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Source: Research, Policy and Planning Department, CBL.

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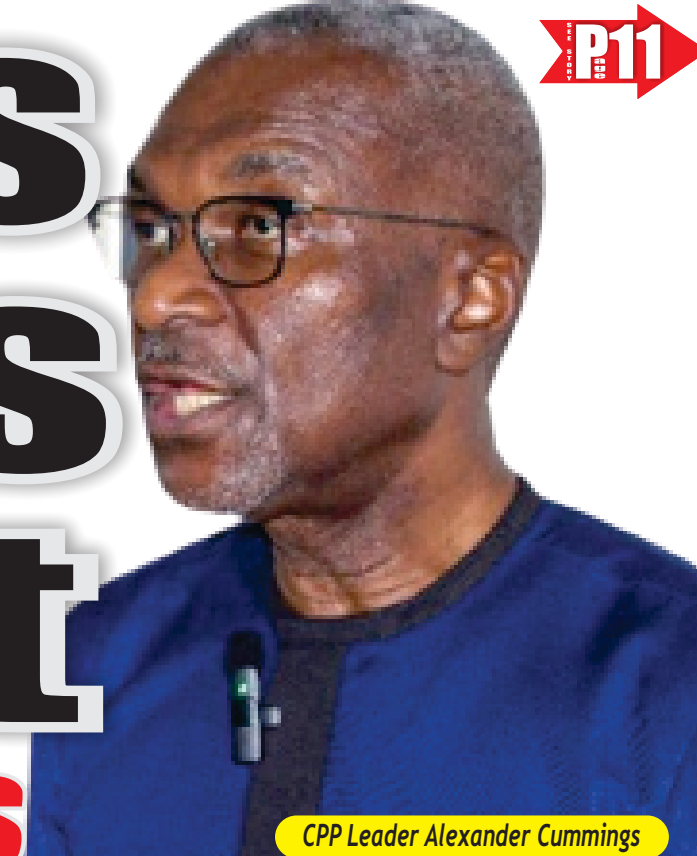


Weah & Boakai in seesaw battle



-As NEC continues release of preliminary election results

Cummings concedes defeat



-But with reservations

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Continental News

Weah and Boakai neck and neck in Liberia election

Liberia's President George Weah and his rival Joseph Boakai are neck and neck, with votes from nearly 73% of polling stations tallied votes from 4,295 of the 5,890 polling stations. The body has 15 days from the date of the election to announce the final results. If there is no



George Weah is seeking a second term as Liberia's president

counted, provisional results show. Mr Weah has 43.8% while Mr Boakai has 43.54% of the votes tallied so far, following the 10 October elections. A run-off will be held if neither candidate gets more than 50%. Mr Weah, a former football star, won a run-off in the 2017 poll with 61.5% to Mr Boakai's 38.5%. He had won the first round with 38.4% of the vote, compared with Mr Boakai's 28.8%, suggesting that Mr Boakai is faring better in this election. By Sunday, Liberia's elections commission had

member, has asked Liberians to "continue to exercise maximum restraint as they wait for official provisional results".

Ecovas also said that it was aware of "attempts by some Liberian stakeholders to declare premature victories or put undue pressure on the National Elections Commission".

It warned that such groups would be held "accountable for any actions that may lead to violence and instability".

Liberia is recovering from the brutal civil wars that ended two decades ago, after killing an estimated 250,000 people.

Analysts say this might be the last attempt at the presidency for 78-year-old Mr Boakai.

Mr Boakai, a former vice-president, has waged his campaign under the slogan "Rescue", arguing that the West African state went downhill during Mr Weah's first six years in office.

Mr Weah, 57, has dismissed Mr Boakai's claims, saying that he has made significant strides in his first term, including introducing free tuition for university students. The secretary general of Mr Weah's ruling Coalition for Democratic Change (CDC) party, Jefferson Koijee, last week ruled out the possibility of Mr Weah losing, but said that the president would accept the result because "the peace of this country is above his own". BBC

Settlement talks in Kenya Facebook case collapse

Talks aimed at reaching a settlement in a long-running case brought by 184 Nairobi-based Facebook moderators against the platform's owner Meta have broken down. The moderators, who filtered out violent and graphic content, allege they were laid off for organising a union. They were made redundant from Sama, a local subcontractor.

Sama has previously told the BBC it has no opposition to unionisation. The moderators are suing Meta, Sama and another outsourcing firm, Majorel. Meta uses artificial intelligence to help spot and remove graphic Facebook content, but it also still relies on thousands of human workers to spot problematic posts.

Several moderators have spoken out about the traumatising nature of the

The moderators also allege they were unfairly refused work at Majorel, the contractor chosen to take on the African moderation work after Sama's exit. But on Monday it emerged that Meta's work with Majorel will not be going ahead.

"A recent court order means it is not possible for Meta to start planned content moderation work with Majorel in Kenya," Meta told the BBC. It blamed a court order resulting from the case which banned the firm starting any planned content moderation work with other contractors while the legal action continued.

"We remain committed to Africa, and our content review work in local languages, so we're exploring options with our partners who have a presence on the continent to ensure that we can continue to help keep people safe on our platforms," the company said. Majorel told the BBC: "Unfortunately, and after careful consideration, today we



Lawyers for the moderators, during a pretrial legal hearing

Bombs sent to churches disguised as gifts, Uganda says

Ugandan police have foiled a plot by Islamic State-linked militants to bomb churches in central Butambala district, President Yoweri Museveni has said. Two bombs were linked to public address systems and sent to pastors, disguised as gifts, Mr Museveni said. Members of the public became suspicious of the devices and told the police, he added on X, formerly known as Twitter. The president blamed the plot on the Allied Democratic Forces (ADF), a militant group linked to Islamic State.

It has been blamed for a series of deadly attacks in Uganda, including the killing of more than 40 people, mostly students, at a boarding school in June. Mr Museveni said the militants had planned to detonate two bombs in churches in Kibibi, about 50km (30 miles) from the capital, Kampala, on Sunday, but the devices "were reported to police and defused". "The evil plan was foiled," he said, urging people "not to accept gifts from strangers". Earlier on Sunday, Mr Museveni said Ugandan forces had carried out air strikes against four ADF positions in DR Congo. "It seems quite a number of terrorists were killed," the president said. He warned that the ADF "are re-entering Uganda and trying to commit some random terrorist acts". In September, Ugandan police said they foiled a bomb attack in one of the biggest churches in Kampala. BBC

The ADF has not yet commented. Formed in 1990s, the ADF took up arms against President Museveni, alleging persecution of Muslims. After suffering heavy setbacks at the hands of the Ugandan army in 2001, it relocated to North Kivu province in neighbouring DR Congo. The group pledged allegiance to IS in 2016.



Ugandan police have thwarted several security threats on churches in recent years

content they worked to filter out of people's feeds, for which they were paid about \$630 (£515) per month, according to Sama. One moderator involved in the legal action told the BBC of his distress at seeing a video in which a man took his own life in the presence of a child.

Sama has always maintained it provided good salaries in local terms, as well as mental health support.

In an interview with the BBC in August, the chief executive of the firm, Wendy Gonzalez, denied it had any opposition to unionisation, saying it was "not a concern". In total 260 moderators were laid off when Sama ended its contract with Meta. The 184 moderators bringing the legal action allege that they were laid off in retaliation for complaints about working conditions and attempts to form a union. Among their demands they want Meta to give an undertaking that moderators have the right to join a union and to speak out about working conditions.

notified approximately 200 of our employees in Nairobi of the commencement of a potential redundancy process."

But it said it remained committed to helping Kenya develop as a "premier destination" for digital outsourcing. In August, the parties involved were ordered to pursue an out-of-court settlement through mediation.

That has now failed, meaning that the legal case will continue, though the judge urged the parties to continue with "serious engagement" ahead of the next hearing on 31 October. Lawyers for the moderators accused Meta of not being committed to the negotiations. "If they are willing to seriously engage then we are always happy to continue," their lawyer Mercy Mutemi said. Martha Dark of the campaign group Foxglove, which is supporting the litigation, said: "Meta's timewasting has forced them to go back to court." But Meta's lawyer argued that the parties had been making progress in the talks.

Sama said in a statement it was "disappointed that the mediation did not lead to a settlement". BBC

EDITORIAL

A need to heed recommendations by international observers

INTERNATIONAL OBSERVERS MONITORING the electoral process in Liberia are providing series of recommendations to Liberian authorities to enhance future polls and strengthen the country's democratic process.

THE ELECTORAL INSTITUTE for Sustainable Democracy in Africa (EISA) through its Elections Observation Mission (EISA-EOM) outlines challenges it observed during Tuesday, 10 October elections polls ranging from underrepresentation of young people in elective offices, growing engagement of youth as militants by political parties, delay in distributing the Final Registration Roll for public scrutiny, delay in releasing regulations on collation and tabulation of results, lack of substantial issue-based or policy-focused campaign messages, widespread misinformation about elections on social media to weak communication strategy, and low visibility of NEC's programs.

ESIA THEREFORE, URGES the Government of Liberia to promulgate into law provisions on compulsory gender quotas for female candidates in line with Liberia's international commitment to affirmative action.

IT ALSO CALLS on government to explore possibility of legally moving Election Day to a timeframe that does not coincide with the rainy season to reduce logistical challenges and risks while facilitating voter's participation.

"ENFORCE THE RULES in the election law by prosecuting offences such as voter trucking. To the NEC, strengthen public communications with emphasis on key processes making it more proactive, timely and precise. Collaborate with CSOs to improve the conduct of civic and voter education", the group recommends.

FOR ITS PART, election observers from the Economic Community of West African States, ECOWAS, recommends that to address congestion and long queues at polling precincts, reforms may be introduced in the electoral laws to reduce the number of voters per polling unit, taking into cognizance the need for such reforms.

THOUGH THESE ARE but few of the recommendations from foreign observers here, with more to come, we think they are germane and should claim immediate attention of authorities of the National Elections Commission and the Government of Liberia in order to enhance our electoral process.

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COMMENTARY

By José Manuel Barroso

Pandemic Preparedness Cannot Wait

GENEVA - As a firm believer in multilateralism, I was heartened that the United Nations General Assembly adopted a political declaration on pandemic prevention, preparedness, and response at its first-ever high-level meeting on the subject in September. It confirms that world leaders recognize the existential threat of pandemics and are committed to breaking the panic-neglect cycle, whereby policymakers pull out all the stops to fight disease outbreaks, only to turn their attention elsewhere once the crisis ends.

The landmark declaration has generated much-needed momentum for a global pandemic treaty, which is currently under development at the World Health Organization. But translating a political commitment into a meaningful agreement requires significant buy-in from WHO member states, and negotiations are sure to be arduous.

As this process unfolds, we must implement practical measures to preserve the knowledge gained during the COVID-19 pandemic, and to improve upon the innovative mechanisms that emerged from it. Any eventual treaty can thus enter into force with many working parts already in place. And, in the meantime, the world will be better prepared for the next infectious-disease emergency.

The pandemic may have faded from our collective consciousness, but with official COVID-19 deaths nearing seven million and the pandemic's cost to the United States economy alone reaching \$14 trillion, it is clear that a more strongly coordinated global response is required to protect against future threats. And make no mistake: another pandemic is an evolutionary certainty. In addition to the current rise in COVID-19 cases, the world is already experiencing more climate-related health emergencies, including outbreaks of infectious diseases such as cholera and yellow fever.

The good news is that some progress is already being made on this front. The COVID-19 Vaccine Global Access (COVAX) facility, established in 2020 by Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance (whose board I chair), the Coalition for Epidemic Preparedness Innovations, the UN, and the WHO, has delivered nearly two billion doses of vaccines. The vast majority went to lower-income countries, where 81% of health workers and 67% of older people received at least two doses. Averting more than 2.7 million deaths, the initiative is undoubtedly the most successful response to a global health emergency in history.

As we prepare to phase out COVAX at the end of the year, Gavi has already devoted considerable effort to assessing the facility's shortcomings and has taken practical steps to do better next time. That means, from the outset, having

enough cash to preorder vaccines on behalf of lower-income countries - just like wealthier countries reserved COVID-19 doses. It also means incentivizing investment in vaccine-production capacity across Africa and in other underserved regions that were hit hard by export bans.

Building up manufacturing networks, if done right, is a multi-year process. But it is necessary, as is immediate access to cash, to counter the tendency, apparent during the pandemic and rooted in national self-interest, to direct scarce supplies to the countries with the most money rather than the most need. And more needs to be done to ensure that countries are prepared, to improve vaccine readiness, and to sustain a broad coalition of partners ready and willing to implement a coordinated response.

Countries need the most help coping with rapid case surges that can undermine their ability to provide other public-health services. This means investing in existing health systems, especially outbreak prevention and detection, and recruiting and training future vaccinators. It will also be important to redouble efforts to bring up to date childhood vaccinations, which dropped sharply during the pandemic; otherwise, we run the risk of causing health systems to collapse under the weight of multiple crises.

To increase vaccine uptake requires more than expanding manufacturing capacity. It will be necessary to invest in and capitalize on innovation, whether mRNA technology, a new delivery method like needle-free patches, or something else entirely. We should also stockpile reserves of vaccine candidates for deadly diseases such as Sudan ebolavirus or Marburg virus, so that, in the absence of fully licensed antigens, there is still a first line of defense when an outbreak inevitably occurs.

Finally, a coordinated network of partners from across regions and sectors must be established to advance this work. COVAX was nimble enough to provide an end-to-end solution, from funding research to delivering shots in arms. Now, a broader group of stakeholders from civil society, the private sector, humanitarian and emergency agencies, development banks, and regional organizations must work together with global health agencies, funders, and countries to start preparing for the next pandemic.

Pathogens will not wait for policy deliberations. While we must do everything in our power to help achieve a global pandemic treaty, we must also build a broad vaccine coalition in the meantime - or risk being caught flat-footed once again.

OP-ED

By Richard Haass

An Israeli Dilemma

NEW YORK - The history of Israel has often been a history of conflict. A partial list includes the 1948 Arab-Israeli War that followed Israel's birth; the Israeli-British-French attempt in 1956 to seize the Suez Canal and topple Egypt's Arab nationalist leader; the 1967 Six-Day War; the 1973 Yom Kippur War; and Israel's invasion of Lebanon in 1982. There are also the two Palestinian intifadas and numerous smaller conflicts.

To this list must now be added Hamas's October 2023 invasion of Israel. Thousands of short-range rockets were launched from Hamas-controlled Gaza against towns and cities in western Israel. Hundreds if not thousands of Hamas fighters crossed into Israel by breaking through defensive barriers, flying over them, or sailing around them.

The human toll of these attacks is enormous and growing. More than 900 Israelis have lost their lives. Several thousand have been injured. Some two hundred Israelis attending a concert were killed in cold blood. Nearly the same number have been abducted. It was terror - the intentional harming of innocents by a non-state actor - on a large scale.

It was also a colossal Israeli intelligence failure. The most likely explanation for Israel's being caught unprepared is less a lack of warning than a lack of attention. As was the case in 1973, complacency and an under-estimation of the adversary can be dangerous.

It was a defensive failure as well. Deterrence broke down. Expensive physical barriers were overrun. Israeli military readiness and troop levels were woefully inadequate, possibly because attention had shifted to protecting settlers in the occupied West Bank. There will surely be official inquiries and independent investigations.

Why Hamas attacked remains a subject of debate. The most likely explanation is that Hamas wanted to demonstrate that it alone - not the Palestinian Authority that rules the West Bank and not Arab governments - is able and willing to protect and promote Palestinian interests.

The timing of the assault is another matter. It is possible that the date was chosen to coincide with the last successful surprise attack against Israel, carried out by Egypt and Syria 50 years ago almost to the day. But the planning and training for the attack took place over months, which suggests a strategic purpose not tied to a specific event. The timing may have been motivated by a desire to disrupt the growing momentum in negotiations to normalize diplomatic relations between Israel and Saudi Arabia, an outcome strongly opposed by Iran, the principal backer of Hamas. Hamas may also have sought to take advantage of Israeli political divisions. Or all of the above.

The Hamas attackers took hostages back to Gaza for two reasons: to limit Israel's freedom of action lest those individuals be placed at even greater risk, and to exchange them for Hamas operatives held in Israeli jails.

Israel now faces an acute dilemma. It wants to deal a decisive blow to Hamas, both to weaken the organization militarily and to discourage future attacks and Iranian support for them. And it wants to accomplish this without bringing Hezbollah, which has some 150,000 rockets in Lebanon that could reach much of Israel, directly into the conflict. It also does not want the war to expand to the West Bank. Restoring meaningful deterrence without widening the war will be difficult.

There is the additional consideration that Israel's military options are limited. The hostages are one reason. In addition, occupying - or, more precisely, re-occupying - Gaza would be a nightmare. There are few, if any, military undertakings more difficult than urban warfare, and Gaza is one of the most densely populated urban environments in the world. Many Israeli soldiers would lose their lives or be captured in such an operation.

Massive attacks from the air, designed to avoid the need for a ground invasion, would inevitably kill or injure a significant number of innocent inhabitants of Gaza, thereby decreasing international sympathy and support for Israel. Efforts to shut off Gaza's supplies of food, water, fuel, and electricity also would be counterproductive. Regional and international pressure for a cease-fire would surely mount.

There is also the question of the operation's strategic objective. Hamas cannot be eliminated, because it represents an ideology as much as an organization. Efforts to destroy it risk building support for it. What comes to mind is the famous question posed by then-US Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld, who wondered whether US drone strikes on suspected terrorists, which at times killed innocents, were effective. His question - "Are we creating more terrorists than we're killing?" - remains worth asking.

All of which is to say that while there must be a military component to Israel's response to its security challenge, including reconstituting Israel's ability to defend itself from attacks and targeted strikes on terrorists in Gaza, there is no solely military answer. A diplomatic element will need to be introduced into the equation, including a credible Israeli plan for bringing about a viable Palestinian state.

There is an American saying that you cannot beat something with nothing. Rewarding those Palestinians willing to reject violence and reach an accommodation with Israel is still the best way to marginalize Hamas.

OPINION

By Koketso Moeti

South Africa's Deadly Housing Crisis

JOHANNESBURG - In late August, a devastating fire in a dilapidated apartment building in Johannesburg claimed the lives of 77 people. The fire, one of the deadliest in South Africa's history, was a stark reminder of the substandard living conditions faced by the city's most vulnerable residents and underscored the country's urban housing crisis.

Built in the 1950s, the five-story building at 80 Albert Street originally served as a "pass office," a checkpoint for regulating the movement of Black people during apartheid. It was later turned into a shelter for abused women and children, before municipal authorities ultimately abandoned it. Subsequently, it morphed into a makeshift settlement housing migrants and people living in poverty. Its occupants endured precarious living conditions, frequent police raids, and no access to basic services, a common predicament among the city's impoverished residents.

Sadly, this was not the first time that people have died in Johannesburg due to substandard housing conditions. In 2017, a fire in the downtown Cape York building took the lives of seven people. The following year, three children were killed in the inner-city suburb of Doornfontein when a wall collapsed on them. And in 2021, a fire near Johannesburg's central business district resulted in nine fatalities.

In responding to the fire at 80 Albert Street, officials have downplayed Johannesburg's broader housing crisis. Rather than address the underlying problems, such as poverty and regulatory negligence, they tried to shift the blame to "illegal immigrants" and anti-eviction NGOs (without which the crisis would be even more dire). This response exemplifies the long-standing failure of municipal authorities to protect the city's poorest and most vulnerable inhabitants, rendering tragedies all but inevitable.

South Africa's severe housing crisis can be partly attributed to rapid urbanization. In 2022, more than 65% of the country's population resided in urban areas. The population of Johannesburg, South Africa's most densely populated city, has surged by nearly 30% since 2011. Amid a shortfall of 3.7 million housing units, low-income households - which constitute the majority of the populace - struggle to find decent, safe shelter in the country's urban centers.

No one willingly resides in a dangerous building; it is a desperate measure taken by people with low or no income and no other viable choices. According to the latest State of South African Cities Report, as of 2016, nearly half of Johannesburg's residents were living on less than R2,000 (\$105) per month. As the housing shortage has escalated and costs have surged, many more people have been forced into hazardous makeshift structures.

To mitigate the housing crisis, Johannesburg adopted an inclusionary housing policy in 2019. Among other things, the policy aims to "create more of a mix of income groups in private housing developments" by requiring developers to allocate at least 30% of all new residential developments with 20 units or more to affordable housing. For example, the government provides subsidies to first-time homeowners earning between R3,501 and R22,000 a month, as well as rental subsidies, which are capped at R2,100 a month. But the most acute demand for rental housing in Johannesburg comes from low-income households earning less than R3,200 a month.

While this policy is a welcome development, the disparity between incomes and housing costs has undermined its potential. The city's Spatial Development Framework 2040 defines affordable housing as a dwelling where total costs - including taxes, utilities, and insurance (in cases where the property is owned) - do not exceed 30% of a household's gross income. So, by the city's own standards, the policy falls short of its goals.

Another factor driving residents into substandard housing is the lack of access to economic opportunities. A 2016 study on "spatial mismatch" in South African cities highlighted the enduring impact of apartheid-era policies that perpetuate extreme racial and class segregation, forcing Black working-class people to live in peripheral and poorly serviced areas. A 2020 report by the Gauteng province, which encompasses Johannesburg, found that 60% of households spend more than 10% of their disposable income on public transport, up from 55% of households in 2014.

But the legacy of apartheid is not the only obstacle to spatial justice. Instead of ensuring accommodation for low-income residents, Johannesburg officials facilitated the privatization of urban planning by approving the construction of gated neighborhoods for the rich, such as Steyn City. As the sociologist Federica Duca notes, such developments impede integration and accessibility, creating "sites of social reproduction of spatial and social separation." Since the 1990s, the number of gated communities in Gauteng - particularly in Johannesburg - has increased sharply, effectively transforming public areas into semi-private spaces.

This has to change. Johannesburg must provide low-income residents with safe, affordable housing that enables them to access economic opportunities and essential amenities. All permanent and transitional housing must be urgently improved to ensure that occupants can receive basic services. Municipal authorities must also take a tougher stance toward negligent building owners, including by expropriating abandoned and poorly maintained buildings and converting them into public rental housing aimed specifically at low-income households.

Most importantly, policymakers must change their attitude toward the city's underprivileged communities. As long as city authorities continue to neglect low-income residents or treat them with outright contempt, tragedies like the fire at 80 Albert Street are bound to recur.



Statement by the Standard Bearer of the
Collaborating Political Parties
MR. ALEXANDER B. CUMMINGS
October 16, 2023

My Fellow Liberians:

Thanks to all of you who voted on October 10. The high turnouts from all across the country, should remind all of us that Liberians cherish their hard-won democracy, and will do anything to preserve it.

On behalf of my family, Cllr. Charlyne Brumskine and her family; on behalf of our entire CPP family, all of our down-ballot candidates, and the entire campaign team; from the bottom of my heart, I thank all of our partisans, well-wishers and supporters for their courage to boldly and proudly stand with us and support the patriotic cause to fix our country.

As Cllr. Brumskine and I campaigned with you, we came to renew our own faith in a better future for Liberia. That renewal of faith has come not from any acceptance from the top of the political class, but from the hopefulness of the grassroots - market women, motorcyclist, healthcare workers, teachers, civil servants, farmers, street sellers, amongst many others.

Change will happen. Real change will prevail. The fight for real change which we have begun cannot and will not be stopped! This is not because of me or Cllr. Brumskine. It is because of you, each and every one of our supporters, well-wishers, partisans and Liberians from ALL walks of Life.

This is why, despite the ridiculousness in results being announced, my faith in God and belief in our people remain strong and unwavering. Change - real change - is on Liberia's doorsteps. A few may succeed to conspire against it happening now, but real change will ultimately and inevitably happen because Liberians desire, will work for, and deserve it.

Like many Liberians, including our fiercest critics, we too, are disbelieving of the results being announced. When Liberians voted, they did so in believing their votes would be reflected in the results. This is how democracy is supposed to properly function. The announced results ridiculously defy common sense. This is sowing an unhealthy impression about our democracy.

People are feeling robbed of their right to freely and fairly express their will and choice for leadership. The scheme to rob the Liberian voter of their right to choose their leaders may be sophisticated and difficult to trace and prove, but in the end, it undermines our democracy and risks the security and stability of

our country. The evil geniuses involved, and their co-conspirators may believe they can demoralize our right to vote. They may be thinking they can crush our desire to be governed democratically and live in peace.

They are wrong. They are underestimating the resolve of the Liberian people. Liberians are no fools. Our nation has paid dearly for our cherished democracy. Let there be no mistake: Liberians are determined to preserve our hard-won peace and democracy.

I have heard from many of our partisans, well-wishers and supporters. I feel your disappointment. I share your pain. I understand your anger. But we must not lose hope - not in ourselves, and definitely not in our country. We must continue to remain peaceful and law-abiding. We will win in the end.

Let me assure all of you that we will continue to do everything within our power to investigate and bring to light what has happened. I promise you that no matter how long it takes, everyone involved will answer. There will be consequences for seeking to undermine Liberia's young democracy and acting against the interests of the Liberian people.

Fellow partisans, sympathizers and supporters, we must never give up on our country. Because of what we have dared to do, because of the spark for real change which we have started together - business will never be "as usual" in Liberia. This country will be fixed, now or later!

Liberians deserve better. This is a fact that cannot be denied in any ridiculous election result. The Liberian people want change. I have seen it. I have heard it. I continue to feel it. And I believe it. One day soon, real change will come. It may be delayed, but our just cause for real change is not, and will not be lost.

Finally, as I have consistently said and advocated for, I strongly encourage and urge all Liberians to remain peaceful. I particularly call on our supporters, partisans, well-wishers and sympathizers to stand tall, and walk proudly. Let us all always put Liberia first.

May God bless you, and may He continue to bless our nation. I thank you.

MORE HEADLINE NEWS

MORE HEADLINE NEWS

Claims and counter-claims

Liberia observes World Food Day

-as Candidate Williams leads Rep. Chambers in Pleebo Sodoken

By Patrick N. Mensah, Maryland County

In a subsequent news conference, Representative Chambers, who is said to be trading behind his rival Anthony Williams, explained that

destruction of election materials. He details that one of the precincts in Old Sodoken had 962 used and unused ballot papers on the tallying sheet, rather than 550, as required by the NEC. He says said alleged act is totally against the election guidelines and intended to manipulate the process.

Chambers claims to have evidence that Maryland County Senator James Biney was bent on twisting the process after a meeting the senator allegedly held with NEC staff in Gbloken over the weekend.

"So Senator Biney, I feel he holds Pleebo people explanation, because being a Senator, why would he want to interfere in Pleebo issue?" He asks. He says the act of bringing 'Country Devil' out in the town deprived most of his supporters from voting in Old Sodoken, which put his rival ahead with total votes of six hundred and forty-three (643) against ninety-five (95) votes he obtained from Old Sodoken polling center.

Representative Chambers, who also serves as Speaker of the House, also excuses Deputy Speaker and his ruling CDC lawmaker, Grand Kru County Representative Fonati Koffa of financing and plotting these acts against him.

"Let me say this, I'm surprised; Biney of all people, who I have helped during the 2020 election, is among those people behind these things.

Even my colleague Koffa, but I can assure my supporters that we are leading this

By Naneka A. Hoffma

Liberia joined the rest of the world in celebrating the World Food Day on Tuesday, 16th October under the theme "Water is life, water is food" with a country slogan, "We must not take water for granted: we must work together to manage a finite, precious resource." This year's World Food Day celebrates one of the planet's most precious resources, water and it's essential to life on earth. It covers majority of the planet's surface, making up over 50 percent of the human body.

The Director-General of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) Dr. QU Dongyu, said they approach the complex challenge of shielding existing freshwater resources and aquatic food systems from pollution and impacts of the climate crisis, while ensuring that people have equal access to water with about 70 percent of all freshwaters going to

with rapid population growth, urbanization, industrialization, economic development, and the climate crisis that have all taken a toll on global water resources.

He mentioned that increased extreme weather events, drought and flooding are stressing the ecosystems, with daunting consequences for global food security, with small holder farmers, particularly the poor, women, youth, Indigenous Peoples, migrants, and refugees, as the most vulnerable.

Dr. Dongyu added that approaching a complex challenge at the heart of the balancing act to address these combined challenges must be securing sufficient water for agriculture, while reconciling the competing water needs of other economic activities, especially as urbanization accelerates.

He underscored that good governance is crucial for sustainable and equitable water allocation, through an integrated and inclusive approach with all partners. Water governance and



Anthony F. Williams

Rep. Bhofal Chambers

County, supporters of incumbent Representative Bhofal Chambers and his fierce rival, Anthony F. Williams of the CPP, are claiming victory ahead of announcement of final results by the National Elections Commission.

Rival supporters began early celebration a day after polling ended in Maryland.

Progressive results released by the National Elections Commission have Candidate Anthony Williams with 7,944 votes, while Representative Chambers trades behind with 7,858 votes. However, last week Friday, supporters of both candidates besieged local office of the National Elections Commission in the county, chanting battle cries, as they demanded the election magistrate there to announce results.

though he is not charged with the responsibility to announce results of the poll, after tallying results from his war room, he is optimistic of reelection.

However, Chambers, who has represented the district for 18 years, noted that results from other polling centers especially, a precinct in Old Sodoken that contains two polling places were plagued with series of controversies, resulting in appearance of a 'Country Devil' last Wednesday, 12 October, leaving his ruling CDC observers to flee for their lives. According to him, the 'Country Devil' allegedly took over the ballot site, while Candidate Anthony Williams' supporters were seen harassing and intimidating supporters of the CDC and Team Chambers, to the extent of threatening them with bodily harm and

▶ CONT'D ON PAGE 11

Respect the will of the people

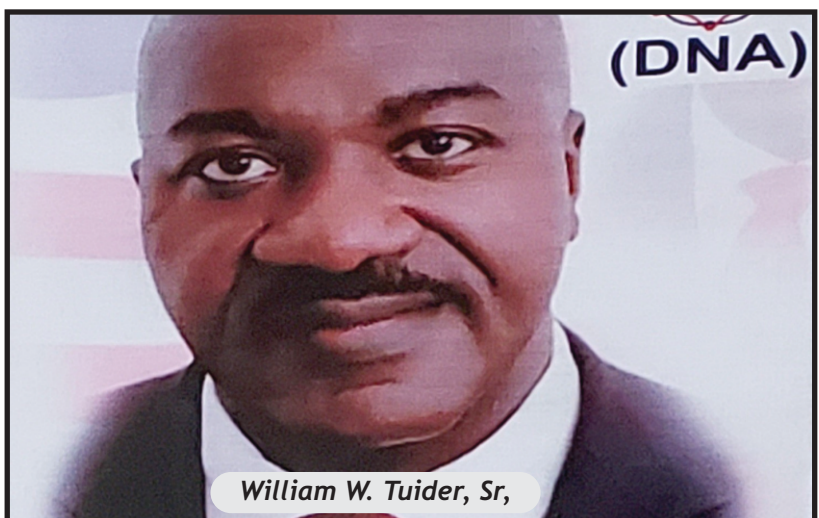
-Presidential Candidate Tuider

Opposition Democratic National Allegiance (DNA) Presidential Candidate William W. Tuider, Sr, says the voting process has ended in Liberia and the right thing should be done. Speaking at a news conference here on Monday, October 16, Mr. Tuider said whoever wins the Presidency whether old or young, the choice of the Liberian people should be respected. He recalls that bloody civil war destroyed Liberia and left 250,000 people killed from which Liberians are yet to recover, saying therefore, if anyone or small group of people feel that they can take these elections for the sake of power and cause violence, they should watch out. The DNA Candidate vows to use his international connection to prosecute those who want to cause chaos in the elections, noting this is Life-time commitment to

ensure Liberia remains on the path of peace.

He calls on all presidential candidates who didn't make it to the top two, including himself to join him in condemning any violence and to protect the people. Mr. Tuider says he will reach out to all candidates soon to come together and collectively send a unified message against violence.

His Vice Standard Bearer, Jonah S. Dumoe, says they trust the elections commission to do the right thing. He says anything that doesn't reflect the will of the Liberian people, they will decide whether they have confidence in the process, but the will of the people is more important. Editing by Jonathan Browne



William W. Tuider, Sr,



agriculture, changing the ways food production is carried out with fiber, and other agricultural products as the most crucial task. He stated that it is also where failure to act will have the gravest consequences, adding that Freshwater is not infinite, and should not be taken for granted. Dr. Dongyu, said over the last two decades, the world has lost approximately one-fifth of its freshwater, and that for some people, the reality is much worse, while in some regions, it runs closer to one-third.

However, he explained that unless there are urgent action, the world is on course to increase its water use by more than a third by 2050, given the planet's growing population. He warned of a collective risk of reaching a point of no return

tenure, pricing, regulations, and incentive measures, he noted, are needed to drive change and ensure equitable access to clean and safe water resources.

"We need to implement integrated water resources management through coordinated development and management of water, land, and related resources to maximize human well-being, without compromising the sustainability of vital ecosystems. For this we need both national and regional designs", Dr. Dongyu concluded. Editing by Jonathan Browne

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MORE HEADLINE NEWS

MORE HEADLINE NEWS

ECC hails NEC for transparency in tallying process

By Naneka A. Hoffman

Sports Complex in Montserrado County.

The Chairperson of the Elections Coordinating Committee (ECC) Cllr. Oscar Bloh is commending the Chairperson of the

Joint Security Taskforce.

At the SKD Sports Complex in Montserrado, Cllr. Bloh explains that ECC observers reported that the tallying process was abruptly disrupted allegedly by supporters of the Coalition for Democratic Change.

According to him, the disruption lasted for three hours (7pm-10pm) and the scale of the interference placed the lives of observers at risk, but tallying resumed subsequently at the two centers.

He note that these incidents are calculated attempts to interfere with the tallying process, undermine the credibility of the election results and compromise the integrity of the outcome of the elections.

He reminds all political actors of the U.S. Government Visa Sanction to target individuals who interfere with the election process. He calls on the Minister of Justice, as head of the Joint Security Taskforce, to instruct the Liberia National Police to arrest individuals who were linked to the disruption of the tallying process.

At the same time the ECC chairperson urges the Police to be more vigilant and to reinforce its presence at all of the tallying centers across the country to avoid any further disruptions. *Editing by Jonathan Browne*

Nyanti wants 2023 elections audited

The political leader of the African Liberation League (ALL) Rev. Sara Beysolow-Nyanti has proposed a full audit of the 2023 elections to identify weaknesses and proffer solutions for future elections.

"After the 2023 elections, a full audit should be conducted to identify weaknesses and proffer solutions for future elections, including assessing the current electoral laws to ensure they are sufficient," she said in a statement Monday, 16 October 2023. The female presidential candidate however commended the National Elections Commission (NEC) for its efforts despite numerous constraints.

However, she acknowledged irregularities and concerns that raise questions about the full expression of every registered voter's will. "In spite of these concerns, when the final results are announced, we must all accept it or take a legal pathway," she noted. Rev. Beysolow-Nyanti urged everyone to partner with

difficult. Our commitment to peace will be tested in the coming days, and we must emerge victorious to achieve sustainable development," she urged.

She applauded all Liberians for peacefully voting in these elections despite shouldering their own security responsibilities without international community forces.

"I thank our valued partners for their support during this critical phase in our country's history," she said.

She noted that while Liberians have been relatively peaceful, she must acknowledge the growing tension and apprehension.

"It is concerning that there is a sentiment that there will be violence after the final results are announced. We must work to mitigate these negative perceptions," she said.

She reminded Liberians that the country's history is filled with bloodshed, and it is time to reconcile and not add to this pain.

She noted that God desires



National Elections Commission so far, for the level of transparency in the votes tallying process, while condemning disruptions at tallying centers in Nimba and Montserrado counties, respectively. Addressing a news conference in Monrovia over the weekend, Cllr. Bloh urged the NEC to scale up the announcement of results and to pronounce cumulative percentages acquired by each political party of the total valid votes announced daily.

Governance Commission appeared at the Magisterial Office with seven vehicles, carrying supporters of the CDC to file a complaint.

According to him, the observer reported that some of the CDC supporters allegedly attempted to enter the tally center and their presence disrupted the tallying proceeding, which led to suspension of the entire process for several hours, compelling national and international observers to leave the center.

He notes that the situation was brought under control with reinforcement from the

AFL Chief denies boycotting Joint Security meeting

By Lincoln G. Peters

Liberia's Army Chief of Staff Maj. Gen. Prince Charles Johnson, III, has denied a social media report that he allegedly boycotted a Joint Security Meeting Monday, 16 October 2023.

In a phone interview with our reporter, Gen. Johnson termed as completely false and misleading, the accusation by former Deputy Information Minister Mr. Eugene L. Fahngon that he had boycotted a Joint Security meeting.

Additionally, Johnson denied Mr. Fahngon's claim that he had walked out of the Joint Security meeting and refused to deploy the military to intimidate peaceful citizens.

Mr. Fahngon in a Facebook post on Monday, 16 October, wrote: "Breaking News: Maj. General Prince C. Johnson walks out of Joint Security Meeting;

says the votes of the people must be respected; refused to deploy the military to intimidate citizens."

In the phone interview with our reporter, Gen. Johnson neither confirmed nor denied any planned Joint Security meeting.

"All that I can say is that it's so so lies. That man is saying so

lies. That is fake news," he said.

"Maybe the Justice Ministry will response to it. But, if you want to quote me, it's lies. And so quote me as lies. If you can accept it, go ahead and accept it but all I can say it's a lie" he concluded.



Maj/Gen. Prince Johnson III



Rev. Sara Beysolow-Nyanti

NEC to strengthen the institution, as it is critical to Liberia's democracy. If there is a potential runoff, she recommended a debriefing session involving all candidates to benefit from their collective wisdom and experiences over the last few months.

"Having led elections support and transitional justice advocacy in various countries, including the Gambia's contested 2016 elections, I understand the challenges of supporting countries in conflict and recognize the signs of countries on the verge of it," she said. Madam Beysolow-Nyanti said Liberia must show the international community that their billions of dollars investment in Liberia was not in vain. She added that Liberia's challenges require collective Liberian solutions that transcend tribal affiliations, political allegiances, and religious beliefs.

"Our Liberian identity must come before everything else. Chaos is easy, but building is

Liberians' prosperity and good health, but ... and it cannot be achieved in conflict.

She said she joined the presidential race to impact the process and the people, adding that she initiated the opposition agreement to work together to protect the votes of the Liberian people.

Due to that, Madam Beysolow-Nyanti said she will continue to speak in that regard.

"The upcoming results will not change my belief in or stop my resolve in pursuing nation-building, unity, reconciliation, and poverty reduction as Liberia's much needed solutions," said Madam Beysolow-Nyanti.

She suggested that moving, Liberia forward cannot be done by the president alone but requires the efforts of all Liberians.

"Let history remember that we stood united for our unity and progress. May God bless Liberia, protect our nation, and prosper our people," she noted.

Français

Le chef de la mission électorale de l'UA exhorte le gouvernement à criminaliser les groupes militants

La mission d'observation des élections de l'Union africaine (UA) au Libéria a proposé au pouvoir

élaborer une loi spéciale visant à dissoudre tous les groupes de milices politiques dans leur intégralité et à criminaliser la formation, l'utilisation, l'affiliation et le soutien de

participation et de l'inclusion des femmes, des jeunes et des personnes handicapées en politique.

Madame Mlambo-Ngcuka a exhorté le gouvernement à travailler avec tous les acteurs de l'industrie des médias pour entamer une conversation nationale en vue de développer une commission ou une autorité des médias qui régulerait l'espace médiatique.

"Commission électorale nationale : renforcer les stratégies de relations publiques et de communication pour qu'elles soient plus dynamiques et capables de s'adapter aux tendances actuelles en matière de diffusion de l'information et d'engagement public", a-t-elle exhorté.

Le chef de la mission électorale de l'UA a en outre exhorté la NEC à passer à l'étape suivante de l'enregistrement biométrique des électeurs (BVR), où la technologie sera utilisée non seulement pour enregistrer les électeurs, mais également pour vérifier les électeurs le jour du scrutin.

« Les partis politiques continuent de respecter les

▶ CONT'D ON PAGE 9



législatif d'élaborer une loi spéciale visant à criminaliser et à dissoudre tous les groupes de milices à travers le pays.

Madame Phumzile Gloria Mlambo-Ngcuka, ancienne vice-présidente sud-africaine et chef de la mission d'observation des élections de l'UA au Libéria, a lancé cet appel ce week-end.

"Travaillez avec le pouvoir législatif pour

groupes et d'individus militants", a déclaré Mme Mlambo-Ngcuka.

Selon elle, le gouvernement devrait veiller à ce que tout amendement à la nouvelle loi électorale soit apporté à temps afin qu'il puisse être mis en œuvre dans le cadre des élections.

Elle a recommandé de renforcer les politiques et le cadre juridique du Libéria qui relèvent le défi de la sous-représentation, de la

Clôture de la 8ème édition du Forum de l'Énergie Durable de la CEDEAO

La deuxième et dernière journée de la 8ème édition du Forum de l'Énergie Durable de la CEDEAO (ESEF 2023) a été marquée par des moments décisifs, consolidant sa position de plateforme essentielle de dialogue entre les principaux acteurs nationaux, régionaux et internationaux dans le domaine de l'énergie durable et du secteur énergétique ouest-africain.

Le Forum a également été l'occasion de célébrer les institutions qui ont joué un rôle clé dans le développement des énergies renouvelables et de l'efficacité énergétique avec les Prix ESEF 2023. Ces prix reconnaissent l'engagement et les efforts déployés pour construire un avenir plus durable à travers des initiatives et des innovations qui promeuvent l'énergie durable en Afrique de l'Ouest.

Son Excellence, le Premier Ministre du Cap-

Vert, Dr Ulisses Correia e Silva, a salué le fait que l'ESEF se déroule pour la première fois au Cap-Vert et a souligné que le Forum est une plateforme clé dans l'espace de la CEDEAO pour accélérer la production d'énergie propre en Afrique de l'Ouest.

La 8ème édition du Forum de l'Énergie Durable de la CEDEAO a fourni un forum unique pour la discussion des questions importantes, mettant en avant des sujets tels que la participation des femmes et des jeunes dans le secteur des

énergies propres en Afrique de l'Ouest, l'efficacité énergétique dans les bâtiments, l'eau-énergie-alimentation- l'intégration foncière pour la prospérité et la résilience climatique, ainsi que les opportunités et les défis associés au financement vert pour la transition énergétique dans l'espace CEDEAO.

Selon le Président de la Commission de la CEDEAO, Dr.

▶ CONT'D ON PAGE 9



Éditorial

Il faut tenir compte des recommandations des observateurs internationaux

Les observateurs internationaux qui surveillent le processus électoral au Libéria donnent une série de recommandations aux autorités libériennes pour améliorer les futurs scrutins et renforcer le processus démocratique du pays.

L'Institut électoral pour une démocratie durable en Afrique (EISA), à travers sa Mission d'observation des élections (EISA-EOM), a fait un état des lieux des défis qu'il a observés lors des élections du mardi 10 octobre, dont notamment la sous-représentation des jeunes dans les postes électifs, l'engagement croissant des jeunes comme des milices politiques des partis,

le retard dans l'exhibition de la liste électorale définitive, le retard dans la publication des réglementations sur la collecte et la tabulation des résultats, le manque de messages de campagne substantiels basés sur des questions ou des politiques, la désinformation généralisée sur les élections sur les médias sociaux et une stratégie de communication faible, et la faible visibilité des programmes de la NEC.

L'ESIA exhorte donc le gouvernement du Libéria à promulguer dans la loi des dispositions sur les quotas obligatoires de genre pour les candidates féminines, conformément à l'engagement international du Libéria en faveur de l'action positive.

Il a appelé également le gouvernement à explorer la possibilité de déplacer légalement le jour du scrutin à une date qui ne coïncide pas avec la saison des pluies afin de réduire les défis et les risques logistiques tout en facilitant la participation des électeurs.

"Appliquer les règles de la loi électorale en poursuivant les infractions telles que la transhumance des électeurs. À la NEC, il faut renforcer les communications publiques en mettant l'accent sur les processus clés, en les rendant plus proactives, plus rapides et plus précises. Collaborer avec les OSC pour améliorer la conduite de l'éducation civique et électorale", recommande le groupe.

Pour leur part, les observateurs électoraux de la Communauté économique des États de l'Afrique de l'Ouest (CEDEAO) recommandent que, pour remédier aux embouteillages et aux longues files d'attente dans les bureaux de vote, des réformes soient introduites dans les lois électorales afin de réduire le nombre d'électeurs par unité de vote.

Bien que ce ne soient là que quelques-unes des recommandations des observateurs étrangers ici, et d'autres sont à venir, nous pensons qu'elles sont pertinentes et devraient attirer l'attention immédiate des autorités de la Commission électorale nationale et du gouvernement du Libéria afin d'améliorer notre processus électoral.

Les élections sont cruciales pour consolider la paix au Libéria. Un scrutin crédible produit un résultat qui sera acceptable pour la majorité de la population et fera progresser la gouvernance démocratique. Tout ce qui ne permet pas aux électeurs de choisir librement les dirigeants de leur choix est contre-productif et n'est pas sain pour le pays.

Cependant, le processus menant au déroulement effectif des élections est encore plus important. C'est pourquoi il est nécessaire que les parties prenantes, y compris les acteurs et les arbitres, travaillent ensemble pour organiser des élections crédibles afin que les résultats soient validés par les observateurs nationaux et internationaux pour le bien du pays.

C'est pourquoi nous pensons qu'il est important que nos autorités électorales et le gouvernement prennent ces recommandations très au sérieux pour améliorer le processus.

Français

Starts from page 8 **Le chef de la mission électorale**

engagements que vous avez pris dans la Déclaration révisée de Farmington River pendant la période post-électorale et au-delà », a-t-elle plaidé.

"Utiliser le mécanisme de règlement des différends électoraux existant pour traiter les griefs et le faire dans les délais et conditions prévus."

Elle a appelé la Police nationale du Libéria (LNP) à

enquêter et à poursuivre en justice tous les auteurs des violences survenues pendant les élections.

En outre, Madame Mlambo-Ngcuka a recommandé que les organisations de la société civile (OSC) lancent des programmes dans l'environnement post-électoral qui favorisent la bonne gouvernance et améliorent les pratiques démocratiques et l'édification de la nation.

Starts from page 8 **Clôture de la 8ème édition**

Aliou Omar Touré, le Forum est véritablement « une plateforme de référence pour discuter du rôle des énergies renouvelables et de l'efficacité énergétique comme catalyseur de l'énergie durable dans l'espace de la CEDEAO. Ces journées de débat et d'interaction stimulera l'échange d'idées, de projets et d'initiatives visant à promouvoir une utilisation plus responsable de l'énergie et à contribuer à un avenir plus durable. Le Forum renforce également la volonté et la motivation de la Commission de la CEDEAO à travailler avec tous les gouvernements et partenaires".

Avec près de 500 participants venus des États membres de la CEDEAO, d'Afrique et du monde entier, le Forum a réuni des conférenciers éminents,

notamment des représentants de gouvernements, d'organisations internationales, du secteur privé, de l'industrie et des experts dans le domaine de l'énergie durable.

Selon le directeur exécutif du CERECC, Francis Sempore, l'ESEF 2023 était une occasion unique de discuter et de définir des stratégies pour promouvoir une transition énergétique juste dans les États membres de la CEDEAO.

Le Forum de l'énergie durable de la CEDEAO a été une fois de plus un catalyseur de débat, de collaboration et d'innovation pour promouvoir la croissance du secteur de l'énergie durable en Afrique de l'Ouest, qui joue un rôle crucial dans l'amélioration des conditions de vie des populations de la région, notamment des populations rurales, et en améliorant la compétitivité des entreprises et des industries en Afrique de l'Ouest.

Starts from page 8 **Élections générales au**

Sortant George Weah, l'ancien vice-président Joseph Boakai qui cherche sa revanche après sa défaite en 2017 contre le même Weah, et enfin l'homme d'affaires Alexander Cummings.

Chaque candidat cherche à protéger le vote de ses propres électeurs. Dans ce but, des observateurs ont été placés dans les bureaux de vote pour surveiller le déroulement du scrutin. Le désir de paix est l'un des enjeux de cette élection, explique Oscar Bloh, président d'une équipe de 1 500 observateurs locaux :

« Ces élections sont cruciales en raison d'importantes inégalités sociales qui persistent dans ce pays. Il y a la question du chômage qui touche particulièrement les jeunes. Et ces élections sont également cruciales, car le pays est très divisé entre les deux principaux partis

politiques. Malgré ça, les gens espèrent que ces élections seront pacifiques. » Les résultats définitifs dans deux semaines, des chiffres provisoires dès vendredi

Si aucun incident n'a été signalé, dans le comté de Montserrado, dans le nord-ouest du pays, la commission électorale a dû d'abord fermer l'un des bureaux pour ensuite le déplacer dans un autre quartier, sans explication connue.

Malgré quelques problèmes logistiques, notamment le fait que les personnes âgées et handicapées n'ont pas pu accéder aux urnes qui se trouvaient à l'étage dans certains bureaux de vote, le scrutin s'est déroulé dans le calme. Les bureaux de vote ont fermé à 18 heures (heure locale). Le bidonville du comté de Montserrado est connu pour avoir vu George Weah grandir. C'est ici qu'il a appris à jouer au foot. Mais c'est aussi ici que sa popularité est contestée.

Niger : face à une situation financière difficile, le CNSP lance un fonds de solidarité



Après l'annonce d'un budget révisé en forte baisse, de 40%, pour l'État nigérien le 8 octobre, le Conseil national pour la sauvegarde de la patrie (CNSP) lance un « fonds de solidarité pour la sauvegarde de la patrie ». Dans un communiqué, le régime militaire au pouvoir après le coup d'État de juillet dernier explique vouloir mettre en place un grand nombre de prélèvements : entreprises, hydrocarbures, diasporas, de nombreux secteurs seront mis à contribution.

Ce fonds de solidarité serait financé, selon le communiqué, par des prélèvements sur les hydrocarbures, sur les redevances des opérateurs de télécommunications titulaires d'une licence dans le

pays. Il n'y a pas d'informations sur les modalités d'application pour l'instant, mais cela dénote une chose : le CNSP cherche de l'argent.

Pour alimenter ce fond, il y aura un prélèvement de 10 francs CFA (environ 1 centime d'euros) par ticket de transport terrestre comme les péages par exemple. Les entreprises, ONG et les programmes de développement seront également mis à contribution.

Le président d'une ONG contacté ce samedi 14 octobre salue « un acte patriotique fort » tout en relativisant la portée de ces décisions. Les financements occidentaux sont suspendus, explique-t-il, les caisses de son ONG sont vides, il a donc du mal à imaginer comment son organisation pourrait contribuer.

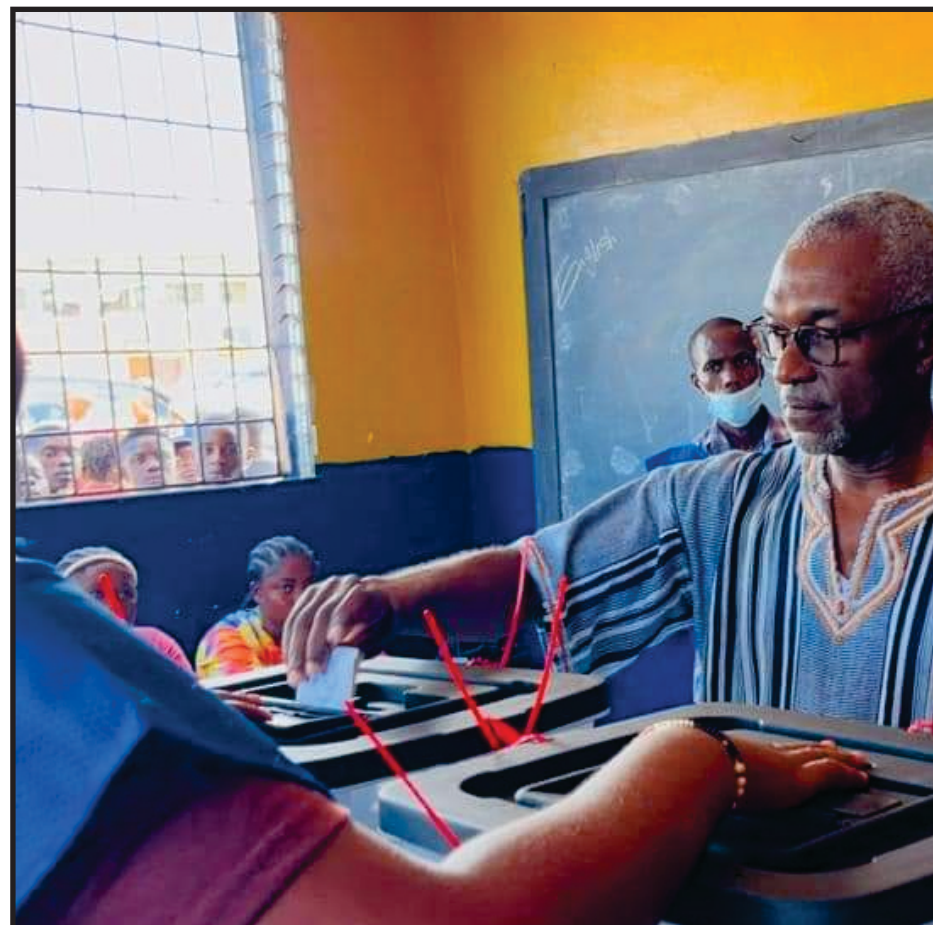
Un appel à l'aide aux diasporas

Une autre source nigérienne pointe « le manque de réalisme » de ces prélèvements, prenant pour exemple les recettes des

péages routiers de l'ordre de 10 milliards de francs CFA par an (approximativement 15 millions d'euros), jugés trop faible pour alimenter le budget. C'est la même chose pour les 1 000 francs de prélèvement sur les billets d'avion avec un trafic aérien faible.

Un appel aux diasporas est lancé par le CNSP : il y a deux jours, les ressortissants nigériens vivant au Togo ont remis un don 100 millions de francs CFA (environ 150 000 euros) au Conseil national actuellement au pouvoir. Une autre donation de 10 millions de francs a été faite de la part de la diaspora nigérienne de Dubaï.

La CPP se dit troublée par les résultats préliminaires de la NEC



Le comité de campagne pour l'élection d'Alexander B. Cummings à la présidence du Libéria s'est dit alarmé par les chiffres attribués à leur candidat jusqu'à présent. "Alors que nous sommes encore en train d'évaluer les résultats à ce stade, il est important que nous signalions comme un sujet de préoccupation majeur la tendance claire qui se dessine à travers le pays", a déclaré l'ambassadeur Lewis G. Brown, président de campagne. Selon M. Brown, dans tout le pays, les partisans et les sympathisants de la Collaboration des Partis politiques (CPP) informent le parti de leurs préoccupations troublantes selon

lesquelles les endroits où ils ont voté en grand nombre, rapportent des chiffres ridiculement bas pour la CPP.

« Cela est également vrai là où les candidats de la PCC sont sensé gagner. Nous constatons cette tendance antidémocratique dans tous les centres de vote du pays. Cela oblige les partisans de la CPP à conclure que les résultats pourraient avoir été prédéterminés au lieu de refléter les votes réels exprimés.

Nous évaluons ces rapports troublants et ces préoccupations alarmantes et exhortons tous les Libériens à faire preuve de paix. Nous sommes déterminés à garantir que la véritable volonté des électeurs soit respectée. Nous sommes

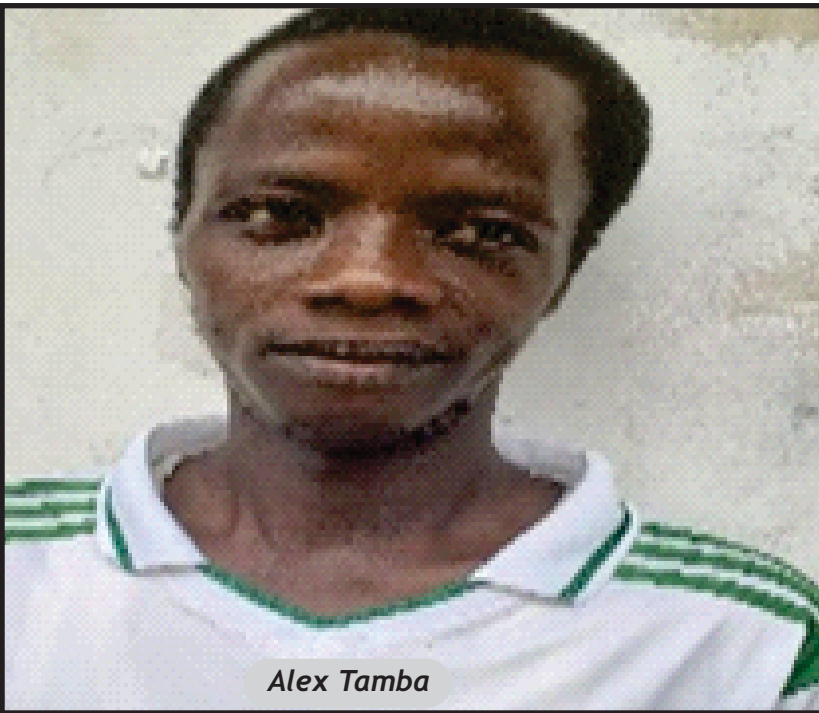
également déterminés à découvrir et à comprendre ce qui s'est réellement passé. Nous avons le devoir de le faire envers notre jeune démocratie, nos partisans et nos sympathisants, ainsi que le peuple du Libéria. Ne nous y trompons pas : le résultat des élections du 10 octobre doit être perçu par le peuple libérien comme reflétant librement et équitablement sa volonté. Rien d'autre ne peut être acceptable », a conclu Brown.

LIBERIANS DEBATE

Topic: The 2023 Elections

By Naneka Hoffman

Liberians went to the poll on Tuesday, October 10, 2023 in Presidential and General Elections. Voting was generally peaceful across the country with huge turnout by electorate. As the National Elections Commission announces daily progressive results of the poll, some Liberians rate the process as free, fair and peaceful. Read their comments, as compiled below.



Alex Tamba

parties' leaders is that let everybody be kind. I believe that everybody has their results in their hands. Both the CDC and the UP are claiming victory each. But only the National Elections Commission has the right to announce results and I believe that she will do the right thing. My advice to all the political leaders and the National Elections Commission is let them do the right thing. And no one is better than Liberia, so let us keep the peace."

"Actually, I feel fine we come to our way about the elections. elections, the If you look at the the elections are other countries like going actually I feel Sierra Leone and fine, because our Nigeria, their democracy is elections never growing. And my ended in peace. When advice to political

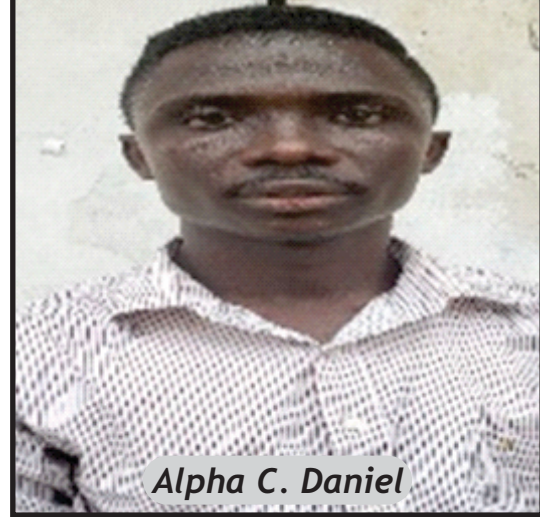
"I feel good about the elections, because they were held in a peaceful manner. Thanks to all Liberians, for exercising their right; we look up to the NEC for the final results, because it is only the National Elections Commission that can tell the Liberian people, who win the elections. I urge everyone to remain their own results. peaceful, and call on Let's keep the country political parties' in peace and wait on leaders to stop calling NEC to announce the



Rufuson P.C Diggs, III

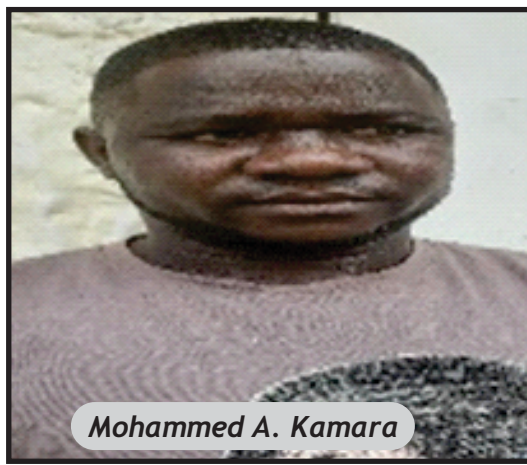
final results. Liberia is all we have, so keep the peace."

"I feel very grateful for the election. And also to the Liberian people for us maintaining the peace of the country; that is one of the key issues. At least the elections were peaceful though some violence occurred before Election Day, but by the grace of God, everything went was brought under control and



Alpha C. Daniel

the elections were peaceful so, I am very much happy for that. I call on all young people to stay away from electoral violence."



Mohammed A. Kamara

"I feel that the election announcement of were free, fair and the final results."

"I feel good about the elections; the only thing is we Liberians have to hold ourselves and wait for the elections commissioners to give the final results."



Mustapha Harmon

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Weah & Boakai in seizer battle

By Lincoln G. Peters

Incumbent President George Weah and his main rival former Vice President Joseph N. Boakai are

of 748,463 votes constituting 43.70% against Mr. Weah's 747,578 votes constituting 43.65%.

The NEC reported from

class as the country's problems found political comfort in backing Weah's quest for the nation's highest seat.



President Weah

Amb. Boakai

said to be in a seesaw battle as the race to the Executive Mansion remains undecided. On Sunday, October 15, Mr. Weah took a narrow lead over his opponent Mr. Boakai with just 0.26%. However, the narrative changed on Monday, October 16, when the Unity Party (UP) presidential candidate swung the narrow lead in his favor at 0.5%.

The battle has been solid from both ends, as the National Elections Commission (NEC) continues to release preliminary results. The two archrivals have been locked in a tight race for the presidential seat contested by a total of 20 candidates.

Reading the progressive tally report, NEC chairperson Davidetta Brown-Lansanah said Mr. Boakai, a former Liberian vice president, secured a total

56467 polling places out of a total of 5890 polling places constituting 92.82%. She said candidate Boakai obtained 748,463 votes constituting 43.70%, while Mr. Weah of the Coalition for Democratic Change (CDC) obtained 747,578 votes, constituting 43.65%.

Either of the two rivals needs 50 percent plus one of the votes cast to win the presidency. In 2017, Mr. Weah and Mr. Boakai battled in a presidential run-off and the former won the polls as an opposition candidate.

Weah, a former Liberian international soccer star overwhelmingly enjoyed the mass support of ordinary people in past elections when he was an opposition. Young people and those who saw the educated

But his six years in office have painted a completely different picture of the leader they thought he was. While he still maintains a strong support base within his Coalition for Democratic Change, it seems the grassroots-level support is now divided.

In this year's polls, both Weah and Boakai have amassed support from the grassroots, and the incumbent did not have a smooth ride this time. The NEC will continue to announce more preliminary results in the coming days. The outcomes will tell whether there can be a one-round victory or a run-off between the two archrivals.

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Claims and counter-claims

election and we will continue with those things we have started as lawmaker of the people."He adds that evidence links the Deputy Speaker towards the reported violence but that he is not deterred.

"If we think, Liberia is our common denominator and we have to make Liberia prosperous, fair, trust and united, I don't think we should have this aspect. I mean, in the legislature, there are many times Deputy Speaker Koffa has been accused. We even had other instances where we have brought it in his face and in recent times, there were some communications between him and Maryland County's former chairman of the traditional council, Nelson Neal, to have contested against me but that didn't happen. Perhaps, he is now using Candidate Anthony F. Williams through Senator Biney."

"So with all that's happening, people trying to control and destabilize the process, but I

want to thank the Liberian National Police for being so active in handling these issues", Chambers narrates.

He reveals that officials of the CDC and Team Chambers have filed an official complaint against the alleged act perpetrated by the 'Country Devil' and supporters of his rival.

On Friday, October 13, 2023, several traditional women and men gathered at Maryland County Administration Building to debunk Speaker Chambers that residents of Old Sodoken used traditional masquerades (known locally as country devils) to disrupt election activities in that town, where Chambers' rival Anthony Williams, hails from and reportedly obtained a substantial number of votes.

The traditional people, including women, men, youth, and elders, said the information provided by Representative Chambers is

untrue because nothing of such happened during the election. They maintain that there was no 'country devil' brought out, as Chambers alleges. They call on the National Elections Commission to announce results from Pleebo Sodoken District#2 in accordance with what was gathered from the field.

The NEW DAWN has tried contacting the Grand County Representative and Deputy Speaker, Fonati Koffa via his press office which has promised to come out with a press release.

Old Sodoken is on the outskirts Pleebo that has a voting population of nine hundred and sixty (960) out of which Representative Chambers received a total of nine-five (95) votes, while his rival, Anthony F. Williams, obtained six hundred and forty-three (643) votes from there. Editing by Jonathan Browne

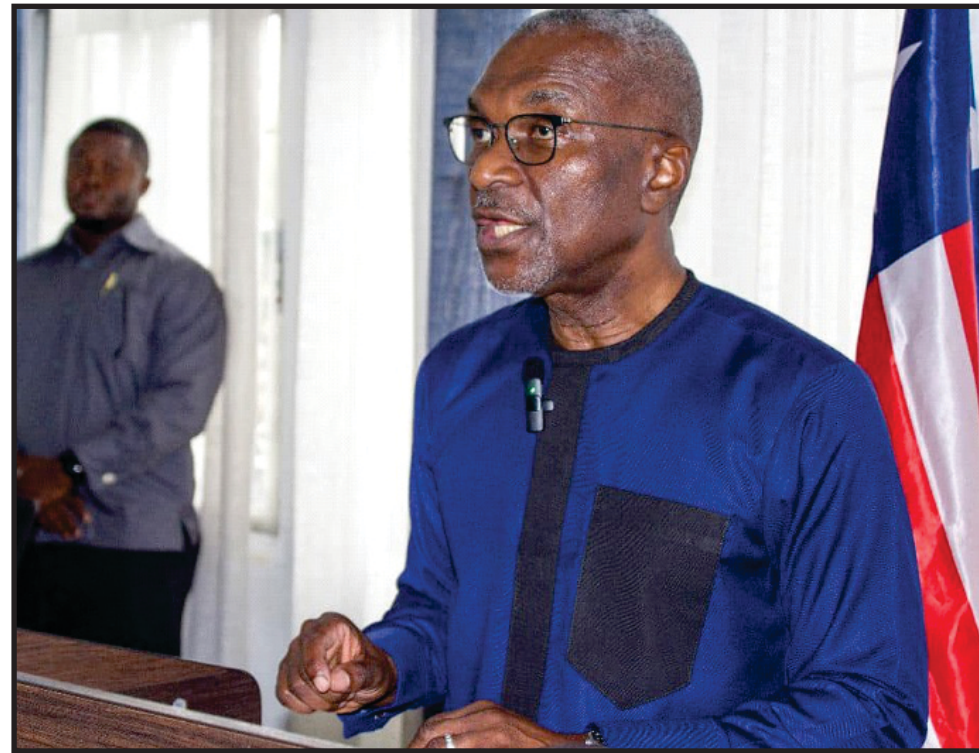
Cummings concedes defeat

Opposition presidential candidate Alexander B. Cummings has conceded defeat but with reservations, ahead of the National Elections Commission (NEC) finalizing the announcement of election results.

As head of the opposition Collaborating Political Parties (CPP)/Alternative National Congress (ANC), Mr. Cummings entered the presidential 2023 race as one of two main rivals to incumbent President George Manneh Weah.

However, the rather humiliating election results relegate Cummings to sixth place across most of Liberia's 15 counties, while other candidates rouse from the bottom to distant third, fourth, and five places.

Mr. Cummings issued a statement Monday, 16 October 2023 outlining his reservation with the outcomes of the 10 October polls and promised his supporters that he will investigate and bring to light what has happened.



"Let me assure all of you that we will continue to do everything within our power to investigate and bring to light what has happened. I promise you that no matter how long it takes, everyone involved will answer," said Mr. Cummings.

Cummings lamented that the announced results "ridiculously defy common sense," warning that this is sowing an unhealthy impression about Liberia's democracy. "People are feeling robbed of their right to freely and fairly express their will and choice for leadership," said Cummings.

According to the opposition leader, the scheme to allegedly rob the Liberian voters of their right to choose their leaders may be sophisticated and difficult to trace and prove. However, the former

Coca-Cola executive believes that in the end, it undermines the country's democracy and risks the security and stability of the country.

"The evil geniuses involved, and their co-conspirators may believe they can demoralize our right to vote. They may be thinking they can crush our desire to be governed democratically and live in peace. They are wrong," said Mr. Cummings.

"They are underestimating the resolve of the Liberian people. Liberians are no fools. Our nation has paid dearly for our cherished democracy," he noted.

Cummings noted that there should be no mistake that Liberians are determined to preserve their hard-won peace and democracy. "I have heard from many of our partisans, well-wishers, and supporters. I feel your disappointment. I share your pain. I understand your anger. But we must not lose hope - not in ourselves, and definitely not in our country."

At the same time, Mr. Cummings has called on his supporters to

continue to remain peaceful and law-abiding. He assured them that they would win in the end, adding that there would be consequences for seeking to undermine Liberia's young democracy and acting against the interests of the Liberian people.

The CPP leader called on his partisans, sympathizers, and supporters to never give up on Liberia. "Because of what we have dared to do, because of the spark for real change which we have started together - business will never be "as usual" in Liberia," he said. "This country will be fixed, now or later! Liberians deserve better. This is a fact that cannot be denied in any ridiculous election result. The Liberian people want change," Cummings noted.

Starts from back page CDC condemns UP

Tuesday, 10 October 2023, the National Elections Commission and the UP remain two archrivals commenced the announcement of preliminary results from various counties. The process is expected to continue in the coming days. CDC and the UP remain two archrivals battling for the presidency. -Press release

CDC condemns UP

-Describes announcement of result as "reckless"

The ruling Coalition for Democratic Change (CDC) has condemned as political recklessness, the announcement of election results by its main rival Unity Party (UP).



Cllr. Kanio Bai Gbala

CDC National Campaign Spokesman Cllr. Kanio Bai Gbala condemned the former ruling party when he appeared on Freedom FM. According to a press release, Cllr. Gbala asserted that such "irresponsible and dangerous action" by the Unity Party tends to severely undermine the credibility of the National Elections Commission.

He added that it could provoke violence and undermine the peace and stability of the Liberian state. He claimed further that a presidential motorcade was attacked during the CDC's closing rally on 8 October 2023. Cllr. Gbala warned the Unity Party that all such actions are collectively serious violations not only of the Farmington Declaration but also of various criminal laws of the Liberian state that are punishable by jail time once due process is adduced. Cllr. Gbala therefore called on all well-meaning Liberians, the Liberia Civil Society Council, the Elections Coordinating Committee, the Interreligious Council of Liberia, ECOWAS, the AU, the European Union, the US Embassy in Monrovia, and other moral guarantors of the Liberian state to condemn the act of the UP. Meanwhile, Cllr. Gbala has assured all partisans and supporters of the CDC that the Weah-Taylor 2023 National Victory Campaign is alive and on course. He cautioned CDCians to remain calm, law-abiding, and jubilant and to promptly report any illegal and/or violent actions to the appropriate authorities for legal redress in line with the law. Following the presidential and legislative elections conducted on

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