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DATE	BUYING	SELLING
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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.

The New Dawn

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VOL. 13 NO. 185 WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 18, 2023 PRICE LD\$40.00

NEC orders rerun in Nimba Dist #4



-As Weah moves back on top with over 5000 votes

Weah back on top



-As seesaw battle continues

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Continental News

Somali TV journalist killed in suicide bombing

A prominent Somali TV journalist has been buried after he was killed in a suicide bombing at a restaurant in the capital, Mogadishu, on Monday. Police said four other people were injured outside the restaurant which is near the presidential palace. Information



Abdifatah Moalim Nur had received threats in the past, fellow journalists say

Abdifatah Moalim Nur, popularly known as Qeys, was described by colleagues as "exceptional" and "inspiring". He becomes the first journalist to be killed in Somalia this year, according to a local media watchdog. The al-Qaeda-linked militant group, al-Shabab, said it carried out the suicide

Minister Daud Aweis condemned the "cowardly" attack. The National Union of Somali Journalists (NUSOJ) said it was "deeply shaken" by the "senseless and brutal" killing of Nur, the director of the privately owned Somali Cable Television. "His remarkable career and unwavering dedication have left an indelible mark on Somali journalism, inspiring countless

young journalists to strive for excellence," the union said. Journalists from various Somali media outlets came together to attend his funeral. They reflected on the impact Nur had on the media community.

"It is black day for all Somali Cable staff, he was a good person. He was not only our director but he was our father. I was with him yesterday discussing stories we'd work on today." said Bushra Bashir a Somali Cable TV reporter. Nur, a staunch advocate of press freedom, had previously faced threats, the Somali Journalists Syndicate (SJS), said. In October last year, journalist Mohamed Isse Hassan was among more than 100 people killed in twin car bombings in Mogadishu. A month earlier, a reporter with state-owned Somali National Television, Ahmed Mohamed Shukur, was by killed by a landmine near the capital.

Al-Shabab has been carrying out deadly attacks in Somalia in response to a large-scale military offensive that seeks to drive out the jihadists. Somalia's President Hassan Sheikh Mohamud took office in May last year promising an "all-out war" against the group. BBC

Gabon's Government Threatens Arrests Over Money Collected for Work Not Performed

Military rulers in Gabon on Tuesday threatened to arrest the heads of businesses who have collected money for work that was not performed. While ordering the resumption of work at utility and construction sites after years of abandonment, Gabon's military-appointed prime minister, Raymond Ndong Sima, told state TV that the junta-led government will ask contractors who abandoned work after collecting money to resume their projects or face arrest. The announcement was part of a promised crackdown on corruption.

Sima said that scores of companies have resumed work after the central African state's coup leader, Gen. Brice Oligui Nguema, visited several abandoned road, water and electricity projects in the capital, Libreville, on

Nguema left. Barber Jacques Abossolo, who lives in Bizango-Bibere, said on state TV that some of the projects there had been abandoned for 10 years. Joseph Dotse, a road construction engineer in Libreville, said Nguema asked his company to resume work it temporarily suspended due to heavy rains. He predicted that in 10 days, his company, Gabon Construction, would complete work on a 6-kilometer stretch of road Nguema visited. Dotse said that Bongo paid half of the money for the road work and that he expects the military junta to settle the remaining bill. He said Bongo, his family and friends own companies that never executed projects after receiving money. Bongo's lawyers deny the accusations. Gabon's military-appointed government said that Nguema will visit other towns and villages in the days ahead to make sure work on abandoned sites is relaunched and that contractors



Gabon's military-appointed Prime Minister Raymond Ndong Sima, pictured here in Libreville on Sept. 7, 2023

Saturday. On Monday, Gabon's state TV showed images of people celebrating as Nguema visited the sites in several poor suburbs. Women and children embraced and shook hands with Nguema, with some shedding tears. They said it was the first time a Gabonese leader had visited poor suburban neighborhoods, a claim VOA could not independently verify. Civilians told Nguema that each time elections approached, ousted President Ali Bongo Ondimba would promise drinkable water, electricity and good roads and dispatch equipment to start construction. But after the elections, construction work would be abandoned, and the equipment removed.

Nguema said on TV that an anti-corruption task force created by the military junta has a list of companies that received money from the former regime but never executed projects. Civilians said several companies resumed work as soon as

who swindled state funds will be arrested if they do not refund the money. Guy Roger Makongo, a political science lecturer at Omar Bongo University in Libreville, said on a messaging app that Nguema has been respecting the roadmap he set up to restore democratic rule following the August 30 bloodless coup. Makongo said besides fighting corruption and carrying out consultations to organize a national dialogue by the end of this year, Nguema has set up a constitutional council and appointed a government and members of the senate and national assembly from the opposition, civil society and the army. Many people, however, are skeptical that Nguema will hand power to civilian rule soon because he has not given a possible date for a return to constitutional order, Makongo said. Last week, Gabon's military junta promised to invest more than \$10 million of what it called recovered ill-gotten wealth on water, electricity, roads and school infrastructure to improve living conditions, especially in the hinterlands. VOA

Nigeria burns \$1.4m-worth of pangolin scales

Nigeria has burned \$1.4m (£1.2m) worth of pangolin scales in a stand against trafficking, officials said. It is the first time the nation has publicly destroyed seized wildlife products for this reason. The pangolin is one of the world's most trafficked mammals - their scales are in high demand in traditional Chinese medicine. Nigeria is a major transit hub for African pangolin scales and other wildlife products trafficked to Asia. "These seized items represent the past we leave behind, but the destruction signifies the future we are determined to build for our planet," Environment Minister Izaq Adekunle said before the burning took place in Nigeria's capital, Abuja. "The destruction of these seized items is a powerful statement of our resolve to protect our environment, conserve our wildlife, and combat the illegal trade that drives species to the brink of extinction." Almost four tonnes of pangolin scales were destroyed alongside seized leopard, python and crocodile skins. The agency had

confiscated the scales in collaboration with the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) and a pan-African alliance named the Elephant Protection Initiative. In August, the leaders of a global wildlife trafficking gang were convicted for smuggling pangolin scales after a four-year investigation and a trial in Nigeria. And last year, Nigerian customs officials seized 1,613 tonnes of pangolin scales and arrested 14 people, Nigeria's Environmental Standards and Regulations Enforcement Agency said. Pangolins are the only mammals in the world to be covered in scales, which are made from keratin, the same substance found in human fingernails. Four species live in

Africa, across countries in the the south, east and centre of the continent. The creature is near extinct in Nigeria, so pangolins smuggled from there are likely to be from other countries, UNODC said. Asia is home to the other four species, although they have been totally wiped out in the continent's vast south-east region. According to animal charity Wild Aid, up to 200,000 pangolins are thought to be taken from the wild every year. It is not known how many are left globally - the animals are notoriously difficult to monitor because they are shy and nocturnal. According to UNODC, seizures of pangolin scales increased tenfold between 2014 and 2018. BBC



All eight species of pangolin are threatened, with three listed as critically endangered

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.

Published by the Searchlight Communications Inc.,

UN Drive, P.O. Box 1266 Opposite National Investment Commission.

Monrovia-Liberia. Tel: +231-06484201, +231-77007529, +231-0555422200 /

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COMMENTARY

By Lennie Bazira,
Prossy Muyingo

Compensating Community-Health Workers

CLARKSVILLE, MD/KAMPALA - At least six million women worldwide provide unpaid or grossly underpaid labor in community-health centers, often in low- and middle-income countries (LMICs). Many work as community-health workers. But, though this is a skilled job that should be salaried, only 34 countries offer CHWs accreditation, training, and salaries, leaving the majority exploited and therefore less effective for their patients. If we are serious about making "health for all" a global priority, this must change.

CHWs are crucial to strengthening health systems at the national level: they have been proven to improve maternal- and child-health services, expand access to family planning, and support prevention and care for both noncommunicable and infectious diseases. Deploying CHWs who consistently provide just 30 lifesaving health services in countries with the highest disease burden would save as many as 6.9 million lives annually and reduce child mortality by almost half. Moreover, the COVID-19 pandemic demonstrated how resilient community-health programs can provide essential services even in the face of great adversity.

But such programs will reach their full potential only with service design that adheres to evidence-based best practices. That means treating CHWs as professionals who require training, fair pay, and safe working conditions. When used as a stopgap solution or a source of cheap labor, CHWs are less effective than their well-resourced counterparts.

In Africa, up to 85% of CHWs are unpaid, and, worldwide, CHWs' essential medicines are out of stock one-third of the time. In Uganda, our home country, there is a shortage of health-care workers, so CHWs have stepped up to fill the gap. Though these workers provide vital services to their communities, performing many of the same tasks as their salaried supervisors, they often receive little or no pay.

Why are CHWs, who are often women of color, expected to work and save lives without recognition or remuneration? It is clear that this is also a gender-rights issue. Patriarchal norms and power dynamics condition women to accept no or low wages for what should clearly be paid work. For example, women from low-income households and with low levels of education often view this type of unpaid work as an opportunity that might lead to paid work or an asset like a mobile phone or bicycle.

Unpaid work in health care can also bring women social recognition. In many contexts, it is seen as honorable work that families will approve of for a woman. As a result, CHWs tend to juggle these positions with piecemeal paid jobs and family responsibilities.

These women face an unenviable dilemma: If they give up their work as CHWs to find full-time employment that can support them, who will provide much-needed health care for their communities? Backed into a corner by systemic inequalities and traditional gender roles, they often continue to overextend themselves, sacrificing stability, economic security, career progression, and their own well-being in the process.

To redress this entrenched social and economic injustice, professional CHWs must become the norm, not the exception. At minimum, CHWs must be accredited to ensure that certain standards are met; paid a competitive wage; continuously trained and supported by a dedicated supervisor; and integrated into health systems, including primary health-care facilities and wider monitoring and evaluation systems. That way, they can be proactive in surveillance and see patients without point-of-care user fees. In short, CHWs must be salaried, skilled, supervised, and supplied.

After years of being marginalized and isolated, CHWs are now organizing and establishing in-country networks, largely using digital technology, to achieve these goals. More than 5,000 CHWs and aligned health organizations across 40 countries have come together via the Community Health Impact Coalition to translate shared research and advocacy work into policy change at the national level. Our shared mission is to ensure that all LMICs, including Uganda, adopt policies for professional CHWs.

The global community must decide whether it will fairly compensate those who, for decades, have propped up health systems in LMICs, or continue to exploit a largely female workforce. The moral choice is clear. Countries that professionalize CHWs and integrate them into a robust health infrastructure will be in the best position to make progress toward "health for all" - including for the women delivering the bulk of the care.

OP-ED

By Svenja Schulze,
Christina Chilimba

Investing in Gender Equality

BERLIN/LILONGWE - Despite coming from vastly different beginnings - one of us comes from a fishing district in Malawi with one of the country's highest adolescent pregnancy rates, the other grew up in West Germany during the height of the women's movement - we have both seen the transformative impact of empowering women and girls. What also unites us is the same sense of urgency for more to be done - faster and at a bigger scale.

During the first 20 years of this century, progress toward equality was occurring, albeit not fast enough. But progress has stalled in recent years, owing to the COVID-19 pandemic, the impact of Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine, and inflation.

Now is the time to regain momentum. One way is through "feminist development policy" - a concept that at its core has a simple idea: Women and girls comprise half the population; they should have an equal share of the power and the same rights, resources, and representation as men enjoy.

Progress on gender equality requires the involvement of women and young people in decision-making and the co-creation of policies that are tailored to their needs. These policies give more women and girls access to contraceptives, safe-birth facilities, nutrition packages, immunization, and maternal care, regardless of where they live or their socioeconomic status.

The most common-sense and desperately needed policies we are fighting for start with bodily autonomy - a prerequisite if women and girls are to realize their full potential. When girls graduate from school, the benefits to society are enormous, not least because of the additional brain power and tax revenue. That is why social and cultural barriers that prevent girls from attending school must be removed. In many places, a teenage girl who becomes pregnant is expelled from school and ostracized by her family - taking away her right to determine her own future. Such outcomes underscore why access to contraceptives is so important.

When a country's laws and regulations stand in the way of gender equality, it is time to change them. With the support of the World Bank and the Global Financing Facility for Women, Children and Adolescents (GFF), countries are adopting crucial reforms.

For example, in Cameroon, where one in four teenage girls become pregnant, regulatory reforms were introduced last year allowing pregnant girls to remain in school. And in Niger, legislation enacted last year provides married adolescent girls access to family planning services without being accompanied by a parent or husband - so as not to be unduly influenced in their decision-making. Girls in secondary school can attend clubs to get information about family planning and learn about topics such as respectful relationships and the risks of sexually transmitted infections.

These policies help women and girls make decisions about their own bodies and lives. They are part of the work of the GFF, which uses modest grants to crowd in additional financing from both the public and private sectors, meaning that each dollar invested is multiplied many times over.

A feminist model like the GFF is one of the best investments the world can make in improving gender equality. This is why the government of Germany, alongside the Netherlands, Côte d'Ivoire, and the World Bank, are co-hosting a campaign this year to raise at least \$800 million for the GFF.

To address not only gender equality but also climate change, racism, and other societal challenges, young people need to be involved in the decision-making. Fortunately, today's youth are politically engaged and eager to make change happen. Around the world, they are forming movements to push for progress and offering fresh ideas and new perspectives on "old problems." Governments should listen to them.

In Malawi, for example, young people on local health committees are improving health services in their community. They reported shortages of family-planning commodities and electricity blackouts in maternity wards that were literally leaving expectant or new mothers in the dark. Young people are now on national health platforms. As a result, programs that offer free or affordable access to health information and contraception to young people have been created. This is a game changer for young women.

Civil-society organizations are building on new momentum generated by the growing movement of youth engagement that we are witnessing across GFF partner countries from Côte d'Ivoire and Uganda to Madagascar and Mauritania. In Senegal, for example, the Youth Alliance for Reproductive Health and Family Planning created a digital tool that tracks the quality of adolescent sexual and reproductive health services.

We are at a point in history when we have the chance to make a difference for women and girls worldwide. We have an opportunity to fast-track equality. But we cannot do it alone. We invite leaders around the world to support our vision. By investing now and committing greater political and financial support to the feminist development agenda through the GFF, the world can unleash the potential of women and girls to create a more just and prosperous future. It's up to all of us to make it happen.

OPINION

By Jim O'Neill

Ending the UK's Permanent Silly Season

LONDON - It is the season of political parties' annual conferences in the United Kingdom. While much of the attention will be on the governing Tories, many also will be closely watching the Labour Party, now that it is significantly ahead in the polls.

In the weeks leading up to the Conservative Party conference, Prime Minister Rishi Sunak seems to have shifted his personal strategy. Rather than presenting himself as a competent, safe, unambitious pair of hands, he is making a show of bold promises to tackle the country's biggest challenges. But is he serious, or is this mere political theater timed for the election?

Sunak, after all, presides over a party that is riddled with factions - many of them ideologically committed, and all of them scarred by the infighting of the past 13 years. Moreover, the party's current MPs were elected in 2019 by a strange mix of traditional Tory constituencies and newer Brexit-oriented voters who previously voted Labour. Both cohorts rather like government spending when it is directed toward them, provided that their own tax bills don't go up.

Hence, in the run-up to this year's conference, some Tories have once again trotted out the dream of lower taxes, decrying the tax burden borne by many households, and blaming this supposed problem on the country's weak economic performance in recent years. Michael Gove, a member of the cabinet, has even come out and said that while he personally favors income-tax cuts before the next election, Sunak and the chancellor of the exchequer have ruled them out.

In fact, though the UK tax burden has risen somewhat in recent years, it remains notably lower than in other developed countries. According to the UK's own fiscal watchdog, the Office for Budget Responsibility (OBR), the UK's tax-to-GDP ratio in 2021 (33.5%) was 2.2% below the developed-country average, 3.3% below the G7 average, and a whopping 6.4% below that of 14 other peer European countries, many of which have much higher standards of living. Of the countries that are wealthier than the UK in terms of per capita GDP (Britain ranks 22nd globally), more have a higher tax burden than have a lower one.

But not only do the data fail to support the argument that taxes are the main drag on UK growth; polling in recent years has shown that the British electorate generally favors higher taxes for the sake of higher spending (though many presumably would prefer that someone else bear the additional burden). This marks a shift from the 1990s and the 2000s, suggesting that higher taxes and spending do not pose the same political risk they once did to an incumbent government.

Still, any Tory leader, no matter how skilled, would struggle to navigate the current political and policy landscape, given the party's own decisions in government since 2010 and the endless internal squabbles they have inspired. Moreover, after 13 years in the political wilderness, Labour is focused squarely on demonstrating that it would be more competent with public finances and deliver stronger growth.

Earlier this year, Labour leader Keir Starmer and his shadow chancellor, Rachel Reeves, issued a mission statement pledging to achieve the fastest growth in the G7. (One hopes they mean per capita GDP, not absolute GDP, since that is what matters to households and correlates more strongly with productivity performance.) They also would enhance the powers of the OBR, which regularly estimates the costs of government programs and the tax policies needed to support them. This point matters because the OBR was (in)famously sidelined by former Prime Minister Liz Truss, whose extremely short stint in office almost crashed the entire economy.

Moreover, a few weeks ago, Labour went further by vowing that, if elected, no major tax or spending decision would be implemented without the OBR having publicly issued an independent analysis of the policy's implications (presumably for growth and the public balance sheet).

In response, George Osborne, who created the OBR while serving as chancellor for the Tory-led coalition government back in 2010, has suggested that Sunak's administration should adopt this proposal immediately. As a means of reinforcing the UK's fiscal "credibility," it has much to recommend it. But unless it results in tax and spending policies that are both more realistic and more ambitious, its effects will be limited.

As the data make clear, the UK suffers from persistently weak public- and private-sector investment, relative to its peers. Unless that changes, achieving rapid per capita GDP growth will be a pipe dream.

A smart government would stop playing the political game of focusing excessively on arbitrary short-term tax-to-GDP levels, and instead pursue an agenda that raises that ratio for the express purpose of boosting investment spending and productivity. Both are needed to sustain long-term growth and to reduce long-term debt. If the OBR's independent analysis determines that such spending will require increased taxes, so be it. That will be the ultimate test of the government's seriousness.

ARTICLE

ARTICLE

Liberia: The 2023 Presidential Election Analysis; Who will win?

By Dagbayonoh Kiah Nyanfore II

On October 10, 2023, Liberians went to the polls to elect a new president. There are 20 candidates, including current president George Manneh Weah. He was elected six years ago. Either the Liberian people will retain or replace him. Also among the candidates is Joseph Boakai, former vice president under President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf, who led Liberia for 12 years. Boakai unsuccessfully ran in 2017, but Weah defeated him in the second round. Boakai vows to win this time.

This article analyses the three leading candidates in their campaigns and indicates which one would win. First, some information on the candidates might be necessary to repeat. Weah entered politics in 2004 as the standard bearer of the Congress for Democratic Change (CDC). He lost the 2005 election in the second round after winning the first. Weah ran again unsuccessfully in 2011 as vice standard bearer to Winston Tubman. After returning to school upon his first defeat, he ran as a senator for Montserrado County and won by a landslide. Weah won the presidency by defeating 20 other contestants. In the second round, he defeated Boakai overwhelmingly by capturing 14 of the 15 counties in Liberia. Before politics, Weah was a former soccer star, winning African, European, and World best. He holds a master's degree.

Joseph Nyema Boakai has been in government for over 40 years. He first worked as head of the Liberian Produce and Marketing Corporation under President William Tolbert. He served as the Minister of Agriculture in the Samuel Doe government and as managing director of the Liberian Petroleum Refinery Company under Amos Sawyer interim presidency. Boakai is a quiet and peaceful person. He has a bachelor's degree from the University of Liberia.

Alexander Cummings is a former Coca-Cola executive. He worked in the corporate sector for over 20 years. He entered politics in about 2015. He became the political leader of the Alternative National Congress (ANC) and the standard bearer for the party in the 2017 presidential election. Although he has not worked in government, he was appointed by President Sirleaf to the board of the Booker T. Washington Institute (BWI). Cummings lost in the 2017 election, but he took second place in the Montserrado County votes. Additionally, lacking government experience does not equate to the impossibility of winning a presidential election. As known, in the US, Donald Trump lacked government practice but won the election. ANC is now part of the Collaborating Political Parties with the Liberty Party. Cummings has a master's degree from Clark-Atlanta University.

The CDC-led government has made many development tangibles, including building more roads and hospitals and improving education and the economy. It makes tuition to public colleges and universities free and constructed public housing and markets. However, corruption continues to be a major problem. For instance, the US government has sanctioned three Liberian officials for corruption. Further, Weah failed to personally and politically fight corruption. He failed his previous campaign promise to institute war and economic crime court in Liberia. However, the other candidates have problems. For example, some observers say Boakai has difficulties making decisions and cannot solve problems and reconcile. Under his watch, he could not resolve the breakaway issue and unite the CPP, indicating his leadership inability.

Moreover, others view him as unkind, not giving freely, and having health problem. UP appears to have financial difficulties. Unlike when it was in power, the party had been unable to pay its headquarters rent. In this election, it has few campaign billboards and other materials compared to the ruling party.

THE CAMPAIGN

Weah worked harder than the other candidates. Besides leaving the country to attend the UN assembly, he campaigned consistently. He visited many remote areas, such as traveling to the Southeast with bad road conditions. Boakai did not travel to that area. Additionally, the CDC had more resources at its disposal. This is seen by the many vehicles, campaign advertisements, and programs displaced. The party implemented more Jehovah's Witness campaigns from door to door. The party maintained its coalition with other political parties and had a regular radio program called The Voice of the Coalition. This exercise informed the public regarding the campaign and spread the party's message. More campaign songs were produced and sung over the country than by the other camps. Particularly in the campaign's last few days, the opposition made many inflammatory remarks that brought public



condemnation.

However, the opposition has campaigned virtually. Many of its parties have published their platforms and debated the issues. They have kept the government's feet to the fire.

POLLS

While opinion polls are not 100% accurate, in most instances, they tell how a campaign is doing and how the public feels about a candidate. Most polls in Liberia are unscientific. Their sample sizes are smaller, and people call in to give opinions. Nevertheless, polls can provide an indication regarding public views. OK FM radio conducted a poll in Nimba before the campaign. The survey showed Weah leading in that county. Before the campaign, the station did another poll in Monrovia, pointing to Boakai winning. But during the campaign, its poll in Monrovia showed Weah leading Boakai and Cummings. A public survey by a credible international firm indicates Weah leading comfortably over Boakai and Cummings. Though a CPP official familiar with the poll questioned some of its elements, he agreed with the findings. However, he believed the survey confirmed Cummings was doing well.

Again, a campaign should not put all its eggs in polling. Survey results may be flawed. In the 2016 presidential election in the US, Hillary Clinton led Trump in most polls. But in the end, Trump won, stunning political pundits and election experts.

THE NUMBERS

Polls and crowds do not vote and are not final in determining an electoral victory. What matters is the number of votes cast. Based on NEC's statistics, Montserrado, Nimba, and Bong counties have the largest registered voters. They constitute about 57% of the total national registered voters, with Montserrado having 37%, Nimba 12, and Bong 8. In other words, a candidate who wins a substantial number of votes from these counties will have an excellent chance of victory. The rest of the 12 counties have fewer registered voters. Nimba and Bong will be battlegrounds. Their votes will split. Tewon Gongloe, Weah, and Boakai will divide Nimba's votes. Boakai is included because of the Jeremiah Koug factor. Koug is Boakai's vice running-mate and is from Nimba. As stated in the last update, analysts predict that either Weah or Gongloe will take first place in the county's votes count. Weah could take first place in Bong, considering Jewel Taylor's and Jeremiah Slonteh's factors. Taylor is from Bong County and is Weah vice standard bearer. Boakai would take second, based on Senator Prince Moyer's account. Montserrado is a Weah-CDC stronghold. Therefore, Weah should do very well, receiving about 60% of the votes. Weah would take the Southeast

and significant votes from the Western region, including Bomi, Grand Bassa, and Rivercess.

Interestingly, Lofa is a battleground, though it is Boakai's birthplace. This is unlike in 2017 when Boakai's influence dominated the county politics. By culture, Lofians consider him an uncle or father. With the Thomas Fallah impact and the government development activities in Lofa, the county prefers development over culture. Consequently, Boakai is less influential than in 2017. The recent special senatorial election in Lofa attests to this analysis. Hence, Weah could do well in Lofa.

With the above, the development of tangibles, and the opposition disunity, Weah would do much better than the other candidates in this election. But pre-election analysis could be a mere intellectual exercise. Elections have a way of functioning differently from the human mind. We can predict and hope the projection will materialize.

The election could go to a second round. While the opposition would prefer a second round to unite, the goal could be problematic and challenging. Usually, some opposition members tend to support the winner of the first round, as happened in 2011 and 2017. Indeed, in 2011, Charles Bromskine of the Liberty Party, Togba-Nah Tipoteh of the Liberian People's Party, and other opposition leaders supported President Sirleaf. 2017, the primary opposition parties' vice standard bearers and key members backed Weah. Historically, in Liberia, since 1980, no ruling party has lost an election. Moreover, as Front Page Africa publisher Rodney Sieh stated, if the opposition can not unite before or during the campaign, it would be unlikely in the second round.

Yet, the above does not mean that records can not be broken. Liberians and the international community hope for a fair, free, peaceful, and transparent election. The election will start at 8 AM to 6 PM. Results should be coming in about 9 PM.

MORE HEADLINE NEWS

MORE HEADLINE NEWS

Senate resumes final segment of 6th Session

By Ethel A Tweh

The Liberian Senate has resumed its final segment of the 6th

transparent, fair and violent-free election process, including the outcome at the end of each stage; especially the exercise of verbal

Distinguished colleagues, please permit me to propose to Plenary the following as my draft agenda for this segment, review of some of the issues which will arise from the ongoing election process; Receipt and Discussion of the draft 2024 National Budget, monitoring the implementation of the Drugs Law which was approved by the Legislature earlier this year; Review of programs for the rehabilitation of drugs-affected persons." He outlines.

Chie notes that this segment will also discuss the Revised Public Health Law, Ratification of few incentive agreements; Preparation for the convening of the first session of the 55th Legislature, Public Hearings and Committee Meetings aimed at exercising oversight over the Executive and Legislative Branches, and completion of reports for work in Committee Rooms.

Meanwhile, The Grand Kru County Senator thanks his colleagues for their hard work throughout the years and welcomes them from their constituency break in an electoral year that may not see nearly half of them returning at the Capitol.



session. During the opening of the session here Tuesday, 17 October Senate President Pro-Tempore, Albert T. Chie, welcomed his colleagues and thanked them for their participation in the October 2023 elections though the process is ongoing.

"Let me join our fellow citizens and members of the international community, who have been stressing the necessity for advocating for a

tolerance during the entire process", Pro-Temp Chie notes.

He thanks the National Elections Commission and expresses confidence in the Commission for handling the electoral process very well despite logistical deployment and terrain challenges.

"We are here over the next few months to essentially close the activities of the 54th Legislature and to prepare for the opening of the 55th.

LCC lauds Liberians for peaceful conduct of elections

By Naneka A. Hoffman

The President of the Liberia Council of Churches, Rev. Dr. Samuel B. Reeves, Jr., lauds Liberians across the country for the peaceful manner in which they conducted themselves during Tuesday, October 10, 2023 Presidential and Legislative elections.

Speaking in a news conference barely a week after the polls yesterday, Dr. Reeves lauded the huge turnout of Liberians to exercise their constitutional rights in choosing their leaders.

He notes that it demonstrates the maturity of Liberia's democratic credentials since post-conflict Liberia.

Rev. Reeves also commends the National Elections Commission for supervising a smooth electoral process in the midst of daunting challenges confronting its operations.

He says the Council believes collective efforts of all stakeholders in the electoral process provided the necessary pathway for the success of the elections and urges Liberians to

remain calm and peaceful as they wait for the National Elections Commission to release progressive and final results. The LCC President adds that the Council of Churches also commends all local and international observers for their support to the electoral process, namely; the Elections Coordinating Committee, Naymote Partners, the United States Government, the European Union, ECOWAS and the African Union for their observatory role in ensuring that Liberia had a free, fair and transparent election.



Rev. Dr. Samuel B. Reeves, Jr

Maintain election integrity and preserve the peace

-CSOs urges NEC

By Lewis S Teh

At least twelve leading civil society organizations (CSOs) have urged the National Elections Commission (NEC) to maintain the integrity of the election and preserve the peace of Liberia.

The CSOs have made the call as members of NEC's Board of Commissioners continue to announce preliminary results from the 10 October 2023 presidential and legislative elections.

Mr. Anderson Miamen, the Executive Director of the Center for Transparency and Accountability in Liberia (CENTAL), read the statement on behalf of the twelve CSOs at a joint news conference Tuesday, 17 October 2023 in Sinkor, suburb of Monrovia.

"We applaud the courage and commitment of Liberians to vote and shape the country's future, despite some of their past and current leaders not doing enough

Research and Democratic Development (IREDD), Paramount Young Women Initiative (PAYOWI), Community Healthcare Initiative (CHI), Sister AID Liberia Incorporated (SALI), Civil Society Human Rights Advocacy Platform, and Kids Educational Engagement Program (KEEP Liberia) as organizations that grouped themselves to caution the NEC.

According to Miamen, access to the voting centers and ballot-counting process allowed civil society, the media, representatives of political parties and independent candidates, and international partners to closely observe the process.

He stated that it increased its inclusiveness, transparency, and credibility.

Miamen noted that despite the success of the voting and ongoing announcement of preliminary results, they are concerned about multiple issues associated with the elections.

Firstly, he said the pace of the counting and announcement



to tangibly transform their lives," said Miamen.

According to him, these and other CSOs have been very active during these elections, in part through conducting civic and voters' education.

He said they also worked by monitoring/observing campaign promises and finance, electoral violence, including those targeting women and disadvantaged groups, and voting, among others.

"We recognize [the] cordial working relationships mutually benefiting partnerships with the National Elections Commission, media, and other stakeholders that made these contributions possible," he added.

He named the CSOs as CENTAL, Integrity Watch Liberia (IWL), Organization for Women and Children (ORWOCH), Women NGO Secretariat (WONGOSOL), Public Health Initiative of Liberia (PHIL), and Accountability Lab Liberia (Alab).

Others are the Institute for

processes are very slow, especially for highly accessible areas.

"With increased anxiety and brewing tension among citizens, political parties, and candidates, NEC needs to be more efficient in tallying and announcing final results to calm down nerves," Miamen urged.

The CSOs noted that after nearly one week, the tallied votes and results from some counties and districts are still below 60%.

He stated that the unexplained delays in announcing final results from Montserrado County Electoral District #8, District #2 in Maryland County, and District #4 in Grand Bassa County raise concerns.

"We acknowledge the 15-day window stipulated in Article 83(c) of the Liberian Constitution; however, we also observe the slow pace with which results are announced, as well as the delay in releasing results from places that are obviously accessible in favor of more remote areas without any

ON 2ND THOUGHTS



with Othello B. Garblah

Desiring a drastic policy change to address Liberia's gross underdevelopment challenges

No doubt Liberia remains grossly underdeveloped despite being endowed with rich natural resources. The country sits 12 places among the poorest countries in Africa with a GDP per capita amounting to US\$676 and 10th place globally with a GDP (PPP) of USD\$1,798.

Last week, citizens of this tiny West African state went to the polls in crucial presidential and legislative elections. Their desire to elect leaders that would lift the country from its current poverty status and set the stage for economic growth and development was demonstrated on October 10.

The outcome of this election is crucial. Just as the winner is expected to muster the political will to adopt drastic policy changes to tackle the country's development challenges.

One of Liberia's major challenges right now is the road network. The country has a poor road network that cuts off nearly half a million of its citizens in the southeastern region during the rainy season annually, making travels to the region very difficult, if not impossible. Inflation is high at this time of the year in the southeast.

The introduction of at least US\$2.5 billion road program legislation with a US\$100 million per annual commitment in the National Budget to tackle specific kilometers of road each year would be key to beginning massive road connectivity and rehabilitation in the county.

For example, say from Buchanan, Grand Bassa County to Cestos City, Rivercess which is about 75 to 90 kilometers, and at US\$1 million per kilometer, for the first fiscal year of 2024, US\$100 million should be drawn from that Legislated amount and allotted in the budget for just that stretch. The following year, an allotment of the same amount should be made to jump-start work on the Cestos to Greenville, Sinoe County corridor and the same the following year from Greenville to Barclayville and from Barclayville to Pleebo, Maryland County.

Under such a legislated national road program, within six years, the government would have allotted and made available US\$600 Million targeting road networks across the entire country.

Such a program when legislated is binding on every elected president and succeeding governments, to carry out construction work linking major towns and cities following the construction of the main intercounty roads over a six-year period. This national road program will address the southeastern road problem as well as the Lofa road and other major cities and towns within the country to boost trade and investments.

With good road networks connecting counties, major towns, and cities, the government should introduce an investment incentives program that is being implemented in Europe, America, and other countries in Africa and the Middle East. This investment incentive program means granting investors temporary citizenship and permanent residencies for investments ranging from US\$200,000 upwards.

These individuals must be able to create at least 5 to 10 employment opportunities for Liberians every 5 years upon establishment of businesses.

For example, Namibia. Namibia has a residency by investment program, which enables investors in the country's real estate industry to receive a five-year, renewable work permit and reside in the country.

The United States also has the EB-5 Immigrant Investor Program, which grants investors the opportunity to acquire immediate residency status. Since 1990 when Congress created this program, each year, the US government allocates a substantial number of visas for individuals who wish to make a significant, qualified investment into the country that can generate jobs for the US economy. Under this program, individuals and their immediate family members are given the opportunity to migrate to the US.

The government can begin this program by granting visa waivers to investors who would want to undertake investment feasibility studies.

The government should also be strategic in its foreign policy programs. It should know what it wants and enter into bilateral relations that would have tangible benefits for the country's developmental needs. Any bilateral relation that would hinder the country's growth and development agenda should be shunned.

Investing in the country's Human capital. Redefine the education policy and award scholarships in areas that are key to the county's developmental needs; Engineering, Agriculture, Health, Sciences, Fisheries, Mining, and fields in which the country lacks human capital.

Scholarships should be given to students in those areas to go and study abroad and students should be given a guarantee that they would have immediate employment upon returning to the country to serve.

This is how Liberians can take ownership of their own development programs, because no one else can develop this country except Liberians, and we must have the right policies to do so.

FEATURE

The Impact of Tribalism on Liberian Politics and the Need to Rise Above Tribalism to Patriotism

Liberia, a nation founded on the principles of liberty and equality, has been marred by the divisive force of tribalism in its political landscape. Tribalism, the loyalty to one's ethnic group above national identity, has profoundly impacted Liberian politics, often overshadowing the country's potential for progress and development.

Historical Roots of Tribalism in Liberian Politics:

Tribalism has deep historical roots in Liberia, dating back to the country's founding in the 19th century. The American Colonization Society's efforts to repatriate freed African American slaves to Liberia resulted in a diverse society, with settlers from various ethnic backgrounds. These differences often translated into forming distinct ethnic communities within Liberia, each with its customs, languages, and traditions. Consequently, tribalism became a fundamental aspect of Liberian society.

Liberia's complex and often painful history is marked by discrimination and inequality, particularly in the realm of politics and political appointments. The historical divide between the Afro-Liberians, descendants of freed Afro-American and Afro-Caribbean slaves, and the native Liberians, comprising various ethnic groups, has left a lasting legacy of discrimination and unequal access to political power.

The Impact of Tribalism on Politics:

1. **Ethnocentric Voting Patterns:** Liberian elections have frequently been characterized by ethnocentric voting, with citizens predominantly supporting candidates from their own ethnic groups. This trend has led to the exclusion of highly qualified individuals from leadership positions solely because of their ethnic background.

2. **Political Instability:** Tribalism has contributed to political instability in Liberia by fostering mistrust and division among ethnic groups. This has led to conflicts and civil wars in the country, such as the devastating Liberian Civil War from 1989 to 2003.

3. **Limited National Unity:** Tribalism undermines the sense of national unity and identity, making it difficult for Liberians to come together and work toward common goals. This has hindered the nation's progress and development.

The Path to National Patriotism:

To overcome the divisive impact of tribalism, Liberia must transition towards a unified national identity rooted in patriotism. This process requires concerted efforts at various levels:

1. **Education and Awareness:** Raising awareness about the negative consequences of tribalism is a crucial first step. Civic education programs can teach citizens the importance of putting the nation above their ethnic affiliations.

2. **Inclusive Politics:** Political leaders must lead by example and promote inclusive politics. By creating multi-ethnic, diverse coalitions and cabinets, they can demonstrate the benefits of unity and diversity.

3. **Reconciliation and Healing:** Liberia must engage in reconciliation and healing processes to address the wounds of past conflicts and build trust among ethnic groups. This can involve truth and reconciliation commissions and dialogue initiatives.

4. **Legal Framework:** Implementing laws and policies that promote national unity and penalize hate speech or actions based on tribal affiliations is essential.

5. **Economic and Social Development:** Fostering economic and social development across the country can help bridge the gap between ethnic groups and create a shared stake in Liberia's future.

Discrimination by Americo-Liberians against native Liberians in politics and political appointments is a historical injustice that has left deep scars on Liberian society. Recognizing the legacy of this discrimination is the first step in addressing the ongoing challenges of inequality and social division. To build a more inclusive and harmonious Liberia, it is crucial to pursue policies and initiatives that promote equal access to political power, representation, and opportunities for all citizens, regardless of their ethnic or cultural backgrounds. Overcoming the historical discrimination is a necessary step towards a more united and prosperous Liberia.

Tribalism has had a detrimental impact on Liberian politics, hindering the country's progress and fostering division among its people. The path to patriotism requires a shift in mindset, from loyalty to one's ethnic group to loyalty to the nation. With a commitment to inclusivity, education, and reconciliation, Liberia can rise above tribalism and work towards a brighter, unified future where the nation's potential can be fully realized. It is only through this transition to patriotism that Liberia can truly overcome the shackles of its divisive past and build a brighter, united future.

To build a more inclusive and prosperous nation, Liberians must collectively rise above tribalism and embrace patriotism. Only by uniting as one nation, irrespective of ethnic background, can Liberia fulfill its promise as a land of liberty and equality. In this journey towards unity, reconciliation, and progress, Liberia can strive for a brighter future, leaving the shadows of tribalism behind.

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 CEREEC, 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.

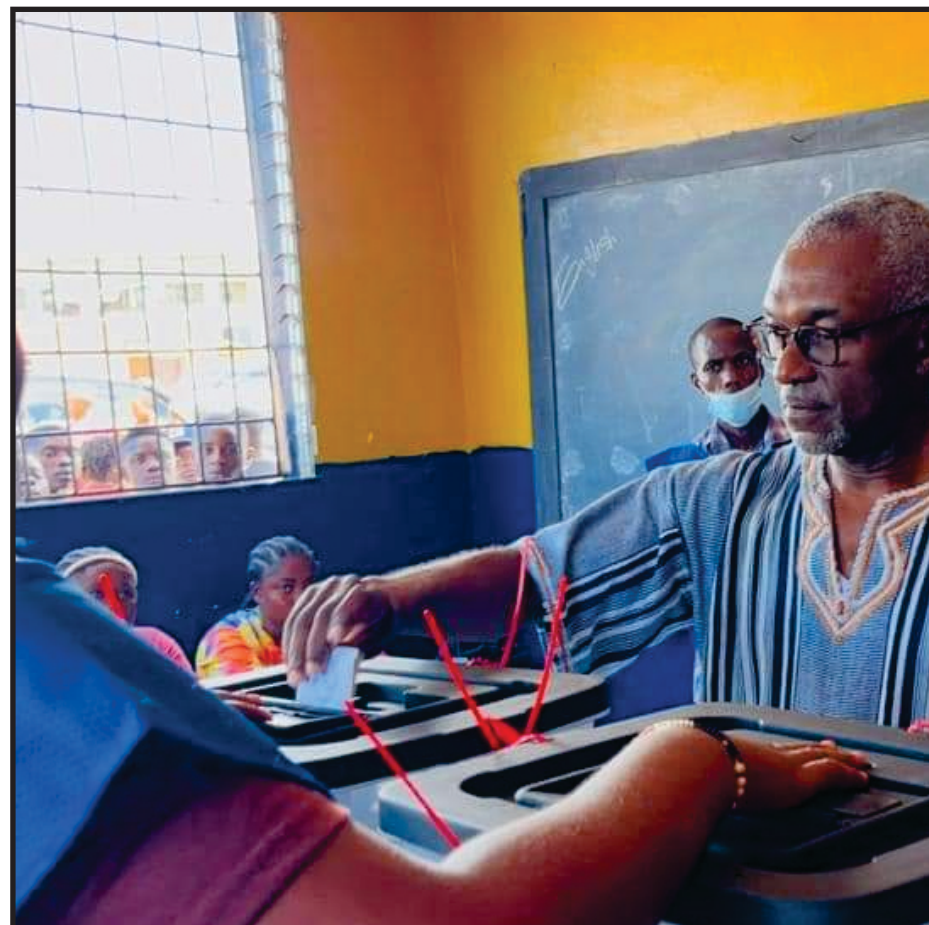
Un appel à l'aide aux diasporas

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.

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WSR, LCC want a probe into country devil's election interference

By Lincoln G. Peters

The Women's Situation Room (WSR) in collaboration with the Liberian Council of Churches

International Centre (ABIC) appealed to political parties and individuals to use the law as their voice. "The Women's Situation Room and the Liberian Council of Churches call on the

Akerete and the president of Rural Women, Madam Korpo Howard. WSR and the LCC have urged political parties and individuals to use the law as their voice in addressing their dissatisfaction during these election periods.

Chesson-Wureh, ABIC Establishment Coordinator and WSR Initiator said they are calling on the NEC to continue the tallying process transparently. "We call on the NEC to continue the process in a transparent manner and to ensure that incidents like the incident in Nimba where the country devil came out and ballot boxes were missing...[are] investigated by the NEC and the results are expeditiously reported to the public," said Cllr. Chesson-Wureh. According to her, one box was still reported missing after some were retrieved. She believes that to leave incidents of such without the NEC publicly and expeditiously addressing them has the propensity to undermine the confidence of the public in the NEC.

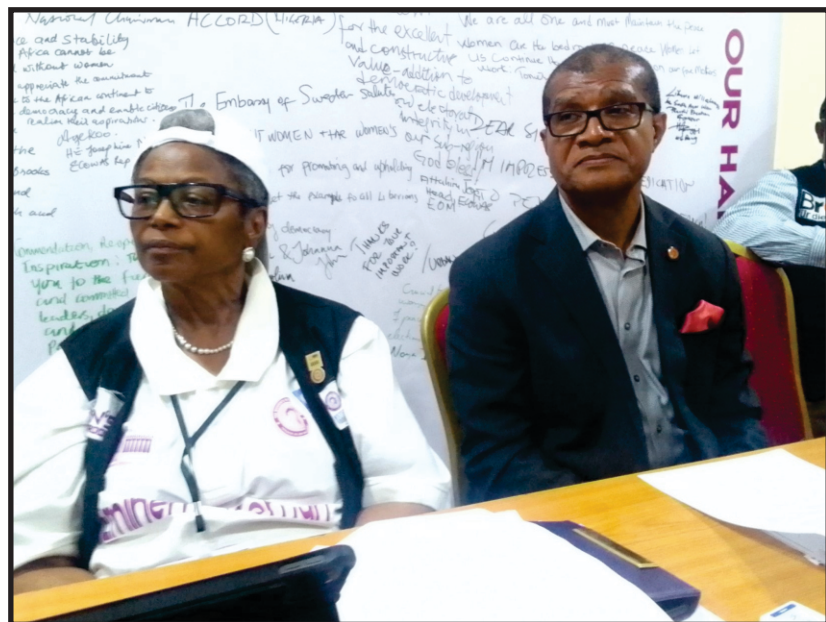
At the same time, the WSR and the LCC called on the Minister of Internal Affairs, Varney Sirleaf, to investigate the coming out of the country devil and report his findings to the public.

"It's our request that the Minister of Internal Affairs ensure that our National Symbols like the Country Devil are not used during elections to disrupt the election process," she admonished.

citizens of Liberia to remain calm and non-violent as we go to the announcement of the final vote tally by NEC," she pleaded.

"If you are dissatisfied with the tally or the procedure, then there is a way provided by Liberian law by which you can challenge the process and even the final vote itself once you have evidence," Cllr. Chesson-Wureh stated.

The press conference was graced by LCC president Dr. Samuel Reeves, Swedish Ambassador to Liberia, former Chief Justice Cllr. Francis Johnson-Allison, former Foreign Minister, Amb. Olubanke King-



(LCC) has called for an investigation into Country Devil's interference with elections. The organizations have called on the National Elections Commission (NEC) and the Ministry of Internal Affairs to ensure the unleashing of country devil in Nimba and Maryland Counties is investigated. Ballot boxes were reported to have gone missing during the incidents.

Reading the statement at a joint press conference Monday, 16 October 2023 at the WSR's head office in Sinkor, Cllr. Yvette Chesson-Wureh, Establishment Coordinator of Angie Brooks

"Forging maritime security: ECOWAS gathers its Chiefs of Naval Staff of staff for a 3rd Sub-Committee meeting

The Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) organized the 3rd Meeting of the ECOWAS Sub-Committee of the Chiefs of Naval Staff, from October 15 to 16, 2023, in Lome, Togo. This highly anticipated event aimed to review and assess the operations and functionality of the ECOWAS Maritime Centers, with the objective of strengthening maritime operations and combating illicit maritime activities in the region.

The primary purpose of this meeting is to evaluate the performance and effectiveness of the ECOWAS Maritime Centres, which will provide valuable insights for improving maritime operations and effectively dealing with illicit maritime activities in the ECOWAS region. Participants in this significant gathering include representatives from the ECOWAS Commission, ECOWAS Maritime Centres, Chiefs of Naval Staff from Member States, and their respective

towards equipping the maritime security centers. He highlighted that significant progress has been made in reducing maritime attacks, with a decline from 68 attacks in 2018 to 50 in 2019, and further decreasing to 18 in 2021 and 15 in 2022. He attributed this positive trend to the cooperation and coordination among Member States and the international community. Minister of Maritime Economy, Fisheries, and Coastal Protection, Honorable Kokou Edem TENGUY, underscored the importance of maritime security due to the significant flow of goods and equipment passing through the sea. While this contributes to economic development, it also poses risks of illicit activities linked to maritime insecurity. He assured that Togo, as the host country, remains committed to participating in the ECOWAS maritime strategy and the fight against maritime piracy and illicit activities through the establishment of multinational maritime centers.

The Multinational Maritime



"Forging maritime security: ECOWAS gathers its Chiefs of Naval Staff of staff for a 3rd Sub-Committee meeting."

During his opening speech, the Chief of Staff of the Togolese National Navy, Frigate Captain Atatoum Babaté, expressed that by organizing this meeting in Lome, ECOWAS shows its commitment to effective maritime governance and its desire to ensure peace, security, and prosperity in the West African sub-region. He also emphasized that member states have strengthened their individual and collective efforts in addressing threats related to maritime security, and stressed the importance of remaining united in combating maritime insecurity.

In his opening address, the Permanent Representative of ECOWAS in Togo, His Excellency, Barros Bacar BANJAI, on behalf of Ambassador Abdel-Fatau Musa, Phd, Commissioner for Political Affairs, Peace and Security, commended the Member States for their contributions

Coordination Centres (MMCCs) play a crucial role in the ECOWAS maritime security architecture. These centres, along with the Regional Centre for Maritime Security in West Africa (CRESMAO) in Côte d'Ivoire, have significantly enhanced maritime security in the region and have led to a decrease in piracy and theft incidents at sea.

In parallel to the Chiefs of Naval Staff meeting, the 7th International Symposium of the Gulf of Guinea is scheduled to take place in Lome, Togo from October 18 to 19, 2023. This simultaneous gathering will provide a platform to discuss broader issues related to the Gulf of Guinea, including its challenges and potential solutions.

The ultimate goal of the Sub-Committee of Chiefs of Staff of the ECOWAS Navy meeting is to have a fruitful and productive session that will result in the preparation of a comprehensive report to be submitted to ECOWAS management. -Press release

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ECOWAS, AU, will not

Commission (NEC) announced preliminary results.

"We urged the people of Liberia especially the key holders to remain peaceful during this period that they are collecting and announcing preliminary results," said Mr. Jonathan. "Even after they have announced the results, we emphasize that we must get a country before you can get any office," he added.

He noted that whether you want to be a member of the House of Senate, Representatives or a governor, Liberia must remain in tight, noting that Liberia belongs to all, not an individual.

The former Nigerian President informed Liberians that there is a huge presence of international observers in the country, extolling them for their presence and impact.

He indicated that it's the first of its kind for him to see such an influx of international observers and so it speaks to the fact that they take the Liberian elections seriously.

"I can command the NEC for the registration process. I also want to command the NEC for being in the position for conducting their first election after the UN team has gone out,"

said Mr. Jonathan. He noted that they were all worried, but what they have observed means that the NEC is competent to conduct further elections in Liberia with a minimum technical assistance from an international body.

"Let me very sincerely on behalf of the West African Elder Forum congratulate the people of Liberia for this fortunate election," he said. "We have seen that democracy is really consolidating in the country," he said.

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Maintain election integrity

reason given by the Commission." The tough talking CSOs actor believes that the more the results are delayed, with no clear information and explanations, the more people will speculate about alleged wrongdoings or foul play.

"It is in NEC's best interest, as well as the integrity of the elections and peace of [the] country, to timely process and announce all results from the elections," he indicated.

At the same time, Miamen reported that they have received

distressing reports of violence and storming of the tallying centers in Montserrado and Nimba Counties by supporters of some political parties and candidates, especially the Coalition for Democratic Change (CDC). He said this is extremely troubling, as it could be interpreted as attempts to manipulate or undermine the integrity, transparency, and independence of the votes counting process. Miamen said they are deeply concerned about some candidates and political parties

declaring themselves as winners, when NEC is the only institution mandated by law to do so. The CENTAL executive director revealed that such is a recipe for violence, as it may incite overzealous partisans and supporters to act in ways that jeopardize the peace of the country.

He detailed that calm and maturity are needed, as Liberians await the final results from the NEC.

NEC orders rerun in Nimba Dist.#4

By Lincoln G. Peters

The National Elections Commission (NEC) has announced a presidential rerun at two polling places in Nimba County

the theft and destruction of ballot boxes in two polling places in the area.

The incident occurred on 10 October just after the poll at Beo Lontuo Public School

Also, at the Montserrado County Tally Center at the Samuel K. Doe Sport Complex in Paynesville, Outside Monrovia, the magistrate of upper and



Electoral District #4 following the theft and destruction of ballot boxes there.

The NEC gave the order Tuesday, 17 October 2023 as incumbent President George Manneh Weah and his archrival Amb. Joseph Nyumah Boakai continue to battle for the presidency in a tight race.

Out of 20 presidential candidates, the NEC announced Tuesday evening that Mr. Weah has obtained 791, 661 votes (43.79%), while opposition Amb. Boakai has obtained 786,205 (43.49%).



As at Tuesday, 17 October, NEC chairperson Madam Davidetta Brown Lansanah said 5,996 polling places out of a total of 5,896 polling places constituting 98.40% had been tallied. Meanwhile, there have been reports of election irregularities following the 10 October 2023 polls.

Recently, police in Nimba County arrested eight individuals in connection with

in Electoral District 4.

The seized ballot boxes contained votes cast for the District 17 Representative candidates. Menwongbay Sahyeedeh, the Election Supervisor for the Beo Lontuo polling places, has, however, been arrested for his alleged involvement in the disappearance of the ballot boxes. Sahyeedeh's main crimes, which the police have yet to disclose, come as he stands accused of trying to protect a family member who was involved in

lower Montserrado ordered the arrest of five polling staffs for electoral malpractices.

Similarly, the NEC boss added that at the Grand Cape Mount Tally Center in Robert Sports, the election magistrate reported that three presiding officers were found to have been involved in electoral malpractices at one precinct which is coded 12035.

According to the NEC boss, investigation into those matters is ongoing and finding will be disclosed to the public as soon as possible.

Meanwhile, incumbent President Weah has secured a slight lead over his main rival, Amb. Boakai of the former ruling Unity Party (UP).

Madam Brown-Lansanah has noted that the total valid votes is one million eight hundred and seven thousand seven hundred and sixty-six constituting 100%. She said the total invalid vote is one hundred and twelve thousand eight hundred and seventy-five.

Additional, NEC chairperson also puts the total votes at one million nine hundred thousand and twenty-six hundred and twenty-five.

the disruption.

The incident in Lontuo has caused confusion in the district, leading to serious tension between supporters of Representative Gunpue Kargon of the ruling Coalition for Democratic Change and his main rival, Ernest Mansea of the Movement for Democracy and Reconciliation, which is part of the Unity Party Alliance.

Weah back on top

-As seesaw battle continues

By Lincoln G. Peters

Incumbent President George Manneh Weah once more leads the National Elections Commission (NEC) 2023 Presidential votes tally, ahead of his main archrival, former Vice President Joseph Nyumah Boakai, of the opposition Unity Party, just a day after he traded behind Boakai. National Presidential tally report released Tuesday, October 17, by NEC Chairperson Madam Davidetta Browne Lansanah puts President Weah back in the lead with 5,456 votes.

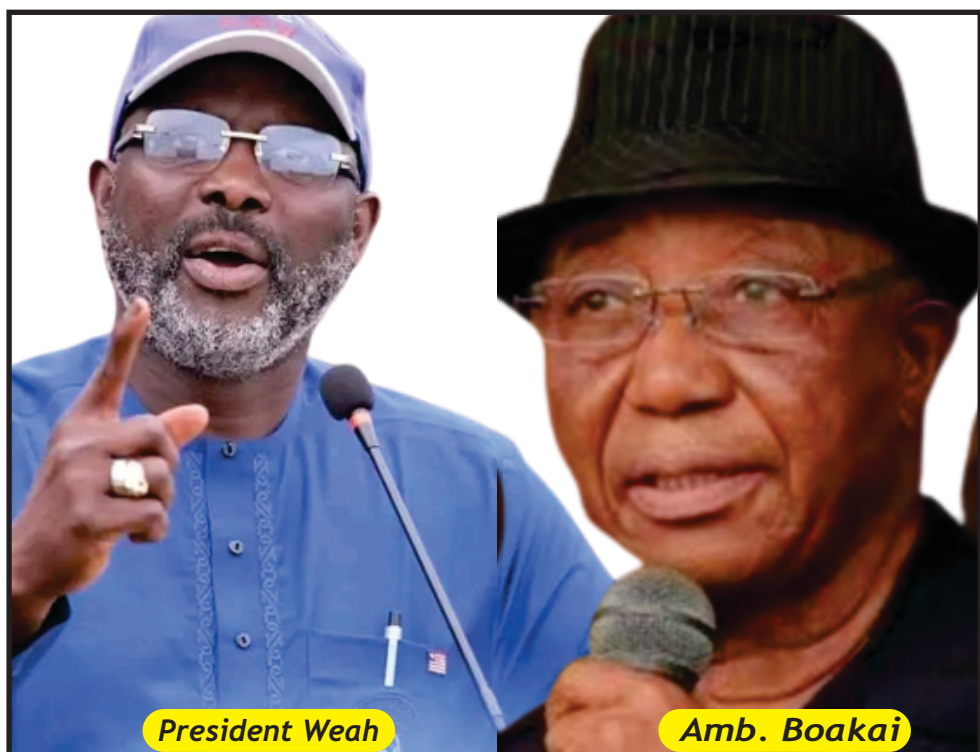
"I now read you the Presidential progressive tally report for today, October 17, 2023. Five thousand, nine hundred and nineteen-six polling places of the total of five thousand, eight hundred and nineteen-six polling places constituting 98.40%. Candidate Joseph Nyumah Boakai,

in connection with theft and destruction of ballot boxes in two polling places in the area.

The incident occurred on October 10, after poll ended at Beo Lontuo Public School in Electoral District#4, where seized ballot boxes containing votes cast in District# 17. Election Supervisor for the Beo Lontuo polling places, has, however, been arrested for his alleged involvement in the disappearance of the ballot boxes.

Sahyeedeh's main crimes, which the police are yet to disclose, comes as he stands accused of trying to protect a family member, who was reportedly involved in the disruption.

The incident in Lontuo has caused confusion in the district, leading to serious tension between supporters of Representative Gunpue Kargon of the ruling Coalition for Democratic Change and his main rival, Ernest Mansea of



President Weah

Amb. Boakai

opposition Unity Party, (UP) 786,205 votes, constituting 43.49%, while incumbent President George M. Weah of the ruling Coalition for Democracy Change (CDC) obtained 791, 661 votes, constituting 43.79%", Madam Browne Lansanah stated.

Accordingly, she notes that the total valid votes from across the country is one million, eight hundred and seven thousand, seven hundred and sixty-six, constituting 100%, while total invalid votes is one hundred twelve thousand, eight hundred and seventy-five. On the other hand, the NEC chairperson also puts total votes cast in the October 11, 2023, elections at one million, nine hundred and twenty-six thousand, twenty-five.

Meanwhile, the National Elections Commission announces a presidential rerun at two polling places in district #4, Nimba County. Recently, Police in Nimba County arrested eight individuals

the Movement for Democracy and Reconciliation, which is in alliance with the Unity Party.

Also, at the Montserrado County Tally Center at the Samuel K. Doe Sports Complex in Paynesville, Outside Monrovia, the magistrate of upper and lower Montserrado ordered the arrest of five polling staff for electoral malpractices.

Similarly, the NEC boss adds that at Grand Cape Mount County Tally Center in Robertsport, the election magistrate reported that three presiding officers were found to have being involved in electoral malpractices at one precinct with Code 12035.

Chairperson Browne Lansanah says investigation into those matters is ongoing and finding will be released to the public as soon as possible.

"As the NEC approaches conclusion of the Presidential results, the Commission assures all stakeholders that all ballot papers

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ECOWAS, AU, will not accept lawlessness

-Ex-Nigerian President warns

By Lincoln G. Peters
Former Nigeria President Goodluck Jonathan has sent a caveat to political parties and individuals against taking the laws into their hands



Pres. Goodluck Jonathan

during and after these election periods. Mr. Jonathan who heads the West Africa Elder Forum Observation to Liberia said Economic Community of West

African States (ECOWAS) and the African Union (AU) will not accept lawlessness.

Mr. Jonathan made a brief remark during ECOWAS and AU's preliminary report on

and ensure that the court is used to address their plight.

According to him, Liberians, especially political parties and actors must ensure that the peace of Liberia is maintained by all and every political actor and parties.

He pointed out that people from Liberia know that everybody is watching them, therefore, all stakeholders must take step to maintain the peace and don't go against the law of the land.

"Why we agree that there are legal processes to follow, we don't want people to take law into their hands. ECOWAS and AU will not accept ... [it] because the entire world is here and we are watching," Mr. Jonathan stated.

According to him, there can be no offices for state actors or political parties if the country is not in tight and peaceful.

Goodluck Jonathan who is currently in Liberia observing the Liberian election process, appealed to political parties and actors to remain peaceful as the National Elections

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