a side in great power contests that feel far removed from daily struggles of their people."

He outlined the US's priorities for the continent, which include

but will recognise the "common challenges" to "tackle together, as equals". He also addressed the controversial Russian mercenary group, Wagner, which has been operating in some African countries like Libya and as some reports say, in Mali and the Central Africa Republic also.

He accused the "Kremlin-backed" group of exploiting "instability to pillage resources and commit abuses with impunity".

The Russian government denies any links with the shadowy private military company.

Mr Blinken said the US will launch a Global Fragility Act which "will make a decade-long investment in promoting more peaceful, more inclusive, more resilient societies in places where conditions are ripe for conflict".

The project is set to receive \$200m (£165m) in funding each year, for the next decade, Mr Blinken said. Earlier Mr Blinken and his South African counterpart, Naledi Pandor, stressed the historic ties between their two countries, and highlighted the importance of their cooperation in areas

such as trade and investment, health and science. The Ukraine war was also a point of contention between the two. Ms Pandor said she and Mr Blinken had had "very frank discussions where at times we don't agree - but it has not broken this friendship", she said. "In fact it has made it stronger."

While she confirmed that the US had not tried to tell South Africa what to do when it comes to its relationships with other global powers, Ms Pandor said that "in terms of partners in Europe and elsewhere there has been a sense of patronising and bullying".

She also once more criticised a draft bill going through the US congress which she says could penalise

African countries for not towing the line on the Ukraine conflict - calling the Countering Malign Russian Activities in Africa Act "offensive legislation".

Relations between South Africa and the US have been strained after South Africa remained neutral over Russia's invasion of Ukraine, refusing to join Western calls to condemn Moscow.

Nearly half of the abstentions for a UN general assembly resolution in March condemning Russian "aggression" and demanding its withdrawal from Ukraine were from African countries. In his speech, Mr Blinken also appeared to address Moscow's argument that Western sanctions are to blame for rising grain prices, which is affecting Africa: "Even before President Putin launched his full invasion, 193 million people around the world were in need of humanitarian food assistance," he said. BBC

The US secretary of state has said Washington will "not dictate" which choices Africa should make and "neither should anyone else".

"African nations have been treated as instruments of other nations' progress, rather than the authors of



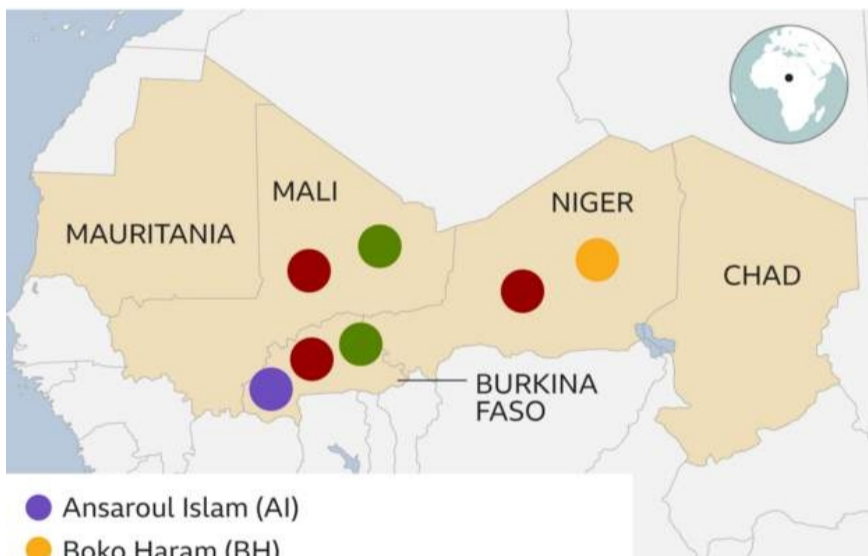
Antony Blinken's speech addressed a wide range of topics from security to elections to Covid

their own," Antony Blinken said. He is currently in South Africa as part of a three-nation African tour. Washington is seeking to boost relations amid growing concern over the growing influence of Russia and China.

democracy, investment, security, Covid recovery support and clean energy. The continent has big upcoming elections, including in Kenya and Nigeria. Mr Blinken said Washington will not treat democracy as "an area where Africa has problems and the United States has solutions"

Dozens killed by suspected Islamists in Mali - military

Jihadist groups in the Sahel region



At least 17 soldiers and four civilians were killed on Sunday, with nine others missing, after an attack attributed to Islamists in the town of Tessit in the area close to the borders of Mali, Burkina Faso and Niger, which is frequently the scene of clashes and attacks.

There were at least two other jihadist attacks on Sunday - killing 12 civilians on Saturday in central Mali and five police officers on Sunday in the south-west.

The death toll from the attack in Tessit, however, is

still provisional and likely to change - according to a Malian army statement released Monday. The army said it had killed seven people in Tessit thought to be from the Islamic State in the Great Sahara, using drone and artillery support to set off explosives. The Malian army also reported 22 wounded in its ranks, plus significant damage to civilian homes, including vehicles and military installations. Mali has been under threat from Islamist militants since 2012, initially confined to the north but has spread to central and southern Mali, as well as to neighbouring Burkina Faso and Niger. BBC

Kenyans Vote in Tight Presidential Election

NAIROBI, KENYA - Kenya's electoral commission says all 46,232 polling stations opened Tuesday for voters to cast their ballot for the six elective posts, including the president. As Kenyans trooped to the polling stations, there were some reports of irregularities.

Shortly after the opening of the polls, the election of member of parliament in the Rongai constituency in Nakuru County was suspended because of errors in the ballot papers.

Residents barricaded roads and lit bonfires to express their dissatisfaction with the electoral commission order.

The suspension is the fifth, after voting for four other MP seats was halted over errors in the voting papers.

Some voters across the country reported biometric voter registration was not working or taking a long time to identify the voters. The

voter identification system in central Kenya could not recognize the fingerprints of Vice President William Ruto's running mate, Rigathi Gachagua. Gachagua was recognized by the manual voter's register and allowed to cast a ballot.

Mwangi Kevin said he waited a long time to cast his vote in Nairobi.

"The process is good," he said. "The only challenge we had at

the beginning was the waiting process, I think they opened around 6:30 a.m., so the waiting time for me was three hours, but as we moved in, things were working. The ballot boxes are well done."

Forty-four-year-old Rahab Kamau is happy with the voting process at her polling station just opposite the parliament buildings in central Nairobi. She said she



A woman casts her ballot at the Dandora secondary school polling station during Kenya's general election in Nairobi on Aug. 9

never voted this early, but coming early helped a lot. In this election, she added, the IEBC officials are well organized. There aren't many people and there is less confusion if voters check the system at the polling station. Kamau believes her vote

will change her life and that of fellow Kenyans.

She said she hopes the country will get a God-fearing person who can help the country. We want a leader who can help us reduce the financial burden, the cost of living and lack of employment, she said. VOA

EDITORIAL

When the Police are found wanting

THE LIBERIA NATIONAL Police (LNP) currently seems to currently has its acts upside down, significantly losing public trust in its duty to fight crimes and protect lives and property, principally due to lack of will to execute.

THE POLICE UNDER the leadership of Director Patrick Sudue have suspended several senior officers for sheer complacency or the manner in which they handled the July 26, Independence Day protest that left several students of the University of Liberia seriously wounded.

AUTHORITIES OF THE LNP did not take action until a week after the bloody violence and six days after President George Manneh Weah officially addressed the nation via a pre-recorded speech broadcast on State radio. A Day after, the international Community (Britain, United States, United Nations and the European Union) issued a joint statement, calling for a thorough investigation of the incident.

SUBSEQUENTLY THE POLICE made few arrests that were said to be ringleaders of a ruling party group (CDC-Council of Patriots) that brutally attacked protesting students on July 26, wounding several of them, one of which was taken out of the country for advanced medical attention because of the severity of injuries sustained.

THE BLOODY VIOLENCE was live-streamed, but the Police had initially said they had no information to carry on arrest; rather, they asked the public, including the wounded, to come out and make formal complaints in what was clearly lack of political will to apply the law. Now with nationwide condemnations and international pressure, the Police have suspended several officers in a face-saving move.

WHEN A KEY PUBLIC institution such as the Police, that is constitutionally charged with the responsibility to serve and protect, deliberately ignores or abandons its duty for whatever reasons, the public is left vulnerable and lawlessness takes center stage, as was witnessed on July 26, Independence Day.

THE POLICE UNDER COL. Patrick Sudue are found wanting. They have erected a very thin line between partisanship and professional service, with little presence in public.

FAMILY MEMBERS OF the late 25-year-old Princess Cooper, who was discovered dead on March 24, 2022 in a fence behind the FAWAZ Building Construction Company at ELWA Junction, Paynesville, in a pool of blood are still crying for justice mainly because of the Police handling of the suspicious death.

THEY LAMENT HOW could they get justice when their late daughter's lifeless body was left on a crime scene by an unknown person(s) and the Police could not provide any explanation or protect the scene after the incident, but allow businesses to operate just few hours after they body was discovered.

THE POLICE UNDER Director Patrick Sudue need to muster political will to serve all members of the Liberian populace if they should regain eroded public trust, as the force citizens and foreign residents can rely on for safety, justice and peace. Anything short of this could be nothing else, but wolves in sheep clothes.

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COMMENTARY

By Eddie Ndopu

Human Rights Without Handicaps

NEW YORK - When the United Nations was built from the rubble of World War II, it would have been inconceivable for someone like me - a young, Black, gay wheelchair user - to be considered for a top job in the organization. So, it is a stunning testament to the distance humanity has come since 1945 that I will be among the candidates the UN will consider to succeed Michelle Bachelet when she leaves her post next month as the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights.

If selected, I would be the highest-ranking international civil servant with a disability since the UN was founded. This would be a historic victory for the 1.3 billion disabled people who, according to the UN, comprise the world's largest minority group.

The UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, signed in 2007, has helped to advance inclusion across the board. But to see someone in a wheelchair in a position of power is still highly unusual. In many parts of the world today, the face of ostracization is still that of a brown-skinned disabled kid.

I could easily have been that kid. But you could say my experience as a human-rights advocate began at the age of six, when - with tears streaming down my face - I told my mother, "I want to go to school."

Life for a kid in a wheelchair in Namibia, where I spent the first nine years of my life, is often extremely limited - as it is in much of the developing world. According to the UN, 90-98% of kids with disabilities in the Global South do not have the opportunity to go to school at all.

At the time, indeed, I was beating the odds just to be alive. As a two-year-old, I was diagnosed with spinal muscular atrophy, a deadly degenerative disease that attacks the nervous system. Doctors told my mother I would most likely not live to see my fifth birthday. I am now 31.

My mother, who wiped the tears from my eyes, was determined. She found a school willing to take me. On my first day, I was placed at the very back of the classroom. It was clear little was expected of me. I stunned the teacher by writing my own name - something most of the other kids could not do. A smile spread across her face. She saw that I could learn just like, or maybe sometimes faster, than the others.

That experience taught me to reach high, no matter the obstacles in my path. My candidacy to succeed Bachelet seeks to push the boundaries of possibility, not just for people with disabilities but for anyone who has ever felt devalued, underestimated, and marginalized.

If selected, I would be the youngest leader at the main leadership level. The UN often emphasizes the importance of engaging young people, given our stake in the future.

And yet we are an unrepresented demographic at the institution. Selecting a young leader for this position would give fresh impetus and authority to the work of the UN High Commissioner.

Attainment of human rights for all very often feels like an impossible pursuit, especially now, when everything feels impossible. But, as Nelson Mandela pointed out, it always seems impossible until it is done.

I had to remind myself of these words some time back, when I was still at Amnesty International and had the impossible mandate of bringing together two groups known to be distrustful of each other: business leaders and human-rights defenders. I persuaded them to listen to each other as part of a campaign to hold extractive industries to account for human-rights violations in Africa.

At a time when the world is increasingly fractured and it feels as though we have simply stopped listening to one another, I think the office of UN High Commissioner for Human Rights is uniquely qualified to address the most pressing challenges of our day. For the first time since 2001, a majority of the world's population lives under non-democratic, rights-violating governments. We face heightened nationalism, an emerging economic crisis, and a global pandemic - a health crisis that too many governments have met by claiming emergency powers and adopting restrictions that often violate rights. And of course, the conflicts in Ukraine, the Sahel, Myanmar, and a host of other places create their own significant rights concerns.

The UN High Commissioner plays a crucial role in times like these, serving as a beacon for the principles of human rights and championing those who bravely speak out when they see violations around the world. As UN Secretary-General António Guterres has said, human rights underpin "the entire UN system. [They] are essential to addressing the broad causes and impacts of all complex crises, and to building sustainable, safe, and peaceful societies."

Should the Secretary-General select me for this role, my job will be to identify and expose rights violations tirelessly, no matter what powerful interests stand in the way, and to engage with civil-society advocates to make the UN's work more participatory and more relevant to driving change.

I am, admittedly, an outside-the-box candidate for this post - an impossible choice, some might say. But I believe, in these times especially, that fresh thinking, new energy, and an ability to see how to overcome seemingly impossible barriers is exactly what the world needs.

Eddie Ndopu, a human-rights activist, is a Sustainable Development Goals advocate for the UN Secretary-General.

O-PED

By Daron Acemoglu and
James A. Robinson

Why Taiwan Matters

CAMBRIDGE/CHICAGO - US Speaker of the House Nancy Pelosi's headline-generating visit to Taipei has reminded the world how much Taiwan matters to China. But Taiwan also should matter to the democratic world.

It is no secret that the Communist Party of China (CPC) is committed to unifying Taiwan (which it views as a breakaway province) with the mainland. The United States formally recognized the People's Republic of China as the sole legal government of China in 1979, and Western powers have since mostly refrained from recognizing Taiwan as a separate country. This "One China" policy, together with rising nationalist sentiment in China, makes a Chinese takeover of the island in the coming decades seem likely, if not inevitable.

Some Western commentators believe that Pelosi acted recklessly by visiting the island. But they ignore how and why Taiwan also matters for the future of both democracy and China itself.

A common belief among Western policymakers and many commentators nowadays is that China will remain non-democratic for the foreseeable future, owing to its deeply authoritarian political culture. According to this view, the West's "individualism" stands in stark contrast to China's Confucian heritage, which entails rigid hierarchies not just in families but in all social settings. The implication is that the Chinese people are more willing to take their place within a pre-defined order of authority, and less willing to participate in democratic politics.

Hence, political scientist Samuel P. Huntington once asserted that "no scholarly disagreement exists regarding the proposition that traditional Confucianism was either undemocratic or antidemocratic." And more recently, Ray Dalio of Bridgewater Associates writes: "All of these Chinese systems are hierarchical and non-egalitarian. ... America is run from the bottom up (e.g., democracy) and optimized for the individual; China is run from the top down and optimized for the collective. ... Democracy as we know it doesn't have any roots in China."

It is easy to see how the last 2,500 years of Chinese history might support these ideas. China has experienced many rebellions and the rise and fall of many powerful dynasties. Since democratic politics has been conspicuously absent through it all, many assume that China is bound to remain under the command of a strong leader presiding over a top-down regime, and Chinese state propaganda assiduously fosters this view. Chinese newspapers and political commentators constantly contrast the Chinese system's efficiency to the West's gridlocked politics, while also pointing out that it is more in line with Chinese values and culture.

But is it? Hong Kong and Taiwan are cut from the same cultural cloth as mainland China, yet they rest on very different political systems. Until the CPC's crackdown on Hong Kong in 2020, the island was in the process of building a vibrant democracy. And Taiwan is even more revealing. Since the 1980s, it has developed a robust democracy with broad-based participation. Far from being established and developed by elites, Taiwan's system is the result of students and other ordinary citizens demanding more through democratic politics.

Democratic participation in Taiwan appears to have intensified over the last six years. The island's dominant party for most of its history was the Kuomintang, founded by Chiang Kai-shek, the Chinese nationalist who fled the mainland with his loyal troops and about 1.5 million supporters after being defeated in 1949 by the Communists. The current government, led by the Democratic Progressive Party, came to power in the 2016 general election, following widespread protests against the KMT's efforts to ram through a trade deal with China despite significant opposition. During the protests, the student-led Sunflower Movement even occupied Parliament.

This was not just a passing phase of anger and protest. The Taiwanese are pioneers in digital democracy. Active political participation by different segments of society is the norm. That is why Taiwanese governments routinely consult the public on key decisions, such as ridesharing regulations and liquor sales.

Taiwan also hosts a "presidential hackathon" that allows citizens to make direct proposals to the president, and a digital platform provides data from most Taiwanese ministries, with the explicit purpose of encouraging civil society to improve government operations. And in the face of COVID-19, its government marshaled an effective response through democratic consultation, close collaboration with civil society, and new digital tools for testing and contact tracing.

Taiwan exhibits these strong democratic tendencies, not because it has undergone a Westernizing cultural transformation. Until 2000, the KMT regime leveraged Confucian values to set itself apart from the Communist regime in China, and subsequent surveys have shown that Confucian values are even more deeply held in Taiwan than on the mainland.

The island thus reinforces a point that we have made in previous work: It is misguided to assert any kind of unbreakable link between cultural values and political systems. All cultures, and particularly Confucian ones, should be viewed as highly adaptable to changing circumstances. Political regimes can rest on many cultural frames.

While Confucius did say that "commoners do not debate matters of government," he also emphasized that "a state cannot stand if it has lost the confidence of the people." Confucian thought recommends respect and obedience to leaders only if they are virtuous. It thus follows that if a leader is not virtuous, he or she can - and perhaps should - be replaced. This perfectly valid interpretation of Confucian values underpins Taiwanese democracy.

By contrast, CPC propaganda holds that Confucian values are utterly incompatible with democracy, and that there is no viable alternative to one-party rule. This is patently false. Democracy is as feasible in China as it is in Taiwan. No matter how strident the CPC's bluster becomes, it will not extinguish people's desire to participate in politics, complain about injustices, or replace leaders who misbehave. Taiwan matters because it represents an alternative political path for China - one that has long sustained freedom and prosperity in the West.

Daron Acemoglu, Professor of Economics at MIT, is co-author (with James A. Robinson) of *Why Nations Fail: The Origins of Power, Prosperity and Poverty* (Profile, 2019) and *The Narrow Corridor: States, Societies, and the Fate of Liberty* (Penguin, 2020). James A. Robinson, Institute Director of the Pearson Institute for the Study and Resolution of Global Conflicts, is University Professor at the University of Chicago's Harris School of Public Policy. He is the co-author (with Daron Acemoglu) of *Why Nations Fail: The Origins of Power, Prosperity, and Poverty* (Profile, 2019) and *The Narrow Corridor: States, Societies, and the Fate of Liberty* (Penguin, 2020).

OPINION

By Pinelopi Koujianou Goldberg

Lose-Lose Trade Sanctions

NEW HAVEN - One of the strongest arguments for free trade is that it promotes peace between participating countries. There is an undeniable correlation between the two, even if it is not always clear whether peace is a pre-condition for the free movement of goods and services, or whether commerce creates the economic incentives for all participants to maintain peace.

Back in 2016, as anti-China rhetoric in the United States grew increasingly shrill, one could not help but feel that we were on the verge of a new cold war. During Donald Trump's presidency, the tensions boiled over into something unprecedented in recent history: the weaponization of trade during peacetime.

Recent research shows that the US-China trade war has had substantial economic costs. But the political costs may be even worse. International cooperation has broken down, multilateral institutions have been disempowered, and the world has entered an era of increasing polarization - both within and across countries. The best hopes for the future have seemed to lie in regional blocs and alliances, auguring a new, more fractured form of globalization.

There are striking parallels between the current era and the 1930s, when the United Kingdom's dramatic shift toward protectionism set off a global chain reaction. Economic historians have argued that this change not only contributed to the decline of international trade in the interwar period, but also made trade more bilateral and regional. Many observers at the time worried that international rivalries would be exacerbated. They were right: we now refer to this era as the pre-belligerence period ahead of World War II.

A trade war in the 1930s was the harbinger of a military war, and the events leading up to Russia's invasion of Ukraine fit this paradigm. The war in Ukraine will inevitably lead to a further unraveling of globalization; but it is as much a result of the breakdown of international cooperation as it is a cause.

Would Russian President Vladimir Putin have pursued his war without the assurance of a lifeline from China? And would China have given Putin a greenlight and risked a further deterioration of its relationship with the West if it had not been relentlessly vilified by American and (to a lesser extent) European politicians? There can be little doubt that Western policies toward China over the last decade have left that country in a position where it has little international goodwill left to lose. If China is destined to be the villain in Western political narratives, it may as well do what it thinks is in its best immediate interests.

As the war in Ukraine unfolds, trade policy is being weaponized further as part of the new sanctions regime against Russia. The explicit objective is to cut off Russia from international markets, isolate it economically, and ... then what? Imposing sanctions on the aggressor may make one feel morally superior - especially when such measures entail real economic costs for the countries that impose them - but that doesn't mean they will bring an end to the war.

Trade sanctions have a long history. The West has used similar measures against Cuba, Iran, North Korea, Venezuela, and Afghanistan. In each case, sanctions hurt the people in the countries they targeted but showed little sign of limiting the power or changing the behavior of the countries' political leaders.

The sanctions against Russia will certainly cause hardship there, impoverishing an emerging middle class that could become a force for reform. If the goal is to topple Putin, history suggests that this is unlikely to happen in the near term. Putin's domestic position may even be strengthened as Russia's disenfranchised middle class turns inward and embraces nationalism, as has happened in Western democracies over the past decade. More broadly, sanctions are likely to strengthen the Russia-China alliance, deepen global polarization, and hammer the last nail into the coffin of multilateralism.

The weaponization of trade will also have costs for the wider world, owing to Russia's importance in energy and food markets. The economic consequences of various scenarios are difficult to predict, because the reallocation of trade flows and the resulting price movements will depend not only on market forces but also on political decisions. Still, one thing is certain: as with the trade war between the US and China, there will be political as well as economic costs. Concessions to current pariah countries (such as Iran or Venezuela) may be inevitable; and even then, the trade sanctions may end up being self-defeating.

Another certainty is that weaponizing trade will not end the conflict. Western leaders must recognize this and double down on diplomacy. Russia needs a face-saving way out. One question that is rarely considered fully in the West is why Russia invaded Ukraine. Certainly, it is about more than one power-hungry autocrat's delusional ambitions (the standard line in the US). Miscalculation on both sides contributed to the escalation of conflict: Ukraine believed that NATO and EU membership were feasible in the short run and that it could count on the Alliance's military support; Russia, extrapolating from its largely bloodless annexation of Crimea in 2014, underestimated Ukrainian resistance. Finding some common ground might seem impossible at the moment. But a negotiated solution is probably the only way to avoid a long-term disaster that would destabilize the entire region, if not the world.

The weaponization of trade is a convenient way for governments to deflect attention from real problems like the economic fallout from the pandemic, widespread demoralization and reluctance among workers, spiraling mental-health crises, and rising debt levels. There are no easy remedies to these problems. So, why bother with them when you can direct people's attention to graphic images showing the plight of those who have it worse? Ultimately, the biggest winners of the war in Ukraine may be self-interested politicians around the world who have found a convenient way to avoid dealing with problems at home.

Pinelopi Koujianou Goldberg, a former World Bank Group chief economist and editor-in-chief of the *American Economic Review*, is Professor of Economics at Yale University.

Internal wrangling intensifies at LNP



By Lincoln G. Peters

Serious internal wrangling is reported to be intensifying among top officials of the Liberia National Police (LNP).

This reported development follows the recent suspension of four top LNP officials, including Spokesman Moses Carter, Unit 122; Godfred Kollie, Unit 112; John Saah, Unit 116; and Walter B.

Wray, Unit 105 in connection to the July 26 pro - government rioters' brutal attack against protesting university students.

According to information in the corridors of the LNP and other sources, the internal wrangling is due to the immediate suspension of the LNP officials by Police Inspector General Col. Patrick T. Sudue.

Information reaching this paper suggests that the four suspended police officials are claiming that they were allegedly targeted by their boss, Col. Sudue. They claimed that they were never subjected to any investigation, nor were they informed of their crimes before being suspended.

The suspended LNP officers claimed that the action of Col. Sudue suspending them allegedly without investigation is unethical and breaches best international practice and the LNP Code.

Publicly venting his anger, police spokesman Moses Carter wrote on his Facebook page on 8 August 2022 confirming that he has received a call from the LNP's Human Resource (HR) official, Fritgerald Biago, announcing his suspension.

"I have just received a call from the HR of the LNP of my suspension. When asked, he didn't tell me any reason for my suspension," Carter wrote on his social media Facebook account.

"I assured him that I will receive my letter tomorrow and I will decide my next course of action in line with the Police Act and Duty Manual," Carter noted. According to him, he was never subjected to a Professional Standards Investigation and was never told any wrong that he committed that led to his suspension.

Carter disclosed that the Minister of Justice will receive his communication for a redress and he remains focused.

Carter said he will never be distracted in the discharge of his duties as Spokesman of the Liberia National Police.

On Liberia's 175th Independence Day celebrated on 26 July, the Coalition for Democratic Change Council of Patriots (CDC - CoP) members mercilessly attacked and badly wounded members of the Students Unification Party (SUP).

The University of Liberia - based students had assembled outside the United States Embassy to stage a 'Fix The Country' protest against the regime.

Following the brutal attack against the students, the Liberia National Police last week charged and forwarded to court seven ringleaders of the attack. The defendants charged are Ben B. Togbah, 25; Kendrick S. Pelenah, 30; Joshua S. Karr, 28; Pukar Roberts, 36; Foday N. Massaquoi, 23; Aaron K. Chea, 26; Abdurahman Barrie, and others to be identified.

They face charges including criminal attempt to commit murder, aggravated assault, criminal mischief, theft of property, rioting, failure to disperse and disorderly conduct.

In addition, the LNP has with immediate effect suspended four of its top officers. In a related development, the leader of the Economic Freedom Fighters of Liberia (EFFL) Emmanuel Gonquoi has termed the suspension of the four LNP executives as a breach of the Labor Law of Liberia.

Gonquoi alleged in a conversation with our reporter on 8 August that the accused were never given due process.

"The Labor Law is clear about issuing warning letters to internal policies violators," said Gonquoi.

He said it is even more worrisome for the law enforcement institution to proceed the way it did.

"Our citizens were almost killed for [exercising] their constitutional rights and the shameless thing the Government can do is to suspend officers who barely await instructions from higher ups [for] fear of being dismissed before acting," Gonquoi continued.

He said this is purely a comical movie and shouldn't be bought.

The EFFL leader believes that Col. Sudue's action is belated because under his leadership, the police have lost public trust and international recognition.

He claimed that the police are no longer regarded as a viable part of Liberia's [justice system] and it has been reduced to a paramilitary structure of the ruling Coalition for Democratic Change (CDC).

"Since the inception of the government, the police have never been accurate in any given situation because of poor leadership," Gonquoi claimed.

OPINION

BY Amb. Nat Barnes

My Fellow Compatriots;



It is appalling to have listened to a top Minister in Government justifying corruption. Minister Nathaniel McGill's inference that acquiring and subsequently converting ill-gotten gains for his personal benefit is appropriate as long as he's investing in Liberia is, not only sickening to hear, but a disservice to our people who are largely disenfranchised by the distribution of wealth in Liberia.

This brings to mind a tweet from the former Chair of Transparency International, José Ugaz, "Corruption creates and increases poverty and exclusion. While corrupt individuals with political power enjoy a lavish life, millions of Africans are deprived of their basic needs like food, health, education, housing, access to clean water and sanitation."

Corruption is corruption regardless of where and how the stolen gains are converted. Of course, what Minister McGill said can only apply in a society plagued with mediocrity such as ours. This comes as a result of incessant deprivation which has constrained our good people to accept this way of life. We must change this; and, we alone have the power to do so.

It is sad to see Minister McGill, who lives in opulence and enjoys a lavish lifestyle, manipulating the ordinary people who battle abject poverty daily. And because our people are deprived, they do not realize how much power they possess to make demands from their Government. Rather, they view the pittance they receive from Government as undeserved gifts. This must end.

Minister McGill failed to conceptualize that the optics of his comments were damning for the following reasons:

1. They encourage rampant corruption in Government; should culprits be arrested and charged, they may demand vindication on grounds that the stolen wealth is used on Liberians in Liberia;

2. They expose other public officials prompting people to conclude that other government officials are behaving in a similar manner especially because the admission of theft comes from the mouth of an authority who directs the affairs of the Highest Office in our land - the office expected to abide by and operate by the highest ethical standards;

3. Minister McGill, in essence, is saying that it is appropriate to convert public resources to personal gains if used in Liberia. This fallacy denies ordinary Liberians the resources for essential services such as education, infrastructure, schools and hospitals;

4. This scares away possible foreign investment opportunities as international investors would view corruption as acceptable in Government which is certainly true.

Liberians, let's stand in unity and demand the protection of our rights and decry corruption regardless of who commits it. We condemn behaviors such as those emanating from the Minister of State for Presidential Affairs and demand that he desists from such deplorable, corrupt behavior.

GOD BLESS LIBERIA!

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Early childhood education a 'national emergency'

-Two educators claim

By Lincoln G. Peters

Two Liberian educators over the weekend described the education sector of the country, particularly the early childhood component, as a national emergency. In

enable young Liberians to compete with their peers in the sub-region.

At the sixth graduation ceremonies of the Standard Kids Preparatory School System, they lamented the poor state of early childhood education programs in the country.

needs to be given to the grass root education sector of the country.

He argued that it's a national educational disaster to have a faulty educational foundation which has the potential to cause low reasoning and thought processing. "We are limited by what we know because nobody can climb beyond the knowledge and information we have [at] our disposal. Therefore, we can't achieve anything beyond that," said Dr. Cummings.

Secondly, he said, people are limited by the strength of their character because their character can not be hidden.

Lastly, he noted, people are limited by the principle, standard, and value which build their lives.

Meanwhile, he urged parents and the national government to design a policy and program that will enable grass root children to be on par with other neighboring countries.

Also speaking, Rev. Andrew S. Fayiah, Principal of the Standard Kids Preparatory School System (SKIPS), described the poor status and emergency situation of the country's education sector, particularly the early childhood area.

He said this has motivated and compelled him to organize SKIPS to offer quality free education for the children.

He noted that after many years of remarkable achievements, the education sector of Liberia still faces many challenges in its struggle for a better education system for children.

He thanked parents, and the hardworking staff of SKIPS for giving their time to the development of education of

children in the country. The Standard Kids Preparatory School System over the weekend held its sixth graduation program.

It was graced with excitement and joy as kindergarten students displayed brilliant skills, and delivered speeches.

SKIPS is an early childhood learning center based in Logan Town, Vicky Spots. It is primarily focused on strengthening the capacity of the younger generation. --*Edited by Winston W. Parley*



separate statements, Apostle Dr. Lincoln E. R. Cummings and Rev. Andrew S. Fayiah suggested that early childhood education requires a holistic and comprehensive redirection of national program and policy.

They believe this will

The two educators said this is posing a serious threat to the education foundation of young children.

Apostle Dr. Lincoln E. R. Cummings, Senior Pastor of the Victory Christian Church and educator, suggested that a special attention

Weah declares August 10 Civil Registration and Vital Statistics Day

President George Manneh Weah has, by Proclamation, declared Wednesday, August 10, 2022, as "Civil Registration and Vital Statistics Day" and is to be observed throughout the Republic as a Working Holiday.

The Proclamation calls on government ministries and agencies, labor unions, civil society organizations as well as students, youths and women groups to join the Cooperative Development Agency to initiate and execute appropriate programs befitting the observance of the Day.

According to a Foreign Ministry release, the 5th Civil Registration and Vital Statistics Day will be commemorated in 2022 under the theme; "Harnessing coordination, country leadership and ownership to strengthen integrated civil registration and vital statistics systems: a vehicle for Counting Everyone,"

The first conference of African Ministries responsible for Civil Registration held in 2010, in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia marked the beginning of a coordinated and an integrated effort towards CRVS improvement in Africa, the release stressed further.

The Proclamation also disclosed that African Union Executive Council, during its 32nd Ordinary Session in January 2018, endorsed the recommendations set out in the Ministerial Declaration.

According to the Proclamations, the fourth Conference of African Ministers declared August 10 each year to be African Civil Registration and Vital Statistics Day and advised African Union member States to observe the day, the proclamation abated further.

The Proclamation recalled that he theme highlights the need for a sustained political commitment at the country level, with African Governments taking leadership and ownership in strengthening their respective civil registration and vital statistics



systems.

The release also stated that the COVID-19 pandemic brought into sharp focus the importance of having timely and reliable vital events data, and the critical role that civil registration and vital statistics systems play in ensuring that everyone is counted for inclusive access to vaccination, health care, social protection and other government services.

The release stated that it is imperative that African Governments invest substantial public resources in the transformation of their systems to make them more technically and financially accessible to the population and in doing so, minimize the perceived scandal of invisibility on the continent; adding African countries must build systems that are dynamic, interoperable, resilient, proactive and agile.

The civil registration and vital statistics systems confer legal identity to individuals and inform good governance, protecting human rights and creating inclusive societies; and,

Civil registration increases the credibility of national and local governments, enhancing their capacity to deliver social services by helping to identify which services are needed, where and by whom; and,

The proclamation noted that millions of people around the globe, however, live without the rights, protections and benefits afforded by having a legal identity and die without having had any proof of existence. Well-coordinated civil registration and vital statistics systems benefit every individual while simultaneously informing public policy, the Proclamation recounted further.

FIU applauds Pres. Weah for signing FIA Act

The Financial Intelligence Unit (FIU) has expressed gratitude to President George Manneh Weah for signing into law the Financial Intelligence Agency Act (FIA).

The FIU describes it a great move to prevent and combat money laundering, financing of terrorism and proliferation of weapons of mass destruction in and outside Liberia.

"We like to commend and extol President Weah for finally signing and passing into law the Financial Intelligence Agency (FIA) Act and other anti-graft bills into law," a press release said.

"We believe and see this monumental step by the President of Liberia, [as] a clear indication of a strong political will and effort to prevent and combat money laundering, financing of terrorism and proliferation of weapons of mass destruction in and outside Liberia" FIU L noted. According to the FIU, the legislative exercise displayed by the 54th Liberian Legislature to

professionally analyze, debate and timely pass those anti-graft bills is a great move.

The FIU disclosed that the passage of key anti-graft bills such as, the Financial Intelligence Agency Act, the Anti-Money Laundering, Terrorist Financing, Preventive Measures, and Proceeds of Crimes Act, Witness Protection Act of 2021 and as well, the Whistleblower Act of 2021, are all laudable initiatives.

Meanwhile, the FIU also

appreciates the administrative role played by its former Director General, Edwin W. Harris who is now the Head of the Intergovernmental Action Group Against Money Laundering in West Africa (GIABA).

FIU cited his leadership effort applied regarding the passage of the Financial Intelligence Agency Act and other anti-money laundering bills, which are few of his achievements while working at FIU. --*Press release*



MORE HEADLINE NEWS

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Liberia makes improvement in Fiscal Transparency Index Score

A robust plan initiated by the government to ensure effectiveness in fiscal transparency, has brought some achievement following strides made over the years. The Government of Liberia is

percent in 2021. Liberia subscribed to the principles of open governance and became member of the International Open Government Partnership (OGP) in 2012, International Budget

IBP, the country has participated in seven (7) rounds of Open Budget Surveys (OBS), which is periodically conducted every two years by the International Budget Partnership (IBP), a subsidiary of the World Bank Group.

Liberia's current OBI stands at 45% as of 2021 OBS Report, while under the Open Government Partnership (OGP) Agreement, the country is required to produce annually and make publicly available, in a timely manner.

Also, about 10,000 copies of the Citizen's Guide to the National Budget (summary of the national budget) will be produced, while government is expected to hold 15 town halls, conduct 15 live-radio phone-in talk-shows aimed at discussing the national budget and related budget documentations, as well as respond to questions from the public on its fiscal reports, including the national budget.

As per the OGP, there will be a publication in at least five (5) widely read local dailies and on government websites of its fiscal reports and key information regarding the preparation, adoption/approval, execution, and reporting of national budget, including making available to the public free of cost, in an interactive, user-friendly and machine-

readable format eight (8) types of budget documents in a timely manner as set by law.

Additionally, in an effort to improve and increase fiscal transparency, the Government has devised a plan to improve its index score of the three dimensions. Beginning with the preparation of the FY2023 National Budget, a Fiscal Transparency Advisory Group will be inaugurated, consisting of both Government and Civil

Society Organizations and implementation of town hall consultations to solicit citizens' inputs for determining budget priorities for the FY2023 National Budget. In addition, the Government will complete, commission and launch the go-live of several digital platforms, including the Citizen's Budget Portal, Citizen's Feedback Mechanism, etc. which will provide opportunities and more access to its fiscal data.



committed to fiscal transparency, making available all of its financial reports and documentations in the public domains - public discourses, print and electronic media outlets.

With regard to the international budget partnership transparency index, Liberia has improved in the index scoresheet in budget transparency from 38 percent in 2019 to 45

Partnership (IBP) and most recently in 2019 applied for full stewardship to the Global Initiative for Fiscal Transparency (GIFT) of which is expected that in August of this year (2022), Liberia will be officially admitted into the GIFT Stewardship Network in Bogota, Islamic Republic of Colombia

It can be recalled that since its ascendancy to the

Starts from back page

Diaspora mobilizes

galvanized Liberians in the Diaspora to eagerly support his re-election bid, and to ensure that he wins in the first round of the 2023 Presidential elections.

Accordingly, DUWORE 2023 will adopt an effective media infrastructure to disseminate the President accomplishments, defend and repel baseless and unwarranted attacks against the President, including deceitful and dubious opposition campaign tactics against his reelection.

After series of consultations, members of the

Diaspora United for Weah One Round Election overwhelming elected Mr. Wilmot Kunney of the state of Pennsylvania as its global Chairman, and Mr. Jerome Gayman of the state of Florida has its Co-Chairman.

The Chairman Mr. Kunney is a prominent Liberian in the Diaspora. He is a former President of the Union of Liberia Associations in the Americas (ULAA), and currently the Chief Political Analyst on the popular social media TV and Radio platform Focus on Liberia, where he first predicted President Weah ONE ROUND ELECTION THEORY in 2019.

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Voker Mission Cemetery

When this paper tried contacting PCC authorities, they neither confirm nor deny the over crowdedness of the

cemetery, as the communication officer's phone rang tirelessly. *Editing by Jonathan Browne*

Dr. McIntosh, a valuable asset

-ANC Chairman

The National Chairman of the Alternative National Congress (ANC), Mr. Daniel Naatehn has described Dr. Toga Gaywea McIntosh as a valuable asset that will certainly propel the ANC to capture the presidency in the 2023 general elections.

At a special welcome

ceremony for Dr. McIntosh at the ANC headquarters in Sinkor, to receive his statement of endorsement of Mr. Cummings, the National Chairman lauded Dr. McIntosh for his unwavering support.

Dr. McIntosh, former national chairman of the Coalition for Democratic Change 2017 Presidential and Legislative Campaign

that brought Mr. Weah to power, switched allegiance to the ANC Political Leader, Mr Alexander B. Cummings, on August 3, 2022.

He said after a careful assessment and evaluation of all major contenders in the 2023 race, including President Weah, he selected Mr. Cummings based on his capabilities, hard work, honesty, and sense of political

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direction as to how the ANC intend to lead Liberia.

Presenting his endorsement statement, Dr. McIntosh said Liberia is in a deep "hole and in coma," under the leadership of President George Weah, and that only Cummings amongst all the candidate, is capable of rescuing Liberia.

He expressed his readiness and willingness to ascediously work with the party and ensure Mr. Cummings' election as President in 2023.

Dr. McIntosh has been in the limelight of Liberian politics in the last 32 years and have held several key national and international positions

including Minister of Foreign Affairs, and Liberia's Special Representative to ECOWAS and other United Nations positions.

ANC Chairman Naatehn thanked Dr. McIntosh on behalf of the Party for the confidence so expressed and reposed in Mr. Cummings as the best alternative for President in 2023.

He assured Dr. McIntosh that the ANC will fully utilize his expertise, and experience and will rely on his good judgement in leading the party to victory in 2023.

ANC Political Leader, Mr. Cummings is currently out of the country on an official visit, due back shortly.

Français

Mme Taylor met l'accent sur la transparence et la responsabilité dans la gouvernance africaine

S'exprimant à la conférence annuelle de l'Association du barreau africain au Malawi, la vice-présidente Jewel Howard-Taylor a fait observer que la question de la transparence et de la gouvernance responsable en Afrique concerne davantage le manque total de respect et le mépris du contrat social.

Selon la vice-présidente Howard-Taylor, les gouvernements, les organisations et les institutions ignorent et se débarrassent avec désinvolture des contrats sociaux qui les ont propulsés au pouvoir ou pour lesquels ils existent, une fois leur objectif atteint.

« Par conséquent, que chacun de nous garde à l'esprit que les questions de transparence et de gouvernance responsable en Afrique ne se limitent pas à des chevilles rondes dans des trous carrés, ou à des occasions manquées, ou au manque de volonté politique, à la mauvaise gestion, au mépris flagrant des systèmes de gouvernance, ou à la

corruption et l'impunité au grand jour. Mais plus encore sur le manque de respect total et le mépris du contrat social qui propulse les gouvernements, les organisations et les institutions dans l'existence, qui est ignoré et jeté avec désinvolture une fois l'objectif atteint », a déclaré la vice-présidente.

Mme Howard-Taylor, qui a reçu une médaille de mérite en leadership de l'Association du Barreau, a en outre affirmé qu'en raison du non-respect des règles et règlements, de

l'agrandissement personnel, de la cupidité, du pouvoir, du manque de patriotisme et d'autres vices, beaucoup n'ont plus de confiance et de respect, ce qui donne lieu à une rupture totale des systèmes de Gouvernance.

Dans son discours d'ouverture prononcé le lundi 8 août 2022, lors de la conférence de l'AFBA qui se tient actuellement au Malawi, la vice-présidente libérienne

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Refus de la grâce présidentielle de Ouattara: Gbagbo prend des risques

Dans son discours de veille de la célébration du 62^e anniversaire de l'indépendance de la Côte d'Ivoire, le président de la République, Alassane Ouattara, a annoncé une grâce présidentielle en faveur de son prédécesseur Laurent Gbagbo condamné à 20 ans de prison et 329 milliards FCFA d'amende, dans l'affaire du « braquage » de l'Agence nationale de la

Banque centrale des États de l'Afrique de l'Ouest (BCEAO) pendant la crise post-électorale ivoirienne. Mais cette grâce ne semble pas du goût de l'ancien chef de l'État et de ses partisans qui la rejettent. Ci-dessous, le décryptage de Apollos Dan Thé, Cadre du FPI (ancien de la FESCI-AHIPEAUD). Apollos Dan Thé, Cadre du FPI: « Donc Gbagbo avait toujours l'intention d'être candidat encore en 2025? » Gbagbo et le PPA-CI rejettent la grâce présidentielle de Ouattara

parce qu'elle n'annule pas la condamnation, elle ne lave pas le casier judiciaire de Gbagbo, et donc il ne pourra pas se présenter en 2025. Pour cette raison, Gbagbo et le PPA-CI sont fâchés. Donc il avait toujours l'intention d'être candidat encore en 2025? Non mais à un moment il faut arrêter. Le président Gbagbo n'a plus la force d'être président de la République, il mérite plutôt un repos tranquille. Je sais déjà ce que certains vont dire, ça doit être sa volonté, donc qu'on le laisse décider. Mais il n'y a pas que la volonté de chacun qui nous guide, il y a aussi la loi. La volonté de chacun d'entre nous est canalisée par la loi. On ne fait pas ce qu'on a envie de faire sans tenir compte de la loi. Dans le cas d'espèce, la loi supplante sa volonté d'être candidat car la loi n'autorise pas ceux qui ont une condamnation à se présenter à l'élection présidentielle. Il veut que le président de la République prenne une ordonnance pour lui accorder une amnistie pour effacer sa condamnation? Ok, mais le

▶ CONT'D ON PAGE 9



Éditorial

Quand les agissements de la police laissent à désirer

LES RÉCENTS AGISSEMENTS de la Police nationale du Libéria (LNP) semblent friser la contradiction, au point de perdre progressivement la confiance du public, vu son manque de volonté politique dans la lutte contre les crimes et concernant la protection des personnes et des biens.

LA POLICE, SOUS la direction du directeur Patrick Sudue, a suspendu plusieurs officiers supérieurs pour complaisance ou pour la manière dont ils ont géré la manifestation du 26 juillet, jour de l'indépendance, au cours de laquelle plusieurs étudiants de l'Université du Libéria ont été blessés.

LES AUTORITÉS DE la LNP ont agi une semaine après les violences sanglantes et six jours après que le président George Manneh Weah s'est officiellement adressé à la nation dans un discours préenregistré diffusé sur la radio d'État et après que la communauté internationale (Grande-Bretagne, États-Unis, Nations Unies et Union européenne) a publié le lendemain une déclaration commune appelant à une enquête approfondie sur l'incident.

LA POLICE A PROCÉDÉ à quelques arrestations. Il s'agirait des leaders du Conseil des patriotes du CDC, un groupe proche du parti au pouvoir qui a brutalement attaqué des étudiants protestataires le 26 juillet.

LA VIOLENCE SANGLANTE a été diffusée en direct, mais la police avait initialement déclaré qu'elle n'avait aucune information pour procéder à des arrestations. Elle a plutôt demandé au public, y compris aux blessés, de sortir et de déposer des plaintes officielles, faisant ainsi montre d'un manque de volonté politique d'appliquer la loi.

MAINTENANT, AVEC DES condamnations à l'échelle nationale et des pressions internationales, la police a suspendu plusieurs officiers dans le but de sauver sa face.

LORSQU'UNE INSTITUTION publique clé comme la police, qui est constitutionnellement chargée de la responsabilité de servir et de protéger, ignore ou abandonne délibérément son devoir pour quelque raison que ce soit, le public est livré à soi-même et l'anarchie prend le devant de la scène, comme cela a été le cas le 26 juillet.

LA FAMILLE DE PRINCESSE Cooper, 25 ans, qui a été découverte morte le 24 mars 2022 dans une cour derrière la FAWAZ Building Construction Company à ELWA Junction, Paynesville, dans une mare de sang, pleure toujours pour la justice avec une police qui laisse à désirer. Une police qui est plus partisane que professionnelle.

Français

Mme Taylor met l'accent sur la transparence et

a également souligné trois points critiques qu'elle considérait comme une "perception négative" qui doit être traitée par l'Association du Barreau. Il s'agit, selon une dépêche, de l'accès à la justice pour tous, de la liberté d'expression des membres du barreau, ainsi que des procédures disciplinaires et des sanctions infligées à des éléments voyous en son sein.

S'exprimant sur le thème « Instaurer un héritage durable de gouvernance transparente et responsable en Afrique : questions fondamentales et feuille de route », la vice-présidente libérienne, qui est elle-même avocate, a déclaré à la conférence que la société ne peut fonctionner correctement que si le peuple accepte, respecte, fait respecter, et protège les règles et règlements convenus pour les sociétés civilisées, avec la ferme conviction que les jugements définitifs qui en découlent devraient normalement être prévisibles, justes et acceptables.

Elle a donc recommandé que, pour éviter de peindre en noir les membres de la fraternité juridique, l'AFBA examine entre autres l'impact des tendances négatives sur la majorité que les professionnels ont juré d'aider, fournisse une opportunité pour le nettoyage interne en procédant à une purge, à la correction et à la punition des

membres capricieux de la fraternité, ce, pour regagner la confiance du public et créer une nouvelle plate-forme qui restaure la confiance du public, relève la barre de la volonté politique pour ensuite faire face à la fois à l'environnement interne et externe.

Par ailleurs, Madame la Vice-présidente a loué le leadership de l'Association du Barreau Africain sous la direction extraordinaire du Camarade Avocat Hannibal Uwaifo SAN pour avoir convoqué la Convention Annuelle 2022 à Lilongwe et lui avoir offert l'opportunité unique de faire partie de cette auguste occasion en tant que Femme Avocate et conférencière principale.

Cette opportunité est un privilège rare qu'elle ne prend pas à la légère. Elle a ainsi fait l'éloge de l'AFBA pour avoir cherché à transformer le paysage juridique de l'AFRIQUE en vue de la révolution industrielle verte africaine.

Avant son discours liminaire, la première femme vice-présidente libérienne a reçu la visite du président de l'Association du barreau africain, M. Hannibal Uwaifo, et du ministre malawite de la Justice, M. Titus Mvalo.

La conférence qui se déroule du 7 au 11 août a également été prononcée ouverte par le président du Malawi Dr Lazarus Chakwera, invité d'honneur spécial de la conférence.

Refus de la grâce présidentielle de

président de la République n'y est pas obligé. Respectons la loi. Par ailleurs, c'est parce que la grâce présidentielle a été prise pour effacer la peine que son argent a aussi été débloqué, donc refus de la grâce présidentielle équivaut au refus de l'argent. Puisque selon la peine de condamnation, en plus des 20 ans de prison, il devait payer une amende de plusieurs milliards de francs CFA.

"Gbagbo doit encore plusieurs milliards à l'État"

Étant donné qu'il devait payer cette amende qui était plus que l'argent que l'État lui devait (ses arriérés), l'État a alors bloqué ce qu'il devait au président Gbagbo et Gbagbo devait encore à l'État. C'est ce qui expliquait que son argent n'ait pas été payé jusqu'à présent. Je crois que ses arriérés montent à environ un milliard et demi alors que l'amende qu'il devait payer était de plusieurs milliards.

Donc si on enlève un milliard et demi dans plusieurs milliards, Gbagbo doit encore plusieurs milliards à l'État. La grâce présidentielle annule les 20 ans de prison et l'amende. C'est ce qui fait que l'État s'est engagé à donner les 1 milliard et demi de Gbagbo. Mais maintenant qu'il refuse la grâce présidentielle, on revient à la case de départ, les 20 ans et l'amende de plusieurs milliards sont toujours en vigueur et donc comme Gbagbo doit plus à l'État que l'État ne doit à Gbagbo, l'État bloque l'argent de Gbagbo et Gbagbo doit encore à l'État. Calcul simple. Tu me dois 100 mille et moi je te dois 20 mille. Tes 50 mille passent dans ma main, je fais quoi? Je pensais que son refus de la grâce présidentielle serait par rapport aux militaires toujours en prison, mais non, c'est par rapport à son intention d'être candidat en 2025. Bon, ils vont régler ça entre aîné, cadet et benjamin. Ils tiennent toujours notre pays en otage. Hélas.

COMMENTAIRE

par Eddie Ndopu

"Je dénoncerai inlassablement les violations des droits fondamentaux"

NEW-YORK - Quand l'ONU a été créée à l'issue de la Deuxième Guerre mondiale, il aurait été inimaginable d'envisager que quelqu'un comme moi - jeune, Noir, homosexuel et en fauteuil roulant - puisse occuper un poste important au sein de l'organisation. Or je serai parmi les candidats envisagés par l'ONU pour succéder à Michelle Bachelet le mois prochain, quand elle quittera son poste de Haut Commissaire des Nations Unies aux droits de l'homme. C'est un symbole remarquable du chemin parcouru par l'humanité depuis 1945.

Si je suis choisi, je serai le fonctionnaire de plus haut rang en situation de handicap depuis la création de l'ONU. Ce serait une victoire historique pour les 1,3 milliards de personnes handicapées qui d'après l'ONU constituent le plus grand groupe minoritaire.

Signée en 2007, la Convention relative aux droits des personnes handicapées est un instrument important en faveur de l'inclusion. Néanmoins, il est encore très rare de voir une personne en fauteuil roulant occuper une position de pouvoir. Dans bien des endroits du monde, le rejet d'un gamin noir handicapé constitue la quintessence de l'exclusion.

J'aurais pu facilement être ce gamin. Cependant, mon expérience de militant des droits de l'homme a commencé à l'âge de six ans, lorsque le visage baigné de larmes, j'ai dit à ma mère : "Je veux aller à l'école."

En Namibie où j'ai passé les neuf premières années de ma vie, la vie d'un enfant en fauteuil roulant est souvent extrêmement limitée - comme dans une grande partie du monde en développement. Selon les Nations unies, 90 à 98 % des enfants handicapés des pays du Sud n'ont pas la moindre possibilité d'aller à l'école.

A l'époque, je me battais avec toute mon énergie pour simplement rester en vie. À l'âge de deux ans, on m'a diagnostiqué une atrophie musculaire spinale, une maladie dégénérative mortelle qui attaque le système nerveux. Les médecins ont dit à ma mère que je ne vivrais probablement pas jusqu'à mon cinquième anniversaire... j'ai 31 ans.

Ma mère qui essayait les larmes de mes yeux était déterminée. Elle a trouvé une école qui a accepté de me prendre. Le premier jour, on m'a placé tout au fond de la classe. Il était clair qu'on n'attendait pas grand-chose de moi. J'ai stupéfié l'enseignante en écrivant mon nom, ce que la plupart des autres enfants ne savaient pas faire. Un grand sourire a éclairé son visage. Elle a vu que je pouvais apprendre comme les autres, peut-être même plus vite.

Cette expérience m'a appris à viser haut, quels que soient les obstacles. Ma candidature à la succession de Michelle Bachelet vise à repousser les limites du possible, non seulement pour les personnes handicapées, mais aussi pour tous ceux qui se sont un jour sentis dévalorisés, sous-estimés ou marginalisés.

Si je suis sélectionné, je serai le plus jeune dirigeant au niveau de la direction de l'ONU, une organisation qui souligne régulièrement l'importance qu'il y a à impliquer les jeunes, car ils sont les premiers concernés par l'avenir. Pourtant, nous sommes largement sous-représentés dans

l'institution. Le choix d'un jeune dirigeant à ce poste donnerait un nouvel élan et une nouvelle autorité au travail du Haut Commissaire des Nations unies.

Le respect des droits de l'homme pour tous semble une quête irréaliste - surtout aujourd'hui où tout semble impossible. Mais comme l'a dit Nelson Mandela, "Cela semble toujours impossible jusqu'à ce que cela soit fait".

Je me suis rappelé ces mots il y a quelque temps, lorsque travaillant à Amnesty International, on m'a confié la mission impossible de réunir deux groupes connus pour leur méfiance mutuelle : les chefs d'entreprise et les défenseurs des droits de l'homme. Je les ai persuadés de s'écouter les uns les autres dans le cadre d'une campagne visant à empêcher les industries extractives de fermer les yeux sur les violations des droits de l'homme en Afrique.

À une époque où le monde est de plus en plus fracturé et où l'on a l'impression que nous avons tout simplement cessé de nous écouter les uns les autres, le Haut-commissariat des Nations unies aux droits de l'homme est particulièrement qualifié pour relever les défis les plus pressants d'aujourd'hui. Pour la première fois depuis 2001, la majorité de la population de la planète vit sous des régimes non démocratiques qui ne respectent pas les droits fondamentaux. Nous sommes confrontés à un nationalisme exacerbé, à une crise économique émergente et à une pandémie mondiale - une crise sanitaire à laquelle trop de gouvernements ont répondu en revendiquant des pouvoirs exceptionnels et en restreignant certains droits fondamentaux. Par ailleurs, les conflits qui se déroulent en Ukraine, au Sahel, en Birmanie et dans bien d'autres endroits s'accompagnent de violations de ces droits.

Dans une période comme celle-ci, le Haut Commissaire aux droits de l'homme joue un rôle crucial en servant de phare pour leur défense et en soutenant ceux qui ont le courage d'élever la voix lorsqu'ils constatent leur violation. Comme l'a déclaré le Secrétaire général de l'ONU, Antonio Guterres, les droits de l'homme sous-tendent "l'ensemble du système des Nations Unies. ... Ils sont essentiels pour s'attaquer aux causes et aux conséquences de toutes les crises complexes, et pour construire des sociétés durables, sûres et pacifiques".

Si le Secrétaire général me choisit pour ce rôle, mon travail consistera à identifier et à dénoncer inlassablement les violations des droits, quels que soient les intérêts puissants qui s'y opposent, et à m'engager avec les défenseurs de la société civile pour rendre le travail de l'ONU plus participatif et plus pertinent pour susciter le changement.

Je suis sans doute un candidat atypique pour ce poste, un choix impossible diraient certains. Mais je crois que tout spécialement à notre époque, une nouvelle manière de penser, une nouvelle énergie et la capacité de voir comment surmonter des barrières apparemment impossibles à franchir, c'est exactement ce dont le monde a besoin.

Traduit de l'anglais par Patrice Horovitz

Eddie Ndopu est militant des droits de l'homme et défenseur des objectifs de développement durable de l'ONU.

SPECIAL

FEATURE

Addressing the Flooding in Liberia

By S.Karweye

Flooding is one of the most prevalent and devastating disasters in Liberia. It happens every year in many parts of Liberia. And it has significant social and economic impacts. It threatens sustainability because it negatively affects the economy, health, social life, and environment. The extent and nature of Liberia's flooding are such that the

in rural Liberia, the country is experiencing unregulated urban expansion. The country is experiencing high urbanization rates without commensurate provision of urban infrastructure and amenities. Swamplands are increasingly being converted to residential areas to accommodate housing needs. It seems that Liberia has no planning law. One consequence of this is that there have been construction projects on natural floodplains and storm water paths. This has exacerbated flooding.

Corruption is also a factor. It is not uncommon for city planning officials to accept bribes and overlook issues. These may include unauthorized use of land and alteration of approved construction plans. While some citizens

also capitalize on the loophole of ineffective development control and extend their buildings over the approved areas. Sometimes they go as far as building over drains.

Liberia's President Weah's response to flooding is typical of Liberian politicians. He used the flooding national disaster to score photo ops every time these floodings occurred in Liberia. Like most Liberian politicians, President Weah gets out of his luxury car and promises to build new homes for flood victims. But what is missing is appropriate action to mitigate the flooding. The Liberia National Disaster Risk Management policy provided by the National

Disaster Management Agency of Liberia (NDMA) does not put more emphasis on flooding management. The lack of flood management policy is an indication of the low importance given to controlling and managing floods in Liberia.

What needs to be done?

Historically, politicians have been more focused on post-disaster flood response for photo ops than control. Reducing and addressing exposure to flooding risk is now a national priority in the Liberian government's disaster risk agenda. However, nothing concrete has been achieved. Also, the NDMA, an agency responsible for all disaster management in Liberia is less funded. In the 2022 budget, while the Presidency was given US\$20 million and the Legislature US\$64.3 million, the NDMA was allocated USD \$846,386. This raises questions about the political will to achieve the goals of tackling floods in the country

Questions: Does the government of Liberia have research institutions and agencies with the skills to design a flood risk management strategy? Does the National Disaster Management Agency of Liberia have a department of planning utilizing geographical information systems to work on flood data? In Liberia, there are no effective national early warning systems in place for floods at the national and local levels.

Crafting flood risk management policy and integrating spatial planning is the way to go. Sustainable urban planning and green infrastructure could also be combined with information and communication technology tools. Citizens can use these to communicate with the relevant authorities at the onset of flooding. Addressing Liberia's perennial flooding is important for the country to make progress. The human-induced causes of flooding should be addressed urgently. Not doing this will delay its journey to sustainable development.



actual figures for displacements, losses, and fatalities cannot be truly ascertained due to poor record and reporting, however, according to the United Nations Office for Partnership (UNOP), around 2.2 million people are exposed to floods, 320,000 to coastal erosion and 2.1 million to windstorms in Liberia.

Causes of Flooding in Liberia

According to a 2021 study from the UN University, the academic and research arm of the UN, human activity is the common link between natural disasters around the world. Unlike some natural disasters, rainfall flooding can be controlled with proper planning and the provision of necessary infrastructure. Liberia's flooding is mainly human-induced with poor urban planning practices and inadequate environmental infrastructure as contributing factors. Poor or non-existent drainage systems are a major cause of flooding in Liberia.

Many residential areas have no drainage system and rely on natural drainage channels. Increasing urbanization also means more areas are built with concrete and cannot absorb water, increasing runoff. The country's poor waste management is another recognized factor. Citizens' poor attitude toward waste disposal and non-provision of waste disposal services by city authorities contribute to flooding. It is not uncommon to have drains blocked by huge piles of trash in Monrovia and its environs.

Due to high unemployment



McGill: I was speaking in context

Liberia's State and Presidential Affairs Minister Nathaniel McGill has been reacting to statement linking him to his justification of corruption saying, "he was speaking in context."

"Unfortunately, instead of listening, understanding and interpreting the context in which I spoke, they in their usual manner started running with the story that I

emphatically stressed that he was taken out of context.

The former CDC chairman told journalist it is totally untrue that he intentionally endorsed corruption in government when he made the remarks which was meant to convey a message that the CDC was willing at any time to stand with the people by identifying with the communities.

Mr. McGill rallying citizens



was justifying corruption when I spoke to the women in Gbarnga who were very appreciative for what this government is doing for the people", Minister McGill said.

He said he detest corruption and has never supported it and will never ever support it, and

in Bong County to support incumbent President George Weah's second term bid in 2023 drew an analogy to debunk alleged corruption accusations against him.

He told Bong Citizens that he could not understand the repeated allegations of corruptions being levelled against about him stealing

money.

He noted that assuming he was stealing from the state's coffers to give it to the Liberian people or build himself houses those houses will remain for the Liberian people and be counted as development and that money would be used to improve the lives of the same people.

Mr. McGill: "Whole day they are stealing money. But even if I am stealing the money and give it to the Liberian people that good thing I am doing because at least I didn't steal that money and take it in Europe.

Some people in this country here all the people in Ellen Johnson's government, they can't say they didn't make money. But when we take our own small money and take it to our people to go build house then they vex.

When I come Bong County here and build a house here, they vex. So, when I take the money and carry to Ghana it correct? But when it is in Bong County that me it for? I will carry it?

Ehn I will leave it here? The day God take me I will carry it? Ehn when our grand children them come here they will say oh Bong County get good and fine houses? These are the things we want to do. I just want to thank you for doing what you are doing. What this young man is doing, he is doing his part. One day he will not be representative..."

Voker Mission Cemetery in deplorable condition



By: Emmanuel wise Jipoh

If the dead could talk or make demands, they would have by now besieged Offices of Paynesville City Mayor, E. Pam Belcher Taylor, in protest over deplorable state of their eternal resting places.

However, they are helpless and those whose duties it is to ensure these cemeteries are in good condition appear indifferent. The abandonment is glaring at the JCN Howard Cemetery in Voker Mission in Paynesville City and elsewhere.

Apart from being overgrown by weeds, with several broken tombs, they are also homes for rodents and criminals. Visiting the cemetery on Monday, August 8, 2022, a worker at the cemetery, William Flomo told The New DAWN that some of the graves were in such a deplorable state, and there's need to relocate.

Mr. Flomo: "There are permanent and temporary graves. When a family pays for a temporary grave, it means there won't be any mark to identify the person; nothing

will be built on it, but when one pays for a permanent grave, it means the person will always come back to pay homage or pray on the grave."

The head of the graveyard, Seh Kamara explains that the premises have becoming deplorable because of limited space and they cannot reject the dead, as families keep coming and crying for spot to bury their loved ones.

"Some families will come crying to us that they don't have money and we can't ask them to return their dead. So, we ask them to pay the grave diggers to bury their deads and they can't come back because they won't be able to identify where they buried the deceased when they return. People buy space permanently as a means to identify a buried family member." Kamara adds.

He says to obtain a graveyard or tomb, depends on the age of the deceased, which also cost between \$10,000 Liberian dollars and above, but sometimes it is below that due to appeal from family members.

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Lawmakers return to Capitol Monday

By Bridgett Milton & Ethel A. Tweh

Lawmakers currently on annual constituency break are expected to cut their break short to return to the Capitol this Monday, 15 August in response to call from President George Manneh Weah.

In a communication to the 54th Legislature, President Weah said his reason for recalling legislators from constituency break is because of pressing national issues they must handle in the next thirty (30) days.

President Weah in a communication addressed to Speaker Bhofal Chambers said he wants the Legislature to convene from August 15 to September 13, 2022. Among others, the President wants the body to preside over appointment of a new Chief Justice of Liberia, as His Honour Chief Justice Francis Korkpor retires in September; setting of a new Census date, passage of the amendment of new elections law and passage of any significant instrument that lawmakers will be discussing

during their return.

President Weah stressed in his communication that these issues are so critical and as such; they cannot await the Legislature to resume in October. Already, staffers of the Liberian Senate have begun to clean the Senate Wing of the Capitol. The chairman of the senate staffers association, Charles Brown, said that female staffers will come along with tide soaps and other materials to wash the

building and clean the bathrooms, while male staffers will bring cutlasses to give the Senate Wing a facelift.

Mr Brown noted that the call came from the President, which means that they expect an addition in their salaries, as this is a special session. He recalled that in previous special sessions, senators always told them that they call themselves back to work, not the president, adding that this time around, they have the letter from President Weah in



their possession, which clearly states that legislators are called back to work.

Brown continued that when senators are called back to work, that means their staffers will have to go back to work, saying that they expect to be paid just as senators would be.

Article 32(b) of the Constitution of Liberia states that the President shall, on his own initiative or upon receipt of a certificate signed by at least one-fourth of the total membership of each House, and by proclamation, extend a regular session of the Legislature beyond the date for adjournment or call a special or an extraordinary session of that body to discuss or act upon matters of national emergency and concern. When the extension or call is at the request of the Legislature, the proclamation shall be issued not later than 48 hours after receipt of the certificate by

the President.

"We acknowledge your second adjournment which by law is expected to end on the second Friday of October of each year; however, there are time-bond critical National issues which must be resolved as a matter of urgency", the President's communication stated.

Members of the House of Representatives and the Liberian Senate adjourned recently for the second Quarter of the 5th Session to return in October.

The Second Quarter of the 5th ran from May 17 to July 22, 2022.

Speaking during the formal closing of the House of Representatives on Friday, July 22, 2022 Deputy Speaker, Cllr. Fonati Koffa said a total of twenty (20) regular sessions were held, including thirteen (13) Executive Sessions, two (2) Special Sessions, eleven (11) appearances of ministers and directors. **Editing by Jonathan Browne**

Diaspora mobilizes for Weah re-election



Wilmot Kunney

PHILADELPHIA: August 8, 2022: -Ahead of the 2023 General and Presidential elections here, Liberians residing in the United States, Europe, Canada, and other parts of the global Diaspora have are said to be forming a united front to support president Weah's second term bid.

The group under the canopy of DIASPORA UNITED FOR WEAH ONE ROUND ELECTION (DUWORE2023), said they will mobilize Liberians across party lines, including independent minded citizens to combine

their efforts in ensuring that President George Manneh Weah is re-elected in the first round of the 2023 elections.

In a statement signed by Wilmot Kunney, the organizing Chairman DUWORE2023, the group noted that to achieve its mission, DUWORE 2023 will mobilize financial resources from thousands of Liberians residing in the Diaspora, provide technical assistance, as well as design strategic and tactical political action plans for the President re-election in close collaboration with the

general campaign committee and the Mighty Coalition for Democratic Change (CDC).

DUWORE 2023 applauds President Weah for his tireless efforts in the reconstruction of Liberia especially in the areas of road construction to achieve road connectivity, and investment in human capital development thru the tuition free program for public universities and colleges.

Additionally, the signing into Law of iconic legislations such as the Kamara Abdullah Kamara (KAK) Act that repeals the anti-democratic libels laws, the dual citizenship bill that ensures that once and Liberian always a Liberia, and the revenue sharing law that facilitates and promotes the decentralization of governance among many others, are all phenomenal achievements of President Weah that has

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