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# Weah, Boakai upbeat of victory

**-in November 14 runoff election**

*Pres. Weah casts his vote*      *Amb. Boakai casts his vote*



# Pre-marked ballots rumor is fake news

**-NEC clarifies**

*NEC Boss Davidetta-Browne-lansana*

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# Continental News

## Mali army seizes key rebel stronghold in north

Mali's army has seized Kidal, a key town in the country's north that the ethnic Tuareg rebels ensure the country's territorial integrity. The army has urged civilians in Kidal to remain calm. The alliance known as the



Mali's junta leader Col Assimi Goita says the mission "is not complete"

have held for nearly a decade. Kidal has been a bastion for the Tuareg, one of the rebel groups at the centre of the country's long-running political and security crises. The army, reportedly backed by Wagner group mercenaries, has battled for Kidal for the past three days. The head of the country's junta said the mission "is not complete", however. Col Assimi Goita, Mali's interim president, said in a post on X his objective was to

Permanent Strategic Framework (CSP), which is mostly formed of Tuareg armed groups, said that it had left Kidal "for strategic reasons", the AFP news agency reports quoting a rebel statement. "The fight continues," it added. On Monday, the Malian army said that its advance to Kidal had only been opposed by "a series of low intensity skirmishes" from what it described as "the alliance of terrorist armed groups". The central government in

Mali lost control of much of the north more than a decade ago following a Tuareg rebellion, which was initially sparked by a demand for a separate country. The country's security was then further complicated by the involvement of Islamist militants. The resulting instability has led to three coups since 2012. Under an agreement signed in 2015, the largely Tuareg separatists were to be integrated into the army and the control of Kidal handed over to the Malian government. Neither item was implemented. From 2013, French troops backed the Malian government in its fight against the Islamist militants. But a failure to solve the problem has led to a rejection of their help by the current military leadership with the last French soldiers leaving in 2022. The junta has since turned to the Russian mercenary group Wagner for assistance, but its fighters' presence has never been formally acknowledged by the authorities. The UN peacekeeping mission is also pulling out of Mali, with rebels and Islamist fighters trying to seize the vacated bases. BBC

## Liberia's George Weah faces Joseph Boakai in run-off

Liberians are voting in a presidential run-off election after the two leading candidates were separated by just over 7,000 votes in the first round a month ago. They are choosing between incumbent and one-time football star George Weah and former Vice-President Joseph Boakai. The president narrowly won the first round but failed to get more than 50% of the vote, triggering the run-off. Voting in October was fraught with allegations of fraud and violence. The election commission said that nine of its temporary staff had been arrested over alleged ballot-tampering. The UN reported clashes between supporters of rival opposition parties. This is the fourth presidential election since Liberia's second civil war, which ended more than 20 years ago and resulted in the deaths of more than 50,000

vote. Mr Boakai, who served as the vice-president to Ellen Johnson Sirleaf, Africa's first elected female head of state, has secured the endorsement of three of the four best performing candidates, according to the Reuters news agency. In his campaigning, he has focused on investing in agriculture and infrastructure. Mr Boakai has also campaigned on the need to rescue the nation from what he calls "mismanagement" by Mr Weah's administration. The president has been talking about improving education and dealing with unemployment. He has asked voters for more time to see the results of his first-term promises, to root out corruption and improve livelihoods. Liberia is still recovering from the impact of two civil wars between 1989 and 2003, and the Ebola epidemic that killed thousands of people between 2013 and 2016. According to the World Bank, the West African nation's economy expanded by 4.8% in 2022, due to "mining and a



Liberians have been queuing to vote in Monrovia

people. The BBC's Moses Garzeawu in the capital, Monrovia, says the turnout for the run-off election is expected to be high as Liberians are "hungry to vote". Images of long queues of people at polling stations have been captured in and around the city. The head of the national elections commission, Davidetta Browne-Lansanah, said: "We want to thank all Liberians who left their bed this morning. Stay on the line and vote."

Mr Weah, 57, who got 43.8% of the vote in the first round, and Mr Boakai, 78, who got 43.4%, have both been trying to build political alliances with the 18 other candidates who ran in the first round. None of them received more than 3% of the

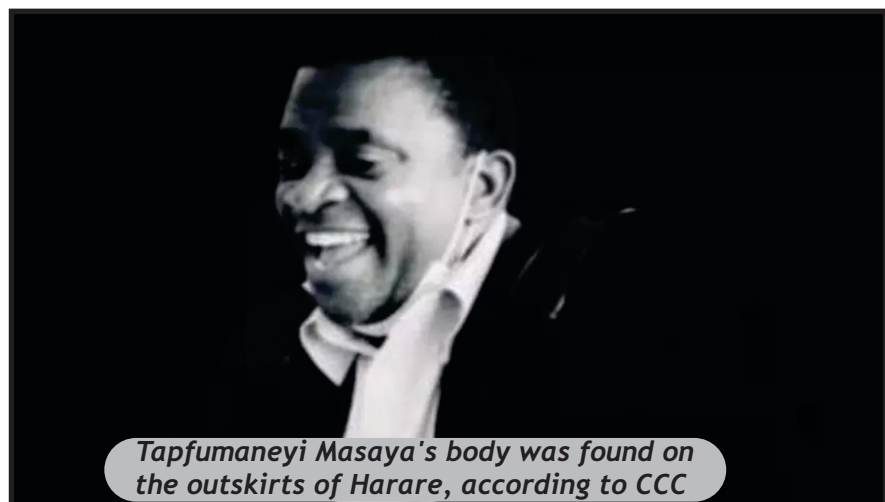
relatively good agricultural harvest". This is the second time the two men have faced each other in a presidential election run-off vote. In 2017, Mr Weah triumphed over Mr Boakai, gaining 61% of the vote in the second round. That time, his international stardom helped his popularity among the youth and voters were also attracted by his promises to clamp down on corruption, analysts say. Polls opened at 08:00 local time (08:00 GMT) and will close at 18:00 local time (18:00 GMT), when vote counting will get under way. The victor will be sworn into office in January next year. BBC

## Abducted Zimbabwe opposition activist found dead

The wife of an abducted Zimbabwe opposition activist has identified her husband's dead body. Tapfumaneyi Masaya, from the Citizens Coalition for Change (CCC), was reported to have been bundled into a car by armed men. A police spokesperson said that the other abductee was released for unknown reasons. Masaya's abduction is the latest in a series of kidnappings involving opposition and rights activists. His wife said a body found on the outskirts of the capital, Harare, from where he was snatched, was that of her husband. The CCC said Masaya, a cleric, along with a fellow activist, was campaigning for its candidate in a parliamentary by-election in Harare, when they were forced into a car in broad daylight. Police spokesperson Paul Nyathi confirmed to the BBC the other person kidnapped, Jeffrey Kalosi, was freed under still-to-be-

clarified circumstances by the captors. The by-election was triggered, along with several others across the country, following a letter to the speaker of parliament by a self-proclaimed interim secretary-general of the CCC, alleging that some of the party's MPs had ceased to be CCC members. The speaker announced that the seats were vacant, despite the party leadership disowning Sengezo Tshabangu, who it said was acting at the behest of the ruling Zanu-PF party. Zanu-PF has vehemently denied responsibility saying some aggrieved CCC leaders are behind

Mr Tshabangu. Masaya's alleged abduction is the most recent in various kidnappings taking place of opposition party members and human rights activists. They date back to the days of the late former President Robert Mugabe. There has been an uptick in the abductions, which the opposition blame on government security agents, since August's disputed general elections that saw President Emmerson Mnangagwa returned by 52.6% of the vote. CCC leader, Nelson Chamisa, who also lost to Mr Mnangagwa in 2018, polled 44.03%.



Tapfumaneyi Masaya's body was found on the outskirts of Harare, according to CCC

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# EDITORIAL

## Runoff election does not mean war

Liberian voters are bracing themselves for a runoff election Tuesday, 14 November between President George Weah and former Vice President Joseph Nyumah Boakai, who both received the highest number of votes but did not obtain the legally required 50 percent plus one extra vote, to win the Presidency.

Official results announced by the National Elections Commission as of Thursday, October 19, 2023, put President Weah ahead with 43.84 percent of the votes against his main rival Ambassador Boakai, with 43.43 percent, thus a need for runoff to determine a winner.

This is not strange, both parties participated in runoff in 2017, when the UP narrowly lost to the CDC, earning Mr. Weah his first term in the Presidency. There will be a winner in the pending runoff now that the Presidential race has been cleared of the crowded candidates that characterized the first round.

But Liberians need to reflect on the peaceful atmosphere under which the October 10 elections were generally held across the country, as they go to the runoff tomorrow, Tuesday in order to maintain the admiration this country just won for itself in the just-ended historic elections.

We're talking about the peace and stability of the Motherland. Election should not put us one another's throats in self-destruction just for the sake of a particular candidate or political party.

We behaved so well at the ballot in the first round, leaving international observers raining praises; absolutely there should no reason to abandon or to depart from such spirit in the runoff.

We urge both President Weah and Ambassador Boakia to talk to their partisans and supporters as they go for a second showdown. The runoff is not meant to bring Liberia to an end or on its knees. Rather, it is meant to elect a leader that will govern the country for not six years.

It is you the Liberian voters that have the power to make such decision thru your votes. Exercise this power tomorrow, void of coercion and violence because you owe to yourselves, your children and posterity.

Parties and presidents will come and go but Liberia remains the only common patrimony that we all belong to. We should not trade this nation for any politician or selfish interest.

We would have kept our admiration in the region by demonstrating in the runoff that Liberia is bigger than any party or candidate to be traded anyhow. Let's prioritize peace.

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Monrovia-Liberia. Tel: +231-06484201, +231-77007529, +231-0555422200 /  
+231-775407211 Managing Editor: Othello B. Garblah; Editor-In-Chief: Jonathan K. Browne  
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# COMMENTARY

By Teresa Marchiori

## Justice for Street Vendors

WASHINGTON, DC - A wave of evictions recently hit in Dakar's bustling Liberté 6 market, a roughly mile-long commercial hub that has served its community for more than 20 years. Hundreds of street vendors' stalls were bulldozed to make way for a new bus system. Authorities gave prior notice and an indemnity to help with the loss of business, but did not address the real problem: the lack of trading space.

Street vending is a legitimate economic activity that provides livelihoods for millions and accounts for a large share of urban employment in many cities across the Global South. Nearly 59,000 street vendors work in Dakar, accounting for 13.8% of total employment, while metropolitan Lima has roughly 450,000, comprising 8.8% of total employment. And these numbers are likely growing as the informal economy absorbs many of those left unemployed by the COVID-19 pandemic.

It is a livelihood that requires one resource above all: access to busy, pedestrian-friendly, well-connected, and affordable public space. But government authorities focus instead on "cleaning up" cities, which means clearing the streets of vendors. In their view, informal traders are a nuisance: they litter and clutter streets, obstruct urban mobility, and occupy precious space that could be used for modernization or beautification projects, or sold to deep-pocketed developers and transformed into oases of leisure for urban elites.

The failure to provide street vendors with the space they need is short-sighted, at best (eviction campaigns never solve the "problem" - workers often have no choice but to set up shop again). In 2015, the International Labor Organization recommended that subsistence workers be permitted to use public space as member states move from informal to formal economies. Yet time and again, governments have implemented narrow policies and legal frameworks that curtail access.

In fact, this pattern has become embedded in policymakers' strategies to formalize the informal economy. These strategies, focused mainly on getting informal workers to register and pay taxes, can provide important opportunities, including access to social protection, financing, and professional training. But they almost never recognize public space as a workplace, perpetuating the status quo. Instead, they build complex structures on shaky foundations - namely, punitive legal and policy frameworks that criminalize informal trading and deny the most vulnerable access to economic activities.

Proposals to relocate street vendors to enclosed markets are often empty promises - or implemented with little or no consultation with the affected individuals, resulting in poorly planned markets far

from the city's commercial hubs and difficult to reach. Vendors either shun or quickly abandon them, returning instead to the streets from which they were removed.

Acutely aware of their precarity, street vendors usually have one goal: to trade without fear of harassment or eviction. "I know we are not allowed to work here, but I have a family to feed," said an informal worker selling mobile phones from a small kiosk in Guédiawaye, a municipality on the outskirts of Dakar, in an interview in 2022 conducted by my organization, WIEGO (Women in Informal Employment: Globalizing and Organizing). "All I want is to be able to work and make a living," added the man, who asked not to be named. Pointing to an empty patch of land across the street, he said, "With other vendors, we asked the municipality to authorize us to sell there, but we got no response."

The United Nations' New Urban Agenda, adopted in 2016, recognizes that public space can function as a workplace reality and supports measures that allow for the "best possible commercial use of street-level floors, fostering both formal and informal local markets and commerce." A legal framework that guarantees informal vendors access to this space must underpin any formalization strategy. In fact, it is a logical prerequisite for all other aspects of formalization, like registration and taxation.

Of course, as a scarce resource, urban public space is highly sought after, and there are many competing interests. But its effective management requires input from workers in informal employment, as various initiatives have demonstrated. In India, for example, the 2014 Street Vendors Act established "town vending committees," consisting of government officials, sellers, and others, to make decisions about trading locations and monitor evictions and relocations. In the 1990s, the Lima municipality involved street vendors from the outset in its relocation planning process to ensure that they had proper access to infrastructure and customers. Between 2009 and 2011, the Dakar municipality started an effective dialogue with informal traders about relocation.

These examples are far from perfect. The inclusive planning process was discontinued in Lima (though it did result in successful relocations), as were the dialogues in Dakar, while India's Street Vendors Act is only partly implemented. But they show that the inclusive management of public space is possible.

Fair distribution of public space is crucial to recognizing street vendors, legalizing their access to a workplace, and protecting their livelihoods. That will not happen unless informal traders participate in - and meaningfully influence - the policies and regulations that affect them.



## OP-ED

By Robert Muggah, Ilona Szabó, Tatiana Schor

## Earth Needs an Amazon Bioeconomy

**R**IO DE JANEIRO - Climate change and biodiversity loss are pushing the world's vital ecosystems to the brink of collapse, with scientists warning that six of nine key planetary boundaries are already breached. Protecting and conserving rainforests is crucial, but to do that, we need investment in rule of law and new economic models that pair significant emissions reductions with viable alternatives to clearing the forest. Nowhere is this challenge more pressing than in the Amazon.

Spanning more than eight million square kilometers (3.1 million square miles), Amazonia is home to the world's largest tropical rainforest. It is also the front line of environmental crimes, including land grabbing and illegal gold mining, as well as extractive industries such as logging, ranching, and soy production. Owing to these activities, large swaths of the region are approaching an irreversible tipping point that could turn rainforest into savannah. Despite recent reductions in forest clearance, deforestation and severe land degradation have already affected 26% of the region, putting more than 10,000 plant and animal species at risk of extinction.

If illegal deforestation and the extractivist development model persist, the World Resources Institute warns, the region's 2050 carbon emissions will be five times higher than the threshold set by the Paris climate agreement. A staggering 57 million hectares of forest - an area the size of France - could be destroyed, with dire consequences for the climate, biodiversity, ocean currents, and global food supplies.

A sure way to slow and reverse all forms of deforestation and land degradation is to increase the economic value of standing forests. We need improved security and market incentives - the ability to profit from protecting nature - to promote decarbonization and conservation. To that end, one especially promising model is the "bioeconomy," which comprises regenerative agriculture, livestock, and fishing; sustainable timber and non-timber cultivation; green- and renewable-energy production; sustainable biomaterials (including pesticides, fertilizers, cosmetics, and pharmaceuticals); eco-tourism and related services; sustainable fashion and textiles; and services based on carbon capture and biological and environmental conservation.

Enthusiasm for the bioeconomy is growing, especially in the Amazon Basin. A Pan-Amazonian Conference on Bioeconomy in Belem, Brazil, this past June brought together hundreds of experts from more than 100 organizations across the region. This is not just "feel-good" environmentalism; the potential economic returns are considerable. By some estimates, fully implementing a bioeconomy approach would enable Brazil to reduce carbon dioxide emissions by 550 million tons and generate \$284 billion per year by 2050.

Aside from a few enlightened businesses, however, there is still resistance from the extractive sectors, which see little to gain from such a shift. The institutional scaffolding of the Amazon bioeconomy is only just being erected. Scaling it up will require sustained, high-quality research and development, widely available infrastructure and capital, and new, resilient supply chains. Safeguards to protect the intellectual property of bioproducts and genetic resources are essential, as are strategies for respectful knowledge sharing with indigenous communities.

An urgent task is to clarify what the bioeconomy model does and does not entail. As matters stand, the eight countries that share the rainforest have competing interpretations, and the definitions being applied in the Amazon are often distinct from those promulgated by governments, businesses, and NGOs in North America and Western Europe. Determining what is included in the bioeconomy matters fundamentally, because it will shape the foundation of a green future. That is why we at the Igarapé Institute are partnering with the Inter-American Development Bank's (IDB) Amazonia Forever program to expand the bioeconomy in a way that respects regional diversity.

The IDB's Amazonia Forever program is leading the charge in promoting and accelerating bioeconomy opportunities through financial support and technical assistance to local start-ups, bio-enterprises, and producers and harvesters at all levels of the value chain. Since fostering synergies between researchers, entrepreneurs, investors, producers, and communities in remote areas presents daunting logistical hurdles, the IDB and others are focusing on the high-value-added products that are needed to make the bioeconomy succeed.

Expanding this model requires stronger connections among bioeconomy scholars and researchers, which is why we have mapped several clusters of research communities working on related issues across the region. Some of the most advanced appear to be in Brazil and Colombia, where one generally finds robust, well-targeted bioeconomy policies and programs. Both countries have rapidly evolving productive sectors that are pursuing scientific and technological priorities, while also harnessing the valuable experiences and contributions of traditional communities.

In Ecuador and Peru, bioeconomy policies are less advanced despite many government-led efforts to promote "bio-business" and "bio-innovation" in certain sectors; Ecuador is in the process of developing a national bioeconomy policy. By contrast, Bolivia and Venezuela have resisted using the term "bioeconomy" (in favor of "sustainable use of biodiversity"), and remain more focused on smaller-scale initiatives to address food security and specific inputs like biofertilizers. Finally, in Guyana and Suriname, incipient low-carbon and green-economy strategies are confronting a powerful, entrenched fossil-fuel lobby.

Despite competing definitions, there are some shared principles. It is generally agreed that the bioeconomy includes activities that make use of biological resources and typically involve scientific and technological innovation, as well as insights and expertise from ancestral and traditional knowledge. Promoting value-added through processing and supply-chain efficiency is key, as are environmental services and the replacement of fossil-fuel-based products with sustainable alternatives.

Understanding how these bioeconomy approaches converge and diverge is critical for developing coherent policies and sustainable investment strategies. As long as conceptual asymmetries between local definitions and global guidelines go unrecognized, potential beneficiaries could miss out on funding opportunities. Ultimately, the environmental and social impact of bioeconomy-related investments will depend on the extent to which they genuinely address a country's specific needs, priorities, and capacities. If bioeconomy initiatives are to be amplified, they will need patient capital and buy-in from a wide range of stakeholders, both regionally and globally.

The shift from extractivist to ecological production models is not just a national strategic imperative. It is a matter of human survival. The bioeconomy has vast potential, but it faces stiff competition from environmental crime and legacy industries. By sustainably leveraging Amazonia's rich biodiversity and promoting the rule of law, we can build a prosperous and sustainable future for the forest and its inhabitants, while also making major contributions to decarbonization. The first step is to build awareness of the economic dividends that nature is capable of paying.

## OPINION

By Abdullah Gül

## The Rules-Based International Order Is Collapsing in Gaza

**I**STANBUL - In 2007, I found myself in a car with Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas and then-Israeli President Shimon Peres en route to Turkey's Grand National Assembly. During their historic visit to Ankara, which I had the privilege of hosting, both leaders addressed the Turkish parliament, advocating peace and a two-state solution. This was just two years after Turkey launched its Industry for Peace project, which sought to rehabilitate the Erez industrial park in Gaza. When my Palestinian and Israeli counterparts and I endorsed this initiative, we were all optimistic that developing the Palestinian economy would pave a path toward sustainable peace in the region.

Regrettably, this dream was extinguished by Israel's decision that year to impose a land, sea, and air blockade on Gaza. Sixteen years later, having witnessed the events of October 7 and its aftermath, I am once again overcome by disappointment and sorrow over this lost opportunity for lasting peace.

October 7 marks a major turning point in Israeli-Palestinian relations, with far-reaching domestic, regional, and global implications. At this critical juncture, we must ask ourselves: Are we truly committed to maintaining a rules-based international order rooted in shared values, or are we prepared for a fragmented and polarized world where these values are obsolete?

Make no mistake: I unequivocally condemn the loss of civilian lives on both sides. Hamas's killing and abduction of Israeli civilians must not be endorsed under any circumstances. At the same time, the disproportionate response of Israeli Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu's government will not only lead to more violence and suffering across the region but also fuel the spread of hatred and division around the world. Ultimately, it is civilians who suffer the consequences.

The tragic events unfolding in Gaza should not come as a surprise. Neglecting the Israeli-Palestinian conflict has never been sustainable, especially as the plight of Palestinians worsens by the day. Israel's ongoing occupation of Palestinian territories, aggravated by its illegal and pernicious expansion of settlements in the West Bank, contravenes United Nations Security Council resolutions, undermines the foundational principles of international law, and violates established human-rights norms.

Moreover, the ongoing blockade of Gaza has segregated and traumatized the enclave's 2.3 million inhabitants, depriving them of basic necessities. Making matters worse, the West and even the Arab world have grown accustomed to this grim status quo. This historic miscalculation has stoked Palestinians' anger, setting the stage for the current conflict.

In 1999, as a member of parliament on a fact-finding mission to the Gaza Strip established by the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, I saw the helplessness in the eyes of Palestinian children and women. Our report highlighted the untenable living conditions and mounting frustration among the Palestinian populace. In my subsequent visits as Turkey's foreign minister and president, it was evident that the situation had worsened, as the political rifts driving this enduring conflict became even more entrenched.

Over the past five decades, the international community has failed to champion the only viable solution: the establishment of two states, Israel and Palestine, living side by side in peace. As opportunities slipped by, conditions on the ground deteriorated rapidly. Today, Palestinian children are reportedly writing farewell letters to their families as they prepare for the possibility of losing their lives in an Israeli bombardment. This state of affairs is bound to breed even more despair and animosity.

Israel's tactics in Gaza obviously violate the laws of war. Depriving Gazans of electricity, water, and food, as well as targeting residential areas, hospitals, mosques, churches, schools, and refugee camps, is incompatible with the Geneva Conventions and their additional protocols. These attacks are nothing short of a war crime, and history will undoubtedly hold those responsible to account.

Given its conduct, it is baffling that Israel has managed to retain the steadfast support of Western countries, particularly the United States. Those who blindly support Israel's actions should ask themselves: If we do not uphold the territorial integrity of Palestine, how can we convincingly defend Ukraine's? If you do not respect international law, how will you remain credible? This double standard undermines the rules-based global order and plays into the hands of authoritarian leaders and extremist movements that thrive on exploiting such inconsistencies.

Avoiding this scenario will require adherence to international law and the relevant UN Security Council resolutions. The 2002 Arab Peace Initiative, which has been endorsed by the Organization of Islamic Cooperation and notably also embraced by Iran, represents a viable path forward and offers a realistic framework for upholding Palestinians' rights and dignity.

But first, we must stop the bloodshed and demand an immediate and unconditional ceasefire. UN Secretary-General António Guterres's efforts to draw attention to the ongoing humanitarian crisis in Gaza, even amid the "veto wars" at the Security Council, are commendable. Additionally, the contribution of Turkish Foreign Minister Hakan Fidan, known for his deep understanding of Middle East dynamics, will be crucial to achieving a peaceful resolution.

To prevent further violence and suffering, an honest and constructive approach to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict is imperative. Effective diplomacy, underpinned by a strong sense of regional responsibility, represents the best way forward. The current war in Gaza is a test of our commitment to a rules-based international order. Now more than ever, we must rely on the moral compass of international law to guide our actions.



# ON 2ND THOUGHTS



with Othello B. Garblah

## Liberia's archrivals meet again

Preparations are far advanced at least according to the National Elections Commission for the Tuesday, November 14, Presidential runoff between incumbent President George Weah and former Vice President Joseph N. Boakai.

Though many have considered the November 14 Presidential runoff as a rerun of the 2017 Presidential runoff between the two most popular presidential rivals in recent Liberian history, much has changed since the two men met in 2017.

In 2017, President Weah was at his highest popularity ratings with no incumbency records to defend, while Amb. Boakai had the burden of defending his party's 12-year record in power, most of which he distanced himself from.

Thus, unlike 2017, both candidates are now running on equal terms with President Weah hoping to maintain the presidency for another six years' term defending his current record, while Amb. Boakai would argue that Weah's six years of administering the nation's affairs have made things worse off than how the UP left it.

Whatever, the forgoing debate, the question that voters would answer on Tuesday is whether their lives have been better off than 12 years ago, the answer to this question is expected to be translated into votes on Tuesday. Another question which the results will show whether Liberians want to have an octogenarian president or continue with Weah to get him over his second and final term.

In 2017, Mr. Weah secured votes well ahead of Amb. Boakai clinching 38.37%, in the first round and 61.54% in the runoff. Amb. Boakai on the other hand accumulated 28.76% of votes cast in the first round and 38.46 in the runoff.

However, both men ran neck-to-neck in the October 10, 2023, presidential polls with incumbent President Weah securing 43.80% of the votes about 7.20 percent shy of securing a first-round victory. The same could be said of Amb. Boakai obtained 43.50% of the votes.

The October 10, presidential results of the two candidates only shows how fierce this runoff would be. Both candidates have so far received endorsements from the camps of the other 18 defeated presidential candidates who participated in the first round of elections. But with the very low percentages of votes obtained by these defeated candidates, it remains to be seen how these endorsements will translate into votes.

However, the stakes remain high in this election and both sides are hoping to clinch victory amidst various conspiracy theories ahead of Tuesday's vote. But what are their chances? Incumbent President Weah

Incumbent President Weah arguably remains a popular candidate in the race. His connection with young people, especially most first-time voters put him in a league all by himself. His Coalition for Democratic Change (CDC) ability to organize rallies and publicize events has been exceptional compared to his fierce rival.

Mr. Weah and his CDC's slogan of "Change you can depend on", alongside WEAC fee payments and free tuition for public schools and universities, have resonated well with young people, but did not secure him a first-round victory.

Mr. Weah faces a daunting task not just in securing victory but with the huge margins secured in 2017. President Weah's critics will acknowledge that he came into the 2017 race without any record to defend and therefore, his popularity was the only vehicle that drove him to the Executive Mansion.

In 2023, the variables have changed. President Weah now has a record to defend: a crippled economy, corruption and failed promises. These are holes that have crept into the President's popularity, some created by men and women he has placed in authority, and he must now ably defend against a raging opposition that continues to feast on his administration's failure.

But the President would boast in addition to WAEC and free public schools and universities the construction of hospitals, roads, and rural housing units, etc. These have well swept him into his third runoff, and he must now finish the race.

At the end of the first round of voting, Mr. Weah changed his campaign strategy by knocking on voters' doors, particularly in his own district where he had never won before.

Amb. Boakai

Amb. Boakai stands a much better chance than he did in 2017. Now, that President Weah has a record to defend, and the former Vice President being seen as the most experienced Statesman puts him in a much better position to wrestle power from President Weah.

Supported by a host of former government officials including defeated presidential candidates in the October 10 polls, and surrounded by his kinsmen, Amb. Boakai looks the most likely alternative.

However, the former vice president comes into 2023 with too much excess baggage. The former vice President's alignment with US designee Sen. Johnson, a former warlord, has caused many of his supporters both local and international to rethink. Added to this is his inability to be decisive. Many blamed him for his failed leadership role which saw the CPP, Liberia's strongest opposition collaboration in recent history disintegrating right under his watchful eyes.

But some say the issue of Sen. Prince Johnson could be put away within the first six months of Amb. Boakai's regime, that is if he plays his cards well and works with the United States Government.

The former vice president's age is also a factor, particularly speculations surrounding his health, which has caused many to fear that electing him in office will be equated to electing Sen. Johnson. Sen. Johnson has not even made it any easier for Amb. Boakai with his campaign pronouncements prior to the October 10 polls.

However, he has remained quiet during the runoff campaign which ended Sunday, November 12.



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**Duty Station:** Sinoe  
**Category:** Local  
**Application Deadline:** November 20<sup>th</sup>, 2023

#### General Scope of Work/Duties:

1. Manage VSAT and SAP plantation network in all units.
2. Designing and implementing new network solutions and/or improving the efficiency of current networks
3. Installing, configuring, and supporting network equipment, including routers, proxy servers, switches, WAN accelerators, DNS, and DHCP
4. Configuring firewalls, routing, and switching to maximize network efficiency and security
5. Maximizing network performance through ongoing monitoring and troubleshooting
6. Arranging scheduled upgrades, Updating network equipment to the latest firmware release
7. Manage all network infrastructure equipment, including Cisco Routers/Switches/Firewalls/Wireless Networks/Power Management
8. Carry out any other task the Superior gives occasionally.

#### Education

Bachelor's Degree in Network Engineering. A Master's degree would be an advantage.

#### Experience/Competencies/Skills:

1. 7+ years' work experience in a fast-paced multinational/cross-border operation, including over five years as a Network Engineer.
2. Expert knowledge of networking concepts and protocols such as TCP/IP, DHCP, UDP, and routing.
3. Experience manage VSAT and SAP.
4. Experience with network hardware and infrastructure such as routers, hubs, servers, VPNs, and switches.
5. Knowledge of firewalls and security for network security, especially Firewall Fortigate.
6. Experience with monitoring and troubleshooting complex network issues.
7. Knowledge of cloud networking architecture, virtualization, and automation
8. Must have the skills and knowledge of IT Support, such as Installing and configuring computer hardware, software, systems, networks, printers, and scanners
9. Must have deep knowledge of IT Power Management (especially Inverter and battery Installation and integrated with Dashboard Monitoring) and Solar Panels
10. Must have skills in programming languages and can build websites (have experience using AI-based technology)
11. Good time management skills to coordinate various project aspects. Strong analytical and problem-solving skills
12. Having MTCNA & MTCRE certificate will be an advantage
13. Proactive, team player, loyal, honest, helpful, recognized good character.
14. Adaptable to multicultural settings with mutual respect
15. Ability to work in remote areas, under high pressure, and over long hours if necessary

#### How to Apply

Interested Candidates should address a cover letter with a CV & (2) two passport-size photos to:

The Human Resources Department  
 Golden Veroleum (Liberia) Inc.  
 Butaw Main Office  
 Sinoe County

#### Kindly note the followings:

- the information & application shall optionally be dropped at the GVL Butaw Main Office (HR Department)
- applicants shall also email the application letter, cover letter & credentials to: [alphonso.kofi@veroleum.com](mailto:alphonso.kofi@veroleum.com) or [daniel.cephas@veroleum.com](mailto:daniel.cephas@veroleum.com)
- Only selected candidates will be notified for the interview.

## GVL appreciates host communities

Golden Veroleum Liberia (GVL) has lauded communities in its operational areas for the support and collaboration towards its investment.

The company in a press release, says that while there are occasional

with communities to ensure all MOUs are fully implemented in its developments and to continue to improve relationships with the communities.

GVL says despite the challenges faced by its operations, it remains committed to improving the well-being of communities

and employees, and plans to sustain its operations in Liberia.

At the same time the company expresses optimism that factors that directly impact and/or undermine its operations would be addressed and mitigated with joint efforts from the government and the company in the New Year, noting that it expects increases in production and improvement in operational efficiency by applying agronomy best practices.

However, GVL says it has experienced significant losses driven mainly by factors including high cost of materials imported into the country and logistical challenges coupled with the ailing economy and global price increases that remain the most serious challenges to its operations in Liberia. Press Release



challenges, as would be expected of an investment and operations of this scale, it appreciates the support it continued to enjoy from the communities and looks forward to a mutually beneficial working relationship in sustaining the operations.

The company adds that it is working



# MORE HEADLINE NEWS

# MORE HEADLINE NEWS

## Police assure protection of peace in presidential run-off

By Emmanuel wise Jipoh

Liberia National Police (LNP) Inspector General Col. Patrick

there is no cause to fear because the joint security is on top of security issues across the country to ensure that the

He indicated that the Joint-Security is working in the interest of the Liberian people, describing the Election Day as a good democratic process for the benefit of the country.

Meanwhile, Col. Sudue has condemned a recent election violence in Foya District, Lofa County in which poll watchers of the ruling Coalition for Democratic Change (CDC) were allegedly beaten by supporters of the opposition Unity Party (UP).

It was alleged that an helicopter belonging to CDC on Monday, 13 November 2023, was carrying pre-marked ballot papers when those on board met resistance from supporters of the Unity Party.

IG Sudue said the incident in Lofa was saddened, but cautioned Liberians to desist from violence that will undermine the peace process of the country. He assured that the Liberia National Police will be vigilant in engaging those involved in violence, noting that the police will ensure those involved will be brought to book.

election goes peacefully to the end. The police chief told journalists that the police have been robust working in the interest of all parties and will ensure that the presidential run-off remains peaceful throughout the entire process.

“As you saw during the first-round election in October, we are of the conviction that the second round will go seamless and peacefully because we are working with all parties involved,” Col. Sudue said.



Sudue has assured the protection of peace and tranquility throughout the presidential run-off election that took place Tuesday, 14 November 2023.

Col. Sudue gave the assurance Tuesday after casting his ballot at the Kendeja Elementary School in Rehab Community, Paynesville, Montserrado County.

Sudue emphasized that

## Liberians unhappy over poor election turnout

By Lincoln G. Peters

Several Liberians residing in Monrovia have expressed displeasure over what they said was a poor turnout in the presidential run-off election, despite voting centers opening early on Tuesday, 14 November 2023.

Incumbent President George Manneh Weah and his archrival Amb. Joseph Nyumah Boakai, the country former vice president, met for the second time in a run-off on Tuesday. During the voting exercise Tuesday, our report visited several polling places in Montserrado County Electoral District #4, #15 and #16. During the tour, our report discovered from polling places and precincts visited that ballot boxes, and National Elections Commission staffs arrived very soon and opened polling places within time. But our reporter also observed that from 6:30 a.m. up to 4:30 p.m., polling places in those districts had low turnouts.

Speaking in an interview with this paper at the Samuel T. Kun School in Logan Town, Patience Nagbe said she was

concerned about the poor turnout. She however blamed the trucking of voters for the reported low turnout in the run-off.

“The first time we voted here it was not even easy to get in to cast your vote. We even opened polling place here almost 11pm, but today, see how the place is empty,” said Ms. Nagbe.

“People are just coming in few instead of numbers. But again we know that people were trucked and they are not able to come back that’s why the turnout is low,” she noted. Vision for Liberia

Transformation Party (VOLT) standard bearer Dr. Jeremiah Z. Whapoe also spoke to journalists after casting his vote at the Morris’ Farm, Montserrado County.

Dr. Whapoe expressed displeasure over the poor turnout of voters, terming it a setback to democracy and a justification that Liberia’s political system and electorate are influenced by finance.

He suggested that there should be legislation enacted by the Legislature to prevent voters trucking, describing it as

▶ CONT'D page 11



## EISA-IEOM strongly condemns Nimba electoral violence

By Lincoln G. Peters

The Electoral Institute for Sustainable Democracy in Africa International Election Observation Mission (EISA-IEOM) has strongly condemned the electoral violence in Zor Zualay, Nimba County that led to over seven persons being injured.

In a statement dated Monday, 13 November 2023 under the signature of EISA-IEOM Executive Director Mr. Baidessou Soukolgue, the action was anti-democratic and unnecessary.

“EISA-IEOM strongly condemns the acts of violence that emerged in District 3 in Nimba County on November 10, 2023, resulting in injuries of more than five people due to the shooting,” EISA-IEOM said.

Mission also cited another incident in Grand Gedeh County involving supporters of the opposition Unity Party (UP) and the ruling Coalition for Democratic Change (CDC) on the same day.

EISA-IEOM further stated that

Liberians that the gains made so far in consolidating peace and strengthening democracy have come at a significant cost. The EISA-IEOM Executive Director said any post-election violence would be a major setback for the prosperity and democracy of Liberians. He reiterated the recommendations made in all EISA-IEOM’s public reports and analyses, encouraging Liberian stakeholders to uphold peace and tolerance. At the same time, the EISA-IEOM called on political parties to adhere to the Farmington agreement and lead by example and also educate their party supporters. “We call on political parties to lead by example and also educate their party supporters on the importance of adhering to the Farmington River Declaration principles,” EISA-IEOM said. The EISA IEOM has been in Liberia since January 2023, observing and reporting on all key electoral activities.

The USAID-funded organization seeks to enhance the



it is concerned about the minimal post-election peace messaging observable since the announcement of the results and called on Liberians to continue to show the restraint and calm demonstrated on 10 October.

Mr. Soukolgue noted that community-level mechanisms to encourage acceptance of results, community dispute resolution, and physical safety are crucial as the country holds the run-off election. Soukolgue reminded

integrity of the 2023 Liberian presidential and legislative elections through the deployment of an independent international Election Observer Mission (EOM).

The observers are to monitor, assess and report on all phases of the electoral process in accordance with international and regional benchmarks. The IEOM is implemented in close coordination with the financial support of USAID/Liberia and will complement the efforts of other electoral stakeholders.

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# MORE HEADLINE NEWS

# MORE HEADLINE NEWS

## Liberia: ECOWAS calls on citizens to cast their votes in calm

The Head of the ECOWAS Election Observation Mission (EOM) to Liberia, Prof.

accredited to ECOWAS and the ECOWAS Council of Wise.

The Head of the ECOWAS EOM

Prof. Attahiru JEGA and his delegation visited other polling stations at West Point Administrative Building, Police Station, Central Mosque Elementary School, Clara Town



Attahiru JEGA, Tuesday, November 14, 2023, called on citizens to come out massively to exercise their franchise in a peaceful manner to elect their future president of the Republic and consolidate their democracy.

Prof Jega made the statement after visiting three voting centres in the capital Monrovia in Montserrado County. He was accompanied during these visits by Dr. Abdel-Fatau Musah, Commissioner for Political Affairs, Peace and Security, Ambassador Josephine NKRUMAH, ECOWAS Resident Representative in Liberia, Mr. Abdou Kolley, Director of Cabinet of the President of ECOWAS Commission, Representatives of the ECOWAS Parliament, Permanent Representative Committee of Ambassadors

also made this call yesterday Monday, November 13, 2023, during his meetings with the two candidates, namely the President George M. WEAH and Mr. Joseph BOAKAI in the company of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General of the United Nations and Head of the United Nations Office for West Africa and the Sahel (UNOWAS), Mr. Leonardo Santos Simão.

On this Tuesday, November 14, 2023, in the morning, the ECOWAS delegation visited the voting centres of Matilda Newport High School, William V.S Tubman Silver Jubilee Elem. & Jr. High School, before meeting with the ECOWAS Situation Room where it received briefing on the Vote Opening process, per the data received from the various teams deployed in all the 15 counties of the country. In the afternoon,

Central School, Famina Islamic School, and other polling stations located within Greater Monrovia District. They visited some situation rooms including that of the Association of Youth, WANEP, the Women association, the NGO Election Coordination Committee (ECC) and Liberian Early Warning Mechanism, where they received fields information from the various teams deployed in the country.

Taking stock of the progress of the elections after reviewing the reports of the ECOWAS observation teams submitted through the Situation Room, the Head of Mission noted that the polling stations opened on time, and no major incidents had been reported and appreciated the calm and order prevailing in the various voting centres visited.

He reiterated his appeal to

▶ CONT'D page 5

## ECOWAS, Afreximbank and UNECA unveil Study on Informal Cross-Border Trade in West Africa

The Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), African Export-Import Bank (Afreximbank) and the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA) unveiled a study on Informal Cross-Border Trade (ICBT) in the ECOWAS Region at the ongoing 3rd Intra-African Trade Fair in Cairo on November 12, 2023. The study was launched from 2019 to 2023, with the objective of collecting ICBT data along the Abidjan-Lagos Corridor (ALCO) to measure the volume of trade.

In her statement at the unveiling ceremony, Mme Massandjé Toure-Liste, the Commissioner for Economic Affairs and Agriculture of the ECOWAS Commission, highlighted that in view of the importance of informal trade,

the ECOWAS Commission established the Informal Trade Regulation Support Program (PARCI/ITRSP) to leverage the informal sector for increased intra-regional trade.

While delivering his keynote address, Mr. Albert Muchanga, the Commissioner for Economic Development, Trade, Tourism, Industry and Minerals of the African Union, underscored the importance of mainstreaming

ICBT to formal Intra-African Trade, as he said up to 60% of Intra-African trade may be unrecorded.

The study which was carried out in Benin, Burkina Faso, Ghana, Nigeria and Togo over a period of four (4) months found out that about \$22.8 million volume of informal trade is carried out on the corridor, with women accounting for 74% and men 26%.



## Ghanaian soldiers beat and arrest journalist Nicholas Morkah, wipe phone

Abuja, November 13, 2023 – Ghanaian authorities must swiftly complete their investigation into the soldiers who attacked and detained journalist Nicholas Morkah last month and hold the perpetrators to account, the Committee to Protect Journalists said Monday.

On October 19, six soldiers attacked and beat Morkah, a morning show host with the privately owned Akyemansa FM broadcaster, after Morkah began filming the soldiers attacking a man in the Birim Central Municipal District of Ghana's Eastern Region, according to a report by the privately owned Modern Ghana news website and Morkah, who spoke by phone with CPJ. After noticing Morkah was filming, a soldier approached the journalist, grabbed his shirt by the neck and began to hit him, demanding to know why Morkah was filming. Morkah said five other soldiers then joined in

second phone and searched it, Morkah said.

Officers then took Morkah to the local police command, where officers interrogated him, handed him a document alleging he had committed "offensive conduct," and made him write a statement about the incident on that document.

Morkah said the officers released him the same day without charge on administrative bail for which he had to provide a surety and verbal assurances that he would be available for further questioning. He returned the next day and retrieved both of his phones.

After his release, Morkah said he went to a hospital where he was given medication for severe pain in his knee, back, and head, as well as cuts on his lips and head from the attack. Morkah said the cuts have healed, but added he was still in pain more than a week later.

Morkah filed a police complaint on October 23 and Akyemansa FM



Ghanaian morning show host Nicholas Morkah was filming soldiers attacking a man when the soldiers began attacking Morkah, according to news reports. (Screenshot: Courtesy of Akyemansa FM)

hitting and kicking him all over his body, even as he told them he was a journalist.

"Authorities in Ghana must ensure that those responsible for beating journalist Nicholas Morkah are held accountable," said Angela Quintal, CPJ's Africa program coordinator, in New York. "Ghana's leadership have so far failed to take the necessary actions to ensure security forces do not perpetrate violence against journalists."

The soldiers seized Morkah's cell phone, forced him into their van, and then hit Morkah with his motorcycle helmet at least five times before driving the journalist to their local barracks, where they erased everything on his phone by resetting it. They also accused the journalist of offending them. While at the barracks, a senior officer requested that Morkah provide a contact for Yaw Yeboah, Akyemansa FM's manager, then called Yeboah, informed him of Morkah's arrest, and said the outlet would be prevented from covering future military events, Morkah told CPJ. Officers at the barracks also found Morkah's

wrote to the National Media Commission, which is a national media regulator, the Ghana Journalists Association, a local trade group, as well as officials with Ghana Armed Forces and the Information Ministry, according to Morkah and the privately owned Joy Online news website.

According to a statement by the Ghana Journalists Association provided to CPJ, the Ghana Armed Forces expressed "readiness" to investigate the incident and hold those responsible to account. CPJ contacted Ghana Armed Forces' director of public relations, Micheal Addo Larbi, at a phone number and email address he provided, but he did not respond.

Information Minister Kojo Opong Nkrumah, who owns the broadcaster where the journalist works, told CPJ that the armed forces were indeed investigating and promised a report would be out "soon." The journalist said he had been questioned in the investigation.

CPJ reporting has identified a "broad pattern of impunity" in attacks on the press in Ghana, including by security forces. -CPJ report



# Français

## Présidentielle au Liberia : à Monrovia, un second tour globalement calme à la mi-journée

Près de 2,4 millions d'électeurs sont appelés aux urnes depuis ce mardi matin au Liberia. C'est le second tour

patientent, une radio à la main, à l'ombre, pour se protéger du soleil qui tape déjà fort. Le vote, lui, a démarré à 8h, heure locale.

Il y a aussi beaucoup de personnes présentes dans la file. Parmi elles, Joseph, 19 ans. Il espère que « cette élection se passera dans le calme et permettra de mettre fin aux crises » au Liberia.

Plus tard dans la journée, à Bushrod Island, un quartier populaire de Monrovia, tout se passe également normalement : tout est bien indiqué, bien balisé, pour aiguiller les électeurs. Les listes des électeurs sont affichées, avec leurs photos, à l'entrée de chaque bureau de vote.

Ensuite, les agents électoraux expliquent à chaque électeur comment voter : sur chaque bulletin de vote, il y a en effet un tableau avec seulement deux tickets présidentiels, il suffit de cocher la case de son choix.

Cette étape est importante car au premier tour, 114 000 bulletins de vote avaient été annulés. Cette fois, la Commission nationale des élections est très pédagogue pour éviter qu'autant de voix ne soient « perdues ». Au premier tour, il y avait eu à peine 7 000 voix d'écart entre les deux challengers de cette élection. Donc, chaque suffrage compte pour les départager.

L'affluence est toutefois très contrastée : certains centres de vote sont bondés, d'autres sont plus calmes.

Les électeurs arrivent par

▶ CONT'D ON PAGE 9



de la présidentielle, ce 14 novembre, avec une affiche similaire à celle de 2017 : George Weah, le président sortant, face à Joseph Boakai. Les deux candidats étaient au coude à coude au premier tour. Reportage dans des bureaux de vote à Monrovia, la capitale Ce matin, il y avait une forte affluence devant l'école Newport. Ici, les électeurs se sont mobilisés tôt, très tôt même : certains sont ici depuis 5h45. La plupart

Le matériel électoral était déjà sur place. « Toute l'équipe a dormi ici, dans cette école, pour surveiller le matériel électoral », explique le président du bureau de vote, signe de l'importance accordée à la sécurité autour de cette journée électorale.

Ici, le scrutin est bien organisé : les personnes âgées et handicapées ont voté en premières. « C'est important pour moi d'exercer mon droit de vote », affirme John, la cinquantaine.

## On sait où se trouve Guillaume Soro

Oui et ce n'est pas au Mali comme certains le pressentaient... ni à Istanbul, Chypre ou Dubaï. Alors, Le Monde Afrique ironise : « Guillaume Soro serait-il devenu le furet de la politique ivoirienne ? » En réalité, c'est au Niger que l'ancien chef rebelle, ancien Premier ministre ivoirien a trouvé refuge, comme son parti l'a annoncé hier, lundi, dans un communiqué - sans exclure des escales au Burkina Faso, au Mali ou en Guinée-Bissau.

Silence radio de la part de la presse ivoirienne... les titres burkinabè eux ne se privent pas ! Ainsi de Wakat Séra qui s'amuse de « l'importance de ce nouveau citoyen nigérien », reçu par le président de transition, le général Tiani, dès son arrivée, témoignage aussi de « l'intérêt » que peut revêtir Guillaume Soro pour les putschistes.

Une fois de plus, l'ancien

protégé d'Alassane Ouattara se drape dans « un sens de la mise en scène dont il a le secret et une faconde qu'il apprécie », mais surtout, il multiplie les actions. Aujourd'hui au Faso ne dit pas autre chose et souligne, d'entrée de jeu, que « les choses sont allées vite et s'enchaînent », tandis qu'en parallèle, « les images sont largement commentées sur les réseaux

sociaux. » Tout en réussissant à cultiver une forme de silence.

Peu de précisions sur la suite

Cette installation au Niger est-elle « définitive » ? Ou bien est-ce une simple « escale avant de continuer dans la capitale économique ivoirienne », poursuit

▶ CONT'D ON PAGE 9



## Éditorial

### Second Tour, une Étape Cruciale pour la Démocratie Libérienne

À l'approche du second tour des élections libériennes prévu pour le mardi 14 novembre, les électeurs se préparent à un face-à-face décisif entre le Président George Weah et l'ancien Vice-Président Joseph Nyumah Boakai. Bien que ces deux candidats aient recueilli le plus grand nombre de votes, aucun n'a réussi à atteindre le seuil légal de 50 pour cent plus une voix supplémentaire nécessaire pour remporter la présidence.

Les résultats officiels, rendus publics par la Commission Électorale Nationale le jeudi 19 octobre 2023, placent le Président Weah en tête avec 43,84 pour cent des votes, devançant ainsi son principal rival, l'Ambassadeur Boakai, qui a obtenu 43,43 pour cent. C'est donc le recours au second tour qui déterminera le vainqueur de cette joute électorale.

Cette situation n'est pas inédite, les deux partis ayant déjà participé à un second tour en 2017, où le Parti de l'Unité (UP) a été battu de justesse par le Congrès pour le Changement Démocratique (CDC), offrant ainsi à M. Weah son premier mandat présidentiel. Dans ce second tour, le peuple libérien assistera à l'émergence d'un vainqueur, maintenant que la course présidentielle s'est éclaircie des nombreux candidats qui caractérisaient le premier tour.

Il est essentiel que les Libériens méditent sur l'atmosphère pacifique qui a prévalu lors des élections du 10 octobre à travers le pays. Alors qu'ils se dirigent vers ce second tour, ils ont la responsabilité de maintenir l'admiration récemment acquise au cours de ces élections historiques.

L'essence même de cette réflexion réside dans la préservation de la paix et de la stabilité de la mère patrie. Les élections ne devraient en aucun cas être le prétexte à des discordes mutuelles menant à l'autodestruction, que ce soit pour le compte d'un candidat particulier ou d'un parti politique.

Le comportement exemplaire adopté lors du premier tour a valu des éloges aux observateurs internationaux. Il est impératif de conserver cet esprit civique au cours du second tour.

Nous lançons un appel aux deux principaux candidats, le Président Weah et l'Ambassadeur Boakai, pour qu'ils dialoguent avec leurs partisans respectifs alors qu'ils se préparent à ce deuxième affrontement. Le second tour ne signifie pas la fin du Liberia ni son agenouillement. Il vise plutôt à élire un leader qui dirigera le pays pour les six prochaines années.

Le pouvoir de prendre une telle décision réside entre les mains des électeurs libériens. Ils sont appelés à exercer ce pouvoir lors du scrutin du lendemain, sans aucune forme de coercition ni de violence, car leur responsabilité s'étend à eux-mêmes, à leurs enfants et à la postérité.

Les partis et les présidents peuvent être éphémères, mais le Liberia demeure le patrimoine commun auquel nous appartenons tous. Il est impératif de ne pas troquer cette nation contre des intérêts politiques égoïstes.

En démontrant lors de ce second tour que le Liberia transcende tout parti ou candidat, le pays pourrait maintenir son statut admiratif dans la région. Priorisons la paix.

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# Français

## Starts from page 8 **Présidentielle au Liberia :**

exemple au compte-goutte, comme à Chevron Park.

Quelques incidents à l'intérieur du pays rapidement maîtrisés

Globalement, ce vote se déroule dans le calme. Quelques incidents ont été signalés à l'intérieur du pays. Mais, à chaque fois, le problème a pu être maîtrisé rapidement par la police qui est présente dans quasiment

tous les centres de vote. Donc, pas de violence pour le moment.

Ce scrutin est très suivi, en témoigne la forte présence d'observateurs internationaux et la présence aussi des représentants des partis politiques dans la plupart des bureaux de votes. Ces mandataires ont des fiches sur lesquelles ils comptent le nombre d'électeurs venus voter.

## Starts from page 8 **On sait où se trouve**

L'Observateur Paalga qui décidément a une litanie d'interrogations : « Qu'est-ce que les deux hommes [Soro et Tiani] se sont dit exactement ? Qu'a-t-on promis au président de Générations et peuples solidaires ? » Force est de constater qu'à ce stade, c'est toujours « mystère et boule de gomme. »

Mais le point d'interrogation principal se trouve dans les colonnes de Wakat Séra : « Pourquoi Guillaume Soro a-t-il jeté son dévolu sur des pays voisins de la Côte d'Ivoire, et dont certains sont en froid avec les autorités ivoiriennes ? » Aujourd'hui au Faso esquisse un début de réponse : hormis la Guinée-Bissau, les pays d'accueil choisis ont « deux dénominateurs communs : ils sont frappés par le terrorisme et les rébellions ; et leurs relations avec la Côte d'Ivoire sont cordiales » - façon de dire que ces rapports sont froids depuis l'accession au pouvoir de la junte nigérienne car, pointe L'Observateur Paalga, Alassane Ouattara faisait partie des « tenants de la ligne dure de la Cédéao, qui ont poussé à la prise de sanctions politiques, économiques, commerciales et financières » particulièrement sévères. Pour le journal burkinabè, il n'y a donc pas lieu de chercher plus loin que cet adage : « l'ennemi de mon ennemi est mon ami. »

Claude Pivi toujours introuvable

Les forces de l'ordre guinéennes n'ont pas réussi à mettre la main sur l'ancien capitaine, près de deux semaines après l'attaque

contre la prison centrale de Conakry. C'est donc sans cet accusé de premier plan que s'est rouvert, hier, le procès du massacre du 28-septembre. Jamais absent n'aura été aussi présent : en fait, « l'ombre de 'Coplan' plan[ait] sur le tribunal », juge Aujourd'hui au Faso. Et elle devrait continuer de hanter les débats, prédit le journal, « tant qu'on ne le retrouvera pas. » D'abord car, « il constitue une des boîtes noires du massacre et des viols du 28 septembre. »

Mais aussi, car chacun s'inquiète pour sa sécurité, les témoins évidemment, raconte L'Observateur Paalga, mais aussi les avocats eux-mêmes. Des hommes en robe noire bien en peine de faire leur travail car ils subissent, détaille Jeune Afrique, des « difficultés » pour accéder à la prison de Conakry - conséquence des « mesures prises pour sécuriser les lieux », entre la présence de gendarmes à la Maison centrale et les rondes effectuées de nuit autour des domiciles de certains avocats de la défense, dénonce l'un d'entre eux dans les pages du magazine.

Quelles options pour la suite ?

Il y a bien ce que suggère Jeune Afrique : « prendre des mesures pour garantir la sécurité des différents acteurs. » Mais sur ce point, les avis divergent, certains avocats cités par le magazine craignant d'être espionnés par les gardes du corps qui pourraient leur être affectés.

En attendant, « Pivi court toujours »... on ne sait où il se trouve... « une question dont la réponse vaut de l'or » aux yeux du pouvoir, littéralement ou presque : environ 55.000 euros sont promis à ceux qui donneront « toute information permettant la capture » de l'ancien proche de Moussa Dadis Camara.

## **Au Liberia, le bilan économique du président George Weah a déçu certains de ses partisans**



**A**u Liberia George Weah, l'ancienne star du ballon rond et actuellement président en exercice, va tenter aujourd'hui d'obtenir un deuxième mandat. Le second tour qui l'oppose à l'ancien vice-président Joseph Boakai promet d'être serré. Parmi les griefs qui lui sont adressés, un bilan économique jugé décevant.

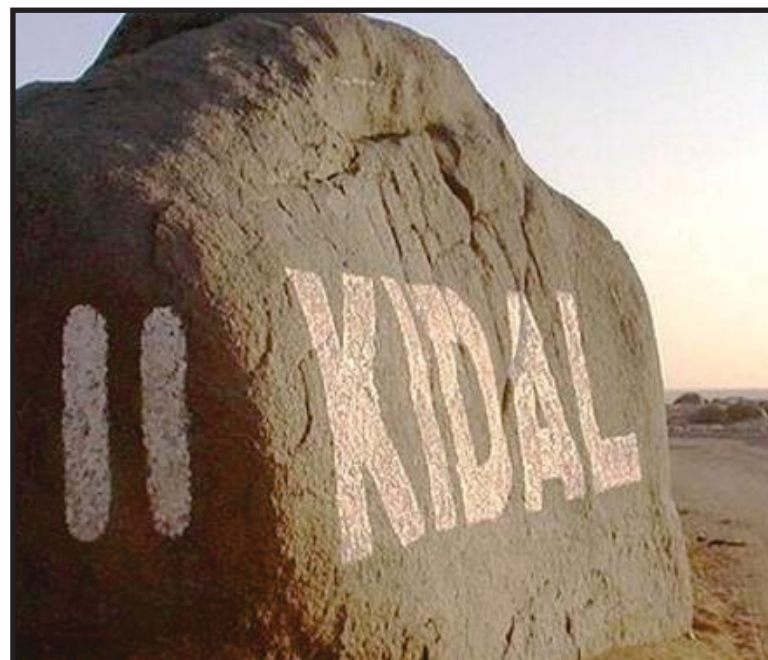
Comme en 2022, la croissance du Liberia dépassera cette année la barre des 4 %. Une bonne performance après des années de stagnation, mais avec des déficits du commerce extérieur et des comptes publics, une inflation qui galope toujours au-dessus de 10 %, cette amélioration macro-économique passe totalement inaperçue au sein de la population. Ce petit pays d'Afrique de l'Ouest est l'un des plus pauvres au monde, avec un PIB par habitant de l'ordre de 800 dollars annuel. Ce pays panse toujours les plaies des deux guerres civiles qui l'ont dévasté à la fin du 20<sup>e</sup> siècle et qui lui ont fait perdre des décennies de développement. Son produit intérieur brut est toujours inférieur d'un tiers au niveau de 1989, l'année où les troubles ont commencé. George Weah avait promis de gouverner en faveur des plus pauvres, et de faire de son pays une économie à revenu intermédiaire Mais les événements extérieurs ont contrarié ses ambitions.

À peine remis de l'épidémie d'Ebola, le Liberia a été balayé par le Covid, puis est survenue la guerre en Ukraine, deux événements qui ont déchainé l'inflation. Réduisant à néant les efforts entrepris pour améliorer le pouvoir d'achat des ménages. En revanche, son programme d'infrastructures, avec la construction de routes et d'hôpitaux, a rendu la vie quotidienne plus facile. Tout comme la gratuité pour l'enseignement secondaire. Des efforts qu'il a fallu financer par l'emprunt. Car les revenus miniers tirés de l'exploitation des richesses minières, le fer et l'or, ne suffisent pas à remplir les caisses de l'État. Le poids de la dette du Liberia par rapport au PIB a doublé pendant le mandat de George Weah. C'est à la fois une nécessité pour financer le développement, grâce surtout aux prêts des bailleurs internationaux, mais c'est aussi un fardeau qui fragilise les finances publiques et donc les marges de manœuvre du gouvernement. On lui reproche aussi son échec dans la lutte contre la corruption

La corruption demeure un mal endémique, elle a même légèrement progressé selon Transparency International. L'an dernier, le Liberia a été rétrogradé à la 142<sup>e</sup> place sur 180 pays examinés. Cette criminalité délétère pour le développement éclabousse l'entourage de l'ancienne gloire du football. L'an dernier son chef de cabinet, Nathaniel Mac Gill, a été suspendu de ses fonctions suite à des sanctions prononcées par l'administration américaine pour des soupçons de corruption.

Aujourd'hui, le département d'État s'intéresse de près à un accord passé juste avant le début de la campagne entre le gouvernement et le groupe Arcelor Mittal. Grâce à un transfert de permis minier en sa faveur.

## **Mali : les combats se poursuivent entre l'armée et la coalition CSP-PSD pour le contrôle de Kidal**



**L**a bataille de Kidal se poursuit, ce dimanche 12 novembre. Des tirs à l'arme lourde ont été entendus, à une vingtaine de kilomètres de la ville. L'armée malienne, avec un appui important des mercenaires de la société paramilitaire russe Wagner, a engagé une bataille contre les rebelles de la coalition dénommée CSP-PSD pour le contrôle de Kidal. Ces derniers occupent la ville depuis 2012, ville qu'a quittée la Minusma, le 31 octobre dernier. Les combats ont repris, ce dimanche 12 novembre, non loin de la localité de Kidal. Ce sont essentiellement des armes lourdes qui sont utilisées, notamment « des tirs de roquettes », précisent nos sources.

Cependant, comparés à ceux de samedi, les affrontements actuellement en cours sont moins intenses. Selon un observateur, l'armée malienne, fortement aidée par les mercenaires du groupe paramilitaire Wagner, tente toujours de se frayer un chemin. Mobiles rebelles

De leur côté, les rebelles, très mobiles, sont familiers du relief où se déroulent les hostilités...

On s'attendait à une journée de dimanche décisive pour la suite des opérations. Il faudrait peut-être un peu plus de temps... Selon l'analyse d'un expert, lorsqu'ils ont finalement pris, début octobre, la localité d'Annéfis située à 100 km de Kidal, les combattants du groupe paramilitaire russe Wagner qui accompagnaient l'armée ont opéré la nuit. Ont-ils l'intention d'utiliser la stratégie ?

Kidal se vide En attendant, les populations civiles continuent de quitter Kidal où les lignes téléphoniques sont désormais interrompues. De rares personnes utilisent le téléphone satellitaire Par ailleurs, l'Union européenne a appelé les autorités burkinabè à « faire toute la lumière » sur un « massacre » de civils qui aurait fait une centaine de morts dans le village de Zaongo, dans la région du Centre-Nord.

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## ARTICLE

## ARTICLE

# LIBERIA: Who Will Win? Results Of The 2023 Presidential Election First Round and Analysis Of The Runoff Election

BY Dagbayonoh Kiah Nyanfore II

On October 10, 2023, Liberians went to the polls to elect a new president. The election was peaceful, fair, and transparent. Moreover, the turnout was huge; 78.8% of those registered voted. The National Election Commission (NEC) took over a week to count and announce the final results.

NEC announced that former Vice President Joseph Boakai of the Unity Party (UP) won 43.44%, and President George Weah of the Coalition of Democratic Change (CDC) won 43.83% of the valid votes cashed. Because none of them received the constitutional requirement of 50% plus one vote, Boakai and Weah will compete in the runoff election, which will be on November 14, 2023. Despite the large turnout, observers noted 114,597 people registered invalid votes, constituting 5.89%, the highest in Liberian electoral history. Analysts attributed this number to inadequate voter education.

The election results surprised many observers. Candidate Alexander Cummings of the Collaborating Political Parties (CPP), one of the three main parties, finished distance 5th. But the newly formed Grass Roots Development Movement Party standard bearer, Edward Appleton, came third, and Lusinee Kamara of the All Liberians Collaborative Party (ALCOP) took 4th. As my last article on the election said, CPP campaigned heavily, canvassing in the 15 counties of Liberia. It launched the biggest political demonstration in Margibi County and held a victory rally in Monrovia. The turnouts were impressive. That election marked Cummings' second unsuccessful presidential run. His poor performance stunned party members and political pundits. Also, Appleton's fine showing surprised most observers. They wondered how he got so many votes, for he did not campaign much, nor was he well-known or popular. Appleton, a Liberian, lived in America for a while. He is said to have returned to Liberia to run for president.

Dr. George Williams, who knew Appleton in Liberia and the US, attempted to explain what he called "the Appleton phenomenon." Williams' article looks at several theories, including that Appleton's votes may have been the results of a "mistaken identity," that some voters may have thought him to be George Weah, or that he could have benefited from Weah's look-alike or "Alexander [Cummings] name similarity." Williams also feels that many voters, tired of standing in line, marked the first name on the ballot alphabetically, starting with A (Appleton). Because of Appleton's third-place finishing, he was one of the persons whom UP and CDC most sought after in the runoff. However, if Dr. Williams' theories are true, the parties' chase could be useless. Moreover, some of Boakai's votes could be consequences of Appleton's phenomenon, particularly the alphabetical arrangement. Williams' article also blames the problem on Liberia's high illiteracy rate.

Albert Barclay, a talk show host at Bana Radio in Liberia, attributed the phenomenon to CDC's pronouncement and advertisement that they would win the election by one ballot, which, according to Barclay, meant to some voters as number one on the ballot. While his assertion somewhat supports the mistaken identity theory, it indicates a factor of illiteracy.

Meanwhile, in an after-election remark, Cummings thanked his supporters but said that someone robbed his votes. Yet he did not say who. However, Gity Brown, a Cummings' auxiliary head, stated thus regarding Appleton: "I am not saying his name was not on the ballot, but we are all human beings. You have to run a campaign to get followers. Where did this gentleman campaign? I did not hear his name. I just got to know his name at the announcement of the results."

Appleton explained why he did well when he spoke at a press conference on October 24, 2023. He indicated that while other candidates focused on campaigning in the urban areas, he did most of his in the rural communities and did door-to-door canvassing.

Let us look at my last analysis to know if my predictions came through. I stated that the candidate that wins significant votes in Montserrado, Nimba, and Bong Counties would have an excellent chance of winning. Weah and Boakai received meaningful votes in Montserrado, Nimba, and Bong Counties. However, Boakai performed better in Montserrado than expected. Montserrado is the Weah-CDC stronghold. Boakai dominated Nimba votes. He also won the Western region, entailing Bomi, Grand Cape Mount, Margibi, and Garpolu Counties. At the same time, Weah did well in Lofa, Boakai's birthplace and stronghold. Weah received more votes than he did in 2017. Weah won Bong County, which was a battleground.

I stated that Boakai would pay a political penalty in the Southeast, primarily for failing to campaign in the area. He lost massively in the region. Weah won Grand Bassa and Rivercess, which have been Liberty Party strongholds. Boakai counted on Senator Nyonblee Karnga-Lawrence to deliver Grand Bassa County, but it did not happen. I stated CDC's and UP's view that they would win by the first ballot may not work and that the parties made the statement to frighten the opponents. I wrote.

"The prediction of a first-round victory may not hold. Such a forecast may be a political statement intended to energize the base and scare the opposition. For instance, in the 2011 presidential election, UP boasted of winning on first ballots, but that did not happen. CDC

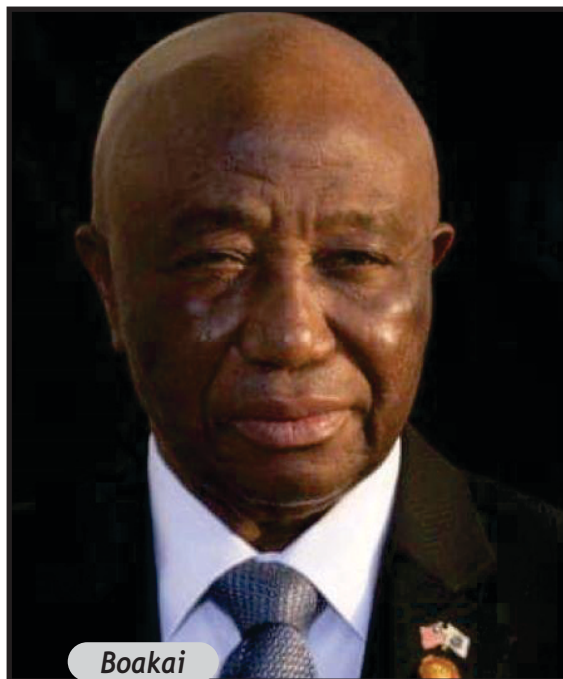
said the same in 2017 but failed, though both parties won in the second round. In Liberia's presidential history from 1995 to 2017, only Charles Taylor won the presidency in round one".

Nevertheless, my projection that Weah would win Montserrado County because it was his stronghold did not materialize. My view was wrong. Oppositions have won Montserrado for the past years. However, Weah lost the county by a slim margin of 2800 votes. As I said before, Boakai deserved the victory. But overall, Weah won the first round despite the race's closeness. Moreover, CDC gained more legislative seats than any other parties and independent candidates, winning 27 representative elections out of 71 and six senatorial seats out of 15, giving the party a legislative mandate.

The opinion by some Nimba political experts that either Weah or Tewon Gongolon would take first or second place in the county's votes did not occur. Boakai was victory impressively, indicating Senator Prince Johnson's continual influence in Nimba's political affairs.

Both Weah and Boakai need to work harder in the runoff. Weah should increase his votes in Montserrado and Nimba and protect votes in the Southeast, Grand Bassa, Rivercess, and Bong Counties. Likewise, Boakai should improve in the Southeast, Grand Bassa, and Rivercess and maintain votes in Nimba, Lofa, Montserrado, and the Western region.

## NEEDS FOR SUPPORTS



Boakai



Weah

Both candidates need the support of unsuccessful presidential and legislative candidates and other influential legislative winners. In other words, they need endorsements in the second round. Each has received support. Weah has gotten the backing of Cummings CPP, Benoni Urey and his All Liberians Party, several parties and permanent individuals, including Nimba County Edith Gongoloe Weh, Grand Bassa Senator-elect Gbehzohngar Findley, Mandigo Women group, and the youth wings of various parties. Boakai has received the endorsements of Edward Appleton, ALCOP standard bearer Lusinee Kamara, Tewon Gongoloe of the Liberian People's Party (LPP), other parties, and individuals. But this support does not mean the members would follow their parties' leaders. For instance, the youth wing of LPP and the women group of ALCOP have pledged to support Weah's re-election. At the same

time, some members of other political parties have endorsed Boakai despite their leaders' support for the president.

## FINANCE

Finance would be crucial in the runoff. The party with deep pockets could have an edge. Some analysts have speculated that UP lacks adequate funds for the second round. The party has struggled financially for a while. On a Sky Radio interview, UP campaign spokesman Mo Ali and Punch CEO Patrick Honnah dodged the question when host T. Max Jlateh asked about the party's financial readiness for runoff.

CDC appears to be prepared financially. It demonstrated this potency during the first round with extensive advertisements and logistics. However, the EU Election Observation team reported that the party had used state resources in campaigning, putting the opposition at a disadvantage. Though the Unity Party, during its rule, used the practice in its re-election bid in 2011, the EU team suggested CDC did more. Executive Mansion press secretary Tobey responded to the team, indicating that it presented no proof of the claim. However, Integrity Watch Liberia complained that all the political parties and independents have violated NEC election campaign financing regulations.

## DOORS TO DOORS CANVASSING

Though endorsements and finance are essential for an electoral victory, doors to doors canvassing, that is, the Jehovah's Witness method of the campaign, is the best strategy. It would effectively reach out to voters, particularly those unlettered and residing in the villages. Both camps have printed sample ballots with photos of the candidates where people should vote and whom they should vote for.

This approach should minimize invalid votes. Freedom FM morning hosts recently discussed the importance of this type of campaigning.

There is less enthusiasm in the runoff compared to the first round. The parties have reduced campaign activities. This could be a factor of complacency or finance. In 2005, after George Weah won the first round, he campaigned less, relaxing and thinking that he had already won the election. Sirleaf came from behind to win the runoff.

To be continue next edition



# Weah, Boakai upbeat of victory

By Emmanuel wise Jipoh & Lincoln G. Peters

Amid visibly low voters' turnout across the country, President George Manneh Weah and his main challenger,

He believes that some voters who registered outside their constituency were unable to transport themselves to where they had registered. The opposition Unity Party (UP) presidential candidate

process, saying "I'm satisfied with what I saw. I don't know what is happening around, but I hope all is okay." When asked about his expectations, the opposition leader says he is in the race to win. Commenting on the alleged confiscation of alleged pre-marked ballot papers, Amb. Boakai notes that these are things they expected, but adds that he was not afraid.

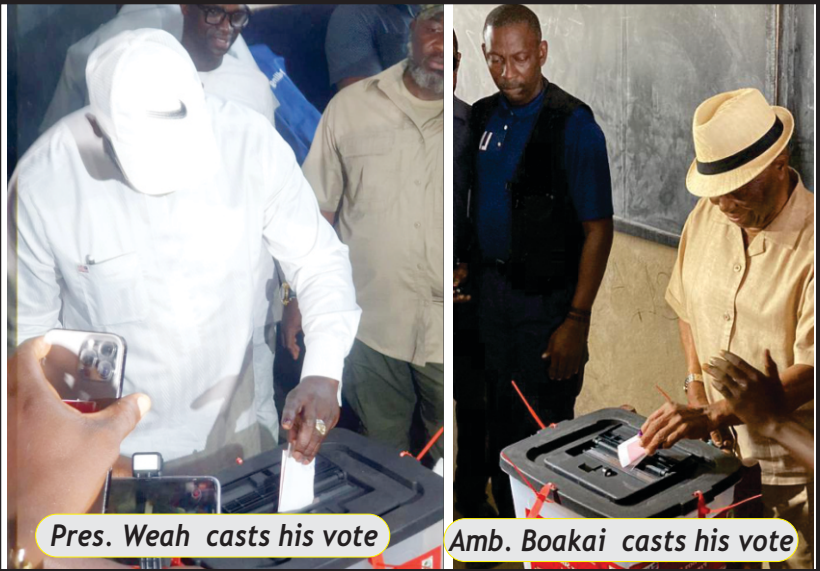
"We expect everything that is happening. We have heard about people traveling with ballot papers and boxes. We also heard about pre-marked ballot papers. But, we are not afraid. We want our supporters not to be afraid, let them go out there and vote for your liberation," he urges. On the other hand, President Weah, who has received barrage of criticisms for bad governance and lack of leadership skills to move the country forward, has always reiterated that he is the West African nation's best President.

He outlines gains made by his administration - building hospitals, roads, free tuition public universities and payment of WASSCE fees for 12th graders, among others, while asking for second term to leave a lasting legacy in the memories of Liberians. President Weah, who acknowledges citizens' outcry against poverty, economic hardship, and youth being consumed by dangerous drugs that have permeated the country, promises to do far better if re-elected.

Both candidates in the runoff presidential election failed to secure 50% plus one of the total votes cast in the first round, a threshold required to avoid a second round election.

President Weah received 43.80% of the votes cast on October 10, 2023 against his main rival Amb. Joseph Nyumah Boakai of the Unity Party (UP) with 43.44 percent. For his part, Unity Party chairman Rev. Luther Tarpeh said he is certain about their victory. According to him, it is written on the walls because he believes Liberians are resolved.

Meanwhile, the National Elections Commission is expected to begin announcing provisional results of the 14 November Runoff Presidential Election today, Wednesday, 15 November. *Editing by Jonathan Browne*



Pres. Weah casts his vote

Amb. Boakai casts his vote

Joseph Nyuman Boakai are optimistic of victory in Tuesday, November 14, 2023, Runoff Presidential Election.

Speaking to reporters immediately after casting his ballot Tuesday, in Kendeja community along the Robertsfield Highway outside Monrovia, President Weah expressed satisfaction over the peaceful manner in which Liberians turned out to vote for a preferable candidate under an atmosphere he describes as calm.

"I'm happy; the place is calm and everybody voting and there is no tension, that's true nature of democracy and want to urge every Liberian to exercise their constitution in this way, as the best for our country," the President says.

Mr. Weah expresses optimism of defeating his fierce rival Amb. Joseph Nyumah Boakai of the Unity Party, noting that his work of unprecedented developments on the past six years will speak for him in a resounding victory after the poll.

"I'm always confident, as I'm in the process of casting my vote, the confidence that was reposed in me for my work. With what I have done, the Liberian people will elect me, there's no doubt", President Weah says in a joyful tone.

However, after casting his ballot in Montserrado County Electoral District #6, Ambassador Boakai told journalists at his Rehab residence in Paynesville that voter trucking was responsible for a low voter turnout in the run-off.

challenged the ruling Coalition for Democratic Change's (CDC) Weah in Tuesday's run-off on 14 November, their second time in such an electoral battle.

The National Elections Commission (NEC) held the run-off because both men failed to secure the 50 percent plus one vote required to be declared a winner of the presidential election contested by 20 candidates on 10 October.

"What I think [is] responsible for the low turnout, the low turnout is due to voters trucking during the general elections," says Amb. Boakai. "Another factor for the low turnout may also be because the electorate believe the process is not as tense as the previous elections, as such they see nothing hasty in being swift to visit the polls," he adds. According to the opposition politician, during the first round of the elections, there were candidates in the race for both senatorial and representative seats.

He notes that some of those candidates transported voters to places that those people are unable to transport themselves in the run-off. Amb. Boakai was accompanied by his wife Kartumu Boakai at Ma Guire Catholic School in Paynesville to cast his ballot. He was also accompanied by party chairman Rev. Luther Tarpeh during voting Tuesday. A huge crowd of young people was seen chanting "Our father sorry, we made [a] mistake; the true rescue," as Mr. Boakai headed to the polling center.

Meanwhile, Amb. Boakai expresses trust in the voting

Starts from page 6

## Liberians unhappy over

a bad politic that is contributing to electing wrong leaders across the country. "We want stringent law to address the issues about voters trucking," said Dr. Whapoe, adding that Liberia has produced several

bad leaders and continue to do so because of this same voters trucking.

Dr. Whapoe also recommended to the National Elections Commission (NEC) to bring about giving people voter registration cards when

they have their National Identifications Cards to help address voters trucking.

"Also, let us understand that people are not out here voting because of poor security, and violence across the nation.

# Pre-marked ballots rumor is fake news

By Naneka A. Hoffman

The National Elections Commission dismisses rumors circulating on social media about pre-marked ballots discovered in Foya, Lofa County as fake news and disinformation campaign intended to undermine the electoral process and discourage Liberians from turning out to vote. NEC Chairperson Davidetta Browne Lansanah emphatically clarifies that the Commission did not issue any instruction to pre-mark ballots for the Presidential Runoff Election.

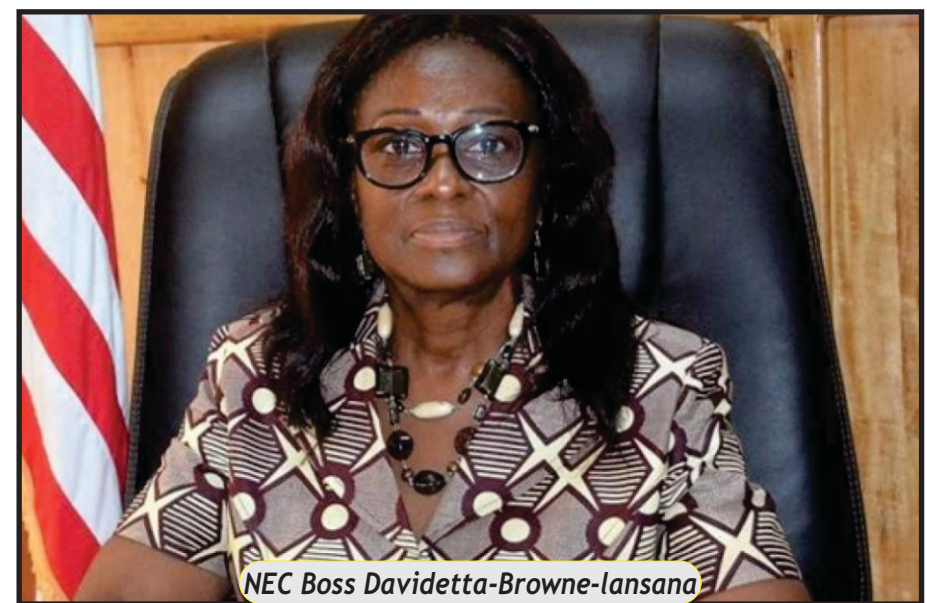
At the same time she says party agents demanding polling staff to read out names of voters prior to voting is not feasible.

Addressing a news conference Tuesday, November 14, 2023 just before polls could close here,

call voters' names and check them against the Final Registration Roll issued them as such practice is against the NEC's polling and counting procedures.

Meanwhile, she discloses that all ballots deployed to the magisterial offices and onward to 2,080 precincts and 5,890 polling places remained intact for the 14 November election. Chairperson Browne Lansanah calls on all political party agents, electoral actors and stakeholders to desist from getting involved in illegal and disinformation campaign that have the propensity to not only undermine the credibility of the electoral process, but to even threaten the peace and stability of Liberia.

She notes that temporary staff conducting the polls are instructed to remain within the scope of the



NEC Boss Davidetta-Browne-lansana

Chairperson Davidetta Browne Lansanah, said this is against polling and counting procedures, as it has the propensity to expose voters to undue scrutiny by unauthorized persons, thereby jeopardizing their protection.

Chairperson Browne Lansanah explains that it also compromises the secrecy of the voting process, and calls on all polling staff involved in calling out voters' names to desist. The NEC boss categorically denies and rejects reports that the Commission has signed a MoU with political parties in the Presidential Run-off Election to

procedures they learned during training for the Presidential Run-off Election.

She urges on all Liberians to remain peaceful and wait for announcement of results from across the country that begins today, Wednesday, with Monsterrado County's votes being counted at the Ellen Johnson Sirleaf Ministerial Complex in Congo Town

She assures that the Commission remains committed to ensuring that every vote coming in is counted just the way it was cast. *Editing by Jonathan Browne*

Starts from back page

## Liberia celebrates

But Pastor Jenkins Peal thinks there is a conspiracy against pastors, as some people, he says believe they are weakening or literally beggars. On the contrary, he insists that pastors are honourable people and they must be respected like lawyers and doctors. The vision bearer of the International Pastors' Day in Liberia, Bishop Sam B. Oroge of the Grace Churches Worldwide says everyone who stands behind the puppet to say thus says the Lord is first, a pastor, and that a pastor gives birth to several others and that person understands Ephesian 4:12 as a theologian.

He says this he knows biblically by calling, training, and commission, noting that everyone who is leading the church today, stands somewhere behind a puppet, speaking and they will not allow the pulpit to go extinct.

Commenting on the celebration, Bishop Oroge says he has a dream that was born out of the courage of his conviction and activated by the burden received from the Lord that that a time and a season will come when every servant of God will have a reason to rejoice. *Editing by Jonathan Browne*



## Liberia celebrates International Pastors' Day

By Naneka A. Hoffman

Church leaders in Liberia particularly bishops and pastors converged here Sunday, 12 November to celebrate International Pastors'

Peal of El Shaddai Ministry, and Vision Bearers, Mother and Bishop Sam Oroge. Bishop Reeves is also President of the Liberia Baptist Missionary and

the ministry. "If you are a pastor, who is you pastor?" He asks.

The Bishop says he is of the conviction that every genuine pastor needs a pastor over his or her life, saying "you can never be a leader if you have not learnt to be a servant." He further emphasizes that a pastoral function is a spiritual gift and that no one takes upon himself the office, while urging pastors to take care of the flocks God has placed under the ministry. "It is not about you but your people; what kind of food are you feeding your people?"

Dr. Samuel Reeves of the First Providence Baptist Church says it is important that pastors know their calling, noting that "You must be sure that you are called by God."

He describes such calling into the pastoral office as a vision from God, but quickly points that in today's dispensation, many pastors don not want to take up time to grow. He says no pastor ought to beg for bread, as God is able to supply his needs.



Bishop George Harris of the Philadelphia Central Church at the ceremony

Day, focusing on the work they do, as servants of Almighty God.

The celestial occasion held in the Harvest Inter-Continental Cathedral on Tubman Boulevard brought together several top church leaders in Liberia, including the President of the Liberian Council of Churches, Bishop Dr. Samuel Reeves; host Bishop Wolo Belleh of the Harvest Cathedral; Bishop George Harris of the Philadelphia Central Church, Bishop Rev. Oliver Kpan of Life Tabernacle, Rev. Jenkins

Educational Convention and Senior Pastor of the First Providence Baptist Church in Monrovia. Bishop Harris explains that pastors are shepherds of God's people, citing St. John 10:11 when Jesus says "I am the Good Shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep."

However, he underscores that pastors should have older pastors over their lives for mentorship in the work of

▶ CONT'D ON PAGE 11

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