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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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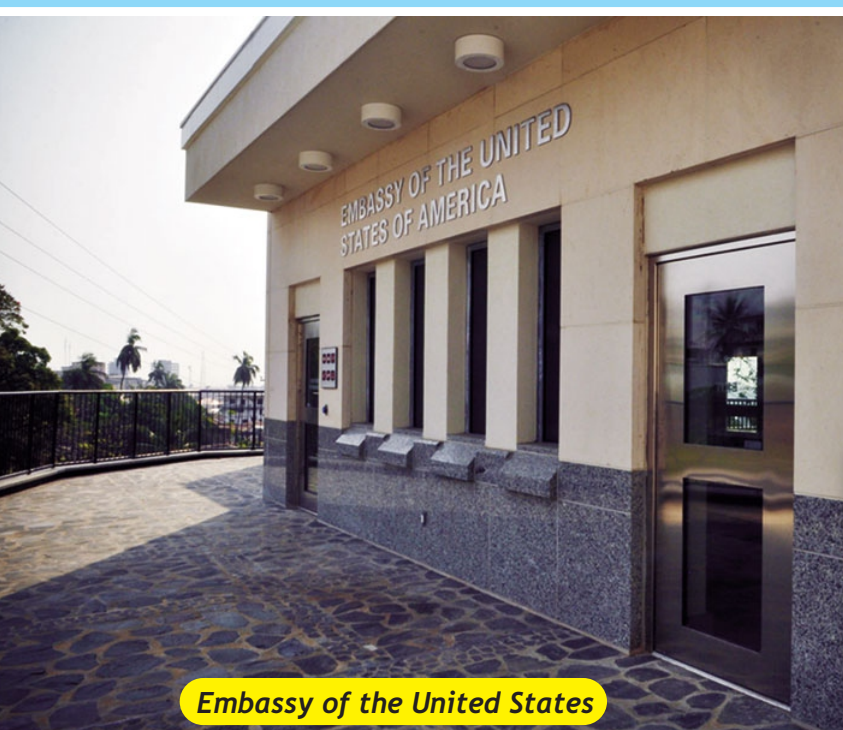
VOL. 13 NO. 144      FRIDAY, AUGUST 18, 2023      PRICE LD\$40.00

# Don't reject me again



President Weah

## -Weah begs District #3 voters



Embassy of the United States

# US Embassy cautions political parties

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# Continental News

## ECOWAS Military Chiefs to Discuss Potential Intervention in Niger

Regional countries are facing a crisis of legitimacy as they run out of options and time to restore democratic rule in Niger after soldiers ousted the president last month, say

since ECOWAS ordered the deployment of a "standby force" last week to restore constitutional rule in the country. It's unclear if or when troops would intervene. A force would likely consist of several thousands soldiers from

But as time drags on with no military action and a standstill in negotiations, the junta is entrenching its power, leaving ECOWAS with few choices.

"ECOWAS has few good options ... particularly as the



Mohamed Toumba, one of the soldiers who ousted Nigerian President Mohamed Bazoum, addresses supporters of Niger's ruling junta in Niamey, Niger

analysts. Defense chiefs from the West African regional bloc, ECOWAS, are meeting in Ghana on Thursday to discuss Niger's crisis after a deadline passed for mutinous soldiers to release and reinstate President Mohamed Bazoum or face military intervention. Bazoum was overthrown in July and remains under house arrest with his wife and son in the capital, Niamey.

This is the first meeting

Nigeria, Ivory Coast, Senegal and Benin and could take weeks or months to prepare, say conflict experts. ECOWAS has a poor track record in stemming the region's rampant coups: neighboring Burkina Faso and Mali have each had two within three years. Niger's coup was seen by the international community and ECOWAS as one too many and in addition to threatening a military invasion, the bloc has imposed severe economic and travel sanctions.

(junta) seems unwilling for the moment to cede to outside pressure," said Andrew Lebovich, a research fellow with the Clingendael Institute, a think tank. "An intervention could backfire and damage the organization in numerous ways, while a failure to extract major concessions from the (junta) could weaken the organization politically at an already fragile time," he said.VOA

## Dozens of Senegalese Migrants Dead or Missing From Fishing Boat

Dozens of migrants headed for Spain are believed missing and feared dead after coast guards off the Atlantic Island of Cabo Verde rescued 38 people on a boat that had left Senegal in West Africa over one month ago with more than 100 aboard, authorities and migrant advocates said. Senegal's foreign affairs ministry said the boat was rescued on Tuesday with 38 survivors and several dead on board by the coast guard in Cabo Verde, about 620 kilometers (385 miles) off the coast of West Africa. Authorities did not confirm how many migrants died, or what caused the trip to fail.

The Spanish migration advocacy group Walking Borders said the vessel was a large fishing boat, called a pirogue, which had left Senegal on July 10 with more than 100 migrants on board.

Families in Fass Boye, a seaside town 145 kilometers (90 miles) north of the capital Dakar, had reached out to Walking Borders on July 20

after 10 days without hearing from loved ones on the boat, group founder Helena Maleno Garzón said. Cheikh Awa Boye, president of the local fishermen's association, said he has two nephews among the missing.

migrants died while trying to reach Spain by sea in the first six months of 2023, Walking Borders says. Factors such as youth unemployment, political unrest and the impact of climate change push migrants to risk their lives on overcrowded boats. On Aug. 7,



Children play on fishing boats known as "pirogues" in Dakar, Senegal, June 24, 2023. Large pirogues such as the one found Aug. 15, 2023, near Cabo Verde are used in migrant crossings from Senegal to Spain.

"They wanted to go to Spain," Boye said. The route from West Africa to Spain is one of the world's most dangerous, yet the number of migrants leaving from Senegal on rickety wooden boats has surged over the past year. Nearly 1,000

the Moroccan navy recovered the bodies of five Senegalese migrants and rescued 189 others after their boat capsized off the coast of Western Sahara.VOA

## Cape Verde boat disaster: 'My brother died for a dream we all have'

The brother of a man who died after a boat carrying dozens of migrants was found off Cape Verde has told the BBC they were trying to reach Spain.

More than 60 people are feared to have died on the boat, which was at sea for over a month. Most were from Senegal.

"Everyone is shocked. He was one of the pillars of our family," Mamour Ba said about his brother Cheikhouna.

But the 27-year-old said he would still attempt the trip himself as it was impossible to make a living in Senegal.

Mr Ba, 27, is a student from the small fishing town of Fass Boye, halfway along the coast between the capital, Dakar, and the historical town of St Louis.

Three of his brothers and one of his cousins were on the wooden pirogue style boat that set off for Europe on 10 July from Fass Boye with 101 people on board.

"They wanted to get to Spain. They said they wanted

they just said: 'We're alive'. They sounded very weak."

But as the conversation continued, he found out that not all of them had survived.

"One of my brothers, Ibrahima, used one of the doctor's phones to call me from Cape Verde.

"He told us our other brother Cheikhouna was lost at sea. I was shocked. We were very close, he was a real fighter. He was married with two kids.

"The day he left he held my hands and said, 'Brother I have to go.'

"He was my brother, he was my friend."

After news of the tragedy spread in Fass Boye, where most of those on board the boat hailed from, anger erupted on Wednesday.

Some set fire to the house of the mayor, angered with the authorities about the lack of opportunities for young people.

This frustration is something Mr Ba is all too familiar with - he has tried at least twice to leave Senegal.

"There was nothing for me here... so I decided I needed to try



to leave and I couldn't tell them not to because they'd already made their minds up."

He thought they had all died, until he got a call from Cape Verde on Wednesday after their rescue. They were among 38 people, including children, who were saved, with footage showing them being helped ashore, some on stretchers, on the island of Sal. More than 60 other people are feared to be lost at sea. The archipelago sits around 600km (372 miles) off the coast of West Africa and on the migration route to the Canary Islands, a Spanish territory seen by many as a route to the EU. Mr Ba says he still does not know the details of his relatives' five-week journey as they were too disorientated: "They didn't have the strength to explain what happened,

to move to Europe via Morocco," he said, speaking of his first attempt during his third year at university. Things did not work out though, and he was forced to return home after spending nine months there. But he was determined to achieve his dream of moving to Europe - and tried again, this time just a few weeks ago, at the end of June, with Cheikhouna. But the attempt failed. "This latest trip was Cheikhouna's second attempt at getting to Europe by boat. Three days after we came back, he had set off again," Mr Ba said. "He was determined to leave because he had a family and there's nothing for us here in Senegal. "We're fishermen, we work all day and we make no money. He just wanted to feed his family and have a better life." Mr Ba knows it is risky to try to board another boat to Europe, but it comes down to finances.BBC

# EDITORIAL

# COMMENTARY

By Gordon Brown

## Bloody campaign is unwarranted

## British Conservatives' Contempt for Human Rights

LAST THURSDAY'S (AUGUST 10, 2023) bloody clash between rival supporters of opposition Candidate Joseph Nyumah Boakia of the Unity Party (UP) and the ruling Coalition for Democratic Change (CDC) in Electoral District#9, Montserrado County left zealous youth wounded in a campaign for the October 10th elections was totally unwarranted. No Liberian or partisan of a political party has to die or has to be disfigured just for the love of a candidate.

AFTER IT ALL, we Liberians have to coexist as one nation whether members of a winning party or losing parties. And there will be many losing parties as only but one out of the 20 candidates in the race, including incumbent President Weah will be declared winner either in the first or second round.

SO WHY DO we inflict injuries on one another during campaigns for the sake of rival candidates? Do Liberians have to go to such extreme to demonstrate love and loyalty for a particular candidate? We think not.

AS LPP'S PRESIDENTIAL Candidate Cllr. Tiawan S. Gongloe has pointed out, political campaign should not be about enmity, but competition of ideas, ideas of how our candidates or candidates of our choice intend to improve the nation and all of its people, not only partisans, if elected President or member of the legislature.

HOWEVER, THE VIOLENCE that transpired on August 10th in District #9 barely five or six days into the campaign was not only unfortunate but highly disappointing especially, after political parties' leaders and candidates had expressed before the citizenry and international partners their commitment to violence-free elections.

SADLY ALSO, WE did not see leadership demonstrated at the highest level of the political parties that were involved in the clashes except denial by the ruling CDC and threats from the opposition UP that it would use every means at its disposal for self-defense.

WE THINK THAT was below the belt. Both the incumbent administration and those desiring leadership should exercise tolerance and maturity in responding to crisis, which is one of the marks of good leadership.

IN OUR WISDOM, ALL that was needed is for leaders of the two parties, thank God, they both have served our country at the highest level - President Weah being at the helm of power for six years and is seeking a second term and Amb. Boakai, who had served as Vice President for 12 years and wants to come to the presidency.

SO WHY WAS it so difficult in calling their respective followers and supporters to order, that citizens had to suffer wounds? Why was it so difficult for both leaders to call each other before coming out? Campaign should not be about enmity, but in Liberia, dare say Africa, this is what it is.

THERE IS YET a long way to go, as campaign is officially expected to end on October 8, 2023, for Elections Day on October 10th. The denial and the threat coming from both sides are sending wrong signals to the electorate and creating fear in the entire population of the kind of canvassing to expect one mar by terror and blood perhaps, as we go to the polls, which is absolutely unwarranted.

EDINBURGH - For centuries, Britain has prided itself on being a bastion of liberty and the rule of law. British leaders have talked in glowing terms of the "golden thread" that connects the Magna Carta of 1215 and the Bill of Rights of 1689 to the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR) of 1950 and the Human Rights Act of 1998. Thus, the United Kingdom's human-rights record has been central to successive governments' efforts to exercise soft power globally.

No one has boasted more about Britain's global leadership in human rights - and its rule-of-law credentials more broadly - than the five Conservative prime ministers who have held office since the 2016 Brexit vote. Yet, in practice, these very ministers have been systematically undermining the rule of law, and the "law and order" party is now contemplating abandoning the ECHR - a framework that British leaders, beginning with Winston Churchill, pioneered over 70 years ago and persuaded Europeans to accept.

According to The Telegraph, a newspaper close to the Conservative Party, more than one-third of the cabinet - at least eight ministers - along with other senior Tories, are pushing Prime Minister Rishi Sunak to place a commitment to withdraw from the ECHR at the center of the coming election campaign. Their justification is that judges at the European Court of Human Rights are blocking the deportation of illegal migrants from the UK to Rwanda, which has agreed to accept them (for a hefty price).

Renouncing the Convention is no idle threat. Already, the government has positioned itself to defy the Court. With the just-passed Illegal Migration Act, the government has - for the first time since the ECHR was concluded - claimed the power not to comply with the Court's "interim measures." In other words, the UK government can now ignore any European order to stop flights of migrants to Rwanda. This provision directly breaches the UK's obligations under the ECHR.

The Illegal Migration Act is the latest development in a downward spiral that has undermined basic rights. The government now boasts it is housing asylum-seekers in inferior accommodation, including massive barges more reminiscent of the prison ships Britain used in the nineteenth century than modern amenities.

The Act also strips asylum-seekers of their right to remain in the UK while their application is considered, and provides for deportation of applicants before any effort is made to determine whether someone is, say, a victim of modern slavery. The United Nations' humanitarian agency, UNHCR, has condemned the legislation, stating that it "effectively extinguishes the right of refugees to be recognized and protected in the UK."

These actions follow prime ministerial rulings that renounced the government's explicit duty, enshrined in the ministerial code, to comply with international law. Government lawyers are now operating under unprecedented new guidance to

proceed with drafting legislation that dismisses international conventions, even if there is a high chance of successful legal challenge. (Fortunately, the opposition has promised to reverse such actions.)

As for the ECHR, Conservative prime ministers have been targeting it for at least a decade. In 2013, David Cameron told the BBC that leaving the Convention might be necessary for security reasons. In 2016, Theresa May said that, while the UK should remain in the EU, it should exit the ECHR, which can "bind the hands of Parliament." May's successors, Boris Johnson and Liz Truss, echoed this call to abandon the ECHR, as did their far-right home secretaries, Priti Patel and Suella Braverman. Braverman claimed earlier this year - with little evidence - that "100 million people around the world...could qualify for protection under our current laws," making an immigration crackdown essential.

According to a statement from 10 Downing Street in February, Sunak is considering "whether being a part of the ECHR is in the UK's long-term interests." And a few days ago, Robert Jenrick, the immigration minister, said that the government would do "whatever is necessary" to stop small boats from crossing the English Channel, even if that meant pulling out of the ECHR.

This wholesale Conservative attack on the ECHR reflects the view that UK sovereignty must be unlimited, unrestricted, and accountable to no one, especially not a European court. Even after Brexit, apparently, the UK does not enjoy enough "independence" to privilege the "us," who deserve basic rights, over the "them," who do not. It is a prejudice that is out of touch with any concept of human rights and unsuited to our interconnected world, in which each country's independence is qualified by all countries' interdependence, and where prosperity, to be sustained, must be shared.

For the time being, under Attorney General Victoria Prentis, the UK may refrain from choosing non-compliance with interim European Court judgments. But the mere fact that the UK statute book now includes a provision allowing for defiance of the Court's rulings undermines the entire ECHR system.

By weakening the Court's authority to interpret the Convention and turning its judgments into political footballs, the UK is setting a precedent that other countries will invariably follow. Indeed, the UK's alignment with "illiberal democracies" such as Poland, Hungary, and Turkey on any issue relating to human rights betrays its historical record and reputation.

Should the UK leave the ECHR altogether, it would become an international outlier, alongside Russia and Belarus.

Anyone who stands for the advancement and protection of human rights must keep this in mind, knowing that rights are on the agenda when the next UK election comes.

History and a sense of who we are should convince the British people not to empower leaders who show such contempt for human rights.

# OP-ED

By Mohamed A. El-Erian

## Simplifying a Complicated Global Economy

**C**AMBRIDGE - The global economy this year is full of puzzling surprises. Japan's GDP growth is currently surpassing that of China, and July retail sales in the United States were double the consensus forecast, despite the US Federal Reserve pursuing one of the most concentrated rate-hiking cycles in decades.

In the United Kingdom, wage growth has risen to an annualized rate of 7.8% and core inflation has remained high, even after 14 consecutive rate hikes by the Bank of England (with more to come). Meanwhile, Brazil and Chile have both cut interest rates, diverging from market expectations that the Fed will keep rates high for a prolonged period.

These oddities are just a few of many, and adding to the complexity are the uncertain implications of significant structural shifts on the horizon. These include the necessary transition to zero-carbon energy, the artificial-intelligence revolution, and various other innovation-driven changes. Add in geopolitical tensions and the retreat from economic and financial globalization, and a wide range of potential scenarios opens up.

With so many moving pieces, and under such unconventional (and in many cases unprecedented) conditions, navigating this landscape would be challenging for anyone. That is when I find it particularly useful to return to a simple analytical framework that I learned early in my career as an economist.

It is an extreme version of a "reduced-form equation" that economists use to focus on just a handful of key factors for predicting outcomes. These factors may not fully explain a phenomenon, but this strategy is better than relying on an impractically large and unwieldy set of factors.

In today's context, my analytical approach poses a simple question: What single piece of information would be most valuable if I were stranded on a desert island for six months and wanted to understand what had happened to the global economy during that time? Given the current state of affairs, I would primarily want to know how the US had managed its growth-inflation dynamics. Or, more to the point, I would want to know whether the Fed had achieved a "soft landing" (bringing inflation back down toward its target without causing a sharp increase in unemployment).

This information is crucial, because the global economy currently lacks alternative engines. After all, the growth challenges facing China, the UK, and the eurozone are not susceptible to quick policy fixes; a still-levered international financial system with high debt levels can ill afford another surge in US interest rates and strong dollar appreciation; Japan has yet to figure out how to exit its "yield-curve control" policy in a smooth manner; and the global economy continues to suffer gradual fragmentation.

At first glance, the prospects for the Fed achieving a soft landing do appear promising. Inflation has receded from its peak of over 9% last year to slightly above 3%, bringing it much closer to the 2% target. At the same time, household spending continues to drive economic growth, and corporate balance sheets are solid. These conditions suggest that the US economy can absorb the cumulative impact of the Fed hiking rates by five percentage points, while also sidestepping the effects of faltering Chinese growth and Europe's on-and-off flirtation with recession.

But, as the economic historian Niall Ferguson recently pointed out, "managing monetary policy is not in the least like flying a plane." This simile seems especially applicable to the current Fed, for several reasons.

First, the Fed's operating manual is outdated. Its "new monetary framework" is, in fact, suited for the prior decade of insufficient aggregate demand, rather than to this decade of insufficient aggregate supply. Second, the Fed's landing zone is questionable, because the inflation target it is pursuing may well be too low given current structural and secular realities.

Third, with its excessive focus on immediate conditions, the Fed could end up neglecting the future wind patterns that it will encounter as its altitude changes. Fourth, it initiated its landing sequence late, following a long period in which it had mischaracterized inflation as "transitory" before finally implementing an intense cycle of rate hikes. And, finally, it is not clear whether the Fed has learned enough from its forecasting and communication mistakes to make the necessary course corrections.

Yes, the US economy has defied skeptics by maintaining robust growth above that of other major economies, and despite its notably higher interest rates and significant external headwinds. But the continuation of this exceptional performance hinges on the Fed's ability to establish a low and stable inflation rate without triggering a recession. This is a delicate balancing act, and whatever happens will significantly influence the rest of the global economy and how policymakers navigate today's extraordinary uncertainty.

My hope is that six months from now, we will celebrate the Fed's success in achieving a soft landing and in positioning the US and the global economy to manage the exciting, but challenging, secular and strategic transitions ahead. My fear, however, is that the process will be much more complicated than many economic and market analysts expect, casting a once-avoidable shadow over one of the few bright spots in the global economy.



## Lord, who tell them the Footballer people geh time for facts

Dear Father:

*I beg you ya, who tell them de Footballer people geh time for facts. In fact, who tell you da they can even listen to him when he talking before your want them to be correcting him.*

*The man say the Old man used to be sleeping so he never used to see him putting him hand up. Which one be your own to come start making noise around here? Is it becus he say only him man Alberto used to see him hand whenever he wor presiding? Yor lee us mehn.*

*You say whatin, da Alberto wor there?*

*I beg you ya, Alberto who just came in de picture de orlor day wehplay he wor eh?*

*So, it mean de Old Man talked true da our man never used put him hand up or he never used to attend meeting at de Traditional Council when he wor there? Becus he na even know who was de Paramount Chief sef. Damn! Father, it look leh de sleepy Old Man win dis orlor debate oo.*

*Bor my son, you want to tell me nobody wor there to correct de man?*

*Father, how many time I mon say dis one thing? When de people see de Country Giant all their brain them can scatter. Some can go spend time.*

*I say de people can be so happy da anything our big Brabee say da gospel truth to them. So, nobody geh time sef to understand de thing them de man can be talking. All they know, their man talking and they there-da all.*

*Bor come to think of it Father, me I na blame de people who are just there to see de man-whether we leokay or not, de man supporter them jus leh him.*

*De only problem I have is with de one them who can come be running with it on de Town Crier them, they wan to tell us da they too have lost their brains?*

*So, you see de problem there. Okay, so we understand de Footballer wor talking da day and him make mistake, you who come explain somer de thing them de man wor saying, you want to tell us you na listen well, well and do some background checking before you come on de village radio to explain to us-Ay mehn!*

*Bor my son who say somer de people geh time for de truth.*

*Father, de thing too bad mehn, leh talk so and talk so. I shame sef. If you do it leh da na, it will jus be looking ugly.*

*We all know de Footballer da human being, he can make mistake-you can't tell me he na know who wor de Paramount Chief when he wor at de Upper end of the Tradition Council.*

*So, to jus start running with de same thing leh da ay mehn, yor na doing well for our Brabee at all. Even de time de man talking about our village paper used to be 23 dollar of Uncle Sam money, na de 50 we are paying for it today.*

*Father, I know de Country Giant made honest mistake.*

*How do you know my son?*

*Father, I been following dis man since 2005, if da one thing I know about him, him na leh for people to lie for him. He will tell you de truth.*

*Ehn we here, all de people da going around telling all kina lies how de man na do dis orlor one here and da orlor one there de day de man geh ready to talk one on one, he will say my people leh me tell your de true yaa.*

*So, leh them be there lying all around here saying they helping and covering up for de man. Trust me Father, just listen to our man next time he talking, he will correct himself. Ley man na willing to give nobody chance to come and say bad, bad thing them about him here just so they can pretend leh they working becus when de shit hit de fence, they will all scatter looking for new places to hang their coat them.*



# MORE HEADLINE NEWS

# MORE HEADLINE NEWS

## GOL to launch rehab centers in four counties

### – UN pledges \$3M in support

By Kruah Thompson

The Minister of Youth and Sports, Mr. D. Zeogar Wilson has announced the launch of rehabilitation centers for at-risk youth across four counties

Minister Wilson disclosed that there are plans for an additional six detoxification centers and thirteen rehabilitation centers to be distributed across the four respective counties.

\$1 million. Meanwhile, Minister Wilson has highlighted the government's achievement in raising \$556,000 to fund the project."

He said the recruitment process for the at-risk youth is expected to take place across several locations, including Montserrado County at the Pennoh Building on Center Street, and the Invincible Sports Park in Sinkor.

Bomi and Brand Bassa counties will have two recruitment sites each.

According to Mr. Wilson, the process has been underway for several years in collaboration with multiple partners. He indicated that President Weah's stance is to maintain a non-political approach with a clear focus on addressing the prevailing issue. Wilson revealed that while the program is administered by the government, its progress was impeded by the emergence of the COVID-19 pandemic. Despite the challenges, he said the previous year still saw significant advancements.

For her part, the United Nation Liberia Resident Coordinator Christian N. Umutoni has appreciated the government through the Ministry of Youth and Sports and other line ministries for their collaboration on the at-risk youth program.

"For the detoxification centers, Montserrado and Margibi are each set to have two centers, while Bomi and Bassa will each host one center."

He further expressed hope that the at-risk youth will embrace the program and actively participate in its recruitment process.

During the early 2023 fundraising campaign for at-risk youth, President George Manneh Weah pledged a sum of

in Liberia. The project targets Montserrado, Grand Bassa, Bomi, and Margibi Counties, respectively. Scheduled to commence on 21 August 2023, the program's initial phase aims to relocate more than 1,000 at-risk youth to rehabilitation centers across the four counties. They will be taken to those centers for screening and comprehensive support, effectively addressing the diverse challenges they encounter.

## House bids farewell to fallen lawmaker

House Speaker Bhofal Chambers has described fallen Grand Bassa County District 1 Representative, Hans M. Barchue, as a statesman whose energetic, eloquent and stirring leadership forged him into the fortitude of history.

Speaker Chambers added that the late Representative Barchue will be mourned all over Liberia by all who owe so much to him.

Speaker, Acting Speaker, Chairman of the House Modernization Committee, and Liberian Representative to the Pan African Parliament among others in the 53rd and 54th legislature respectfully.

Meanwhile, the remains of the fallen lawmaker, has been taken to his hometown in District 1, Grand Bassa County, for a night of wake keeping.

Early Friday morning, the coffin will be taken to the



According to the Speaker, the fallen Grand Bassa Lawmaker, is now at peace after a life in which he created history and which will be remembered as long as history is read.

The Speaker made the

Executive Pavilion on the Fairgrounds in Buchanan City for a whole day of wake keeping and on Saturday, 19 August, funeral rites will take place in District 1 preceding burial at the Ownesgrove cemetery.

## Dangerous for Liberia's peace

### --Political parties warned against campaign violence

By Lincoln G. Peters

Liberian political parties have been warned that the growing wave of political violence here is toxic and dangerous for the country's fragile peace and democracy.

The National Civil Society Council of Liberia (NCSCL) issued the warning about the 'toxic political environment' here Thursday, 17 August 2023.

The civil society group's warning comes in the wake of a recent bloody political campaign clashes between supporters of the ruling Coalition for Democratic Change (CDC) and its main rival Unity Party (UP).

Several persons were severely wounded last Friday when CDC and UP supporters clashed in a stone battle after the former prevented UP presidential candidate Amb. Joseph Nyumah Boakai from accessing his party's

campaign headquarters in Sinkor.

But the NCSCL has expressed serious frustration and disappointment over the uncontrollable wave of political violence and conduct of violent campaign activities across the country by political parties.

In a statement released Thursday under the signature of NCSCL Chairperson Madam

Loretta Pope-Kai, the group spoke against hate speeches and violations of the laws, including the Farmington River Declaration.

The group reminded political parties that they signed the Farmington River Declaration and committed to a peaceful electoral process, urging them to do the needful to have violence-free

▶ CONT'D ON PAGE 11



comments when he paid tribute on behalf of the House of Representatives Thursday, 17 August during the lying in state of the late Rep. Hans Barchue.

Other leaders who joined the tributes included Senate Pro-Temp, Albert T. Chie, Grand Bassa County 53rd Legislative Caucus and the 53rd Legislature.

Prior to his death on July 18, 2023, the late Representative Hans M. Barchue, served as Representative of Grand Bassa County District 1, Deputy

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# MORE HEADLINE NEWS

# MORE HEADLINE NEWS

## National Registry frowns at citizens' defiance

By Naneka Hoffman

Registry.

The National Identification Registry (NIR) says it has observed with disappointment that some Liberians and foreign residents have deliberately refused to renew their expired National

Speaking Thursday, August 17, in a news conference at the NIR headquarters in Congo Town, Executive Director Andrew Peters said the ACT gives the Registry authority to enroll all Liberians and foreign residents in its data base to

documents, opening bank accounts and other identification documents.

He says the biometric ID cards will be supported by adequate and appropriate security features to address possible fraudulent duplications.

The NIR boss adds that the Registry will develop and adapt appropriate rules and procedures for submission and evaluation of biometric data and other information as well as storage and security of such data and information.

Mr. Peters explains that the Registry in five years has registered nearly (600,000) six hundred thousand persons, representing 1.5 percent of the total population of Liberia, quoting the Liberia Institute for Statistics and Geo-Information.

He says this number does not represent actual intent of the Liberian government, but due to unwillingness of some citizens and foreign residents to register, coupled with lack of cooperation from ministries, agencies, banking institutions and the private sector to help the NIR to enforce these regulations by making it mandatory to their

▶ CONT'D ON PAGE 11

## 4th Circuit Court in Harper opens for August Term

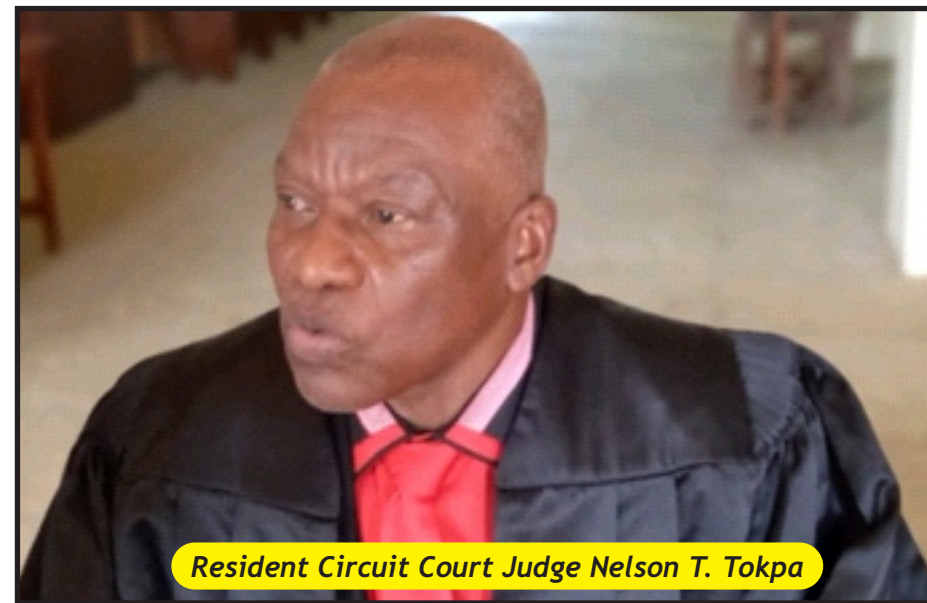
By Patrick N. Mensah, Maryland County

The 4th Judicial Circuit court in Harper, Electoral District One, Maryland County, has opened for the August Term of Court with six criminal cases and five civil cases on its docket. They include two statutory rape cases, aggravated assault, one murder case that is on motion for appeal, theft of property, misapplication of entrusted property, criminal conspiracy, forgery, violation of PPCC procedures and public financial management law of 2009, economic sabotage, bribery, unlawful rewarding of public service and criminal conspiracy, respectively.

During the opening of the August Term on Monday, August 14, Resident Circuit Court Judge Nelson T. Tokpa, said that the judiciary only has power to render judgment, so it needs to be protected from outside influence by providing safeguard to its independence. He reminds that it is the constitutional duty of the court to declare acts that are contrary to the Constitution or are illegal. "The Constitution guarantees judicial protection,

political interest. "We are expected to approach every case with an open mind and render unbiased judgment", he underscores, and adds, "We must be impartial and nonpartisan at all times, especially during these critical periods of our national elections." According to the judge, judicial independence consists of intellectual honesty and dedication to the enforcement of rule of law regardless of popular sentiment, personal interest, and the ability to render timely decision in the absence of political pressure and without fear or favor, reminding that it is often said that justice delayed, is justice denied.

Judge Tokpa points out that judicial independence should be guaranteed to all trial judges and magistrates in accordance with the Constitution, because more trial judges and magistrates are not insulated from Legislative and Executive pressures in the county. He notes that over the years especially, during critical electoral periods, party litigants instead of taking their cases to the Supreme Court on an appeal basis or by other legal means available for proper legal redress, are in the constant habit of taking their cases to



Resident Circuit Court Judge Nelson T. Tokpa

granting its power to say no to the Executive when they overstep the limits of their constitutional power; in this way, the Constitution tries to insulate judges and magistrates from public pressures that will affect elected officials of the government", Judge Tokpa explains. He says the Constitution of Liberia is independent or impartial, as it's not intended to benefit only judges and magistrates, but to promote rule of law, equality before the law and ensure justice in every case throughout the Republic. He says when speaking of judicial independence, it certainly does not mean there is lack of accountability to laws written and enacted by the Legislature, but that judges and magistrates must follow the Constitution in rendering judgment to set precedents that are not based on their own

lawmakers from the county and the Executive to influence and overturn judgment or decision when they are adjudged liable or convicted by the court, terming such acts as a form of threat to judicial independence under the Constitution. The judge alleges that trial judges and magistrates often receive threat of violence from party litigants, their family members or citizens for judicial actions taken by courts in the county. He discloses that in 2022 and during the February Term of Court this year, one Tigbaway of Harper City constantly threatened to kill him alone with other court workers, and two defendants, who were charged with murder and criminal conspiracy, for granting them bill while the matter was pending before the court for trial.

Judge Tokpa adds that the defendant involved in such act is currently serving sentence at the River Gee County prison on account of his threatening remarks

Identification (ID) cards and other identification documents in complete defiance of the National Identification ACT approved by the Legislature on August 1, 2011. The Act repeals the PRC Decree #65, establishing the National Identification

design, produce and issue biometric ID cards each with a unique identification number that would also serve as social security number approved by the government for the purpose of registering births, deaths, passports, immigrant

## Breast cancer victim seeks assistance for foreign treatment

By Lincoln G. Peters

A 28-year-old Liberian single mother Ms. Rejoice Mechin Goffah has launched an emergency appeal for well-meaning Liberians, humanitarian organizations, philanthropists, and government officials to help her seek foreign medical treatment.

Ms. Goffah contracted breast cancer when she had her first child sometime in 2011, but the situation was not serious at that time.

"My sister contracted this unfortunate breast cancer in 2011 when she had her first child," she said.

She said Ms. Goffah felt

uncomfortable and she didn't breast-feed all her two children.

Ms. Nuchoue detailed that the victim's break disengaged from selling due to the pain she was suffering in her breast.

"Currently, my sister is not sleeping in peace. She is experiencing serious pain. We don't sleep at night. We were told to conduct a breast surgery outside the country, but we don't have the money," said Nuchoue.

"Therefore, we are appealing to the public to help us save this soul. We want her to go for the treatment and come back and take care of her children. If anybody reading and wants to help, they can contact 0555744409," she concluded.



Christelle Nuchoue, an extended family member to the victim, granted an exclusive telephone interview with this paper Thursday, 17 August 2023, and lamented Ms. Goffah's health condition.

Ms. Nuchoue explained that the state-owned John F. Kennedy Memorial Hospital in Sinkor and the Chinese Health Center in Paynesville diagnosed Ms. Goffah with breast cancer.

Ms. Goffah is a resident of Gay Town in the Old Road Community. She is a single mother of two children. She was a petite trader before being diagnosed with breast cancer.

According to Nuchoue,

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# Français

## Gongloe avertit Weah et Boakai du risque d'une escalade de la violence

Le Porte-drapeau du Parti populaire libérien a mis en garde ses rivaux, à savoir

démocratie durement gagnées de la nation.

Lors d'un entretien avec un groupe de journalistes mardi à la suite d'une

destruction dans le pays.

Il a exhorté les candidats en lice à expliquer au peuple ce qu'ils ont l'intention de faire s'ils sont élus, au lieu d'inciter les gens à la violence. « La paix au Libéria ne sera sapée par personne », a-t-il dit, « Je lance un appel à la coalition au pouvoir et au Parti de l'unité. Je leur demande de cesser d'augmenter la tension dans le pays et de susciter de la peur chez les gens ». Selon lui, les Libériens ont généralement peur de la violence car ils sont conscients que les violences continues risquent de mettre en péril la démocratie du pays.

A noter que les militants des deux partis se sont affrontés jeudi dernier en allant aux meetings séparés qu'ils avaient organisés dans le district numéro 9 de Montserrado. Il y a eu beaucoup de blessés.

Le porte-drapeau du LPP accuse les deux partis d'avoir commis une grave erreur en faisant couler le sang des citoyens. « Que les deux comprennent à quel point le Libéria a progressé dans le maintien de la paix. Le président Weah et M. Boakai, ne peuvent pas menacer les Libériens qui ont dû fuir leur propre pays pendant la guerre pour se mettre à l'abri des balles. C'est totalement inacceptable. Nous ne permettrons pas à ces deux-là de saper notre démocratie », a-t-il insisté.

Le leader politique du Parti

▶ CONT'D ON PAGE 9

## Niger : comment interpréter l'arrivée de l'ambassadrice américaine Kathleen Fitzgibbon

Kathleen Fitzgibbon devrait arriver durant les prochains jours à Niamey pour y prendre son poste de nouvelle ambassadrice des États-Unis. Celle dont la nomination avait été confirmée le 27 juillet par son Sénat, au lendemain du coup d'État au Niger, ne présentera pas ses lettres de créances à la junte. Son arrivée pourrait toutefois confirmer une position plus souple des Américains vis-à-vis des putschistes.

Au Niger, l'ambassadrice américaine devrait arriver pour prendre son poste à Niamey d'ici la fin de semaine. Une annonce ce 16 août 2023 du Département d'État, le ministère des Affaires étrangères des États-Unis.

La nomination de Kathleen Fitzgibbon a été confirmée par le Sénat le 27 juillet, au lendemain du coup d'État. Il s'agit d'une diplomate d'expérience avec plusieurs années en poste en Afrique. Une

réunion au forum des parties prenantes de la Commission électorale nationale (NEC) à laquelle ont pris part les candidats à la présidentielle, Me Gongloe a été clair. Il a mis en garde le président Weah et son principal rival, M. Boakai contre l'incitation à la violence, indiquant que cela a la propension à provoquer le chaos et la

Elle ne présentera pas ses lettres de créances à la junte

Le département d'Etat se veut pourtant clair. « L'arrivée de l'ambassadrice n'est pas le signe d'un changement de politique. Notre position reste la même », a indiqué Vedant Patel. Pour le porte-parole adjoint, Washington demande toujours la libération du président renversé Mohamed Bazoum et le respect de l'ordre constitutionnel.

D'ailleurs, Kathleen Fitzgibbon ne présentera pas ses lettres de créances à la junte, document permettant d'officialiser la nomination d'un représentant étranger.

Pour autant, selon des experts, les États-Unis ne font pas partie du camp des « durs » et sont frileux vis-à-vis d'une intervention armée pour chasser la junte. « Nous continuons à pousser pour une solution diplomatique », a rappelé hier Vedant Patel. L'ambassadrice, plusieurs

▶ CONT'D ON PAGE 9



## Éditorial

### Une campagne sanglante est injustifiée

L'affrontement sanglant et totalement injustifié de jeudi dernier (10 août 2023) entre les partisans rivaux du candidat de l'opposant Joseph Nyumah Boakia du Parti de l'unité (UP) et de la coalition pour le changement démocratique (CDC) dans la circonscription électorale n° 9 du comté de Montserrado a fait des blessés. C'est regrettable. Aucun Libérien ou partisan d'un parti politique ne devrait mourir ou être défiguré juste pour l'amour d'un candidat.

Après tout, nous n'avons d'autres choix que de cohabiter comme une seule nation en tant que libériens, que nous soyons membres du parti qui aura gagné ou qui aura perdu. Et il y aura de nombreux partis perdants car sur les 20 candidats en lice, un seul sera déclaré vainqueur au premier ou au second tour de la présidentielle.

Alors pourquoi s'infliger des blessures les uns aux autres pendant les campagnes au nom de la politique ? Les Libériens sont-ils obligés de s'adonner à une telle extrémité pour démontrer leur amour et leur loyauté envers un candidat particulier ? Nous pensons que non.

Le candidat Tiawan S. Gongloe l'a souligné. Une campagne présidentielle ne devrait pas être une question d'inimitié, mais une compétition d'idées, des idées sur la façon dont nos candidats ou candidates de notre choix ont l'intention d'améliorer la nation et l'ensemble de son peuple.

Cependant, la violence qui s'est produite le 10 août dans le district n° 9 à peine cinq ou six jours après le début de la campagne était non seulement malheureuse mais très décevante, surtout après que les dirigeants et les candidats des partis politiques aient exprimé devant les citoyens et les partenaires internationaux leur engagement envers des élections apaisées.

Malheureusement aussi, nous n'avons pas vu de leadership démontré au plus haut niveau des partis politiques impliqués dans les affrontements, à l'exception du déni du parti au pouvoir et aux propos de l'opposition qui menace d'utiliser tous les moyens à sa disposition pour se défendre.

Nous pensons que c'était en dessous de la ceinture. L'administration en place et ceux qui souhaitent diriger doivent faire preuve de tolérance et de maturité dans leur réponse aux crises, ce qui est l'une des marques d'un bon leadership.

Dans notre sagesse, tout ce qui était nécessaire, c'est que les dirigeants des deux partis, Dieu merci, ils ont tous deux servi notre pays au plus haut niveau - le président Weah étant à la tête du pays depuis six ans et cherche un second mandat et Boakai, qui fut vice-président pendant 12 ans et veut accéder à la présidence.

Alors pourquoi était-il si difficile de rappeler à l'ordre leurs fidèles et sympathisants respectifs, que des citoyens aient dû subir des blessures ? Pourquoi était-il si difficile pour les deux dirigeants de s'appeler avant de sortir ? La campagne ne devrait pas être sur l'inimitié, mais au Libéria, osons dire l'Afrique, c'est ce qu'il en est.

Il reste encore un long chemin à parcourir, car la campagne devrait officiellement se terminer le 8 octobre 2023 et les élections auront lieu le 10 octobre. Le déni et la menace venant des deux côtés envoient de mauvais signaux à l'électorat et font craindre toute la population.



# Français

## Starts from page 8 **Gongloe avertit Weah et**

populaire démocratique du Libéria (DPPL), le révérend David Kaimu, a aussi abordé dans le même sens. Il a aussi critiqué les deux partis politiques pour les violences qui ont résulté de leur rencontre.

Le révérend Kaimu a déclaré que le Libéria, étant la plus ancienne République de l'Afrique, ne peut se permettre de s'adonner à la violence lors des élections présidentielles et législatives. Il a demandé à la CDC et à l'UP de s'abstenir de la violence sinon ils seront massivement rejetés lors du scrutin d'octobre.

« Ce pays n'appartient pas au CDC, ni au Parti de l'unité (UP). Ce pays appartient à tous les Libériens et s'ils continuent à projeter que ce pays leur appartient, je pense que les Libériens sont sur le point de les rejeter massivement lors des élections », a entonné le révérend Kaimu.

La Commission électorale

nationale (NEC) a déjà donné l'assurance qu'elle est prête à organiser des élections libres, équitables, transparentes et inclusives, crédibles, le 10 octobre.

La présidente de la NEC, Davidetta Browne Lansana, a dit aux parties prenantes et aux candidats le mercredi 15 août 2023 que tout était fin prêt pour les élections, disant avoir rempli toutes les exigences, dont notamment l'opération réussie d'inscription biométrique des électeurs, l'exposition de la liste électorale préliminaire, la publication de la liste électorale définitive, la réception des dossiers de candidature des candidats, la publication des listes finales des candidats retenus et le lancement d'une éducation civique des électeurs (CVE) à l'échelle nationale ainsi que le remplacement en cours des cartes d'électeur perdues et endommagées. Elle s'est dit convaincue que le travail déjà accompli met le Libéria sur la trajectoire des élections réussies en octobre.

## Starts from page 8 **Niger : comment interpréter**

fois en poste en Afrique, aidera d'ailleurs cette politique.

La ligne des Américains est vue comme plutôt souple

La ligne des Américains est vue comme plutôt souple. Ils ont envoyé le numéro 2 du Département d'État, Victoria Nuland, à Niamey début août. Elle y a rencontré le nouveau chef d'état-major nommé par la junte, le général Barmou, formé par Washington, avec qui les Américains veulent maintenir un canal de communication. L'arrivée de

l'ambassadrice procéderait donc de cette position.

Les États-Unis ont aussi des intérêts qu'ils veulent conserver comme une base de drones près d'Agadez, et 1 100 soldats déployés. Le tout pour surveiller le Sahel. Le Wall Street Journal a même révélé récemment que des commandos américains partageaient des avant-postes avec les soldats du général Barmou, à Ouallam et Diffa.

Washington souhaite donc garder ce dispositif, car un départ pourrait permettre au groupe Wagner de venir combler le vide.

## **Le ministre de la Justice met en garde les partis politiques contre la violence**

Le ministre de la Justice met en garde les partis politiques contre la violence

Le Ministre de la Justice Me Frank Musah Dean a demandé aux partis politiques de ne rien dire ou faire qui puisse inciter leurs militants à la violence. Le ministre Dean a également averti que porter des tenues militaires lors des campagnes électorales est contraire à la loi. « Je tiens à demander aux partis politiques de démilitariser leurs insignes. "Ils ne devraient pas porter des vêtements qui ressemblent à ceux de la sécurité nationale, ce qui équivaldrait à exercer le pouvoir de l'État », a déclaré Me Dean.

Par ailleurs, il a promis aux citoyens une sécurité maximale lors des élections. Il s'entretenait avec des journalistes peu de temps après la réunion des parties prenantes organisée par la Commission Electorale Nationale (NEC) et dont l'objectif était de discuter avec les candidats à la présidentielle. Il a expliqué que le ministère de la Justice a déployé une sécurité maximale dans chaque coin du pays pour calmer la violence, rétablir la paix dans tout le pays et protéger tous les candidats. « Nous allons assurer une sécurité maximale, nos hommes sont déjà déployés auprès de chaque aspirant, et nous continuerons à le faire dans la zone régionale.

## **Niger : discussions « difficiles » entre membres du Conseil Paix et Sécurité de l'UA sur les sanctions de la Cédéao**



La communauté internationale a les yeux braqués sur le Niger, depuis le coup d'État du 26 juillet. Un communiqué final sur la réunion du Conseil Paix et Sécurité (CPS) de l'Union Africaine, qui s'est tenue à Addis-Abeba le 14 août 2023, est toujours attendu. La question des sanctions décidées par la Communauté économique des États de l'Afrique de l'Ouest contre le Niger n'a pas fait consensus au sein du CPS, comme des diplomates africains l'ont expliqué à RFI. Une réunion « difficile », « très franche », et « très longue » confie une source diplomatique africaine qui y voit le signe d'une prise de conscience des États membres d'une situation inédite. « Il y a eu

six coups d'État en moins de trois ans », sur le continent, rappelle cette source.

Conséquence : « Nous sommes face à une réalité à laquelle nos textes continentaux ne correspondent plus » et les séances du Conseil Paix Sécurité, dit-elle, deviennent de plus en plus « difficiles ».

Selon cette même source, le cœur des débats a porté sur le positionnement de l'Union africaine par rapport aux décisions de la Communauté économique des États de l'Afrique de l'Ouest (Cédéao). « Certains, au sein du Conseil, ont souhaité, assure-t-elle, pouvoir émettre des réserves et demander des clarifications dans la séquence qui pourrait conduire » à l'option militaire envisagée par la Cédéao.

Les pays membres du CPS négocient depuis le 14 août les termes exacts d'un communiqué final. De son côté, un autre diplomate africain, qui a participé à la réunion, affirme que les pays d'Afrique australe et d'Afrique du Nord étaient « vent debout contre toute intervention militaire ». Les pays d'Afrique centrale, toujours selon cette source, ont eux aussi exprimé leur désaccord. À l'issue de la réunion, le texte de communiqué est entré dans un « processus silencieux » selon les mots d'un diplomate. Les pays membres du Conseil Paix et Sécurité négocient depuis le 14 août ses termes exacts. Car il s'agit d'un document qui « nous engage collectivement », a tenu à rappeler notre source.

## **Sénégal : l'opposant Ousmane Sonko a été admis en réanimation**

Au Sénégal, l'opposant Ousmane Sonko a été admis en réanimation dans la nuit du 16 au 17 août 2023 selon ses avocats et les autorités pénitentiaires. En grève de la faim depuis son incarcération le 31 juillet, il était déjà hospitalisé à Dakar depuis le 6 août et se trouvait dans un état de santé alarmant selon ses proches. L'opposant, déjà condamné à deux reprises, est visé par sept chefs d'accusation dont appel à l'insurrection. D'autres détenus sympathisants d'Ousmane Sonko sont également en grève de la faim par solidarité.

Ce jeudi 17 août, l'opposant sénégalais Ousmane Sonko se trouve toujours à l'hôpital principal de Dakar, où il a été admis le 6 août. Il refusait toujours toute alimentation et soin médical. Son état s'est aggravé dans la nuit du 16 au 17 et il a donc dû être placé en réanimation pour malaise aigu, selon son avocat maître Ciré Clédor Ly.

Ousmane Sonko est en grève de la faim depuis son incarcération le 31 juillet dernier. Il est poursuivi pour sept chefs d'accusation dont appel à l'insurrection et atteinte à la sûreté de l'État. Le but de cette grève, c'est de protester contre « le régime dictatorial » du président Macky Sall. Pour rappel, Ousmane Sonko a déjà été condamné à deux reprises ces derniers mois, pour diffamation en mai et pour corruption de la jeunesse en juin. Ces condamnations pourraient lui coûter son éligibilité lors de l'élection présidentielle de février 2024.

Selon la préfecture de Dakar, il est déjà radié des listes électorales, ce que conteste son camp, qui affirme ne jamais avoir reçu la notification de radiation.

Désormais le bureau politique des Patriotes africains du Sénégal pour le travail, l'éthique et la fraternité (Pastef), son parti dissous début août dans la foulée de son arrestation, demande « la libération immédiate et sans



condition » d'Ousmane Sonko.

À signaler également que d'autres détenus membres du Pastef sont aussi en grève de la faim, par solidarité avec leur chef.

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## FEATURE

## ARTICLE

# Liberia's Biological Diversity is its Economic Power Horse

By Stephen Rodriques,  
former UNDP Liberia Resident Representative

Liberia prides itself as a nation endowed with a substantial share of global biodiversity. The country is regarded as one of the biodiversity hotspots in the world, and one which contains the highest remaining portion (42%) of the Upper Guinea Forest, which is regarded as one of the three lungs of the world extending from Guinea into eastern Sierra Leone, and eastward through Liberia, Côte d'Ivoire and Ghana into western Togo. The forest is characterized by high endemism, boasting over 2000 plant species, 600 bird species, 75 reptile species, and 150 mammal species.

This would not have been the case for the wonderful nature-loving people of Liberia, and without recognizing the tradeoffs that come with maintaining such a rich global asset on more than two-thirds of the country's land area that is equivalent to twice the size of Belgium. Half of the people of Liberia live within 2.5 kilometers of a forest, with each household spending more than three hours daily collecting forest products for subsistence and for sale. With half of the country earning 35% of its income (World Bank, 2020) from forests, this resource is under great threat with reports of rapid decline in the country's biodiversity. Liberia's natural resources are critical for economic growth and delivering the pro-poor agenda for development (PAPD) as well as the sustainable development goals (SDGs).

The threats to Liberia's biodiversity include increasing population pressure, competition for biological resources for food, shelter, and energy, plantation crops in areas of high conservation value, the outdated slash and burn shifting cultivation, poaching and hunting, unregulated timber extraction, charcoal burning, artisanal and small-scale mining, invasive species, insufficient public education and awareness, limited national investment in biodiversity conservation and inadequate law enforcement.

The International Day for Biological Diversity, observed on 22 May, presents the government and people of Liberia as well as partners and other stakeholders the opportunity to take a step back and reflect on the enormous biodiversity in the country and what it means for Liberia's future. This year's theme 'From Agreement to Action: Build Back Biodiversity' calls for a whole-of-society approach to implementing Liberia's national biodiversity strategy goals. This is in line with the historic Kunming-Montréal Global Biodiversity Framework that aims to safeguard the world's nature, halt and reverse biodiversity loss by 2030, and put nature on a path to recovery by 2050. Liberia is expected to develop its implementation plans for the Conference of the Parties (COP16) in 2024, and UNDP is ready to support this process.

Liberia ratified the United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity on 8 November 2000. The then

Head of State and Chairman of the then National Transitional Government, H.E. Charles Gyude Bryant noted in the foreword to Liberia's National Biodiversity Strategy & Action Plan (2004): "The achievement of biodiversity conservation must be fully participatory. I call on everyone, including all citizens of Liberia, foreigners within our borders, United Nations and other development partners, and the private sector to work in concert to conserve Liberia's rich biodiversity ... by ensuring that our actions are environmentally friendly, and mitigating adverse effects on our dwindling biodiversity and fragile ecosystems. I have no doubt that Liberia will follow the path on which nations seen as good examples of friends of the environment walk and that we will not be found relenting on this course."



Liberia's biodiversity

However, I wish to stress that the situation is urgent, and the time to act is now, as tomorrow will be too late. Just as we sing the "LONE STAR FOREVER", let us shout, "DEPLETION OF BIODIVERSITY NEVER."

Kudos to the current government for creating the space for public discourse and embracing the rich exchange of views on natural resource management in Liberia. While it can be stated that the many fora have been somehow successful in documenting and elevating the concerns for biodiversity conservation at the top level of government, now is the time for national investments that would catalyze and unlock global resources to support the implementation of the national biodiversity action plans, including enforcement of relevant laws and policies.

In 1999 the Government, with support from UNDP, established the National Environmental Commission of Liberia (NECOLIB) to oversee all environmental activities in the country, serve as the coordinating institution for the environment and come up with relevant policies and laws. NECOLIB drafted the National Environmental Policy of Liberia, the Environment Protection and Management Law, and the Environment Protection

Agency Act, leading to the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) creation in December 2003. The EPA produces State of the Environment (SOE) reports.

In collaboration with civil society, government, and partners, the government of Liberia in 2006 developed a new forestry legal framework with several progressive initiatives, including formal recognition of communities' rights to their customary forestlands, empowering local populations to participate in forest governance and benefit from forestry revenue, increase participation and access to forestry information and civil society right to independently monitor forestry operations, a complementary land reform reinforcing community rights over forestland through the adoption of a Land Rights Policy in 2013 and the government granting equal legal protection to customary land.

Liberia is preparing for national consultations on the next National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (NBSAP), which UNDP stands ready to support. There is a need to engage all levels of government, forest-dependent people, stakeholders, non-governmental organizations, academia, women, youth, and local communities to ensure that the strategy reflects a broad national perspective and consensus. It is also important to take stock and deeply reflect on the last NBSAP on what has been achieved and what is yet to be realized. For example, while past and current efforts by the government and people of Liberia to conserve biodiversity are commendable, the expected results and deliverables have not been entirely forthcoming.

Going forward, the following recommendations from Liberia's most recent State of the Environment Report (2007-2018) are worth considering:

- Ensure that environmental plans and policies, such as the NBSAP are integrated into the overall national development plan so that the whole of government is involved in managing and safeguarding the country's rich environmental resources which are also vital economic assets.
- The formulation of the new NBSAP should be backed by a comprehensive enforceable regulatory framework that balances biodiversity conservation with the need to harness the country's immense natural resources for the implementation of the pro-poor agenda for prosperity and development. This means mechanisms for shared responsibility among Liberia's ministries, agencies, and commissions must be designed to ensure coordinated planning, control, and implementation of the country's biodiversity hotspots.
- The adoption of an economic approach to the valuation of forests and woodlands to ensure that informed decisions on the country's natural resources are made when signing foreign investment agreements.
- Tree planting trees outside natural forests to ease pressure on them.

As a leader in regional biodiversity conservation, Liberia is well-positioned to drive global action, but it must ensure that its backyard is in order by halting the depletion of biodiversity and forests. This would further enable the country to rally development partners and the international community to invest in biodiversity conservation and protection in Liberia.

# Don't reject me again

By Emmanuel wise Jipoh

Incumbent President George Manneh Weah has pleaded with potential voters in Montserrado County Electoral District #3 not to reject him again as he seeks reelection.

In his campaign tour Thursday, 17 August 2023, Mr. Weah begged voters to vote for more developments so he can leave a legacy.

President Weah and his campaign team rallied

Despite the low turnout, Mr. Weah pleaded with residents to support his quest for a second term to enable him to continue developing the country.

Mr. Weah bragged that he's the best president the country has ever had, stressing his wish for leaving a development legacy in the minds of the people if he's re-elected.

Addressing voters at the Dr. Henry Reeves Sports Pitch in Monsterrado Electoral

African Senior School Certificate Examination] fees and free education," he told the residents.

"I just want to let you know I love you unconditionally," the President. added.

President Weah noted that he has returned to the district again to ask the people of Montserrado County Electoral District #3 to vote him into power for a second term to continue developments for the nation.

He pled with them not to reject his presidential bid, emphasizing that he's a president of the people and he wants to leave a legacy behind.

"District Number Three, I've Come to you again, this time I'm not angry at you because you have rejected me throughout," he said.

"We are all friends and families, this time around I've come. The only thing I am going to tell you is to join those of your friends who give us power in 2017 to give us our second term to leave a legacy that you will all remember," President Weah said.

He promised District #3 that if the voters vote for him and if he's elected, unprecedented developments will come to the district.

He pledged his commitment to developing the district.

"People of District Three, I'm not a stranger to you, and you can follow my track record. Of all [that] I've done for you, so please I've come asking you for a second term to continue with more developments for you to enjoy."

Mr. Weah bragged that his government has done much in a short time, including building roads, hospitals, providing free tuition for students in public universities and colleges, among others.

He alleged that his government has done more than what the administration of the former Unity Party (UP) government did in 12 years.



Montserrado Electoral Districts 2 and 3 on Thursday but received a low turnout. The districts are thought to be opposition Unity Party (UP) strongholds.

The reception Mr. Weah received in Districts 2 and 3 was contrary to the way he was embraced in his initial campaign activities in Monsterrado County Electoral Districts 1, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, & 9.

In these districts, Mr. Weah and his entourage received a rousing welcome from supporters.

But he had a poor reception on Thursday, 17 August 2023 in Districts 2 and 3 where he was greeted by a handful of supporters.

Supporters had a poorly attended campaign match with President Weah from Neezo Junction to the Jacob Town Sports Pitch where he held an interaction with citizens and begged them to support his bid for a second term.

Residents in District #3 repeated the poor reception Mr. Weah received in District #2 when he and his entourage matched from the Pipeline Supermarket Road to the Dr. Henry Reeves Football Field.

District #3, President Weah passionately pleaded with voters not to reject him again.

He lamented that voters in that district have constantly turned down his quest for elected power.

"District #3 I've come again to you. Let me give you a narrative of how we must appreciate one another," Weah began his plead with voters.

"I want you to know when I was running for Senator of Montserrado County, I came here and you did not give me your mandate, but I still did not give up and won the election," Weah continued.

He explained that while serving as a Senator, he returned to the district along with former National Port Authority Managing Director Bill Tweahway and they built a school in the district so that the residents can have access to education.

"Again in 2017, I came to you to vote for me as your President, and most of you did not vote for me, but it did not stop me from building your roads and giving you free WASSCE [West

# US Embassy cautions political Parties

The United States Embassy in Monrovia has cautioned political parties here to adhere to the Farmington River Declaration, to condemn all violence and violent rhetoric, and keep their commitment to free, fair, and peaceful elections. "When Liberians go to the polls in October, we remind all political parties to adhere to the Farmington River Declaration, to

Accra Comprehensive Peace Agreement on August 18, 2023. The US Embassy caution comes following clashes between rival supporters of the ruling Coalition for Democratic Change or CDC and opposition Unity Party or UP, which left four persons seriously injured. While reassuring its strong partnership with Liberia, the US Embassy reminded Liberians that



condemn all violence and violent rhetoric, and keep their commitment to free, fair, and peaceful elections," US Embassy stated. The caution was contained in a brief statement issued Thursday, August 17, in a congratulatory message to Liberian commemorating the 20th Anniversary of the Signing of the

as they celebrate 20 years of peace and democratic governance, they should not forget that it occurred due to the enormous sacrifices of ordinary Liberians - women, youth, civil society, and religious groups - to end the brutal civil war, Liberians country should be proud of this achievement.

# Liberian women sign

Starts from back page

process, so it is imperative that they continue to show leadership in peace building and sustaining process.

While recognizing the need for women to be actively engaged in politics, Gbowee urges that it's also incumbent upon women to show leadership during the process by engaging constructively and peacefully across party lines.

Signing the manifesto at the close of the peace summit, the women committed themselves to upholding the peace for growth of Liberia.

"We the women of Liberia, have come together in Monrovia under the leadership of Nobel Peace Laureates Ellen Johnson Sirleaf and Madam Leymah Gbowee to appeal to all Liberians that what binds us together is greater than what divides us.

We must unite as we did twenty years ago to make war and violence implausible; we call on citizens and participants in the political process to shun violence in all shapes and forms, and respect the dignity and life of every person within our borders" They women further commit to ensuring that the human rights of every person participating in elections will be respected. In remarks, Swedish Ambassador accredited to Liberia, Urban Sjostrom, says the pending

election in Liberia is critical and they are impressed with the manifesto, urging the women of Liberia to continue on the path of peace.

"Women are key in the building of every nation especially, during these times; we will continue to support Liberia's peace and its developmental initiatives. We look forward to working with everyone", Ambassador Sjostrom assures.

The political officer at the United States Embassy in Monrovia, Juan D. Martinez, extols the women for the peace summit.

Mr. Martinez describes peace as a cardinal tool for nation building, saying peace can't be achieved without the support of every citizen.

"This election is a great and major moment since the end of the civil war, this election is critical to the growth and development of the country." The signing ceremony of the women peace manifesto brought together prominent individuals, including representative of foreign missions, heads of government agencies, women-led organizations, women aspirants and members of the legislature, among others. .

Editing by Jonathan Browne

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## Liberian women sign peace manifesto

By Lewis S Teh

Prominent women under the banner, Liberian Women Peace Summit have penned a peace manifesto, calling for peaceful 2023 Elections.

One of the joint winners of

participation in peace-building work."

"Liberia should stand up for her own peace, because if we don't protect this peace, absolutely nobody will do it for us", she cautions.

Miss Gbowee, also founder

few months ago, she met her Co-winner of the 2011 Nobel Peace Prize, former President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf on the pressing need to unite and let go whatever difference that has kept them apart to stand up for the peace of Liberia especially, during the 2023 Elections.

"Our desire is for everyone, including residents and foreigners will buttress their messages of peace as a requirement that the women of Liberia are desiring."

She notes that 20 ago, Liberians across the country ran helter-skelter, escaping gunshots and refusing to bow in spite of many threats, but today they are proud that Liberia is an example of post-conflict peacebuilding.

According to her, Liberia achieved that as a result of a group of people (predominantly women) who abandon their political interests, putting aside their differences, including social status and decided that the country was bigger and better than anything anyone had ever thought of.

She says Liberian women played a vital role during twenty years of peace



Ms. Leymah Gbowee

the 2011 Nobel Peace Prize, Liberian Leymah Gbowee, says Liberia's progress lies on sustenance and maintenance of peace by all citizens.

Miss Gbowee jointly won the 2011 Noble Peace Prize along with former President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf and Miss Tawakkol Karman of Yemen, "for their non-violent struggle for the safety of women and for women's rights to full

of the Gbowee Peace Foundation Africa gave the advice here Thursday, August 17, at the Ellen Johnson Sirleaf Ministerial Complex in Oldest Congo Town during final consultation on a peace manifesto drafted by the Liberian Women Peace Summit, geared towards a peaceful 2023.

Giving an overview of the consultation, she recalls that

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