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CENTRAL BANK OF LIBERIA
MARKET BUYING AND SELLING RATES
LIBERIAN DOLLARS PER US DOLLAR

DATE	BUYING	SELLING
THURSDAY, DECEMBER 21, 2023	LS187.4702/US\$1.00	LS189.1916/US\$1.00

These are indicative rates based on results of daily surveys of foreign exchange market in Monrovia and selected cities of Liberia. These rates are collected from the Central bank, commercial banks, parallel market and the license forex bureaux. The rates are not set by the Central Bank of Liberia.
Source: Research, Policy and Planning Department, CBL.

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VOL. 13 NO. 228 THURSDAY, DECEMBER 21, 2023 PRICE LD\$40.00



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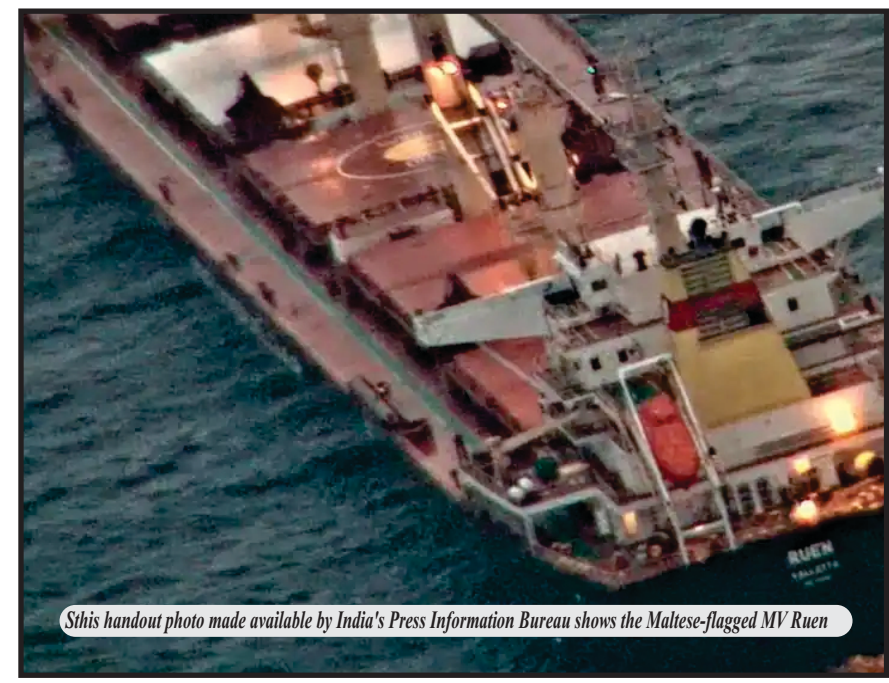
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Continental News

EU's Naval Force Says Hijacked Cargo Ship Moved Toward Somalia Coast

A Maltese-flagged merchant ship that was hijacked last week in the Arabian Sea with 18 crew members on board is now off the coast of Somalia, the European Union's maritime security force said Tuesday. One crew member has been evacuated for medical care.



Sithis handout photo made available by India's Press Information Bureau shows the Maltese-flagged MV Ruen

The bulk carrier Ruen remains under the control of the hijackers, whose identity and demands are unknown, the EU Naval Force said in a statement. It did not give details on the condition of the crew member who was taken

off the vessel on Monday and moved to an Indian navy ship that has been shadowing the Ruen. An Indian maritime patrol plane spotted the Ruen a day after its hijacking last Thursday and made radio contact with the crew, who had locked themselves in a safe room. The hijackers broke into the safe room and "extracted the crew" hours later, the EU Naval Force said. The Ruen, which is managed by Bulgarian shipping company Navibulgar, was off the Yemeni island of Socotra near the Horn of Africa when it was boarded, the private intelligence firm Ambrey and the United

Kingdom Maritime Trade Operations said. Bulgarian authorities said the ship's crew were Angolan, Bulgarian and Myanmar nationals. The 185-meter Ruen was carrying a cargo of metals from the port of Gwangyang in South Korea, the EU Naval Force said. It had been headed to the Turkish port of Gemlik. The captain confirmed the hijacking by sending a mayday alert to the EU Naval Force's command center. The vessel has now moved southwest toward the coast of Somalia, according to the EU force. Suspicion has fallen on Somali pirates, whose attacks have decreased markedly in recent years. They may be more active again. The Pentagon has said that five armed assailants who seized a commercial ship near Yemen late last month were likely Somali nationals and not Iranian-backed Houthi rebels, who were first suspected to be responsible. The Yemen-based Houthi rebels have escalated their attacks on ships passing through the Red Sea during the Israel-Hamas war, impacting global trade. The U.S. said Tuesday that it and a host of other nations are creating a force to protect ships transiting the Red Sea that have come under attack from Houthi-controlled areas of Yemen. VOA

French court jails former Rwanda doctor for 24 years for role in 1994 genocide

A former doctor in Rwanda has been jailed for 24 years by a French court for his involvement in the 1994 genocide in the east African country. Sosthene Munyemana was found guilty of crimes including genocide and crimes against humanity.

He was accused of organising torture and killings in the genocide, in which 800,000 people were killed between April and June 1994.

It took French prosecutors 28 years to bring the case to trial. In 1994, Munyemana was a gynaecologist in Butare, southern Rwanda, and was accused of helping set up roadblocks to round people up, and keeping them in inhumane conditions in local government offices before they were killed.

He was also accused of drafting a widely-distributed letter encouraging the massacre of Tutsis, which prosecutors said was used as justification for future attacks.

Most of those killed in the genocide were from the minority Tutsi ethnic group, and opponents of the extremist

Hutu government.

During the trial, Munyemana, who moved to France in 1994, repeatedly disputed the accusations against him, claiming he had been a moderate Hutu trying to save Tutsis by offering them refuge in local government offices. The prosecutor had sought a 30-year jail sentence during the six-week trial in Paris.

Reading the verdict, the judge said Munyemana was part of a group that "prepared, organised and steered the genocide of the Tutsis... on a daily basis".

After arriving in France in

September 1994 - where his wife was already living - Munyemana lived in the country's southwest, and worked as a doctor. He recently retired. Munyemana was a close associate of Jean Kambanda, who was interim prime minister at the height of the 1994 killings.

Kambanda is currently serving a life sentence in Mali, imposed by a United Nations war crimes tribunal for his role in the genocide. The genocide was sparked by the death of Rwandan President Juvenal Habyarimana when his plane was shot down above the airport in Kigali, Rwanda's capital, on 6 April. BBC



Sosthene Munyemana pictured arriving at court with his lawyer in November

Congo Votes for President, Conflict and Smudged Ballots Lead to Fears About Credibility

Congo headed to the polls Wednesday to vote for president as authorities scrambled to finalize preparations in an election facing steep logistical and security challenges, with voting starting nearly 2 1/2 hours late in the capital.

Some 44 million people - almost half the population - were expected to vote, but many, including several million who were displaced by conflict in the vast country's east, could struggle to cast their ballots. The fighting has prevented 1.5 million people from registering to vote.

Voter Raymond Yuma in the capital of Kinshasa said he's voting for hope.

"When you wake up in the morning you're hoping for good things, good work, and I want security," said Yuma. He sat beside three other people on a bench waiting in line for the doors to open. None of their voting cards were legible.

In eastern Congo, people

particularly in remote areas, might still not have what they need on Wednesday.

A major concern is that ink on voting cards has smudged, making many illegible. That means people could be turned away from polling stations. In addition, the voter registration list hasn't been properly audited.

"The organization of the elections raises lots of doubt regarding the credibility, the transparency and the reliability of the results," said Bienvenu Matumo, a member of LUCHA, a local rights group.

A candidate needs a majority of votes in the first round to win.

President Felix Tshisekedi seeks his second and final five-year term, running against about 20 other candidates. His main rival appeared to be Moise Katumbi, the former governor of Katanga province and a millionaire businessperson whose campaign in 2018 was thwarted by the previous regime of former President Joseph Kabila.

But the opposition remains fractured, making Tshisekedi the



A voter prepares to cast her ballot in a polling station during the presidential elections in Kinshasa, Democratic Republic of Congo, Dec. 20, 2023

said they weren't finding their names on voting lists.

"The voters displayed on lists at the polling station are fewer than those who are lining up. I can't find my name on the list and this could cause scuffles here because I also want to vote," said Jules Kambale at a polling station in Goma. Waiting for polls to open during the more than two-hour delay, people grew agitated and began arguing, particularly in the capital.

Both outside observers and locals have warned of challenges that could affect the credibility of the vote in one of Africa's largest nations and one whose mineral resources are increasingly crucial to the global economy.

On the eve of the vote, some polling stations in Kinshasa told Associated Press journalists they were still waiting for materials. Thousands of stations,

likely favorite. The son of a late, popular opposition figure, he has spent much of his presidency trying to consolidate power over state institutions and working to overcome a crisis of legitimacy after a contested election five years ago. Some voters didn't want to disclose who they were backing, but Kinshasa is a Tshisekedi stronghold. "He's someone who's done a lot of things for the country ... he's fought for democracy," said business owner Joseph Tshibadi. Even though Tshisekedi hasn't succeeded in quelling violence in the east, Tshibadi is willing to give him more time. "The beginning is always hard," he said. After waiting for nearly three and a half hours, Tshibadi was the first person to vote at a school in the capital. He said voting was easy, and he voted for Tshisekedi because he wants to give him another five years to try and improve the security situation. voa

EDITORIAL

Cleanliness should be our way of life

VOLUNTEERS CLEANING OUR streets, including young men, women, and older women is not only heart-touching but highly nationalistic. This exercise is going on in preparation for the festive seasons and mainly for the pending inauguration of President-elect, Joseph Nyumah Boakai and Vice President-elect, Jeremiah Kpan Koung in January 2024.

THESE MASS VOLUNTEERS signing up to clean the capital and its suburbs are revolutionizing the way we ought to take care of our capital, looking and waiting on government to do for us clearly what we can do ourselves.

But cleaning up the city should not be only for Christmas or inaugural purposes. Instead, it should be a way of life for us, as Liberians. We do not need a special time to clean up our city or our environment. It should be a daily, weekly, and monthly practice to set go example for the next generation of Liberians that cleanliness is not just hygienic, but Godly.

We dirty the city and our communities all of the time without any remorse. It is correspondingly important that we clean it regularly instead of waiting for a specific period or a national event.

Unfortunately, Monrovia is littered with garbage and feces everywhere. Shamelessly even public buildings such as the Capitol and other places are not spared of garbage. Grass has swallowed the Capitol. It lacks running water and functioning toilets.

Yet this is where our elected leaders sit to represent us! No wonder why President-elect Boakai has chosen to take his inaugural program there, to ensure it is given a proper facelift.

This was not the case in the past especially, during the Tubman, Tolbert, Doe, and most recently, Sirleaf eras, because relevant state institutions responsible to keep the city and its environs tidy were fully functional such as the Monrovia City Corporation and the Liberia Water and Sewer Corporation.

The MCC is the enforcer of city ordinances, while the LWSC is responsible for the sewage system and running water in the capital. But these institutions have broken down completely because of bad administration and corruption. The LWSC cannot provide the city running water and sewer services so feces littered the streets due to clogged sewage lines, while the MCC has collapsed under recently sanctioned Mayor Jefferson Tamba Koijee.

The incoming administration of President-elect Boakai should maintain the current group of volunteers to help keep the city and parts adjacent cleaned from time to time to demonstrate Liberian pride.

Garbage and feces are breeding grounds for roaches, rats, flies, mosquitoes, and other rodents that come directly into homes and contaminate food and drinking water with sicknesses such as cholera and diarrhea. A clean environment is a healthy environment that promotes healthy people.

Such delicate responsibility is not a child's play and should not be assigned to someone with divided or mixed priorities. It should be reserved for people with enough innovation and resilience to execute the job of maintaining a healthy environment that will drive the health of the nation.

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+231-775407211 Managing Editor: Othello B. Garblah; Editor-In-Chief: Jonathan K. Browne

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COMMENTARY

By Johanna Sydow

How the EU Can Secure a Sustainable Supply of Critical Minerals

BERLIN - Mining giant Glencore has been extracting copper in the Peruvian province of Espinar for more than a decade.

During that time, the presence of toxic metals in the local environment and people has been well documented.

But only recently has the Peruvian government acknowledged what was obvious to many on the ground: a causal link between Glencore's Antapaccay operations and pollution in Espinar. The company has yet to make amends with the affected indigenous communities.

Demand for copper - and other critical minerals used in green tech - has increased substantially. But so far, only a handful of countries are responsible for mining and refining these resources. China, for example, accounts for more than 70% of rare-earth mining and 50% of the world's (natural) graphite, cobalt, lithium, and manganese processing.

In the wake of the Ukraine war, many in Europe are wary of depending on a single country.

"The race is on" to dominate clean-energy technology in the future, noted European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen in March, when she announced the Critical Raw Materials Act, which aims to reduce the European Union's current dependencies.

Together with the proposed Net-Zero Industry Act, it is the bloc's response to the United States' Inflation Reduction Act, which includes a commitment to increase the domestic supply of critical minerals.

The rise of industrial policy is not the only evidence that the world is waking up to the importance of raw materials. The International Energy Agency held the first ever global summit on critical minerals and their role in the green transition earlier this year. More recently, while addressing world leaders at this year's United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP28), UN Secretary-General António Guterres focused on how best to meet soaring demand for copper, lithium, cobalt, and more.

This means that the mining industry, which the UN has categorized as a high-risk sector for human rights, will play an indispensable role in the energy transition.

In this context, many European leaders are willing to turn a blind eye to the industry's human-rights violations and environmental destruction. But neglecting these issues could undermine the EU's efforts to secure access to raw materials and to mitigate climate change.

In his speech, Guterres stressed that the extraction of critical minerals "must be done in a sustainable, fair, and just way" to avoid repeating the "mistakes of the past" - a reference to the rich world's historic pattern of systematically exploiting developing countries' natural-resource wealth.

To prevent such an outcome, he announced the creation of a new panel of government, industry, and civil-society leaders to draft voluntary guidelines for extractive industries. Similarly, the Minerals Security Partnership, an alliance of wealthy governments, seeks to improve environmental, social, and governance (ESG) standards across the global minerals sector.

While these efforts are a step in the right direction, they will not be enough to ensure that sustainability rules are respected. With the Critical Raw Materials Act, the EU intends to create mutually beneficial partnerships with

resource-rich countries and promote strategic projects for critical-mineral mining, processing, and recycling. But pressure to move fast could lead to the revival of old practices.

Moreover, monitoring of compliance with human-rights and environmental standards will be outsourced to private certification providers, at least for projects outside the bloc.

Certification systems have been shown to deliver inadequate human-rights and environmental protections in the mining and raw-materials sectors. For example, the German certification company TÜV SÜD confirmed the safety of a dam near Brumadinho, Brazil, just months before it failed, killing hundreds of people. More recently, a mine run by BMW's cobalt supplier in Morocco, which had been certified by the Responsible Minerals Initiative, was found to be releasing large amounts of arsenic into nearby bodies of water.

The EU needs more effective tools. The proposed Supply Chain Due Diligence Directive, which would oblige companies to prevent adverse environmental and human-rights practices in their supply chains, is crucial and should be applied to financial firms as well, given their importance in the raw-materials sector.

Moreover, the EU must play an active role in the negotiations for a UN Binding Treaty on Business and Human Rights, to prevent multinationals from harming the environment and local communities, as happened in Espinar.

Equally important is an honest appraisal of what is driving demand for materials such as copper and iron and how to reduce consumption. The automobile industry, for example, uses huge quantities of critical minerals. Germany's construction and transport sectors also are the main drivers of demand there, rather than the energy transition.

This suggests that European policymakers should build more energy-efficient public-transportation systems, encourage smaller vehicles and batteries, and promote a circular economy.

Even though the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change recommends reducing material consumption to mitigate global warming, this message has been lost in the rush toward renewables.

But such an approach would undoubtedly be effective: extracting and processing critical minerals requires vast amounts of water and causes environmental pollution. Seven metals alone - iron, aluminum, copper, zinc, lead, nickel, and manganese - are responsible for 7% of global greenhouse-gas emissions, according to the OECD.

By focusing on lowering demand, and introducing more stringent requirements and effective mechanisms for due diligence, the EU could prevent environmental harms and human-rights abuses while also meeting its goal of building a more independent and resilient bloc.

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OP-ED

By Hippolyte Fofack

Africa Needs an Entrepreneurial Boom

CAMBRIDGE - For decades, Africa has been the world's most commodity-dependent continent. At the same time, it has become overly reliant on imports from the rest of the world: intracontinental trade accounts for only 15% of total African trade, compared to 60% in Asia and 70% in the European Union. Worryingly, imports of manufactured goods into African countries have grown by more than 25% over the decade ending in 2022.

The continent's import dependency can be explained primarily by the dearth of African industrial entrepreneurs. And Africa's projected population growth and burgeoning middle class suggests that this dependency will only grow in the medium term, with significant implications for macroeconomic stability, unless local actors begin driving innovation and creating new products and services to meet the needs and desires of domestic consumers.

The problem, however, is not sustained import growth per se, especially when the rise of global value chains and increasing fragmentation of production have reduced the power of exports as a driver of short-term demand. Instead, the main issue is that African countries are participating in global value chains largely through backward activities, systematically exporting natural resources and primary commodities and importing manufactured goods, an imbalance that drains wealth away from the continent. For African fossil fuel-producing countries, the carbon-intensive "round-tripping" model of exporting crude oil and importing refined petroleum has been costly, resulting in immense deadweight losses and foreign-exchange leakages. In Nigeria, for example, the opening of a much-anticipated oil refinery could save the country \$26 billion annually.

Moreover, in an era of hyper-globalization when intermediate goods account for 50% of global trade, African countries' high level of forward participation in global value chains has scuttled prospects for structural transformation and shrunk the continent's share of global trade to around 3%. It has also perpetuated the unhealthy correlation between growth and commodity-price cycles, resulting in increased exposure to global volatility and persistent structural current-account deficits.

While limited access to finance has been cited as a binding constraint on African economic development, what if the chronic deficit of entrepreneurs is equally limiting? After all, entrepreneurship, which improves competitiveness and business efficiency to lower prices for consumers, has become a leading driver of innovation and growth in many countries in recent decades. And Africa lags behind in this area: in the latest edition of US News and World Report's Best Countries for Entrepreneurship, the continent's highest-ranked country, South Africa, places only 44th.

One top-ranking country on that list, which includes some of the world's wealthiest and most complex economies, is Singapore. Recently, companies based in the city-state have pursued major growth opportunities across myriad sectors and industries in Africa, highlighting the continent's entrepreneurship deficit. The Tolaram Group, for example, created the instant-noodle market in Nigeria, producing 4.5 billion packets annually and generating almost \$1 billion in annual revenue.

Compared to more diversified and higher-ranking countries like Singapore, where tight labor markets have pushed unemployment to natural rates, a shortage of industrial entrepreneurs may be doubly costly for Africa, where persistent widespread poverty and high unemployment fuel insecurity and migration pressures. For example, the unemployment rate is at Great Depression-era levels - above 30% in two of the continent's largest economies, Nigeria and South Africa. In other countries, economic informality - think of street vendors hawking imported toothpicks, candles, cell phones, and batteries - has become a form of disguised unemployment.

An increase in entrepreneurship on the continent would generate wealth more sustainably, expand employment, and reduce migration flows. In many African countries, industrial entrepreneurs, in particular, could help diversify sources of growth, improve the current-account balance, and broaden the tax base. This, in turn, would expand countries' fiscal space, improve debt sustainability, and gradually ease the constraints associated with capital scarcity. Moreover, when the rules of origin for the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) are finalized, they will serve as an "industrialization passport" enabling made-in-Africa goods to circulate duty-free. This would provide local entrepreneurs with a much-needed boost to operationalize continental trade integration and enhance Africa's economic dynamism. But to take full advantage of the economies of scale and the growth opportunities provided by the AfCFTA - most notably the drastic reduction of risk associated with investing in smaller markets - African entrepreneurs need the support of entrepreneurial states. Fostering business environments that ensure a level playing field for all participants, together with policy coordination at the regional and continental level, would go a long way toward increasing Africa direct investment and stimulating the development of robust regional value chains. African policymakers must also implement financial reforms to eliminate the credit rationing that has long undermined entrepreneurship. Finance is the lifeblood of business; yet, expressed as a percentage of GDP, domestic credit to the private sector has remained very low across Africa, especially in Sub-Saharan Africa, where it averaged 37.1% of GDP in 2022. By contrast, the GDP share of domestic credit to the private sector in the ten countries that US News and World Report ranked as being the best for entrepreneurship ranges from 83.6% in Germany and 129.5% in Singapore to 175.9% in South Korea and a whopping 216% in the United States.

In addition to providing easy access to capital, the most successful and enterprising countries share other important attributes: technological expertise, highly skilled labor, well-developed infrastructure (both physical and digital), transparent business practices, and comprehensive legal frameworks. They are also globally connected and fully integrated into value chains, often as manufacturing powerhouses.

According to an African proverb, it takes a village to raise a child. Likewise, it will take a host of industrial entrepreneurs and proactive entrepreneurial governments to transform African economies and improve their global engagement with the rest of the world. Supporting local entrepreneurship is the surest path to a more self-reliant and prosperous continent.

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OPINION

By Richard Haass

A Year of War and Little Peace

NEW YORK - The advantage historians have over journalists is that the passage of time offers them a perspective not available to those with immediate deadlines. But the year is about to end, which constitutes a firm deadline if the goal is to put 2023 into perspective. "Instant history" may well be an oxymoron, but it is worth the effort, especially in a year that will be remembered as one defined by war.

Two wars in particular stand out. The first is Russia's continuing aggression in Ukraine. While Ukraine continued to hold its own against Russian forces and remains a viable, independent country that controls roughly 80% of its territory, the much-anticipated Ukrainian counter-offensive accomplished little. All told, the second year of this costly war will be known less for what changed on the field of battle than for what did not; the map does not look all that different in December than it did in January. Meanwhile, some cracks appeared in support for Ukraine in both Europe and the United States.

The second war was initiated by Hamas against Israel on October 7. Surprising Israeli intelligence and defense forces, Hamas's savage terrorist attacks killed more than 1,200 people, with another 240 taken hostage. Most of the victims were civilians.

Israel declared as its goal the elimination of Hamas and has attacked Gaza heavily ever since, first by air and then on the ground, killing nearly 20,000 people so far and displacing almost two million. In its third month, the war shows no sign of ending. When it does, Israeli occupation of Gaza is likely to follow, but what will follow that is unknown. Prospects for peace and a Palestinian state appear more remote than ever.

Not surprisingly, the most important bilateral relationship of this era, between the US and China, also dominated headlines in 2023. The year began with a Chinese spy balloon traversing the US, prompting the US to shoot it down. Relations entered something of a deep freeze until high-level contacts resumed over the summer, culminating in a meeting between President Joe Biden and President Xi Jinping in San Francisco in November.

Both leaders want a calmer relationship, albeit for very different reasons. China is hoping for improved economic ties, while the US wants to prevent China from adding to global turbulence by undertaking aggression in the Taiwan Strait or the South China Sea or by providing military assistance to Russia. Without a shared approach to the major issues of the day, any floor under the relationship will be shaky at best.

That said, it is important to note two things that did not happen in 2023. There was no Taiwan crisis or incident that threatened to provoke a conflict between China and the US. China ended the year focusing mostly on its economy and on beginning a necessary transition toward domestic-demand-led growth. Given the reluctance of Chinese households to spend rather than save, it will be a difficult transition.

Nor was there a crisis involving North Korea. A widely-predicted seventh nuclear test never materialized. Just why Kim Jong-un refrained is unclear, but what is clear is that North Korea continued to increase the quantity and quality of its nuclear and missile forces, and even enshrined their further development in a constitutional amendment.

What also did not happen is any concerted response to these developments on the part of South Korea, Japan, or the US, although America attempted to allay growing concerns in South Korea about the reliability of extended deterrence.

The year will also be remembered for being the hottest on record. World leaders, CEOs, lobbyists, and activists gathered in Dubai for the United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP28). But the mismatch between their efforts and the urgency of the problem raised more troubling questions about the world's willingness to come together to address what could prove to be the defining challenge of the century.

Artificial intelligence had a breakthrough year in 2023, gaining broad public recognition as a transformative technology. Some hesitant steps at regulation were taken, but AI is evolving faster than governments can grasp the implications, and policymakers are wary of closing off potentially beneficial applications. As a result, the world is more likely to be affected by AI than affect its development.

Populism remained the year's dominant political trait. Outsiders, or insiders who acted like outsiders, had a good year. This would apply to existing leadership in India and new leadership in Argentina, the Netherlands, and Slovakia. Regardless of their objective circumstances, more people are frustrated and pessimistic than content and optimistic.

We can end on an upbeat note, however. The US economy was a rare bright spot in 2023, with inflation declining alongside steady economic growth. Indeed, the year ended with stock markets near all-time highs, owing to investors' belief that inflation could be reduced without triggering a recession. Prospects for a so-called soft landing appeared bright.

The most surprising development of the year might well have been the rapprochement between Japan and South Korea. Helped by some creative American diplomacy and made possible by the willingness of South Korean President Yoon Suk Yeol and Japanese Prime Minister Fumio Kishida to take some political risk, the bilateral relationship has become closer than at any time since the end of World War II. In a world in which we have been reminded of the reality of war, it was reassuring to see these two former foes enter a new era. It is a welcome reminder that positive outcomes are still possible.

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Section I. Letter of Invitation to Bid
National Competitive Bidding
Procurement of Coaster Bus
IFB No. LRA/MFDP-Proj/NCB/001/2023

1. The Liberia Revenue Authority (LRA) has received funds from the Government of Liberia through budgetary allocations and intends to use portion of it to fund eligible payments under the contract for **PROCUREMENT OF COASTER BUS** for its FY-2023 operations.

2. This procurement covers **Procurement of Coaster Bus** under one lot as indicated below;

No.	Item Description	Quantity	Specification
1	Procurement of Coaster Bus	1pc	To be provided in the Bidding Document

3. The Liberia Revenue Authority now invites sealed bids from eligible and qualified bidders for the **Procurement of Coaster Bus**.

4. Bidding will be conducted through the National Competitive Bidding (NCB) procedures specified in the PPCA and approved by the PPCC, and is open to all eligible bidders.

5. A complete set of Bidding Document in **English** may be pickup at the cost **US\$25.00** by interested bidders at LRA Headquarters on **Monday, December 18, 2023** between 9:30 am & 3:30 pm daily.

6. Interested eligible bidders may obtain further information from the below address within the hours of 9:30 am to 3:30pm

Lovetta W.J. Williams
Basement Floor
Liberia Revenue Authority Headquarters
ELWA Junction
Paynesville, Liberia
Tel: 231-(0886) – 676-046
Email: lovetta.johns@lra.gov.lr

7. Qualification requirements include the following:

- A bid security (in the form of Managers Check/Bank Guarantee)
- A valid Tax Clearance Certificate and valid Business Registration Certificate (must registered with Business Code: **G4510**)
- Prove of registration on PPCC vendor registry



- Company profile
- Proof of supply of similar good rendered
- Proof of clients & contracts

8. Bids must be delivered to the address below on or before **Monday, January 15, 2024 at 2:00pm**. Bids shall be valid for a period of **Ninety (90) days** after the deadline of bid submission.

9. A pre-bid meeting will be held at the conference room of the LRA Headquarters, Basement Floor on **Wednesday, January 3, 2024 at 2:00 pm** to answer questions relevant to the Bidding process.

10. Bids will be opened on **Monday, January 15, 2023 at 2:00pm, in the Conference Room on the Basement Floor of the LRA Headquarter** in the presence of bidders' representatives who choose to attend, at the address below:

11. **Bids must be submitted both in hard and electronic copies.** Electronic bid should be submitted through this link: procurement@lra.gov.lr. Late bids will be rejected and returned unopened. All bids must be clearly marked with the address indicated below

12. **The most responsive Bidder will be issued Framework Contracts**

13. The address is: **Procurement of Coaster Bus**
Ref: IFB No. LRA/MFDP-Proj/NCB/001/2023
Liberia Revenue Authority, Headquarters
Paynesville, Liberia
Tel: 231-(0886) -676-046
Email: lovetta.johns@lra.gov.lr and procurement@lra.gov.lr

14. The Liberia Revenue Authority reserves the right to reject or accept any bid submitted and to annul the entire process at any time for reasons to be communicated to bidders without incurring any liability.

Signed

Lovetta W.J. Williams
Manager/Procurement

Approval

Samuel G. Bennett Jr.
Deputy Commissioner General
Administrative Affairs
 12/18/2023

ARTICLE ARTICLE

The Impact of Foreign Aid and Development Assistance in Liberia and the Way Forward

Jessica Hadja Siebu,
Candidate, MAIR, Cuttington Graduate School of Global Affairs and Policy

Foreign aid and development assistance has play a significant role in shaping Liberia's international relations and socioeconomic development. This paper seeks to highlight some significant impact aid has on development initiative in Liberia and also to unveil the challenges therein, with recommendations.

Since 2003, the international community has poured billions of dollars of aid into the country. This means Liberia remains a highly aid-dependent country, despite a significant drop in the amount of official development assistance (ODA) it has received since 2015. Liberia received US\$621.6 million in net ODA in 2017, which was 43% less than it received in 2015. ODA makes up 33.5% of Liberia's gross national income (GNI).

Financing Post-2015 Development Goals: Shaping a New Policy Framework for Aid in Liberia (waldenu.edu)

The United States is the largest donor to Liberia and Sweden is the eighth-largest donor. According to OECD data, Liberia received US\$765 million in development aid in 2011, making up for 73 percent of its GNI. Between 2010 and 2017, Liberia received US\$776 million in aid per year, which accounted for anywhere from 40% to 25% of its GDP during that time period.

The country economy was sliced by 90% as a result of the civil wars, with its gross domestic product (GDP) falling to barely US\$54.50 per capita by 1995. However, the gross domestic product increased from US\$748 million in 2003 to US\$3.3 billion in 2017, with a per-capita GDP of around US\$600, thanks in large part to the influx of international aid.



In 2020, The Executive Board of the International Monetary Fund (IMF), approved the disbursement of SDR36.17 million (US\$50 million; 1.7 percent of GDP) which was drawn under the Rapid Credit Facility (RCF).

IMF Executive Board Approves a US\$50 Million Disbursement to Liberia to Address the COVID-19 Pandemic

And in April 2022, The Government of Liberia and the World Bank signed two financing agreements for the Liberia Investment, Finance and Trade (LIFT) project totaling the amount of US\$ 40 million of which US 20 million is an IDA grant and US\$20 million is a concessional IDA credit.

GoL, World Bank Sign Financing Agreements Totaling US\$ 40M - EasyBlog (mfdp.gov.lr)

Reliance heavily on foreign aid have several negative impacts on the country.

Below are few negative impact foreign aid have had on the country

1. Reliance on foreign aid has cause dependency syndrome: Aid dependence doesn't make a country strong but poorer, as you depend on others to solve your own problems and the worse problem is, it makes us have a vulnerable economic structure, becoming highly dependent on donor assistance and food imports.

2. It has cause corruption: Foreign aid has become more about what it can do for our elites and severing the special interests of government officials rather than the public. The effects of corruption go beyond the corrupt government or individual, and it damages the rule of law, social justice and erode the truth in democracy, and elected officials to act in public interest.

3. Limited capacity Building: A well-known argument is that the availability of foreign aid may reduce a government's incentive to make the necessary investments in state capacity and institutional quality required for development (e.g., Svensson, 2000). Most times, donors allocate funds for a specific objective of the donor rather than the needs of the recipient country.

4. Limited economic autonomy: relying heavily on foreign aid established a false sense of stability and growth in the economy, as infusions of foreign cash are temporary and it will further create a hopelessly dependent economy and systems that ignore its potential for hand work and taking full control of its own economy.

Recommendations: In order to exit this foreign aid dependency syndrome, we need to do the following:

1. Formulate long- and medium-term development strategy and policies with concrete and practical programs and plans aimed to effectively reduce and eradicate poverty and realize prosperity and development.

2. Give emphasis to developing and improving infrastructure and connect all the 15 counties with land, rail, air or water transportation. Attach importance to power development by building more hydro-power plants, erecting sufficient power grid, making better use of green energy.

3. Provide more education, vocational training and job opportunities to the youth.

4. Actively develop tourism, Develop ICT and promote smart cities and vigorously develop agriculture. etc



GENERAL INFORMATION

1. **SOLICITATION NO:** VA-669-23-000028
2. **ISSUANCE DATE:** December 18, 2023
3. **CLOSING DATE AND TIME FOR RECEIPT OF OFFERS:** January 1, 2024
4. **POINT OF CONTACT:** Executive Officer, email at LiberiaHR@usaid.gov
5. **POSITION TITLE:** Acquisition and Assistance Specialist
6. **MARKET VALUE: \$ 28,052.00 - 44,894.00 FSN- 9**
In accordance with AIDAR Appendix J and the Local Compensation Plan of USAID, final compensation will be negotiated within the listed market value. Note that all U.S. Embassy Locally Employed Staff are expected to observe and fulfill all tax obligations imposed by the Government of Liberia and you will be required to provide a Taxpayer Identification Number (TIN) before employment for the purpose of automatic tax withholding.
7. **PERIOD OF PERFORMANCE:** Five-Year Period of Performance with the possibility to renew in accordance with ADS 309. Personal services contracts are subject to the five-year limitation in accordance with FAR Part 17. In accordance with AIDAR Appendix J, Cooperation Country Personal Services Contracts (CCNPSCs) are of a continuing nature and expected to be part of a series of sequential contracts, each not to exceed the five-year limitation in the FAR. Start date is dependent upon security and medical clearances.
8. **PLACE OF PERFORMANCE:** Monrovia, Liberia.
9. **ELIGIBLE OFFERORS:** This solicitation is available for Cooperating Country Nationals (CCNs). CCNs are individuals who are Liberian citizens or non-Liberian citizens lawfully admitted for permanent residence in Liberia. Non-Liberian citizens must possess a valid Liberian work permit in compliance with host government laws and regulations prior to application. The Embassy cannot sponsor applicants for work permits.

Current employees serving a probationary period with the Mission are not eligible to apply.
10. **SECURITY LEVEL REQUIRED:** Facility access approved by the U.S. Embassy Regional Security Officer at post.

11. STATEMENT OF DUTIES

A. Basic Function of Position

The Acquisition and Assistance Specialist (Trainee) is located in the Office of Acquisition and Assistance of USAID/Liberia. The function of the Office is to provide Acquisition and Assistance (procurement) support to Mission Technical Offices and Development Objective (DO) and Assistance Objective (AO) Teams in the Mission. The primary purpose of this position is to perform a variety of acquisition and assistance duties including writing grants, cooperative agreements, contracts, and other procurement instruments and preparing amendments in support of the Mission. The Specialist (Trainee) reviews and recommends approval or revision of requisitions in the Global Acquisition and Assistance System (GLAAS); reviews and recommends approval or revision of scopes of work (SOW); drafts requests for proposal or quote; performs cost and price analysis; analyzes proposals or quotes received; drafts contracts and contract modifications; analyzes contractor-proposed budgets; recommends revisions to various contract provisions; writes Memoranda of Negotiation; and, prepares other required documentation. The Specialist (Trainee) maintains contract files and records up to date, prepares Contractor Performance Reports (CPRs), and supports award closeouts. The Specialist (Trainee) provides guidance related to administrative award modifications. The Specialist (Trainee) is responsible for carrying out day-to-day activities under the mentorship of more senior Office employees.

This position is a part of an established career ladder, which provides for the potential to progress to the FSN-10 and, subsequently, to the FSN-11 grade level. There is no potential for the Job Holder to become a permanent FSN-09 in this work assignment. Attainment of higher grade levels is contingent upon the Specialist (Trainee) successfully completing required training, meeting agreed-upon objectives and milestones, and performing in a Fully Successful (or equivalent) manner. Promotion to the FSN-10 and to the target FSN-11 grade levels is not mandatory, and failure to achieve those high levels of performance may be the basis for dismissal.

B. Major Duties and Responsibilities

a. The Specialist (Trainee) is responsible for providing basic project acquisition and assistance support to USAID/Liberia Technical Offices, DO and AO Teams. USAID programs are diverse and multi-sectoral. The Specialist (Trainee) is required to provide basic and limited acquisition assistance to designated Technical Offices, DO, and/or AO Teams, and to support a variety of programs/projects/activities. These programs/projects/activities are implemented through complex Government contracting and grant mechanisms, including but not limited to purchase orders, competitively negotiated technical assistance agreements, contracts, cooperative agreements, Participating Agency Service Agreements (PASA), and sole source contracts, requiring the Specialist (Trainee) to become familiar with the full range of USAID procurement instruments.

b. The Specialist (Trainee) is assigned work in such a manner as to provide training and the basis for independent selection of appropriate procurement instrument types for the situation at hand, and to accurately apply USG procurement laws, regulations, policies, and procedures governing each type of instrument. The developmental nature of the assignment provides exposure to the acquisition of goods and various types of services. The Specialist (Trainee) will become equally familiar with the procedures for acquisition of goods, and for managing personal service and non-personal service contracting actions.

c. The Specialist (Trainee) is expected to work with higher-level Specialists/Officers, and with technical specialists/activity managers in DO and AO Teams throughout the Mission, assisting in the preparation of annual procurement plans, clear and concise statements of work, and supporting documentation. The Specialist (Trainee) will develop the ability to provide authoritative technical guidance to technical specialists/activity managers pertaining to their procurement-related responsibilities and procedures. Specific developmental duties include: Pre-Award Duties – the Specialist (Trainee) participates in meetings on procurement planning; collates data, and prepares and updates tracking tools in order to monitor pending procurements; works with clients to assist in the preparation of justifications, waivers, and other necessary approvals, as needed; and, reviews GLAAS Requisitions (REQs) for completeness and clarity before endorsing them to higher-level Specialists/Officers. Prepares solicitation documents in GLAAS, electronically posts Simplified Acquisitions and Personal Services Contracts; and, works with higher-level Specialists/Officers to ensure compliance with FAR and AIDAR advertisement requirements, including publication of synopses and solicitations, as prescribed. The Specialist (Trainee) works with higher-level Specialists/Officers to prepare Requests for Proposal and Requests for Application. The Specialist (Trainee) assists higher-level Specialists/Officers in pre-award activities for competitive solicitations, and with pre-award assessment surveys of potential contractors or recipients, in order to ensure eligibility prior to an award being made.

Post-Award Duties – the Specialist (Trainee) assists higher-level Specialists/Officers in monitoring performance as required by the terms and conditions of the award, through reviews of performance and reviews of financial reports. The Specialist (Trainee) manages the assigned developmental portfolio, assuring that funding is available when required; and, under the guidance of higher-level Specialists/Officers works with AO Teams/CORs/AORs to assure targets/milestones are set and being met (or that remedial action is taken), and that the overall goals of the program/project/activity are met. As assigned, the Specialist (Trainee) conducts site visits and attends meetings. The Specialist (Trainee) provides guidance to technical personnel, and assists in programmatic duties as required to avoid contractual/legal improprieties, seeking guidance from higher-level Specialists/Officers as required. The Specialist (Trainee) assists in researching and resolving issues that may arise during contract performance, including changes, work stoppages, disputes, implementation problems, defaults, cost overruns, unacceptable performance, and payment problems.

d. The Specialist (Trainee) assists in the conduct of closeouts of contracts, grants, and cooperative agreements after completion. These include ensuring contract audits are conducted in a timely manner, preparing performance documentation, and resolving outstanding issues noted in audits.

Performs other duties as assigned or required.

• Supervision controls

The Acquisition Specialist (Trainee) works under the general supervision of the Contracting Officer/Regional Contracting Officer and/or his/her designee, or a higher-level Specialist/Officer, who makes assignments in terms of the broad range of developmental procurement actions the Trainee will perform.

The Specialist (Trainee) will independently initiate necessary coordination with requesting Mission CORs/AORs, Technical Offices, and DO and AO Teams, providing basic policy guidance on how to best fulfill requirements, with OFM and RLA as necessary, and with staffs of other agencies, and with awardees. The Specialist (Trainee) will keep the higher-level Specialist/Officer, and/or the Contracting Officer/Regional Contracting Officer, and/or his/her designee, updated through status reports and verbal briefings. Completed work is reviewed closely at this level, in terms of reviewing the procurement approach for results achieved, in meeting delivery schedules, and in the selection of appropriate contract methods.

• Supervisory Relationship

This is a non-supervisory position.

12. PHYSICAL DEMANDS

The work requested does not involve undue physical demands.

II. MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS REQUIRED FOR THIS POSITION

1. Education:

Possession of a Baccalaureate Degree or the equivalent of a four-year US college/university (or equivalency accreditation if a non-US institution) degree in accounting, law, business, finance, contracts, purchasing, economics, industrial management, marketing, quantitative methods, and/or organization and management is required.

2. Prior Work Experience:

Three or more years of progressively responsible experience in acquisition and assistance, development assistance, or a closely related field is required. One year of this experience must have been gained working in a position equivalent to no less than the next lower level of FSN responsibility in this or a related occupation, within a USG organization the Host Government, the private sector, or within an international or donor organization, in an English-language work environment.

3. Work/Residency Permits:

Applicants must have valid work and/or residency permits allowing work in Liberia

4. **Language Proficiency:**

Level IV (Fluent) English, both oral and written, is required.

III. EVALUATION AND SELECTION FACTORS

The Government may award a contract without discussions with offerors in accordance with FAR 52.215-1. The Contracting Officer (CO) reserves the right at any point in the evaluation process to establish a competitive range of offerors with whom negotiations will be conducted pursuant to FAR 15.306(c). In accordance with FAR 52.215-1, if the CO determines that the number of offers that would otherwise be in the competitive range exceeds the number at which an efficient competition can be conducted, the CO may limit the number of offerors in the competitive range to the greatest number that will permit an efficient competition among the most highly rated offers. The FAR provisions referenced above are available at <https://www.acquisition.gov/browse/index/far>.

The technical evaluation committee may conduct reference checks, including references from individuals who have not been specifically identified by the offeror, and may do so before or after a candidate is interviewed.

Applicants will be evaluated according to the following criteria:

1. **Language Proficiency:** Fluent English ability (Level IV Reading, writing, speaking) is required. Short listed applicants will be evaluated through a written test in addition to the in-person or virtual interview. (Pass/Fail)

2. **Job Knowledge:** Maximum number of points is 40. The applicant must have a general knowledge, or the ability to quickly gain such general knowledge of the position duties as articulated in the required job knowledge essay. Candidates meeting the minimum requirement will receive a maximum of 20 points. Additional points, up to maximum 40 points, will be given to candidates with more extensive, relevant job knowledge as articulated in the following job knowledge essay(s):

- Provide a comprehensive overview of the Acquisition and Assistance process in a government or organizational context. Include key steps, principles, and the significance of this process in achieving organizational objectives. (250 words max.)
- Describe various contract types used in Acquisition and Assistance. Compare and contrast fixed-price contracts, cost-reimbursement contracts, and time-and-materials contracts. When is each type most appropriate, and what are the associated risks? (250 words max.)
- Outline the source selection process in Acquisition. What factors are considered in evaluating proposals? How does the government or organization ensure fair and competitive procurement practices? (250 words max.)
- Explain the significance of ethical considerations in Acquisition and Assistance. How can potential conflicts of interest be identified and addressed? Discuss the role of transparency and accountability in ethical procurement practices. (250 words max.)

3. **Skills and Abilities:** Maximum number of points is 60 – Demonstrated skills in the statement of duties as detailed in Section 11 above. Short listed applicants will be evaluated through a skills test in addition to the in-person or virtual interview. Candidates meeting the minimum requirement will receive a maximum of 40 points. Additional points, up to the maximum 60 points, will be given to candidates with more advanced skills and abilities.

4. **Reference check** - Pass/fail

IV. SUBMITTING AN OFFER

1. Eligible Offerors are required to complete and submit the offer form [AID 309-2](#) and a detailed, current resume or curriculum vitae not to exceed 3 pages providing email address and a daytime telephone number;
2. Offerors must submit a supplemental document in response to the job knowledge essay.
3. Offerors must submit four references, two from the current and two from a previous employer. From each employer, one must be a supervisor and the second a peer/coworker, along with their contract information. If not currently employed, all references may come from previous employers.
4. Offers must be received by the closing date and time specified in Section I, item 3, and submitted to the Point of Contact in Section I.
5. Offeror submissions must clearly reference the Solicitation number on all submitted documents.
6. Incomplete applications will not be considered.
7. Complete the USAID/Liberia Applicant Google form. To get to this form, copy and paste this link into your internet browser <https://forms.gle/V5wWpTmzrRhXYQEK7>

V. LIST OF REQUIRED FORMS PRIOR TO AWARD

1. The CO will provide instructions about how to complete and submit the following forms after an offeror is selected for the contract award:
 - Background investigation forms
 - Medical clearance forms

2. Ensuring Adequate COVID-19 Safety Protocols for Federal Contractors - Please be advised that, upon award, the contractor will be required to follow the Mission policies and/or directives from the U.S. Department of State regarding COVID-19 requirements.

VI. BENEFITS AND ALLOWANCES

As a matter of policy, and as appropriate, a CCN PSC is normally authorized the following benefits and allowances:

1. BENEFITS:
 - a) Foreign Service National Defined Contributions Plan (FSN DCP) – Eligible for the FSN DCP.
 - b) Annual Leave – PSC is entitled to 15 workdays (120 hours) for the first three years of employment
 - c) Sick Leave – Sick Leave is granted as needed.
 - d) Health Insurance.

2. ALLOWANCES (as applicable):

- a) Transportation Allowance
- b) Miscellaneous Allowance

VIII. USAID REGULATIONS, POLICIES AND CONTRACT CLAUSES PERTAINING TO PSCs

USAID regulations and policies governing CCNPSC and TCNPSC awards are available at these sources:

1. USAID Acquisition Regulation (AIDAR), Appendix J, "Direct USAID Contracts With a Cooperating Country National and with a Third Country National for Personal Services Abroad," including contract clause "General Provisions," available at <https://www.usaid.gov/ads/policy/300/aidar>
2. Contract Cover Page form AID 309-1 available at <https://www.usaid.gov/forms>. Pricing by line item is to be determined upon contract award as described below:

Line Item

ITEM NO (A)	SUPPLIES/SERVICES (DESCRIPTION) (B)	QUANTITY (C)	UNIT (D)	UNIT PRICE (E)	AMOUNT (F)
0001	Compensation, Fringe, Benefits and Other Direct Costs (ODSc) - Award Type: Cost - Product Service Code: R497 - Accounting Info. TBD	1	Lot	\$ TBD	\$ TBD at Award after negotiations with contractor

3. Acquisition & Assistance Policy Directives/Contract Information Bulletins (AAPDs/CIBs) for Personal Services Contracts with Individuals available at <http://www.usaid.gov/work-usaid/aapds-cibs>

4. Ethical Conduct. By the acceptance of a USAID personal services contract as an individual, the contractor will be acknowledging receipt of the "Standards of Ethical Conduct for Employees of the Executive Branch," available from the U.S. Office of Government Ethics, in accordance with General Provision 2 and 5 CFR 2635. See <https://www.oge.gov/web/oge.nsf/OGE%20Regulations>.

5. PSC Ombudsman

The PSC Ombudsman serves as a resource for any Personal Services Contractor who has entered into a contract with the United States Agency for International Development and is available to provide clarity on their specific contract with the Agency. Please visit our page for additional information: <https://www.usaid.gov/work-usaid/personal-service-contracts-ombudsman>.

The PSC Ombudsman may be contacted via: PSCOmbudsman@usaid.gov

EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY: The U.S. Mission provides equal opportunity and fair and equitable treatment in employment to all people without regard to race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, political affiliation, marital status, or sexual orientation.

Français

Ministère des Finances soumet un projet de budget de 625 millions de dollars américains

Enfin, le Ministre des Finances et du Développement a soumis le Projet de Budget National à la Chambre des

comme revenu intérieur, tandis que 2,43 millions de dollars, soit 0,39 %, proviennent de ressources externes.

Selon la Ministre adjointe

catégories de dépenses obligatoires qui doivent être satisfaites. À cet égard, un montant total de 594,54 millions de dollars affecté aux dépenses récurrentes a été alloué et guidé par l'ordre de priorité suivant : Service de la dette (intérieure et extérieure), Rémunération des employés, Subventions, Biens et services pour les secteurs de l'éducation et de la santé, entre autres.

Elle a précisé que le processus de soumission était en conformité avec l'article 17.1 de la Loi sur la Gestion Financière Publique, couvrant la période du 1er janvier 2024 au 31 décembre 2024.

"Honorable Président et Membres de la Chambre des Représentants, bien que ce budget soit le reflet des programmes et des priorités de l'administration sortante, il ne devrait pas être inattendu que l'administration entrante puisse instaurer des mesures pour ajuster, recalibrer, voire même recaster les programmes et les priorités ici pour indiquer un changement de politique, espérons-le dans l'esprit de la continuité dans la gouvernance", ajoute-t-elle.

En même temps, elle s'est excusée pour le retard dans la soumission, qu'elle attribue à l'occupation nationale et à la distraction associées aux élections très compétitives de 2023.

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Ministre Tanneh Geraldine Brunson

Représentants, totalisant 625,57 millions de dollars américains pour l'année fiscale 2024. La soumission intervient avec trois mois de retard par rapport à la date prévue pour l'instrument financier.

Lors de la présentation ici le mardi 19 décembre 2023, la Ministre adjointe des Finances chargée du Budget et de la Planification du Développement, Tanneh Geraldine Brunson, a déclaré que le montant de 623,14 millions de dollars, soit 99,6 %, est projeté

Brunson, les dépenses totales proposées pour l'exercice 2024 s'élèvent à 625,57 millions de dollars, en conformité avec l'enveloppe budgétaire prévue.

La composante récurrente des dépenses est de 594,54 millions de dollars, soit 95 % du total des dépenses proposées, tandis que le coût total des Projets d'Investissement du Secteur Public est projeté à 31,03 millions de dollars, soit 5 % du total des dépenses proposées.

La Ministre Brunson a expliqué que les premières revendications sur les ressources disponibles sont axées sur les

Le médecin légiste du gouvernement dément le rapport du médecin légiste de la défense

Le médecin légiste en chef de la République du Libéria, le Dr Benedict B. Koule, a témoigné lundi 18 décembre, réfutant le rapport d'autopsie fourni par le médecin légiste de la défense basé aux États-Unis, le Dr Mathau I. Okaye, le décrivant comme très erroné.

Le Dr Koule a déclaré que le Dr Okaye semblait avoir l'intention d'introduire un élément contradictoire dans l'autopsie initiale précise qu'il avait réalisée. Le médecin légiste libérien a souligné dans son travail que la cause du décès était un choc hypovolémique dû à de multiples blessures par arme blanche, entraînant une perte massive de sang dans la poitrine.

"Si vous regardez la conjonctive de Charloe Musu lors de l'autopsie, vous pouvez clairement voir qu'elle n'est pas seulement sévèrement pâle mais

blanche comme du papier ; effectuer une autopsie et une analyse ADN et conclure qu'un tueur est musclé représente une falsification de faits, de science et de dimensions inimaginables", a rétorqué le Dr Koule.

Il a affirmé que la représentation du Dr Okaye est fautive, trompeuse et une déformation complète des faits. Le Dr Koule a soutenu que sur la cuisse gauche du corps, il y a une profonde lacération causée par un

couteau tranchant, se déplaçant de la partie interne de la cuisse vers la partie externe, inclinée légèrement vers la tête. Cela indique qu'il ne s'agit pas d'une blessure par force contondante, mais d'une blessure similaire à celle précédente causée par un tranchant, très probablement un couteau, comme l'a témoigné l'une des suspects,



Éditorial

L'hygiène, un mode de vie

Le spectacle des volontaires, parmi lesquels des jeunes hommes, des femmes, et des aînées, qui s'attellent au nettoyage de nos rues ne peut que susciter une profonde émotion, car il incarne un patriotisme ardent.

Cette initiative, orchestrée en prévision des festivités et en préparation de l'investiture imminente du président élu Joseph Nyumah Boakai et du vice-président élu Jeremiah Kpan Koung en janvier 2024, témoigne d'une mobilisation collective sans précédent.

Ces bénévoles massivement engagés dans l'assainissement de la capitale et de ses environs opèrent une véritable révolution dans notre approche de la préservation de notre capitale, démontrant qu'il est temps d'assumer nous-mêmes ce que nous attendons du gouvernement.

Cependant, l'entretien de la ville ne devrait pas être circonscrit uniquement aux périodes de Noël ou d'investiture. Il doit plutôt devenir un mode de vie pour nous, Libériens. Nul besoin d'attendre une occasion particulière pour nettoyer notre cité et son environnement. Il convient d'instaurer une pratique quotidienne, hebdomadaire, voire mensuelle, afin de donner l'exemple à la génération future, tout en démontrant que la propreté n'est pas seulement une question d'hygiène, mais revêt également une dimension spirituelle.

Malheureusement, Monrovia se trouve actuellement jonchée de débris et d'ordures à chaque coin de rue. Même des édifices publics tels que le Capitole et d'autres lieux ne sont pas épargnés par ce fléau. L'herbe a envahi le Capitole, qui souffre du manque d'eau courante et de toilettes fonctionnelles. Il est dès lors compréhensible que le président élu Boakai ait choisi d'organiser son programme inaugural à cet endroit, afin d'assurer une remise en état adéquate.

Une telle situation n'était pas envisageable par le passé, particulièrement durant les ères Tubman, Tolbert, Doe et plus récemment Sirleaf, lorsque les institutions étatiques responsables du maintien de la propreté de la ville étaient pleinement opérationnelles, telles que la Corporation de la Ville de Monrovia et la Corporation des Eaux et Égouts du Libéria.

La CVM est chargée d'appliquer les ordonnances de la ville, tandis que la CLEL assure le bon fonctionnement du système d'assainissement et de l'approvisionnement en eau dans la capitale. Malheureusement, ces institutions ont totalement décliné en raison d'une mauvaise gestion et de la corruption. La CLEL n'est plus en mesure de fournir à la ville des services d'eau courante et d'assainissement, laissant les rues jonchées d'excréments dus à des canalisations d'égouts obstruées.

Parallèlement, la CVM a implosé sous la direction du maire récemment sanctionné, Jefferson Tamba Koijee.

Il est essentiel que l'administration à venir du président élu Boakai maintienne le groupe actuel de volontaires pour contribuer régulièrement au maintien de la propreté de la ville et de ses environs, afin de manifester la fierté libérienne.

En effet, déchets et excréments constituent des foyers de prolifération pour les cafards, les rats, les mouches, les moustiques et autres rongeurs, qui pénètrent directement dans les foyers, contaminant nourriture et eau potable et propageant des maladies telles que le choléra et la diarrhée. Un environnement propre est un environnement sain, favorisant la santé de la population.

Français

Jet Yvonne Aki-Sawyer

Starts from page 8

Ministère des Finances

"Face à des pressions croissantes, en particulier le fardeau de la dette nationale et les dépenses récurrentes, seuls des programmes et projets nationaux transversaux critiques dans trois secteurs ont été proposés dans le cadre du segment du Programme d'Investissement du Secteur Public (PISP) du budget. Parmi ceux-ci figure le Fonds National Routier dans le secteur de l'Infrastructure et des Services de Base", explique la Ministre.

En recevant le budget, le Président de la Chambre Bhofal Chambers a appelé à une planification automatique du processus budgétaire.

"Comme vous le savez et nous acceptons les excuses, cet instrument aurait dû être présenté ici il y a trois mois, afin que nous aurions pu examiner attentivement le

processus et assurer la diligence", dit-il.

Le Président Chambers a dit que le législateur ferait le maximum pour assurer l'adoption dans l'intérêt du pays et de son peuple. L'organe prêtera, selon lui, une attention particulière à la décision de la Cour Suprême, enjoignant au gouvernement de régler les arriérés des anciens législateurs et le paiement aux victimes du naufrage dans le cadre du processus de révision, afin de maintenir une coordination entre les trois branches du gouvernement.

Le projet de budget national de 625,57 millions de dollars est le dernier de l'administration sortante du Président George Weah, qui a perdu les élections de 2023 face au principal challenger, l'Ambassadeur Joseph Nyumah Boakai. M. Boakai prend officiellement ses fonctions de Président du Liberia en janvier 2024. Édition par Jonathan Browne.

Starts from page 8

Le médecin légiste du

Getrude Newton.

Le Dr Koule a déclaré que les conclusions du Dr Okaye manquent de spécificité et ne peuvent pas être mesurées, les rendant vagues et destinées à induire le public en erreur. Il a souligné que la certitude médicale se mesure en termes de probabilité, et cette probabilité doit être clairement énoncée.

"Si je lance une pièce, il y a une chance de 50% que soit la face soit le dos apparaisse, et cela doit être précisé ; lorsque nous traitons des personnes malades atteintes d'une maladie terminale, nous donnons la probabilité de survie", a-t-il ajouté.

Le Dr Koule a soutenu que la conclusion du Dr Okaye est basée sur de mauvaises prémices et est donc fautive, car il n'était pas scientifiquement possible pour lui d'utiliser les résultats de la scène de crime pour conclure qu'un intrus masculin était entré dans la maison.

Il a souligné que les échantillons d'ADN qu'il (le Dr Koule) a prélevés dans la maison n'ont pu isoler aucun ADN masculin, ce qui ne signifie en aucun cas qu'aucun homme n'est entré dans la maison. La présence de l'ADN du suspect sur la scène du crime ne les implique en aucune manière scientifiquement, car le suspect vivait dans la même maison.

"Nous sommes tous conscients que, parmi les quatre suspects, seul un suspect, Getrude Newton, aurait saigné d'une coupure mineure sur la peau. Il est donc incorrect d'analyser des échantillons de sang qui n'appartiennent manifestement

pas au suspect et d'en tirer une conclusion parce que leur ADN était présent dans ce sang ; ils sont exclus du crime", a-t-il encore argumenté.

Le Dr Koule a noté que les preuves d'ADN fournies par le Dr Okaye indiquaient clairement des artefacts le long de la ligne représentant le chromosome Y, également connu sous le nom de Yardin, donc la question de la contamination a été soulevée dans les conclusions du Dr Koule.

"Mon cerveau est plus jeune ; il est vif. En tant que pathologiste, j'ai utilisé mes connaissances au fil des ans pour fournir des faits qui ont conduit avec succès à l'adjudication des affaires", a déclaré le Dr Koule.

D'autre part, il a fait valoir que le Dr Okaye a utilisé ses connaissances pour effectuer plusieurs autopsies, au moins quatre au Libéria, dont une impliquait Angel Togba, une mineure de 13 ans. Le Dr Koule a rappelé que le Dr Okaye était venu au Libéria deux ans après la mort de la mineure et avait pratiqué une autopsie sur les restes décomposés, concluant qu'il n'avait rien trouvé.

"Vous êtes conscient que la défunte Charloe Musu n'est pas la fille biologique de ces suspects", a souligné le Dr Koule.

Il a rappelé un cas impliquant feu Harry Greaves, où le Dr Okaye avait conclu une autopsie en déclarant que Harry Greaves était mort par noyade après que son corps ait été retrouvé sur la plage dans une phase critique.

"C'est le bilan de ce pathologiste nigérian, le Dr Okaye", a insisté le Dr Koule. Édition par Jonathan Browne.

Gray souhaite que les sanctions américaines fassent l'objet d'une enquête



Acarous Moses Gray

À peine une semaine après que le gouvernement américain a sanctionné trois hauts responsables supplémentaires du gouvernement du Libéria pour leur prétendue implication dans la corruption, le représentant vaincu du district électoral n°8 du comté de Montserrado, Acarous Moses Gray, est venu défendre vigoureusement les responsables sanctionnés, appelant à une enquête approfondie.

"Mon point de vue sur toute cette saga des sanctions, je pense que le gouvernement américain aurait dû aller plus loin pour enquêter sur certaines de ces questions.

Imaginez certains des personnages mentionnés sur la liste des sanctions, je les connais personnellement et je peux témoigner pour eux ; ce sont des gens de bonne moralité", déclare le député Gray.

Il a lancé ce défi le mardi 19 décembre 2023, lors de sa visite à l'école de démonstration de Monrovia à Clay Street, Monrovia, où il a remis cent mille dollars libériens (LRD100,000) à l'administration, ainsi que du matériel éducatif pour marquer cette saison festive.

Récemment, le gouvernement américain a sanctionné trois hauts responsables du régime Weah pour corruption. Les personnes désignées incluent le ministre des Finances Samuel Tweah, les sénateurs Albert T. Chie et Emmanuel Nuquay.

Plus tôt, le 8 décembre 2023, le département du Trésor américain a désigné le maire de Monrovia et secrétaire général de la Coalition pour le changement démocratique (CDC), Jefferson Kojee.

Les États-Unis avaient déjà sanctionné Nathaniel McGill, sénateur élu du comté de Margibi, Bill Twehway, sénateur élu du comté de River Cess, et l'ancien procureur général Cllr. Saymah Syrenius

Cephus. Ont également été sanctionnés le sénateur du comté de Nimba, Prince Y. Johnson, et le sénateur vaincu du Grand Cap, Varney G. Sherman.

Mais en réaction à ces sanctions, le député Gray a affirmé qu'en matière de violation des droits de l'homme, mentionner le maire de la ville de Monrovia, Jefferson Kojee, dans une telle catégorie nécessite une enquête approfondie car "je connais Kojee et je ne me déroberai jamais à cela".

Il a critiqué les États-Unis pour ne pas avoir sanctionné des individus qui, selon lui, ont travaillé avec la Commission Vérité et Réconciliation (CVJR), en particulier l'ancien président de la CVJR, M. Jerome Verdier, et l'ancien général rebelle devenu évangéliste, Joshua Milton Blayee alias "Butt Naked". "Je pense que ces individus qui ont tué nos concitoyens et qui ont contribué à la

destruction massive de citoyens innocents, ce sont des personnes qui doivent être sanctionnées. Franchement, condamner quelqu'un sans preuve, où intervient la loi de l'enquête?" a-t-il ajouté.

Il estime que les sanctions visent les responsables du gouvernement dirigé par la CDC, se demandant pourquoi le secrétaire d'État américain n'a pas imposé des restrictions de visa à l'encontre des individus de l'administration précédente dirigée par l'ancienne présidente Sirleaf.

Il a rappelé que l'ancien auditeur général John Morlu a déclaré trois fois corrompu le gouvernement de l'UP sous Madame Sirleaf, mais l'Amérique n'a désigné aucun responsable de cette administration.

Commentant son silence depuis l'annonce des résultats des élections, le député sortant du district 8 s'est vanté de chercher l'intérêt du peuple et du pays dans son ensemble au cours de ses douze années au Parlement.

"Cette fonction appartient au peuple ; c'est eux qui décident quand vous la recevez et quand ils vous la retirent, donc je suis reconnaissant au peuple du district 8 et à la CDC, y compris le président Weah, de m'avoir donné l'opportunité de servir", dit-il.

Gray a souligné qu'à partir de maintenant, il se considère comme membre de l'opposition et ne se dérobera jamais aux positions qu'il a prises alors qu'il était membre de l'administration sortante dirigée par la CDC.

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MORE HEADLINE NEWS

MORE HEADLINE NEWS

3 years old boy drowns in River Gee

By Patrick N. Mensah, Maryland County

A three-year-old boy identified as little Emmanuel Feartieah

Sarah is alleged to have left little Emmanuel beside the clothes and went to purchase soap in the nearest community. Sarah said upon her return,

Kanweken when he was nowhere to be seen.

For several hours there was a search for the missing little boy in the Jenkins Community before he was finally found at 10 PM to have drowned in the well.

Meanwhile, a 15-man jury was immediately instituted by the police to examine the body of little Emmanuel Feartieah.

After careful examinations and observations on the body, the 15-man jury reported to the public that there was no foul play. The jury however pointed out that the boy may have died of drowning and his lifeless body was turned over to the bereaved family for burial.

The death news of little Emmanuel Feartieah has been greeted with lots of regrets and worries including calls from community dwellers to parents for them to be able to take good care of their kids. The deceased's relative Sarah Chea has been arrested by the Liberia National Police in River Gee County and is undergoing police questioning regarding the death of little Emmanuel Feartieah.

Senatorial candidate runs to Supreme Court

By Lincoln G. Peters

Liberia National Union (LINU) Maryland County Senatorial Candidate Dr. Wollor E. Topor, has taken flight to the Supreme Court of Liberia, demanding a recount in the senatorial election.

Dr. Topor is calling for examination of the decision taken by the Board of Commissioners of the National Elections Commission, declaring incumbent Senator J. Gblebo-Bo Brown, winner of the county's senatorial seat.

Addressing a news press conference in Monrovia Wednesday, December 20, 2023, senatorial candidate Topor alleged that he was robbed of his votes therefore, his legal team will file a bill of exception to the Supreme Court today, Thursday, to comprehensively examine the NEC's decision.

He said they have been following all of the initial processes to addressing their grievance in line with Article 83 (c) of the 1986 Constitution of Liberia and the election law by filing formal compliant before the Elections Magistrate in the county, and the full Board of the National Elections Commission.

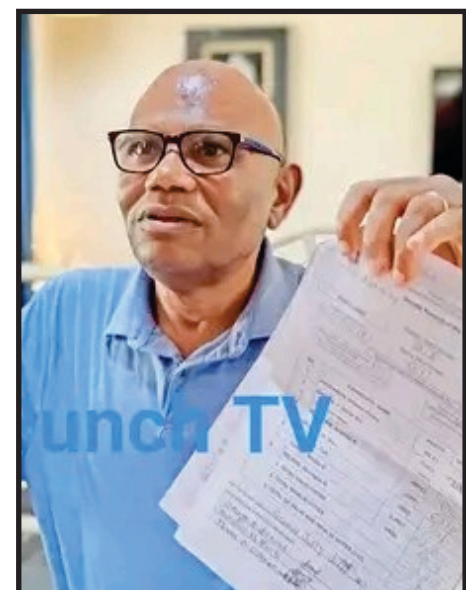
According to him, they filed compliant within the timeframe on October 16, 2023 and the case was heard by NEC designated hearing officer, Richard M. Dafuwah, and provided evidence that several of the tally sheets were not stamped, including alleged tampering with figures, and that the average number of valid and invalid votes recorded were more than the total number of ballot papers recorded in the ballot box from precincts 27024, in electoral district#2, Maryland.

"Our opponent leads the senate race with 12,712 votes while we obtained 11,618 votes. What the NEC pronounced and placed on the website is quite different from what is on the NEC official tally sheet issued to us right after the tally process. NEC pronounced

we obtained 11,618 votes, while official tally sheet says we obtained 11,918 votes, with a difference of 300 votes; does this not call for recount?" He asked.

Dr. Topor disclosed that these alleged irregularities are alarming and warrant a recount of the votes, saying that the hearing officer and the NEC Board erred in the manner and form they conducted the entire proceeding to the point that they did, because they did not properly examine all pieces of evidence presented.

"We are taking our appeal to the Supreme Court to examine the decision taken by the NEC to declare Mr. Brown winner of the senatorial race in the county. In our bill of exception, we are only demanding a recount in the process. And so, from here I am meeting with my legal team because they have already prepared the bill of exception



and we will file it with the Supreme Court today."

According to him, this is not just about him but the more than twelve thousand citizens that stood in the sun to vote, maintain that he will not allow their voices to be thwarted because he can't afford to drop their hope.

The aggrieved senatorial candidate claims he has dozens of evidences in his possession which suggest that the election was fraudulent, as ballot papers exceeded the average number of voters and Senator Brown took the election based on financial influence.

Liberia in double standard

Starts from page 11

diplomatic approach in restoring peace because, he argued, peaceful lives are being lost, especially children.

President Weah noted that he urged the Israeli President to exercise restraint for the sake of humanity and peace.

At the same time he clarifies that his resentment is not against the United States, but he stands with the United Nations and the rest of the

world for global peace and stability.

"How can a George Weah, President Weah that you know, vote against peace. Before voting, I met with the Foreign Minister as to how we will vote and we agreed to vote for peace and diplomacy to end the war in Gaza. I told him that if the entire world is voting diplomacy and peace, I can't be left out as former Peace Ambassador. There is no way I can't call for peace in another country", Mr. Weah maintains.

has died after drowning in an open well in Gbeapo Kanweken, River Gee County. According to police reports, the incident occurred on 19 December 2023 when little Emmanuel Feartieah's aunty identified as Sarah Chea allegedly took him to the well to watch her clothes.

she didn't see little Feartieah besides the clothes and she thought that he had gone home.

Sarah said she continue to wash her clothes for several hours. But little Feartieah's situation claimed his parents and community members' attention during the late evening hours in Gbeapo



Lonestar Cell MTN's donates to St. Joseph's Catholic Hospital

Lonestar Cell MTN, a leading telecommunications company, has proudly donated funds to St. Joseph's Catholic Hospital in effort to raise monies to purchase the state-of-the-art CT (Computed Tomography) scan machine.

The CT scan machine, a vital diagnostic tool that will significantly enhance the hospital's medical imaging capabilities. This advanced technology will contribute to quicker and more accurate diagnoses, ultimately improving patient care and outcomes. This philanthropic initiative is a testament to Lonestar Cell MTN's commitment to the well-being of the community and further strengthens the longstanding partnership with the Hospital.

St. Joseph's Catholic Hospital has been a key stakeholder for Lonestar Cell MTN staff but also plays a crucial role in facilitating mobile money payments for patients, showcasing the depth of the relationship between the two entities.

Speaking about the donation, Lonestar Cell MTN Senior Manager for the Enterprise Business Unit,

Princess Eva Cooper, expressed the company's dedication to making a positive impact on the community.

"Our longstanding relationship with St. Joseph's Catholic Hospital goes beyond business. We recognize the critical role the hospital plays in providing healthcare services to our community. This donation is a small token of our appreciation for the invaluable work they do, and we are proud to contribute to the enhancement of their medical facilities," she said.

The partnership between Lonestar Cell MTN and St. Joseph's Catholic Hospital exemplifies the company's commitment to corporate social responsibility and community development. By investing in healthcare infrastructure, Lonestar Cell MTN aims to contribute to the overall well-being of the community it serves. Christine Attia, a Registered Nurse, and the Chairperson of

the 60th Anniversary Fundraising Committee expressed her sincere gratitude for the generous donation. "We thank Lonestar Cell MTN for its partnership. We have raised \$63,000 towards the CT scan thus far and this company's donation is helping us get closer to our goal. About Lonestar Cell MTN: Lonestar Cell MTN is a leading telecommunications company committed to connecting people to the opportunities that enable them to progress. With a focus on innovation and community development, Lonestar Cell MTN strives to make a positive impact on the lives of its customers and the communities it serves.

About St. Joseph's Catholic Hospital:

St. Joseph's Catholic Hospital is a reputable healthcare institution dedicated to providing high-quality medical services to the community. With a commitment to excellence and compassion, the hospital plays a crucial role in promoting health and well-being.



Cllr. Scott faces verdict today

By Lincoln G. Peters

Democratic Change (CDC) secretary general Jefferson Koijee denied ordering the brutal attack in which Charloe Musu was brutally murdered on 22 February 2023 at her mother Cllr. Scott's Brewerville

out the attack. Both Koijee and Telleh have denied the allegation that they were responsible for the attack at Cllr. Scott's Brewerville residence.

Cllr. Scott said she had reported to police authorities

A fifteen-man jury panel will hand a verdict today, Thursday, 21 December 2023 following Liberia's former Chief Justice Cllr. Gloria Musu Scott and three of her family



Cllr. Scott

Charloe Musu

members' trial for alleged murder. Cllr. Scott and Gertrude Newton, Alice Johnson, and Rebecca Youdeh Wisner have pleaded not guilty to the indictment following the murder of Charloe Musu. Their trial comes after sanctioned Monrovia Mayor and ruling Coalition for

residence after the former Chief Justice reported to police authorities two different criminal attacks on her home. Liberia's former Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) boss Cllr. Jerome Verdier has accused Koijee of allegedly ordering Monrovia City Police official Varlee Telleh to carry

two incidents of attacks at her home, but no action was taken before the third incident led to Charloe's murder. However, Cllr. Scott and three of her family members were instead indicted by Liberian prosecutors for Charloe's murder.

World Bank announces new Country Director for Ghana, Liberia, and Sierra Leone

ACCRA, December 20th, 2023—The World Bank has appointed Mr. Robert Taliercio O'Brien as Country Director for Ghana, Liberia, and Sierra Leone in the Western and Central Africa Region. His appointment takes effect from January 2nd, 2024, and he will be based in the World Bank's Accra Office.

Mr. Taliercio, an American national, joined the World Bank in 2000 as a Young Professional in the Africa region and has served as Practice Manager, Lead Economist, and Country Economist in multiple regions, including East Asia and the Pacific, Europe and Central Asia, and Africa. His most recent assignment has been as Regional Director in the Latin America and Caribbean Region for the Equitable Growth, Finance, and Institutions (EFI) Department.

Prior to joining the World Bank, Mr. Taliercio was a Lecturer in Public Finance at the Harvard Institute for International Development and a Manager for HIID's Program on Investment Appraisal and Management. He also served as a visiting professor at the Bolivian Catholic University. He has written on public finance policy and administration in academic journals, books, and development

publications. He has received service awards from the Ministers of Finance of the Republic of Korea and the Kingdom of Cambodia.

In his new position Mr. Taliercio's top three priorities will be to: (i) lead the Bank's strategic dialogue with these countries and support the implementation of the Africa Region's priorities, (ii) deepen the policy dialogue and partnership with governments and key stakeholders, and (iii)

oversee the delivery and implementation of the lending and non-lending portfolio.

Mr. Taliercio holds a PhD and a master's in public policy from Harvard University, a Master of Arts in Latin American Studies from Stanford University, and a Bachelor of Arts in Public and International Affairs from Princeton University. He has written on public finance policy and administration in academic journals, books, and development publications.



Mr. Robert Taliercio O'Brien

Liberia in double standard on Israel?

President George Manneh Weah's recent order to the Minister of Foreign Affairs Dee-Maxwell Saah Kemayah in Monrovia, to revoke Liberia's vote against humanitarian ceasefire in war-torn Gaza is opening a can of worms in what seems to be clear double standard here, as the government had earlier taken a definitive stance on 12th December 2023 along with 10 other countries including the United States, against ceasefire in Gaza.

But overturning the decision in a brief statement here on Sunday, 17th December at a regular worship in his Forky Klon Family Church, President Weah said, as man of peace, he will not promote, vote, neither support war and political instability in another country.

"That Liberian that voted against war is a wicked Liberian and he voted himself; not us, and God will not spare that person's life. They voted

a need for President Weah to seek clarification from the Foreign Minister, who seemingly did not adhere to his instructions issued since 14th November 2023, more than a month before the UN vote.

"It's important to highlight that on December 8th, I instructed the Deputy Permanent Representative to seek the Minister's guidance to co-sponsor the draft resolution A/ES-10/L.27 but received no response.

On December 12th, I communicated with the Minister and the Acting Foreign Minister, to confirm their directive on the vote on the resolution. Acting on their affirmative response, I instructed a staffer to implement the directives", Ambassador Fyneah explains.

She underscores that the responsibility for the inaccurate directive lies with the Foreign Ministry, noting that "it is crucial not to tarnish the reputation of Liberia's diplomats at the UN who, despite challenges, continue to make sacrifices for Liberia's visibility and contribution to the United Nations' mandate".

The Ambassador refutes perception that Liberia's Diplomats at the UN



Pres. Weah

Minister Kemayah

wrongly and we will fix it. Our vote will be with the other countries that voted diplomacy and not war. Maybe, he was doing it to tarnish my character and government because we are leaving power. But I want to tell him or her that they are wasting time", President Weah reacted.

However, Liberia's Ambassador and Permanent Representative to the United Nations, Sarah Safyn Fyneah, clarifies that the Government of Liberia's initial vote on UN resolution A/ES-10/L.27 on December 12th was based on a prior directive from the Foreign Ministry in Monrovia, which, she notes, unfortunately, contradicted President Weah's and the government's established stance.

Ambassador Fyneah in a press release from New York, laments that the discrepancy raises concerns about misrepresentation, prompting

acted independently, and calls for review and clarification of misrepresentation.

According to her, Liberia's diplomats at the UN operate under the guidance and instructions of the Minister of Foreign Affairs, ensuring that their actions align with the country's stance, adding that decisions are not made independently; instead, guidance is sought to accurately represent Liberia's position.

But President Weah said he is innocent of the decision and knows nothing about it because his government took a decision in consultation with the Minister of Foreign Affairs to vote peace over war, noting that the person who voted in favor of continuous conflict, acted unilaterally based on personal interests.

Mr. Weah explained that when the war started initially, he wrote a letter on November 4, 2023 to the Israeli Embassy, appealing to President Benjamin Netanyahu to consider

House rejects MIA request to lift Moratorium

By Bridgett Milton

Members of the House of Representatives have rejected a request from the Minister of Internal Affairs to lift the moratorium placed on the Bong County Development and Social

audit, completed since then, had raised concerns about the setup of the County Council. However, the rejection by the House was grounded in the fact that the Public Accounts Committee (PAC) had not yet reported on the matter.

On 10 August 2021, Bong County District #3 Representative Marvin Cole wrote a letter to plenary inviting Internal Affairs Minister Varney Sirleaf and the county's Superintendent Esther Walker to appear before Plenary and explain the alleged mismanagement of over \$80,000 USD from the county's coffers.

During their appearance, Minister Sirleaf and Superintendent Walker denied financial malpractice and said they had been working in line with the law.

Minister Sirleaf said Rep. Cole had over the past had a close relationship with Bong County Assistant Superintendent for Fiscal Affairs Paul Sulunteh who sometimes complained of being left out in financial decision making by the county despite being signatory A-1 to the county's account.

However, the lawmakers in session voted to audit the account of the county from the period 2018 to 2021.



Development Accounts. Internal Affairs Minister Varney Sirleaf had appealed to the Plenary through the representatives' offices, seeking the removal of the moratorium.

The moratorium was imposed in 2019 following an audit conducted by the General Auditing Agency (GAC).

Additionally, members said the initiation of the moratorium had been at the behest of the Bong County legislative caucus.

This decision underscores the importance placed on due process and committee evaluations in matters of financial governance.

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