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CENTRAL BANK OF LIBERIA		
MARKET BUYING AND SELLING RATES LIBERIAN DOLLARS PER US DOLLAR		
DATE	BUYING	SELLING
FRIDAY, JANUARY 13, 2023	LS153.8867/US\$1.00	LS155.7237US\$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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**P11**

# Weah's final address

**-for first term**

Pres. Weah

**P11**

# Opposition accuses army chief

**-Over huge guns discovery**

Gen. Johnson

**Lonestar Cell** | **MTN**

**Christmas Season na Come!!!**

Watch out for plenty good good things from **y'ello** Santa this year!

**Yello SANTA**





# Continental News

## Hunting out cash from under Nigeria's mattresses

In our series of letters from African journalists, Mannir Dan Ali, former editor-in-chief of Nigeria's Daily Trust newspaper, looks at the latest cash crisis to hit Africa's most-populous nation weeks before elections. Cash is king in Nigeria - electronic banking it still in its infancy. In



fact very few people keep their money in banks - and it is often joked that most put any savings they have under their mattresses.

According to the Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN), less than 20% of the local currency in circulation is held by the banks.

CBN Governor Godwin

Emefiele explained that of the 3.2 trillion naira (\$7bn; £5.8bn) in circulation, up to 2.7 trillion was outside the vaults of commercial banks.

This is one of the reasons why he made a shock announcement in October that three of the country's higher denominations were going to be replaced. The

old notes will no longer be legal tender.

Midway through this window, the new notes are like gold dust and it is very difficult to get hold of them. I have only handled 10 of the crisp new notes, which I managed to get hold of when I went to a bank in the capital, Abuja, last week.

I had tried to withdraw new notes from an ATM, but they are all still dispensing old notes.

The bank teller who handed over to me the 10 banknotes, worth just over \$20, said this was the maximum anyone could get.

He even asked me to fill out my details in a notebook by his counter - a way to ensure that only genuine bank customers are getting the new notes and not those diverting them to money changers who are charging a premium for the new cash.

Even the rich and powerful are facing problems getting hold of them.

On the day the new notes became legal tender, just before Christmas, I overheard a senior member of the ruling party complaining that though he personally went to his local bank, the manager there said he could only provide him with a small amount because the banks have only a very limited supply of the new notes. BBC

## Simultaneous Militant Attacks Kill 14 Malian Soldiers

Mali's army says 14 troops were killed and 11 wounded Tuesday in central Mali when their vehicles struck explosives planted by Islamist militants.

In a press release Wednesday, the army said there were two explosives that detonated simultaneously.

The attacks were in central Mali, a region that has seen increasing violence in recent years from Islamist militants.

The army statement says Mali's airborne special forces engaged what it called "terrorists," killing 31 of them, including 14 as they were burying their dead.

No group immediately claimed responsibility for Tuesday's attacks.

Mali has been battling an Islamist insurgency since 2012. It started in the north of the country before spreading.

The militants took control of northern Mali in 2012, until the French army intervened in 2013 to drive them out. French President Emmanuel Macron announced last year that

main design change appears to be the colour of the banknotes. The 1,000 naira note has changed from brown to blue; the 500 from purple to green and the 200 from brown and blue to pink. The problem for a country where things rarely go according to plan, is that the switch has to happen in a six-week window - and after the end of January the

that ousted former President Ibrahim Boubacar Keita.

Violence has continued to move south ever since, with ongoing attacks in central Mali and increasing attacks in southern Mali.

Militants on January 2 attacked a civil defense post about 80 kilometers from the capital, killing five people.

In July, militants killed six people in an attack on a checkpoint 70 kilometers from Bamako followed by another attack one week later on Mali's main military camp, just 15 kilometers from the capital. VOA



Malian army soldiers patrol an area next to the river of Djenne in central Mali

## Zambia's Former Ruling Party Rejects IMF Allegation of Corruption Under Lungu

Zambia's former ruling Patriotic Front party has rejected a report by the International Monetary Fund saying corruption flourished under its government. The IMF said this week the political elite under former president Edgar Lungu bent rules to access lucrative government contracts. Current President Hakainde Hichilema pledged to tackle corruption and secured \$1.3 billion in IMF debt support after Zambia defaulted to creditors.

An IMF mission conducted a study last year focusing on governance weaknesses and corruption vulnerabilities in Zambia at the request of local authorities. The assessment revealed serious weaknesses

Patriotic Front had put in place measures to ensure transparency and accountability in public procurement. He challenged the current government to take legal action against any of its former leaders found wanting.

"We ensured at the time that we were in office that all government contracts go through a rigorous public bidding process to ensure transparency and accountability and there are sufficient laws in Zambia to allow citizens to object, appeal or challenge any government contract process they deem is shrouded in corruption. The tender process is a public process and therefore those allegations are malicious," Nakachinda said.

Presidential spokesperson Anthony Bwalya told VOA that the IMF report is a confirmation of



Zambia's President Edgar Lungu addresses the 74th session of the United Nations General Assembly at U.N. headquarters in New York City

across all state functions, especially public financial management and the granting and managing of contracts of large infrastructure projects. It said the cost of high-profile projects were inflated by as much as 200 percent under Lungu, with the extra money going into the pockets of well-connected Lungu supporters. German, French Foreign Ministers in Ethiopia to Support Tigray Peace

Simultaneous Militant Attacks Kill 14 Malian Soldiers

MSF Welcomes Cameroon's Release of Staff Accused of Aiding Separatists

Several former government officials were arrested on corruption charges. However, the arrests ended in bail, with defendants denying the accusations. No convictions have been secured.

Patriotic Front spokesperson Raphael Nakachinda denied the IMF allegations of large-scale corruption under Lungu.

Nakachinda told VOA that while in government, the

what the government of Hichilema has always known — that corruption in Zambia had worsened under the Lungu administration.

"This is why the president has made it a fundamental priority to win the fight against corruption as part of the process towards rebuilding the economy," Bwalya said. "We have set up the financial crimes fast track courts to expedite the process of holding accountable perpetrators of grand scale corruption, we have also reformed the public financial management systems for better transparency as well as reforming the public procurement process."

For Boyd Muleya, an economist at the research organization the Centre for Policy, Trade and Development, the IMF report is an important step toward enhancing the fight against corruption in Zambia. "We are happy that there's a drum up towards ensuring that the rule of law is brought back, that transparency is enhanced, we are still yet to hear the progress on access to information in this country," Muleya said. VOA



# EDITORIAL

## Arms discovery at Freeport is scaring

THE DISCOVERY OF cache of high-caliber automatic military weapons stacked in a container and shipped to Liberia is worrisome and scary. Even of great concern is that a significant quantity of the arms had been offloaded and stored at a private residence in Brewerville outside Monrovia before the discovery was made at the Freeport, heightening suspicion about the quantity of weapons that might already be hidden at various locations across the country.

THAT THE HUGE cache of arms was packaged, destined for Liberia, and arrived at the Freeport and offloaded before the Joint Security of this country received intelligence, clearly indicates the extent of vulnerability of the state.

THE DISCOVERY COMES barely nine months to the general and presidential elections in October. This speaks volumes, especially since state security forces are already making arrests and identifying suspects. What could be the motive behind the importation of sophisticated military weapons to a country that had suffered 14 years of bloody civil war that left over 200,000 people killed, including women and children. Infrastructure worth millions of dollars were destroyed, thousands of others displaced and subjected to refugee life in other countries. Is someone contemplating on reverting this country to the dark days?

THE ARMS CACHE followed the shipment of a 40-ft. container of cocaine valued at US\$100 million last year that was said to have been in transit via the very Freeport of Monrovia. This container was cleared from the Freeport and taken to TRH warehouse in Topoe Village along the Japanese Freeway before Liberian Joint Security was informed by the United States Embassy near Monrovia.

WE DEMAND AN open investigation into the arms discovery at the Freeport. Instigators should get to the bottom of what has the potential to destabilize the peace of Liberia. They should remain professional and the entire exercise should be void of political manipulation.

WE ARE VIVIDLY reminded of the Samuel Doe era when opposition politicians were falsely implicated in a bid to get them out of the race. These are electioneering period and we hope this would not be the case in the ongoing investigation.

NEWS ABOUT MILITARY weapons being discovered at our major commercial port is not good for the economy. This information creates insecurity and drives away potential investors. It is not just about the suspects already identified and arrested, but the actual motive for the importation.

ALL THOSE BEHIND this for whatever intention should be reminded that besides pandemics, the world is conflict-wearied, particularly with the Russia-Ukraine war that is taken a huge toll not only on Europe and the West but Africa. There are military coups in neighboring Guinea, Mali and Burkina Faso, respectively. These arms takeovers are gradually destabilizing West Africa with serious instability in Nigeria.

MORE THAN A decade ago, the United Nations invested millions in Liberia with the largest peacekeeping mission of 15,000 troops that disarmed and demobilized rebel forces leading to holding of democratic elections and return to civilian administration. The least the international community would like to hear is that Liberia is slipping back to chaos. If we were to revert to this route again as the discovery of arms seems to indicate, let us rest assured that we will be on our own! No country would like to send her sons and daughters here again to die for our selfish greed and foolishness.

# COMMENTARY

By Janet L. Yellen

## Resilient Trade

WASHINGTON, DC - Economies across the world have been strained by the events of the last three years. The COVID-19 pandemic claimed millions of lives and brought the world economy to a standstill. Russia’s brutal war has taken a devastating toll on lives and infrastructure in Ukraine, generating seismic repercussions for oil and food prices at a time when the global economy was finding its footing.

Looming above these crises has been climate change. Severe droughts and floods have disrupted agricultural capacity and exacerbated energy shortages around the world. These disruptions have resulted in severe shortages of key goods - from lumber to microprocessors to food and fuel - that have in turn slowed global growth and contributed to high inflation in many economies. In the developing world, we have seen a rise in poverty for the first time in decades.

Over the past year, US President Joe Biden’s administration has advanced a historic economic plan to strengthen America’s resilience against costly supply disruptions like the ones we have experienced. Here at home, we have built on our work to ease bottlenecks in ports with ongoing monitoring of our supply chains and a historic investment in our physical infrastructure. And we have passed legislation that will expand domestic manufacturing capacity in core twenty-first-century sectors like semiconductors and clean energy. But I believe that the success of our plan also depends on our economic policy abroad. The traditional conception of free trade emphasizes the efficiency of trade governed by comparative advantage. That’s the economic theory that suggests that each national economy should produce what it is comparatively best at. Comparative advantage explains the efficiency gains of international trade and specialization. But we have learned that we must also account for the reliability of trade.

In today’s world, I believe that any economic agenda must consider the potential for regional and global shocks to impact our supply chains, including those shocks driven by the policies of certain foreign governments. We are concerned about vulnerabilities that result from over-concentration, geopolitical and security risks, and violations of human rights. Through an approach called “friend-shoring,” the Biden administration aims to maintain the efficiencies of trade while promoting economic resilience for the United States and its partners.

The Importance of Secure Trade  
Let’s start with the fundamentals. No country can, or should, produce every good its economy needs. Trade brings significant economic benefits to all countries involved.

We can export goods that we produce more efficiently. And we can import goods produced more efficiently by other countries. For businesses, trade boosts production by providing a larger market for exports. It enables our most productive firms to expand and create good jobs for more people. For consumers, it means lower prices and greater choice in the products we purchase. Trade also encourages the global flow of ideas that is essential for scientific discovery and technological advancement.

We must vigorously protect global economic integration. As we do so, we need secure trade that reaps the benefits of economic integration while providing greater reliability of supply for the goods we depend on. Three key risks are of particular concern. The first risk is over-concentration. The US and its partners have a strong interest in creating

redundancies in our supply chains. We must avoid over-concentration of the production of critical goods in any particular market. Concentration of sources for key components can sometimes lower costs. But it leaves supply chains vulnerable to cascading disruptions that hurt workers and consumers.

Take the example of semiconductors. Microchips are essential building blocks of the modern economy. Yet virtually all manufacturing of the most advanced chips is located in East Asia.

We have seen firsthand the consequences of a shortage which, according to one estimate, has affected at least 169 industries. For the automotive industry alone, the pandemic chip shortage was estimated to have cost \$210 billion in lost revenue in 2021, with manufacturers like Ford and General Motors forced to shut down several of their plants temporarily.

Concentration risks can manifest most acutely during a crisis. These events introduce sudden supply or demand shocks; they can also prompt countries to turn inward. Prior to the pandemic, the US imported nearly half of its personal protective equipment from China. When global demand surged in early 2020, this concentration contributed to drastic shortages of PPE for American frontline workers. We must never again force our health-care professionals to resort to using trash bags for protection during a public-health emergency. And that requires reshaping our supply chains.

Second, we must protect against geopolitical and security risks. Not only is Russia waging a brutal war against the Ukrainian people; it has also weaponized commodity exports against the world. For too long, much of the world was too willing to believe Russia’s claim that it was a reliable supplier of cheap and convenient energy.


The consequences are clear. In the first five months following Russia’s invasion of Ukraine, the price of natural gas in Europe jumped by 170%. Russia’s destruction of grain storages and blockade of Ukrainian ports have also driven up food costs. The World Food Programme estimates that Russia’s war could push up to 70 million additional people into acute food insecurity.

Third, we must shift away from supply chains that violate core human rights. For decades, the US has prohibited the import of goods made with forced labor. One area of particular concern are imports from the Xinjiang region in China, where the Chinese government has perpetrated human-rights abuses against Uyghurs and other ethnic and religious minority groups. It has subjected detainees in its internment camps to forced labor - using threats of violence, physical and sexual abuse, and torture. The Biden administration is restricting imports of goods produced with forced labor from Xinjiang, including cotton, tomatoes, and certain silica-based products. The US will always stand up for human rights. And we must continue to do so, including through our supply-chain decisions.

The Future Is Friend-Shoring  
Supply-chain risks are a cause for urgent concern. In the past two years, these risks have hampered our economic growth and hiked costs for our families. They have also harmed our national security. It is time for a systematic approach to address these vulnerabilities.

We first need to recognize that the private sector does not internalize the right level of economic resilience by itself. Some firms are highly incentivized to focus on lowering costs in the short term and may not factor in longer-term risks like over-concentration in supply chains.





The Original

Letter to God

with Othello B. Garblah

Lord, de papay say he na ready for ancestor call yet

Dear Father:

Hmm, de other day our village pepo were on their knees. Dey say dey were praying for de Old Man- de big man from de Umbrella camp.

Mm, dey say whatin happened to him?

Father, dey thought de Old Man was receiving an ancestor’s call. Dey say de Papay woke up on Sunday morning and said he was going to take a stroll to one big human being garage. He spent whole four days there, so everybody was worried.

Bor you say Papay again den da one along na call for worry?

Eehn Father, da de thing sef get everybody afraid becus on Christmas Day one of our big man after sending us Christmas Message, a surprise ancestor call came for him. So, everybody was thinking da de Angels were asking for de Papay.

Bor, at least thank God de man home mehn. Dis voting time da coming we na want anybody to leave us again, becus when everybody around it will na be easy.

My son, all da one you talking right na da yor own. So, where de papay right na?

Um, dey say he na go home. De man say he na answering no ancestor call right na. He still get him jule he gat to take care of and by fire by force he mon chop president job.

Bor papa God sef know how de Papay pepo dem gave him hard time dis few days for him to na allow da telephone to ring.

Somebody say da Daniel was calling him becus, dey say all de thing Daniel wor doing around here before going to his ancestors was to make sure de Papay chop president, so he wanted to pass some messages over to him.

Bor de angel said he could not allow de call to take place becus it will mean de Old Man will have to join him there. Hmm. So how he coming on na?

Um, me I na know yet oo becus I na visit him house yet. Bor I scare for de Old Man. What making you scare?

Father, you remember way, way back dey say de Old Man fall down in him village during campaign time and dey say he wor na strong to be president?

Aha, so dey mon na come make de Old Man run around here for nothing just to convince de pepo da him okay oo. Dey mon allow de Old Man to rest him body small before making him to do hard exercise oo.

Me. da my own I talking so oo. De Old Man na get nothin to prove to anybody oo. If yor rush him to start taking plenty exercise and him angel geh vex, de ancestors will call him to explain oo.

And yor pepo already know de Old Man say he na ready to answer to ancestor’s call. And yor already know de man da big traditional man he will na want to disrespect him ancestor dem. So, yor please don’t push him to do so.

De man say he na ready to answer ancestor’s call-period!

OP-ED

By Tom Ginsburg

The Three-Front War on Academic Freedom

CHICAGO - It has been a tough week for academic freedom in the United States. Florida Governor Ron DeSantis packed the board of a liberal arts college with allies determined to transform it into a conservative ideological bastion. Kenneth Roth, the former head of Human Rights Watch, was denied a fellowship at Harvard’s Kennedy School, allegedly over HRW’s criticism of Israel’s human-rights record. And Hamline University in Minnesota came under fire after an adjunct professor was dismissed for showing a centuries-old image of the Prophet Muhammad in an art history class.

To advance their core mission of generating and transmitting knowledge, institutions of higher education rely on funds from three main sources: the state, the market, and their students and alumni. The key is to maintain a balance among all three; depending on any of them too heavily poses a distinct threat to academic inquiry.

Start with the state, which has a long history of constraining academic freedom. During the US Red Scares that followed both world wars, faculty were driven out of institutions solely for their ideological beliefs. While the explicit targeting of faculty is rare today, continued dependence on government funding means that universities - especially public institutions - remain vulnerable to efforts by politicians to influence budgets, curricula, personnel decisions, and much else.

Republicans think this is a winning political issue. They argue that educational institutions, especially universities, are hotbeds of liberal indoctrination. In a 2021 speech entitled “Universities Are the Enemy,” for example, future US Senator J.D. Vance argued that universities pursue not “knowledge and truth,” but “deceit and lies,” and called his alma mater, Yale Law School, “genuinely totalitarian” in its hostility to conservative views.

But far from protecting academic freedom, Republicans have sought to prevent the dissemination of ideas with which they disagree. DeSantis has been a leader in the effort to ban “divisive” lessons about race, following a moral panic about “critical race theory” in schools. Last year, he signed into law the Stop Wrongs to Our Kids and Employees (Stop WOKE) Act, which forbade teaching that “espouses, promotes, advances, inculcates, or compels” several ideas related to race, including the view that discrimination to achieve diversity is acceptable. It also sought to prevent anyone from feeling “guilt, anguish, or other forms of psychological distress” on account of their race or sex.

Last November, a federal judge ordered a temporary injunction against the higher-education sections of the Stop WOKE Act for violating professors’ First Amendment right to free speech - a victory for academic freedom. But DeSantis is not giving up; he now aims to achieve his ideological goals by other means. By appointing six conservatives to its 13-member board - including a dean at the conservative Hillsdale College - he hopes to transform the New College of Florida into the “Hillsdale of the South.”

But the state is hardly alone in suppressing academic freedom. Good university leaders educate their private donors - including industry partners and philanthropists - on the importance of staying out of academic decisions. But there is no doubt that donor pressure can shape an institution’s decision-making.

The denial of Roth’s fellowship appears to be a case in point. While university officials have not publicly explained their decision not to approve his fellowship, scholars claim that HRW’s alleged “anti-Israel bias” was the main consideration. HRW, which Roth ran for nearly three decades, has faced a powerful backlash from Israel’s defenders, including over a 2021 report asserting that in some areas, the “deprivations” inflicted by Israel on the Palestinians “are so severe that they amount to the crimes against humanity of apartheid and persecution.”

Roth would not be the first person to lose out on a university position over Israel. In 2020, the University of Toronto rescinded an offer to Valentina Azarova to direct its law school’s human-rights program, in response to donor pressure over her past criticisms of Israel. The university was ultimately censured by the Canadian Association of University Teachers.

Donor pressure was also behind the decision by the University of North Carolina’s board of trustees to reject the journalism department’s recommendation to offer tenure to Nikole Hannah-Jones in 2021. Conservative donors apparently took issue with her involvement in the 1619 Project, a New York Times initiative focused on examining the political, social, and economic legacy of slavery in the US.

Student tuition - which has more than doubled in the last two decades - reduces universities’ reliance on public and private donors. But overreliance on it generates its own risks, with institutions increasingly treating their students as customers. The result has been to submit to demands by students not to be exposed to material that they deem offensive.

Enter the Hamline University controversy. The adjunct professor, Erika López Prater, did everything right, issuing a trigger warning in the syllabus and providing context before showing the 14th-century depiction of the Prophet Muhammad - a Persian masterpiece long beloved by Muslims, many of whom do not hold that all representations of the Prophet are forbidden.

Students complained anyway, and the university’s “associate vice president of inclusive excellence” labeled Prater’s actions “undeniably ... Islamophobic.” It is apparently easier to undermine a faculty member in the name of ensuring that every student feels heard than to defend a clearly legitimate pedagogical decision.

The return of repressive state laws undoubtedly poses a grave threat to academic freedom. But as the Harvard and Hamline cases show, the excessive influence of private donors and students can be just as insidious. In all three instances, feelings of offended groups limited the content of higher education. Such grievances need to be aired and discussed, and threats against minorities should of course never be tolerated. But if academic discourse and campus debate are shut down every time a person feels offended, how can universities possibly examine controversial topics? Without intellectual freedom - one of the great achievements of American civilization - they can’t.

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# DEATH. ANNOUNCEMENT



The death is announced of Timothy Kessie, commonly known as Saye Glaybo-Gar from Lao, Bunadin Town, Nimba County in his 43rd year. The late Timothy was an employee of New Republic Newspaper in Congo Town.

He died on arrival at the St. Joseph Catholic Hospital Saturday, January 7, 2023. The cause of death is unknown. The deceased is survived by his wife, Cathy Boayou, three children, two boys and a girl, several brothers, sisters and friends in Liberia and abroad.

The family meeting is slated for Saturday, January 14, 2023 at 3pm at the deceased residence behind KP Gas Station, opposite the Kailondo Plaza. The late Timothy's body will be taken Bunadin, Nimba County on Friday, January 20, 2023. Interment followed the next day.

The following numbers can be called for directions to the meeting: 0776802280, 0775144131 and 07701683380. This announcement was brought in by, Cathy Boayou wife, Ariston Tucker, brother, New Republic Newspaper and Stephen Quoi, uncle to the deceased.

## NATIONAL COMPETITIVE BIDDING - NCB Invitation for Bids (IFB)

The Webbo Rural Teacher Training Institute has received budgetary allocation from the Government of Liberia and intends to apply part of it to fund eligible payments under the contracts for the procurement of the following lot:

Lots	Items	IFB No.	Specification
Lot I	Assorted Food Items	WRTTI/NCB/001/2023	As stipulated in the Bid Document

The **WEBBO RURAL TEACHER TRAINING INSTITUTE (WRTTI)** now invites sealed bids from eligible and qualified bidders for the **SUPPLY OF ASSORTED FOOD ITEMS**.

Bidding will be conducted through the National Competitive Bidding (NCB) procedures specified in the Public Procurement & Concessions Act (PPCA) and approved by the Public Procurement & Concessions Commission (PPCC), and is opened to all bidders from Eligible Source Countries as defined in the Guidelines.

Interested eligible bidders may obtain further information from the Procurement Unit located on the Institution Campus in Konowroken City, River Gee County. Bidders are also encouraged to inspect the Bidding Documents at the address given below from **Friday January 13, 2023 to Monday February 13, 2023 beginning 9:00AM to 4:00PM**. You may call Tel. No.: 0777399329 / 0886356818 / 0777022858 / 0886610195, WhatsApp: 0777022858 or email [gueve2011@gmail.com](mailto:gueve2011@gmail.com) for inquiry.

A complete set of Bidding Documents in English may be purchased by interested bidders for a non-refundable fee of **US\$100.00** and can be obtained from the Procurement Unit of the Webbo Rural Teacher Training Institute (WRTTI) by a representative.

Deadline for submission of bids is **Monday February 13, 2023 at 12:00 noon**. All bids must be accompanied by a Bid Security in the amount of **US\$5,000.00**. Bids coming in after the deadline will be rejected. Submissions will be opened in the presence of Firms/Companies who choose to attend on **Monday February 13, 2023 at 12:30 P.M.** on the Institution Campus in Konowroken City, River Gee County. **PLEASE NOTE THAT ELECTRONIC BIDS ARE NOT ACCEPTABLE.**

All bids must be addressed and submitted to: The Procurement Unit – Webbo Rural Teacher Training Institute (WRTTI), Konowroken City, Webbo Statutory District, River Gee County.

SIGNED: \_\_\_\_\_  
HEAD OF PROCUREMENT UNIT

APPROVED: \_\_\_\_\_  
DIRECTOR WRTTI



**Liberia Agency for Community  
Empowerment (LACE)**  
EXECUTIVE MANSION GROUND, CAPITOL HILL  
MONROVIA • LIBERIA



December 7, 2022

**Invitationn for Bid**  
**For the Construction of Market in Gbarnga City, Bong County**

Contract Identification No : IFB NO: LACE/JCVF/SP/NCB/001/2022

The Government of Liberia has received funds from the Government of Japan for the construction of a Modern Market in Gbarnga City, Bong County, through the Japanese Counter Part Value Fund Secretariat office. The modern market construction project will be supervised by Liberia Agency for Community Empowerment (LACE) and monitored by the Japanese Counter Part Value Fund Secretariat office situated in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. LACE intends to apply portion of the proceeds of this fund to make payments under the contract for the procurement of a modern market construction project in Gbarnga City, Bong County.

This Bid covers the *installation of 6 pcs of Polly tanks, erection of 2 pits latrine, and provision and installation of two water pump machines, erection of two units of reservoir and to carry on full implementation and completion of the market project in Gbarnga City, Bong County*; as indicated in Section V – Schedule of Requirements and the project deliverables indicated in the Bidding Documents for the construction of a modern market project in Gbarnga City. The Works are categorized under one (1) procurement package, as per the specification.

A bidder must bid to cover the full quantities of the entire procurement package bided for in the BOQ (Bill of Quantities). Any incomplete items within the package would be deemed to be nonresponsive and the bid would be rejected.

LACE, along with the Japanese Counter Part Value Fund Secretariat, now invites sealed bids from eligible and qualified bidders for the construction of a Modern Market facility within the City of Gbarnga, as per the specific works indicated above. The bidding process will be conducted through the **National Competitive Bidding (NCB)** Method of Procurement with procedures specified in the PPCA, approved by the PPCC, and are opened to all eligible bidders.

The aforementioned Contractors, who are interested in the project, may obtain bidding documents from the address below at the Procurement Department, during working hours from 09:00 to 16:00 hours, and contact:

**Mr. Kornema Y. Mulbah**  
**Procurement Director**  
**Procurement Department**  
**Liberia Agency for Community Empowerment (LACE)**  
**Executive Mansion Ground, Capitol Hills**  
**Former Ministry of Planning & Economics Affairs Building**  
**Monrovia, Liberia**  
**Email: [kornemamulbah@gmail.com](mailto:kornemamulbah@gmail.com)**

A complete set of Bidding Documents in English will be issued to interested bidders at a cost of **Two Hundred United States Dollars (200.00 USD)** for each bid document. Bidding requirements include the availability of the following:

- Valid Tax Clearance Certificate.
- Bid Security
- Current Business Registration Certificate
- Article of Incorporation
- Ministry of Public Works (MPW) Certificate (CCCS)
- Association of Liberian Construction Company (ALCC) Certificate
- Notarized Power or Attorney
- Provide documentary evidence of disclosing legal or beneficiary owner(s)
- Bidder must have implemented similar project(s) funded by the Japanese Counterpart Value Fund (JCVF) and attached copy(ies) of past contract(s) to substantiate the claim(s).

Bids must be delivered at the below listed address not later than **11:00 a.m. on Wednesday, January 18, 2023:**

**Procurement Department**  
**Liberia Agency for Community Empowerment (LACE)**  
**Executive Mansion Ground, Capitol Hills**  
**Former Ministry of Planning & Economics Affairs Building**  
**Monrovia, Liberia**

Bids shall be valid for a period of **ninety (90) days** after the deadline of bid submission. All Bids must be accompanied by a **Bid Security of 2% of the quoted price** and should be valid for a period of **twenty-eight (28) days** after the bid validity period. Late Bids will be rejected. Bids will be opened in the presence of the Bidders or bidder's representatives who choose to attend at the address below, soon after the close of Bids at **11:00 a.m. on Wednesday, January 18, 2023:**

**Procurement Department**  
**Liberia Agency for Community Empowerment (LACE)**  
**Executive Mansion Grounds, Capitol Hills**  
**Former Ministry of Planning & Economics Affairs Building**  
**Monrovia, Liberia**

Signed:

Mr. Quilwa Yeke  
Executive Director

Mr. Kornema Y. Mulbah  
Procurement Director



# MORE HEADLINE NEWS

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## APM Terminals Liberia celebrates Christmas with New Mothers

To celebrate Christmas, APM Terminals Liberia made gift donations to corporate social initiative program led by the female staff of the company to extend love to women who had women play in our society. It's unfortunate that some cannot even celebrate with their families but we are here for



women at the maternity wards of selected hospitals in Monrovia. The hospitals include the Redemption Hospital, Japanese-Liberian Friendship Maternity Center (JFK Compound), Duport Road Clinic, St Joseph Catholic, ELWA Hospital, 14th Military Hospital, Hope for Women Hospital and J & J Memorial Clinic.

In all, a total of about 300 new mothers recieved gift packages containing assorted baby items such as wipes, baby powder, shampoo, diapers, holding blanke shower gels, baby oils amongst others.

The donation exercise was an APM Terminals Liberia

successfully gone through the labour of child delivery during the festive season.

Presenting the items to the Hospitals on behalf of the company, Jean Hannah Thompson - Head of HR said the donation is APM Terminals own way of celebrating Christmas with the rest of Liberia.

She said the company has embarked on this exercise the year before and this year because of how it values family, maternal health and the role that women play in general.

“One of our aims as a company is to support women because we recognize the role

them as a family and we cherish them.” she added.

An elated group of new mothers at all hospitals thanked the company for remembering them in this season.

Hospital Administrator at JFK Memorial Hospital, Laurene Hawa Nyenpan who spoke on behalf of the recipients said the gesture will go a long way to support these women in catering for their new babies.

APM Terminals Liberia has with this gesture further underscored the company’s commitment to its values of care, respect and love for the community.

## Come Clean on Boakai’s health

**BY: Isaac W. Jackson, Jr.**

The nation needs Oldman Boakai around as an elderly statesman. And so, the news about him being rushed to ELWA hospital is deeply troubling. We think the Unity Party owes the entire country the truth about the Oldman’s health condition.

Personally, I am appalled by the political obfuscation being carried out by Boakai’s handlers when they assert that VP Boakai was rushed to ELWA Hospital on January 8, 2023 for precautionary health reasons. “Precautionary observation” sounds like a meaningless phrase to me. Imagine the former Vice President was hospitalized for three days!

We, as citizens who the aging Former VP is aspiring to lead, have the right to know the truth about the



## Make Liberia proud

### -Pres. Weah urges former At-Risk Youth

President George Manneh Weah has urged former At-Risk Youth, who graduated from the Detoxification and Rehabilitation Center recently in Margibi county, to keep their heads up and make Liberia proud following months of training, completing their first transition into normal life.

Speaking Wednesday, January 11, 2023, at graduation ceremonies of the youth held in Boy’s Town, Margibi County, the President thanked the graduates and extended heartfelt best wishes to them on their transition to a new and productive life.

“Go forth from this program with your heads held up high, and make Liberia proud of you,” Dr. Weah said.

According to the Executive Mansion in Monrovia, President Weah recalled how it all began with the now transformed young people, reflecting on one of his

that they are appreciated, and can now claim their rightful and respected place in our Civil Society.”

The President said he was delighted to witnessed and participate in the ceremonies “marking the first transition of some of our at-risk youth from this Detoxification and Rehabilitation Center” which was recently opened by his administration in Margibi County.

He also recalled the launch of the National Fund Drive for the Rehabilitation and Empowerment of the At-Risk Youth of Liberia, under the theme, “Reclaiming Our Youth For A Better Liberia” which was intended to raise approximately US\$13.9 along with development partners, including the United Nations System, the World Bank, the African Development Bank, the IMF, and the Diplomatic Corps, as well as the prominent members of the business community.

He said as a government, “we



Photo Credit: Executive Mansion Photo

regular visits to the Invisible Park when he encountered a throng of them hanging about in a deplorable state of living condition.

“I made a visit to the Invincible Park one day and saw many of them hanging around the park,” President Weah reflected on the fateful encounter.

“Many of them were not in the best of health. Many of them had problems with their teeth, their eyes, and other illnesses. I was so moved by their plight that I collected all of them that day and sent them here to be taken care of.” “Today, during this Program, you have seen the very positive results of this initiative,” the Chief Executive said rather proudly. “They were given appropriate medical care, including the necessary dental and eye treatments.”

He continued: “They were put through an effective detoxification program, from which they have all benefitted. They were made to attend various training programs that would give them some basic skill-sets. And here they are before you today, proud graduates of this First Transition Program, poised and ready to return to normal life with confidence, and with assurance

have made an initial contribution of US\$1m to kick-start the Fund Drive, and we intend to provide an additional Two Million United States Dollars to be appropriated within this year’s budget to support this program.”

Mr. Weah said the first batch of the graduation of 35 former “at-risk youths”, their transition after detoxification, is a manifestation of the seriousness that he attaches to this program, and a demonstration of his personal commitment to rehabilitate these young people, and fast-track their return to society as productive citizens.

“Funds are being raised under the Fund Drive, and other facilities are now being prepared to deal with the vast majority of these At-Risk youths, which some estimates suggest number more than 130,000,” President Weah said.

He added: “These programs are designed to orientate, rehabilitate, and build their capacities over the long term, through skills-based vocational training, as well as economically empowering them through jobs and business opportunities.

President Weah renewed his commitment to improve the lives of the young people of Liberia, “all of them, not just the youths that are at risk”.



MORE HEADLINE NEWS

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A.M. Dogliotti initiates 36 first-year medical students

The A.M. Dogliotti School of Medicine within the College of Health Sciences, University of Liberia (UL), Delivering the keynote address at the ceremony, John F. Kennedy Medical Center Chief Medical Officer Dr. Siah Watta Camanor implored the



has initiated 36 first-year medical students. The White Coat ceremony for the first-year students with the class name ‘Medicas Manus’ (Healing Hands), was held Saturday, January 7, 2023, in the auditorium of the Medical School in Congo Town. Families and friends of the initiated students, UL authorities, and officials in the medical field graced the ceremony. students to serve more as they learn more, and they will earn more. “I will encourage our teachers, please, let us adopt a service learning style where our students are encouraged to apply what they learn and serve the community, to solve problems in their community so that they can be caring and responsible citizens,” said Dr. Camanor. She encouraged the initiated students to make “Be kind, introduce yourself ... patients have the right to know who is touching them, who is treating them,” she said. The JFK Chief Medical Officer stated that medical practitioners are there to support patients and their families, especially when they sometimes have a difficult diagnosis. “The last finger, and not the least, is to hold the hand of your patient. Remember to hold their hand sometimes

responsibility to leave from there as medical doctors. “We are here to encourage you, [and] give you all the support you need. Don’t let everything that has been said here [put fear] in you,” he said. Regardless of all the problems that the initiates may have outside, Dr. Sherman said their one task in this life now is to succeed as medical doctors. The president of the Liberia Medical Students Association (LMSA), Madam Patricia Gray admonished the newly initiated students that with self-discipline, anything is possible. She urged them to create innovative ways in their studies, and go beyond just reading their materials. She also urged the students to be focused, read smartly, and know what they want to achieve at a time. Student Gray thanked the Administration of the Medical School for the availability of a bus to commute students and instructors between Fendall and the Medical School for their clinical studies. She however encouraged the Administration to give support for electricity to enable students to study and do their best. On behalf of the initiated students, Mr. Benjamin Bedell, Jr., president of the Medicas Manus class, thanked the Administration and the instructors for preparing the class for its journey in the medical profession. when you have to break bad news,” said Dr. Camanor. “Hold their hand when they are going through pain; hold their hand when they are .... to answer the call ... that we will all have to answer one day,” She noted that when the Master of the universe calls patients home, and there’s nothing more that can be done medically, “you need to be able to hold their hands.” Mrs. Fatee Ziegler, Executive Assistant, College of Health Sciences, told the newly inducted class that it’s a privilege to be in Medical School now without paying any money. She implored the class not to take the opportunity for granted, saying in other countries, medical students pay a lot of money for their education. “So they have the problem of funding themselves, and they have the problem of studying. You only have the privilege to just come to school and study. Don’t [ever] take that privilege for granted,” said Madam Ziegler. She said it’s her wish that the 36 students will reach the senior class and will do the Oath and Honor. Dr. Lawrence Sherman, Dean of A.M. Dogliotti School of Medicine, told the initiates that since they have decided to attend medical school, it’s their

Dr. Nelson holds dinner

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of Liberia Faculty Association (ULFA) president Prof. Dr. Edna Johnny; University of Liberia Staff Association (ULSA) president Mr. Lawrence F. Seiftuah; and Mr. Varfee Dukuly, president of the student interim leadership, to reflect where the nation’s premier university has come. President Nelson said it is from the interactions he had with the three constituencies of the University that led to the holding of the fellowship dinner. He particularly congratulated Mr. Varfee Dukuly for the idea that the University Administration needed to find time to interact with the different leaders of the student organizations to reflect on their journey together. In his remarks at the dinner, President Nelson informed the gathering that he hoped that the second semester for Academic Year 2022 will conclude in March 2023, to be followed by the University’s 103rd convocation between April 17 and April 29, 2023. Around May this year, he said, it is hoped that the next Academic Year 2022/2023 can start to conclude the first semester before the presidential and legislative elections are held. He promised to remind the Office of Enrollment Services, and the Office of Information Technology to open the e-portal system so that students can register, with the understanding that they will make 50 percent payment of their registration fees before mid-term, and complete registration before the final exam as was agreed last year. President Nelson said it has been discussed to do a special invitation to the outgoing secretary of the Regional University Forum (RUFORUM) for Capacity Building in Agriculture, and some stakeholders. He said RUFORUM has given 27 slots to the University of Liberia to train faculty for Ph.D. and Master’s programs to upgrade the faculty profile. Also, President Nelson disclosed that discussions have begun for a partnership with the University of South Africa following a recent trip to South Africa by Liberia’s Vice President Madam Jewel Howard-Taylor, accompanied by UL Vice President for Graduate Studies, Dr. Jonathan Taylor. “And we are about to sign that new agreement with the University of South Africa,” said President Nelson. Addressing different concerns raised by students at the dinner, Dr. Nelson explained that the University Administration did not put a stop to the conduct of popular elections for students, but a referendum must be held for the University of Liberia Student Union (ULSU) Constitution. According to him, the ULSU Constitution was suspended by the University Council because it contained issues that were contravening the revised student handbook. Regarding rumors that the UL Administration would construct classrooms at Muslim students’ prayer site, President Nelson said he has decided with the University leadership that classrooms will

not be constructed at the site. Regarding the Muslim students’ office, Dr. Nelson said the University is relocating the office to another place because where the Muslim students occupy as an office has been assessed and found to be ideal to open the School of Nursing and Midwifery to offer a Bachelor’s degree program. Further, President Nelson announced that between now and the end of January 2023, an office specifically for students with disabilities will be set up and attached to the Office of the President to give him direct information on issues relating to disabled students. He said the team that is working on the office will meet with the leadership of students that are physically challenged and have disabilities. Additionally, President Nelson said pretty soon discussions will be held with the Office of Students Affairs to revive the President-Students Advisory Council so that meetings can be held frequently on the campus to look at the different issues raised. President Nelson disclosed that he has informed members of his cabinet that he will be intentional about making sure that the University of Liberia finds a minibus for the student government of the University. “We want to ensure that we can do that on or before the 103rd graduation so that we can achieve that goal together as a major effort as we work together,” he noted. At the dinner, representatives of various student groups made their points across the floor during the dinner. Varfee Dukuly, president of the interim student government, thanked President Nelson and his cabinet for the dinner. He noted that UL is a political hub, and the country is in its election year, adding that it’s obvious that there will be a lot of tension. As such, he suggested that student leaders and UL Administration should sit at a round table to discuss how to manage the campus for a successful election year. He pleaded with the University Administration to consider Monday, January 9, 2023, as the date of the opening of school because they did not see much happening during the previous week. Student Dukuly urged the University Administration to improve the school’s library, and laboratories and be practical in providing knowledge.



# "L'avenir du Liberia repose sur Boakai, Cummings", selon le sénateur Ballout

L'avenir du Libéria repose entièrement sur les épaules des opposants Joseph Nyumah Boakai et Alexander B. Cummings, c'est du moins ce que pense l'ancien sénateur du comté de Maryland, John Ballout.

Karnga-Lawrence et le chef politique de l'All Liberian Party (ALP) M. Benoni Urey comme étant des hommes politiques qui peuvent changer ce pays.

« L'ancien vice-président Joseph N. Boakai du parti de l'unité, M. Alexander B. Cummings de l'ANC, la sénatrice Nyonblee

succès politiques aux dernières élections partielles.

Mais cette coalition politique autrefois solide a fini par s'effondrer avant les élections de 2023, et seuls le Congrès national alternatif (ANC) de M. Cummings et une faction du Parti de la liberté (LP) fidèle au président contesté Musa Bility en sont actuellement les membres.

Alors que les partisans de Boakai et de Cummings s'accusent mutuellement d'être la cause de l'échec de la coalition de l'opposition de former un ticket présidentiel, beaucoup doutent que les deux hommes d'État puissent se réunir pour former le duo que leurs partisans appelaient autrefois de leur vœu.

Cummings a exclu à plusieurs reprises de servir de candidat à la vice-présidence de Boakai, ce qui a largement contribué à la fracture au sein de la CPP, car beaucoup pensaient que Boakai, un ancien vice-président libérien, devrait désormais être en tête.

Le Libéria doit organiser des élections présidentielles et législatives en octobre de cette année au cours desquelles le président sortant Weah, qui vise un second

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Au cours d'un entretien avec un groupe de journalistes à Monrovia le mercredi 11 janvier 2022, M. Ballout a indiqué que l'avenir du pays repose sur l'opposition actuelle. En plus de Joseph Boakai et Alexander Cummings, il a également cité la sénatrice de Grand Bassa Nyonblee

Karnga-Lawrence du LP et M. Benoni Urey de l'ALP sont les quatre grands sur les épaules desquels repose l'avenir de notre pays », a déclaré Monsieur Ballout.

Les partis politiques des quatre personnes citées ci-haut étaient autrefois regroupés dans une coalition de l'opposition appelée Collaboration des Partis Politiques (CPP) qui avait remporté quelques

## Mali : les partis d'opposition rejettent le projet de nouvelle Constitution avec des stratégies différentes

Au Mali, le ministère malien de l'Administration territoriale invite ce 12 janvier 2023 les partis politiques à une réunion sur le projet en cours de nouvelle Constitution. Les partis d'opposition aux actuelles autorités de transition rejettent tous catégoriquement ce projet, mais avec des stratégies différentes.

Au Mali, le ministère malien de l'Administration territoriale invite ce jeudi matin les partis politiques à une réunion sur le projet en cours de nouvelle Constitution.

Un avant-projet a été remis il y a trois mois (11 octobre) au président de la Transition, le colonel Assimi Goïta. Ce texte réaffirme notamment l'unité de l'État malien, son caractère laïque, il prévoit aussi la création d'un Haut Conseil de la Nation - l'équivalent d'un Sénat - et renforce le rôle du président.

Une fois le texte définitivement bouclé par une commission de finalisation créée par décret

le mois dernier (19 décembre), un référendum sera organisé pour proposer aux Maliens d'accepter ou de rejeter la nouvelle loi fondamentale, théoriquement en mars prochain.

« Le temps ne nous permet pas d'aller à une nouvelle Constitution »

Les partis d'opposition aux actuelles autorités de transition rejettent tous catégoriquement ce projet, mais avec des stratégies différentes.

« Échanger sur les pistes » pour « une meilleure organisation du référendum » constitutionnel, tel est l'objectif annoncé dans la

lettre d'invitation du colonel Abdoulaye Maïga, ministre de l'Administration territoriale, que RFI a pu consulter.

Cette réunion, certains partis politiques radicalement opposés à l'adoption d'une nouvelle Constitution la boycotteront.

C'est le cas des partis de l'alliance Jigiya Kura, en tête desquels le Codem, dont Alhassane Abba est le secrétaire général. « Ce n'est pas opportun, estime ce dernier. Le temps [avant la fin annoncée de la période de

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## Éditorial

## Le manque de volonté politique tue les institutions libériennes d'intégrité

L'ambassadeur des États-Unis au Libéria, Michael McCarthy, demande aux dirigeants libériens d'avoir le courage de soutenir les institutions de moralisation de la vie publique, car le sort de la nation en dépend.

Selon l'ambassadeur McCarthy, le manque de volonté politique affecte ces institutions d'intégrité et les empêche de remplir leur mission régalienn, quoi qu'elles semblent ragaillardies par les sanctions américaines Magnitsky à l'encontre des fonctionnaires corrompus.

« C'est une chose de dire qu'on veut la transparence dans les industries extractives du Libéria, c'en est aussi une autre de rendre publics tous les accords et revenus de concession et d'exploration des industries extractives et dénoncer publiquement les acteurs illégaux. C'est une chose de soutenir le Code de conduite, mais c'en est une autre de faire respecter les exigences en matière de déclaration de patrimoine », a dit le diplomate américain.

L'ambassadeur américain a récemment fait le tour de plusieurs institutions d'intégrité et rencontré des dirigeants et des employés de ces institutions, dont notamment l'Agence d'audit interne, la Commission générale d'audit, l'Agence de renseignement financier, la Commission des marchés publics et des concessions et l'Initiative libérienne pour la transparence des industries extractives.

"L'un des objectifs de cette récente série de réunions", explique M. McCarthy, "était d'évaluer si les institutions de moralisation de la vie publique avaient constaté des améliorations en matière de gouvernance responsable à la suite des sanctions du département du Trésor américain annoncées en août".

Il a attiré l'attention des libériens sur trois points essentiels à retenir, à savoir : le Libéria ne prospérera pas sans des institutions d'intégrité qui fonctionnent bien, les institutions d'intégrité du Libéria ont besoin de plus de ressources, et les institutions d'intégrité ne peuvent pas réussir sans une vraie volonté politique.

L'ambassadeur a fait observer que la plupart des institutions chargées de l'intégrité sont composées de personnes travailleuses, dévouées et motivées, des gens qui veulent faire du Libéria un pays meilleur où il fait bon vivre, mais malheureusement, beaucoup d'entre elles ont des budgets bien insignifiants et un pouvoir d'achat très négligeable. Pire, la plupart d'entre elles ne reçoivent jamais le montant total qui leur est alloué. Dans certains cas, selon le diplomate américain, les déficits de financement représentent plus de 50% du montant accordé aux institutions dans le budget national. Ce qui, bien évidemment, entraîne des coupes importantes dans les fonds opérationnels, au point de ne plus avoir de carburant ou d'ordinateurs portables pour les enquêtes et les audits.

Selon lui, au cours des 20 dernières années, les États-Unis et le Libéria ont travaillé ensemble pour construire un Libéria prospère pour l'avenir de tous les Libériens, et après le conflit civil, les Libériens se sont réunis en 2003 pour reconstruire les institutions démocratiques du pays, ainsi que des garanties pour protéger sa gouvernance démocratique, dont les principales étaient les institutions d'intégrité du pays qui ont été construites, financées et dotées de certains des esprits les meilleurs et les plus brillants du Libéria.

Ces institutions ont été créées par la loi et conçues pour être à l'abri de l'ingérence politique, et en combinaison avec un environnement de société civile robuste et des médias libres dynamiques, elles donnent au Libéria des atouts uniques pour maintenir sa démocratie, alors que le pays a construit son post-fondation de guerre sur la démocratie et l'État de droit, la communauté internationale en a pris note et les entreprises multinationales sont revenues sur les côtes du Libéria, et la croissance du PIB s'est accélérée de 2003 à 2011.

Mais au cours de la dernière décennie, l'élan a changé et les dirigeants libériens ont accordé moins de soutien politique et financier aux institutions d'intégrité vitales du pays, l'économie a ralenti, la corruption a augmenté et les entreprises internationales ont commencé à chercher ailleurs des opportunités d'investissement.

Selon l'ambassadeur, le potentiel économique du Libéria reste énorme, mais cela ne se réalisera pas sans une gouvernance démocratique responsable que les institutions d'intégrité du Libéria sont censées promouvoir. Nous sommes tout à faire d'accord avec M. McCarthy. Il est temps que les dirigeants joignent l'acte à la parole. Le soutien des institutions de moralisation de la vie publique devrait une priorité.

L'ambassadeur des États-Unis l'a si bien dit. Les institutions telles que l'Agence d'audit interne, la Commission générale d'audit, l'Agence de renseignement financier, la Commission des marchés publics et des concessions et l'Initiative pour la transparence des industries extractives du Libéria n'existent que par leur nom. C'est triste, très tristes.

De toute évidence, le manque de volonté politique de l'administration Weah affame progressivement les institutions d'intégrité et affaiblit la lutte contre la corruption

Nous voilà en 2023. Nous ne pouvons faire qu'espérer que les dirigeants tiendront compte des préoccupations soulevées par le diplomate américain en accordant une importance aux institutions d'intégrité.



# Français

## "L'avenir du Liberia repose sur Boakai,

mandat, affrontera une communauté d'opposition divisée.

Cependant, M. Ballout croit fermement qu'un ticket Boakai-Cummings dans les prochaines élections pourrait racheter le Libéria des mains du président Weah et de ses fonctionnaires.

L'ancien sénateur du Maryland a accusé le président Weah d'avoir infligé des souffrances massives aux citoyens. Pour lui, ce régime a lamentablement échoué.

« Écoutez, si nous voulons vaincre ce régime en octobre, il faut que nous nous rassemblions et formions un duo Boakai-Cummings. Il faut que ces deux se réunissent parce que l'avenir de ce pays repose sur eux », a déclaré M. Ballout.

Il a appelé tous les membres de l'opposition à envisager d'adopter une nouvelle posture de respect collectif, de partenariat, de coopération et de collaboration, car « trop c'est trop ». « Utilisons notre proximité, notre expérience, notre éducation et nos liens avec divers dirigeants politiques pour raviver l'esprit d'unité », a-t-il plaidé.

Ballout a également présenté des excuses ouvertes aux membres du bloc d'opposition, en particulier à Boakai, à M.

Cummings, à la sénatrice Karnga-Lawrence et à M. Urey, pour les insultes qu'ils ont reçues. Il les a exhortés à regarder au-delà d'eux-mêmes, de leurs différences politiques, des insultes et des blessures politiques, et de voir les enfants à la maternelle et les millions de jeunes sans emploi.

Il a rappelé aux dirigeants de l'opposition les milliers de toxicomanes, les personnes âgées sans sécurité sociale, les 250 000 personnes qui ont perdu la vie dans une guerre civile insensée et brutale et les survivants qui ont trouvé le courage de forger un nouveau départ.

Ballout a fortement averti que si l'opposition reste divisée et se rend aux élections en octobre, elle perdra et à la présidentielle et aux parlementaires au profit du parti au pouvoir.

Par contre, selon lui, si l'opposition se rend à cette élection unie, elle gagnera aussi bien la présidentielle que les parlementaires et ouvrira la voie à une réforme politique, économique et structurelle sans entrave.

M. Ballout croit que divisés, si l'un des opposants atteint le second tour, ils auront du mal à concilier leurs différences causées par des années de luttes internes. D'après lui, la lutte de leadership au sein de la CPP n'a pas que causé sa désintégration, elle a également alimenté « les flammes d'un sang politique incontrôlable ».

## Mali : les partis d'opposition

transition, ndlr] ne nous permet pas d'aller à une nouvelle Constitution. Ni le temps, ni la loi elle-même : la Constitution actuelle indique les mécanismes de sa révision. Les autorités actuelles n'ont même pas la légitimité pour se pencher sur cette question : la Constitution est sacrée, pour la réviser, il faut un président de la République élu et une Assemblée élue. Nous boycottons la réunion, car c'est une réunion de validation et de préparation du référendum. Un référendum avec lequel nous ne sommes pas du tout d'accord depuis le début. Aller à une telle rencontre, pour nous, serait nous dédire ». « Nous n'allons pas faire la politique de la chaise vide »

Une position que ne partagent pas les autres membres du Cadre, des partis et regroupements politiques pour le retour à l'ordre constitutionnel, qui rassemble les partis d'opposition aux actuelles autorités de transition.

Amadou Koita est le président du PS-Yelen Koura

et l'un des porte-parole du Cadre. « Pour nous, toutes les questions d'intérêt national doivent d'abord rassembler les Maliens pour qu'il y ait des compromis, souligne-t-il. Autant nous sommes d'accord pour des réformes, autant nous sommes d'accord pour le toilettage de la loi fondamentale, autant nous estimons que nous n'avons pas besoin aujourd'hui d'une nouvelle Constitution. C'est pour réaffirmer notre position, convenir de ce qu'on doit réviser, que j'ai décidé d'être moi-même présent à cette rencontre. Ça signifie tout simplement que nous n'allons pas faire la politique de la chaise vide, et que nous allons défendre nos positions afin de défendre la démocratie et renforcer nos institutions. Mais nous ne sommes pas pour une nouvelle Constitution : ça, c'est une aventure ! »

Les partis du Cadre affichent une unité de fond

En dépit de ces divergences sur la conduite à tenir, qui pourraient faire le jeu des autorités maliennes de transition, les partis du Cadre affichent une unité de fond : contre le projet de nouvelle Constitution, et pour une sortie rapide de la période de Transition.

## COMMENTAIRE

Par Janet L. Yellen

# Le commerce résilient

WASHINGTON, DC - Les économies du monde entier ont été mises à rude épreuve par les événements survenus ces trois dernières années. La pandémie de COVID-19 a coûté la vie à plusieurs millions de personnes, et conduit l'économie mondiale à la paralysie. La guerre brutale menée par la Russie a provoqué en Ukraine d'immenses dégâts en termes de vies humaines et d'infrastructures, entraînant des répliques sismiques au niveau des prix du pétrole et des produits alimentaires, alors même que l'économie mondiale commençait à reprendre pied.

À ces crises vient s'ajouter la menace du changement climatique. Sécheresses et inondations sévères viennent perturber les capacités agricoles, et accentuer les pénuries énergétiques à travers le monde. Ces perturbations engendrent de graves pénuries de produits clés - du bois de construction jusqu'aux microprocesseurs, en passant par l'alimentaire et le pétrole - qui entraînent à leur tour un ralentissement de la croissance mondiale, tout en contribuant à une inflation élevée au sein de nombreuses économies. Dans les pays en voie de développement, une aggravation de la pauvreté s'observe pour la première fois en plusieurs décennies.

Au cours de l'année, l'administration du président américain Joe Biden a promu un plan économique historique visant à renforcer la résilience de l'Amérique face aux perturbations d'approvisionnement coûteuses du type de celle que nous connaissons. Ici aux États-Unis, nous travaillons à l'atténuation des goulots d'étranglement au sein des ports, en surveillant constamment nos chaînes d'approvisionnement, ainsi qu'en procédant à un investissement historique dans nos infrastructures physiques. Nous avons également adopté une législation qui développera les capacités nationales de fabrication dans les secteurs clés du XXI<sup>e</sup> siècle, tels que les semiconducteurs et les énergies renouvelables.

Mais je pense que la réussite de notre plan dépendra également de notre politique économique à l'étranger. Le libre-échange dans sa conception traditionnelle insiste sur l'efficacité d'un commerce caractérisé par l'avantage comparatif. Selon cette théorie économique, chaque économie nationale aurait intérêt à produire ce qu'elle fait de mieux comparativement. L'avantage comparatif explique les gains d'efficacité du commerce international et la spécialisation. Or, nous savons désormais qu'il nous faut également tenir compte de la fiabilité des échanges commerciaux.

Dans le monde d'aujourd'hui, je pense que n'importe quel programme économique devrait prendre en considération le potentiel de chocs régionaux et mondiaux susceptibles d'impacter nos chaînes d'approvisionnement, notamment de chocs provoqués par les politiques de certains gouvernements étrangers. Nous devons prendre garde aux vulnérabilités qu'engendrent la surconcentration, les risques géopolitiques et de sécurité, ainsi que les violations des droits de l'homme. Via une approche dite de « friend-shoring », l'administration Biden entend maintenir les efficacités du commerce tout en promouvant la résilience économique des États-Unis et de leurs partenaires.

L'importance d'un commerce fiable Commençons par les fondamentaux. Aucun État n'est capable de produire tous les biens dont son économie a besoin, et aucun n'aurait intérêt à le

faire. Les échanges commerciaux confèrent d'importants bienfaits économiques à tous les pays impliqués.

Nous pouvons exporter les biens que nous produisons plus efficacement, et importer les biens que produisent plus efficacement d'autres pays. Du côté des entreprises, le commerce permet d'accroître la production en apportant un plus vaste marché pour les exportations. Il permet à nos entreprises les plus productives de se développer, et de créer des emplois de qualité pour un plus grand nombre de personnes. Du côté des consommateurs, il est synonyme de prix moins élevés, ainsi que d'un plus grand choix dans les produits que nous achetons. Le commerce encourage également ce flux mondial d'idées qui est essentiel aux découvertes scientifiques et aux avancées technologiques.

Nous devons activement protéger l'intégration économique mondiale. Dans cet exercice, nous avons besoin d'un commerce sûr, qui tire parti des bienfaits de l'intégration économique tout en conférant une plus grande fiabilité d'approvisionnement aux produits dont nous dépendons. Nous devons ici prendre particulièrement garde à trois risques majeurs.

Le premier risque réside dans la surconcentration. Les États-Unis et leurs partenaires ont fortement intérêt à créer des solutions de repli sur nos chaînes d'approvisionnement. Nous devons éviter une surconcentration de la production de produits cruciaux sur un marché donné. La concentration des sources de composants clés peut parfois permettre de réduire les coûts, mais elle rend également les chaînes d'approvisionnement vulnérables à des perturbations en cascade susceptibles d'impacter les travailleurs et les consommateurs.

Prenons l'exemple des semiconducteurs. Les puces électroniques sont des composants essentiels de l'économie moderne. Or, la quasi-totalité de la fabrication des puces les plus avancées se situe en Asie de l'Est.

Nous avons été directement témoins des conséquences d'une pénurie qui, selon une estimation, a impacté au moins 169 secteurs. Rien que pour l'industrie automobile, la pénurie de puces électroniques durant la pandémie a représenté environ 210 milliards \$ de manque à gagner en 2021, certains constructeurs tels que Ford et General Motors ayant été contraints de fermer temporairement plusieurs de leurs usines.

Les risques liés à la concentration sont susceptibles de se manifester plus intensément durant une crise. Ces événements entraînent des chocs d'offre ou de demande soudains, et peuvent conduire certains pays à se replier sur eux-mêmes. Avant la pandémie, les États-Unis importaient près de la moitié de leurs équipements de protection individuelle en provenance de Chine. Lorsque la demande mondiale a explosé au début de l'année 2020, cette concentration a contribué aux pénuries majeures d'EPI parmi les travailleurs américains de première ligne.

Jamais plus nos professionnels de santé ne devront se retrouver contraints d'utiliser des sacs poubelle pour se protéger face à une urgence de santé publique. Et cela implique de refaçonner nos chaînes d'approvisionnement.

Deuxièmement, nous devons nous protéger contre les risques géopolitiques et de sécurité. Non seulement la Russie mène une guerre brutale contre la population ukrainienne, mais elle use également des exportations de matières premières comme d'une arme contre le monde. Pendant trop longtemps, la majeure partie de la planète a trop voulu croire en l'affirmation de la Russie selon laquelle le pays était un fournisseur fiable d'énergie bon marché et pratique.



## ARTICLE

## ARTICLE

# Prosperity or Plunder: The Case of Liberia Western Cluster Iron Ore Deposits

By S.Karweaye

Liberia is among the top iron ore-producing countries in Africa and has a potentially long future in the mining sector due to the under-exploration and current development of mining projects of global significance. Although the iron ore mining sector is a key component of national development, with 47 percent of total export earnings in 2020, it has never been able to create a positive impact on Liberia's economy or its people due to the corrupt concession agreements and poorly monitored regulatory system.

Before the civil war, Liberia was the world's fifth-largest producer of iron ore and in the 1970s, Africa's leading producer of iron ore. Currently, the country has one of the largest remaining iron ore deposits in the world. The western cluster iron ore project consists of three deposits, including two idle mines that span Bomi, Grand Cape Mount, and Gbarpolu Counties. The project covers the Mano River iron ore deposit (the former National Iron Ore Company, closed in 1976); the Bomi Hills iron ore deposits (the former Liberia Mining Company, closed in 1985); and the Bea Mountain iron ore deposits, which are virtually untouched. The project contains over 3 billion tons of iron ore with a production estimate of 30 million tons of Iron Ore annually, composed primarily of quartz, hematite, and magnetite as well as weathering and replacement products such as martite and limonite.

## History of Western Cluster Iron Ore Deposits Concession

In January 2008, the Liberian government declared the South African mining firm, Delta Mining Consolidated the provisional winner of a \$1.5-billion bid to develop the Western Cluster Iron Ore Deposit. According to the government, Delta Mining Consolidated beat various rival bids for the Liberian concession including those from India's Tata Steel, the world's sixth-largest steel maker, Sinosteel Corporation, Xingxing Group, Rio Doce South Africa, ArcelorMittal, and Bahlodi Africa.

However, Delta Mining Consolidated's reputation in Liberia was tarnished after a scandal emerged around its bid for the Western Cluster iron-ore concession. The company was alleged to have paid kickbacks to the late Willis Knuckles, then a senior minister and trusted aide to President Sirleaf, in exchange for help in gaining access to the valuable western Cluster Iron Ore Deposit. Delta was disqualified amid bribery allegations but cleared of corruption after a meeting at the Executive mansion.

Eventually, the concession was granted to an Israeli firm, Elenilto Minerals and Mining on January 28, 2010, despite advice by renowned Liberian economist Dr. Togba Nah-Tipoteh and others not to award the western cluster iron ore deposits to Elenilto Minerals & Mining LLC because the company lacked the credentials and experience to operate one of Liberia's last mining sites, but those bits of advice and cautions fell on deaf ears by President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf.

Sesa Goa Limited, India's largest exporter of iron ore in the private sector and a subsidiary of Vedanta Resources Plc acquired Western Cluster Limited, a subsidiary of Elenilto via a 'flip'. Sesa Goa bought 51% of Western Cluster Ltd from Elenilto Minerals & Mining LLC in 2009 for \$90 million, on the same day, Elenito signed a 25-year mining lease with the Sirleaf government for the mine. Less than six months later, Elenilto (a phony company set up to facilitate and 'flip' the deal) bailed out altogether by selling the remainder of the Western Cluster to Vedanta for \$33.5 million in cash without throwing a shovel.

After the termination of Delta Delta Mining Consolidated from the Western Cluster iron ore project bid, the United Kingdom-based Sable Mining bought a 36.5 percent stake in Delta Mining Consolidated in 2010 for US\$36.9 million and set its focus on Wologizi, a mountain situated in Lofa County. It is viewed as the final significant concession region in Liberia and Sable's eyes, a mother lode with the possibilities of millions. Sable Mining was previously called BioEnergy Africa and floated on Aim in September 2008 with a 94 percent

interest in an ethanol fuel project in Mozambique. In October 2009, the company changed its name to Sable Mining.

According to Global Witness, in its report titled: The Deceivers, more than US\$950,000 in bribes and other suspicious payments were made to top Liberian officials by the United Kingdom-based Sable Mining Company and its Liberian lawyer, and Ellen's Johnson Sirleaf's Unity Party Chairman at the time and current Senator Varney Sherman. The Global Witness report further revealed how Sable Mining Company wanted to get the concession rights to Liberia's Wologizi iron ore. The report says the officials who took bribes include the Speaker of the Liberian House of Representatives & Bomi Representative Alex Tyler: \$75,000 for "consulting expenses" and Richard Tolbert, chairman of the National Investment Commission: \$50,000 for "consulting fees."

The report uncovered Morris Saytumah, Minister of State for Finance, Economic and Legal Affairs, a Senator at the time received \$50,000 for "consulting fees", and Willie Belleh, Director of Public Procurement and Concessions Commission supposedly got \$10,000 for "counseling expenses". Two of the greatest payments went to people recognized in the report as "Big Boy 01" and "Big Boy 02", each getting \$250,000 without any clarification of why the payments were made. The report likewise claims that President Sirleaf's child, Fombah Sirleaf, who was the director of Liberia's National Security Agency likewise benefited from "a



\$7,598 hunting excursion to South Africa paid for by Sable". Others referenced in the report include then-Senator Sumo Kupee and Cletus Wotorson, both supposedly getting \$5,000 each for "consulting fees".

According to the Global Witness report, Varney Sherman gave Sable CEO Groves a spreadsheet of accounts indicating payments made to specific, named ministers and government employees in Liberia. Sherman received the funds via Salans. Sable's attorney at Salans said that the company had no knowledge of or justification for the simple transfer of monies to another law firm's client account at the request of its client.

After the Global Witness report came out, Cllr. Sherman attested that Sable was a rebirth of Delta because legitimately they reserved the privileges toward the Western Cluster. Phil Edmonds, a former Britain cricketer, and Andrew Forests, a Zimbabwean mining businessman came into the picture in April 2010 and bought a minority stake in Delta. The arrangement seemed OK at the ideal opportunity for Sable since Delta previously had an arrangement in Liberia and an organization. The majority of Sable's tasks were run from Cllr. Sherman's office. Sherman was recently sanctioned by the US Department of Treasury under the Global Magnitsky Act. According to the US Treasury, "in 2010 Harry Varney Gboto-Nambi Sherman (Sherman), now a prominent lawyer, Liberian Senator, and Chair of the Liberian Senate Judiciary Committee, was hired by a British mining company in an effort to obtain one of Liberia's last remaining mining assets, the Wologizi iron ore concession. Sherman advised the company that, in order to obtain the contract, they first had to get Liberia's concessions law changed by bribing senior officials. In 2016, Sherman was indicted by the Liberian government, along with several other government officials, for their involvement in the USD 950,000 bribery scheme. In 2019, the presiding judge acquitted all individuals accused of being involved in the bribery scheme. Sherman offered bribes to multiple judges associated with his trial and had an undisclosed conflict of interest with the judge who ultimately returned a not guilty verdict in July 2019. Sherman has routinely paid judges to decide cases in his favor, and he has allegedly facilitated payments

to Liberian politicians to support impeachment of a judge who has ruled against him. Sherman's acts of bribery demonstrate a larger pattern of behavior to exercise influence over the judiciary and the Ministry of Justice."

Not only was the deal irregular and highly suspicious, but the total \$123.5 million Sesa Goa Limited, a subsidiary of Vedanta Resources Plc that acquired Western Cluster Limited paid for one of the largest remaining iron ore deposits in the world, was a fraction of the potential value of the 3 billion tonne reserve, yet, Gesler Murray, the current Minister of Mines and Energy announced to the public that the government of Liberia has granted Western Cluster Liberia a Class "A" permit to start its mining of iron ore in accordance with the Mineral Development Agreement (MDA) which calls for the exploration, mining, and marketing of iron ore.

As previously stated, Western Cluster Limited is a step-down subsidiary of Vedanta Resources Pl, the same company that had an agreement with the Zambian government to mine copper at the Konkola Copper Mines in the country, but the company ran into issues with the local administration. Senator Edwin Snowe of Bomi County is on record as proudly saying he was part of the team that traveled to India and negotiated how the government of Liberia could waive the US\$20 million the company had accumulated in taxes in order for the company to start operation in Liberia. I wondered if Snowe and others in the Weah-led administration were aware that in 2014, a video surfaced of Vedanta Resources Plc Boss, Anil Agarwal in March 2014 while addressing a trade organization in Bangalore India proudly boasted of how he bought Konkola Copper Mines in Zambia for just \$25 million, rather than the \$400 million asking price, and received loud cheers when he stated that the company brings in \$500 million in profit each year. Meanwhile, Vedanta was claiming that there was a loss or minimal profit at KCM. The Zambian government put Vedanta's local arm into liquidation in May 2019, accusing Vedanta of environmental and financial regulation breaches.

In the mining industry in Liberia, mineral extraction - particularly of iron ore, gold, and diamonds is mined in industrial and artisanal concessions. Each mode of operation lacks transparent due diligence in several key areas, including procurement, subcontracting, and joint venture reporting practices. Artisanal or small-scale mining (ASM) is accompanied by illegal intervention by corrupt political and state security actors, a lack of transparency in production and export data, and human rights abuses, including child labor, environmental degradation, and unsafe working conditions.

Liberia's iron ore mining plays a significant role in the economy. Growing demand and the struggle for access to this valuable material by manufacturers of steel can provide an opportunity for buildings and infrastructure, automotive, metal products, etc. to enrich themselves in a poorly regulated and monitored environment. In addition, under the new mining regulations in Liberia, mining companies are supposed to return a portion of their profits through royalties for developing mining communities. Still, these mining royalties are often mismanaged or misappropriated by corrupt officials. If managed in a transparent and accountable manner, the revenues generated from mining in these communities can contribute to poverty reduction in Liberia and leverage development.

Transparency and Accountability in the mining sector Building accountability in the mining sector is essential for ensuring a sustainable future for the industry in Liberia Transparency is essential for ensuring accountability in the mining sector in general. In Liberia, mining companies must be open and honest about their operations, including their environmental and social impacts. This can be achieved through public disclosure of information, such as financial records, environmental reports, and social impact assessments. This information should be made available to the public, allowing stakeholders to hold companies accountable for their actions. Additionally, companies should engage in meaningful dialogue with local communities to ensure that their operations are not causing any harm.



# Weah's final address

By Kruah Thompson

President George Weah is expected to address the Joint Session of the 54th Legislature on 30th

Act, among others. Rep. Gray says the House of Representatives has taken full responsibility to organize activities leading to the President's last Annual

everyone at the assembly. only guests will be allowed to enter the joint assembly," he underscores, adding that series of meetings are being held with line ministries and agencies to



January in fulfillment of Article 58 of the 1986 Constitution of Liberia. The President is expected to present his legislative programs and report on the state of the nation to the full Legislature in joint session. Briefing reporters Thursday, January 12, 2023, at the Ministry of Information, Cultural Affairs and Tourism in Monrovia, Montserrado County Electoral District#10 Representative, Moses Acarous Gray, further revealed that the President will catalogue some laws his government has enacted during the period in review in not just tackling corruption, but bills that have been passed or amended. Among them, he names the Code of Conduct, the LACC Act, the Whistleblowers Act, and the Witness Protection

Message to the 54th Legislature in his first Six-year term. He says security protocol will be tight and advises anyone without invitation or accreditation to stay clear of the premises of the Capitol on that day. He notes that instructions have been given to the national security apparatus to protect the entire vicinity of the Capitol, and that invitations will be sent across to specific personalities by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs with priority given to only ministers proper from various ministries. "This year is going to be a different year; we don't want anyone embarrassing himself or herself, therefore, we cannot have

ensure proper execution of the program. He says already, accreditation process for media institutions has begun in coordination with the Ministry of Information and that only accredited Journalists will be allowed in the joint assembly. The ruling Coalition lawmaker says the Legislature will not condom people taking invitations and giving them to others to come to the program, warning "If you're not officially invited and someone gives you invitation, you have to stay away." Meanwhile, he says President Weah will be the last person to enter the grounds of the Capitol and the first to leave after the ceremony, and no one will be allowed to enter the building once the President enters.

# Come Clean on Boakai's health

Starts from page 6

It is unwise to play politics with the life of the Oldman. The UP leaders who are opting to do so are unfair to the Oldman and our country. The political argument that Oldman Boakai should be celebrated because he has been hospitalized at a local facility closest to his home is ridiculous and suggest a serious condition for which he couldn't even go far. Because, in the first place, the pacemaker that was surgically implanted in Oldman Boakai's chest was

not carried out in Liberia's local medical hospital. In fact, a pacemaker requires regular medical check-ups. And pretending that the medical facilities in Liberia are capable of handling critical cases only because the Oldman may not currently have the means to travel is downright deceptive and dangerous. It compromises the Oldman's life! You see, democratic competitions are rigorous, and the desperate push for

Boakai to participate in the upcoming democratic competition could just exacerbate his obvious declining health conditions. We need Oldman Boakai to be round. So, let's pay attention to his health void of political theatrics and deception. Once more, I wish to renew my prayer for Boakai's recovery and good health and stand ready to contribute to his travel for proper checkups. This will be a wiser "precautionary observation".

# Opposition accuses army chief

By Lincoln G. Peters

The youth congress of Liberia's former ruling Unity Party (UP) believes that Maj. Gen. Prince Charles Johnson, III, is a person of interest for illegal weapons recently discovered at the Freeport of Monrovia.

But the UP youth congress provided no evidence to back its wild allegation against the Chief of Staff of the Armed Forces of Liberia (AFL), Gen. Johnson. In an exclusive interview with this paper Thursday, 12 January 2023, the UP youth congress chair Togar Melvin Cephas said his suspicion is based on Gen. Johnson's statement during President George Manneh Weah's absence from the country. Cephas explained that one month ago, Gen. Johnson was heard on local broadcaster OK FM saying people in and outside the country were urging him to overthrow the president, but he had resisted. "I think the Chief of Staff is a person of interest and a party to these guns discovered at the Freeport of Monrovia," said Cephas. "Major Johnson, III, should be invited and investigated by the Liberia National Police," he

laughable because he doesn't know what the law says," he said. Following Gen. Johnson's appearance on OK FM last year, some local dailies attributed a statement to him allegedly saying he had received calls and messages urging him to overthrow the government of President Weah. He argued that just one month after the Chief of Staff's statement, guns were seen at the Freeport of Monrovia. "Major Johnson needs to be investigated because the president and all Liberians' lives are at risk," Mr. Cephas alleged. He noted that since Gen. Johnson said he received calls to overthrow the president, he has failed to state the names of those making the call. Cephas thinks that those that were calling Gen. Johnson may be allegedly the same people smuggling weapons into the country to cause fear and intimidation. But Cephas alleged that President Weah is so careless about his own life. "If somebody tells you that people want to kill you and you don't care about it, that demonstrates carelessness, [an] irresponsible attitude," he noted. The Unity Party National Youth Congress chairman, therefore,



continued. But Gen. Johnson has rubbished Cephas' wild allegation as silly and laughable, saying he can't say anything much about it. "It's a bit stupid, silly and laughable that somebody will think of me or say that about me," the Army Chief told our reporter Thursday night, 12 January in a phone interview. "I just can't say anything much to you about this because the police is investigating the matter and so I think you need to contact the police," said Gen. Johnson. Major Gen. Johnson furthered that if Mr. Cephas believes that he is a party and a person of interest, let him help the police in the investigation and give them further information. "Meanwhile, that is all I have to say because before I talk, I have to see you, know which institution you [are] working with by your ID card. But, for now, it's very stupid, silly, and

called on the Government of Liberia to take the illegal guns issue very seriously. He warned that it borders on national security, and it also has the potential to threaten the peace and stability of the country, especially as Liberians are gearing up for the 2023 presidential and legislative elections. "We call on the government to take this issue [more] seriously than ever before. They should make sure that the Army Chief of Staff Major Prince C. Johnson is invited for [a questioning]," he urged. Security forces here have launched an investigation into the discovery of a huge cache of arms and ammunition at the Freeport of Monrovia and at a private residence in Brewerville, outside Monrovia. Both discoveries are connected to a single source. The arms and ammunition were first discovered at the port in a shipment consignee to a lady before further discoveries were made at her home in Brewerville following a search and seizure operation.



## ***-Discuss a wide range of Plans***

President Nelson hosted the fellowship dinner to solicit from the students what are some of the things they want the University Administration to deal with so that their work together in

He indicated that this year, the University Administration has decided to invest in students' lives, noting that though they will

Before the dinner, President Nelson over the Christmas holiday held meetings with the University

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