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

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EDC wins top legislative seats

Speaker J. Fonati Koffa **Deputy Speaker Thomas P. Fallah**



UP alliance takes over Senate

Sen. Pro-Tempore Nyonblee Karnga-Lawrence **Sen. Abraham Darius Dillon**

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Continental News

Tanzania bans Kenya Airways flights in tit-for-tat move

Tanzania's aviation authority has said that it will not permit any Kenya Airways flights from

Nairobi, a statement from the Tanzania Civil Aviation Authority (TCAA) said.

It added that Kenya's move

not giving us access to operate in their country? We have calculated over \$330,000 (£260,000) loss for every single cargo flight from Nairobi to other countries." While other airlines ply the Nairobi-Dar es Salaam route, this tit-for-tat action could make things more expensive and disrupt the travel plans for thousands of tourists and businesspeople who have come to rely on Kenya Airways, Tanzania's Citizen newspaper reports.

In response to TCAA's statement, Kenya Airways said it is "engaging the Civil Aviation Authorities and relevant government agencies in Kenya and Tanzania to find a solution that will ensure there are no flight disruptions between Nairobi and Dar es Salaam".

This is not the first time the two countries have fallen out over aviation.

In 2020, Tanzania stopped Kenya Airways flights for a brief period in a row over quarantine restrictions for Tanzanians. BBC

went against a 2016 agreement between the two countries.

Hamza Johari, director general of the TCCA, told BBC: "We have written to Kenyan authorities' but they do not respond. We tried other means of arbitration without success.

"We had no barriers for their flight to Tanzania, why are they



Kenya Airways will not be allowed to land in Dar es Salaam from next Monday

Nairobi to land in Dar es Salaam from next Monday. There are usually three scheduled services on this leg of the route every day.

The decision to prevent the flights comes in retaliation to a move by Kenya to not allow any all-cargo flights operated by Air Tanzania to land in

Cyclone brings heavy rain to Mauritius and Réunion

Torrential rain and flooding have hit Mauritius and the French territory of Réunion, in the Indian Ocean, as Cyclone Belal crosses the islands.

One person was killed in Réunion, where the population of about 860,000 was ordered to shelter at home, but the eye of the storm has avoided the island. Around a quarter of households on the island had no electricity and thousands were without running water on Monday. One person - a motorcyclist - has also died on Mauritius, police have said.

Officials on the island say the storm will pass to the south on Tuesday. A cyclone warning level three, out of four, is in place.

"Belal is dangerously approaching Mauritius and it represents a threat," Mauritius's meteorological service said. Sheets of metal clattering in the howling wind can be heard in the deserted streets of the capital, Port Louis. People further south on the island are dealing with the worst of the weather. The nation has been under curfew since 20:00 local time (16:00 GMT) and it will last until noon on Tuesday.

By 16:30 local time the country's international airport

was shut, along with government offices, banks and other firms, and the staff were sent home in advance of expected torrential rain, the AFP news agency reports. The storm had already brought heavy downpours.

Posts on social media show vehicles being submerged or washed away in Port Louis. Some of the water has now receded, revealing numerous damaged cars. "When the government closed offices today at 12:30 pm, it created a big panic. Many did not find their cars," one bank employee was quoted by AFP as saying. "My car was carried away 500 metres [yards] by rainwater. This is the first time in my life that I've seen this," he added. Ahead of the cyclone passing to the south of the island, the UK Foreign Office

advised tourists to follow official guidance, which includes staying indoors. Earlier, the authorities in Réunion had raised the storm alert level to violet, the highest level, as the cyclone approached the island. That alert level banned even police and rescuers from leaving shelter. The level was later dropped to red, allowing the authorities to offer aid to those affected. Despite the dire warnings, Réunion appears to have been spared the worst of the cyclone, as the eye of the storm passed to the north. Jérôme Filippini, the region's prefect, said it had not had the "cataclysmic character" initially feared.



Cyclone Belal created strong winds that hit Réunion before moving towards Mauritius

Opposition Condemns Designation of Chad's Military Ruler as Presidential Candidate

Opposition parties in Chad are condemning the entry of the country's military ruler into the 2024 presidential race. General Mahamat Idriss Deby seized power after his father's death, declared himself interim president, and pushed through a new constitution which enables him to run for president in this year's delayed elections.

In the nationally televised broadcast Saturday, Mahamat Zene Bada, secretary of Chad's former ruling Patriotic Salvation Movement or MPS party, said that military ruler Mahamat Idriss Deby is the party's candidate for the central African state's presidential elections expected later this year.

Bada said Chad is lucky to have Deby, an understanding leader who he said listens to

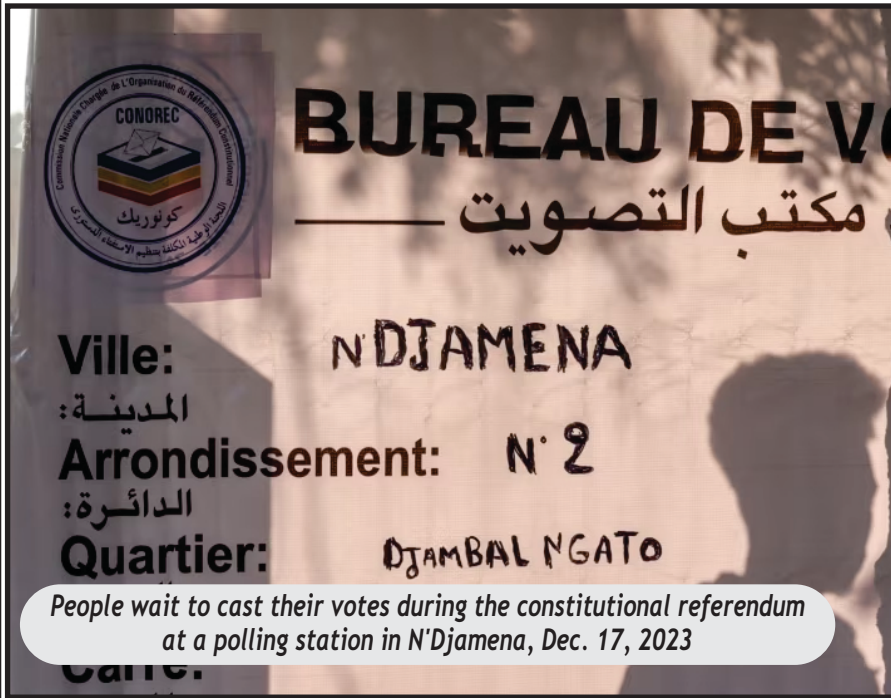
ruler as candidate for presidential elections expected this 2024.

He says Deby, who wants to conserve power and continue his late father Idriss Deby Itno's three decades iron fisted rule, should save Chad from descending into violence by not single handedly appointing people loyal to the military ruler to manage elections, instead of people who are independent, neutral and have the confidence of all Chad's political actors.

Padacke spoke on Chad state TV on Monday. He said Chad has remained poor and is devastated by armed conflicts and political tensions since the Deby family took power in 1990.

General Mahamat Idriss Deby became leader of Chad's Transitional Military Council in April 2021 after his father, Idriss Deby Itno, died on the frontlines of a fight against northern rebels.

The younger Deby was to head



his people and works for peace, development and national concord as transitional president. Baba said members of MPS designate Deby as their candidate for presidential elections so Deby can continue the work he has been doing to stop armed conflicts and political tensions and make Chad an emerging economy by 2030.

However, Chad's opposition and civil society groups are condemning Deby's designation and candidate for the presidential race. The opposition and civil society groups say Chad is not a Deby dynasty that can be ruled only by a single family. Albert Pahimi Padacke, opposition leader of Chad's National Rally for Democracy, contested and lost Chad's 2006 presidential election.

Padacke says he is certain the younger Deby asked the MPS, Chad's former ruling party, to name the military

an 18-month transitional council but in October of 2022, he dissolved the council and declared himself interim president.

Deby organized a December 17 constitutional referendum he said paved the way for a return to civilian rule and Chad's supreme court announced that the new constitution was approved by 86% of voters. Chad's opposition and civil society groups called the constitutional referendum a sham to prepare for an eventual election of Deby, a 39-year-old military general.

Opposition parties, including the Rally for Democracy and the Union of Democrats for Development and Progress, said the referendum should have barred Deby from becoming a candidate.

Meantime, interim president Deby has been designated honorary president of the MPS by a resolution of congressmen. VOA

EDITORIAL

Elect a people-centered Speaker

Lawmakers on Capitol Hill are gearing up to elect a Speaker that will head the incoming 55th Legislature. The race for the speakership is between incumbent Deputy Speaker, Cllr. J. Fonati Koffa and Representative Richard Nagbe Koon of Montserrado County District#11.

The election is intended to replace outgoing Speaker Bhofal Chambers, who lost his district in Maryland County during the October 10, 2023 election.

As the lawmakers prepare to vote on January 15, 2024, we urge to elect the right candidate that serve the public interest. This is important to main the doctrine of separation of power and promote the wellbeing of the citizenry.

This does not mean however, that whoever emerges as the next Speaker should be confrontational or combative with the executive. There should be strong coordination with the other two branches of government to keep the nation sailing smoothly.

The Speaker should be people-centered first before exercising party loyalty so as to keep a level head. By doing so he will focus on the bigger picture that is Liberia.

Lawmakers going to vote should look for these qualities and more in the candidates before arriving at a decision who to elect. A person should not be elected merely on friendship.

A Speaker that will champion Liberia's interest will do better. He should be able to navigate his way in diplomatic cycles to win trust and woe foreign investments to the country that will provide jobs for Liberians.

He should know needs of the people besides his immediate constituency and be able to sway his colleagues to act.

The Speaker wields so much power, but should not allow himself to be intoxicated by power that could lead to his destruction. In other words, power should be exercised judiciously.

Lastly, the Speaker should be someone that upholds transparency and accountability in both his public and private dealings to command respectability. Whether it is Cllr. J. Fonati Koffa or Representative Richard Nagbe Koon, these should be some of the characteristics of any emerging as Speaker of the 55th Legislature to preside over the business of the Liberian people.

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COMMENTARY

By Mohamed ElBaradei

The International Order Is Dying in Gaza

VIENNA - After COVID-19 struck in 2020, creating chaos and misery, I hoped that some silver lining would emerge from this global tragedy. For a time, it seemed possible. The pandemic was a powerful reminder of our common vulnerabilities, our shared humanity, and the importance of solidarity that transcends our differences and borders.

Now, however, I wonder if I was wrong even to hope. Once the pandemic subsided, we rushed back to the precipice with renewed vigor. None of the lessons of solidarity stuck, as if we were coated in Teflon. Many, if not all, of the pillars of the post-World War II global order seem to be crumbling. Violent conflict has become the default method to settle disagreements between countries (Russia and Ukraine) and within countries (Yemen and Sudan), while the multilateral security system, headed by the United Nations Security Council, is sliding into irrelevance.

Moreover, the inequality gap between the Global North and the Global South has widened, and more of the latter countries are suffering from debilitating debt burdens. This, in turn, has exacerbated poverty, fueled migration, and sown distrust. With populism and authoritarianism on the rise, attacks on human rights and democratic values have intensified and, in some cases, the veneer of elections has given these attacks spurious legitimacy. And the intensifying rivalry between the United States and China is fast becoming an end in itself.

But the ongoing war between Israel and Hamas has dealt a particularly crushing blow to the system. The gross violations of international humanitarian law to protect civilians beggar belief. In fact, the atrocities committed against civilians, first in Israel and now in Gaza, are evil in its purest form. These despicable acts should be at the top of the priority list for the International Criminal Court prosecutor and addressed in International Court of Justice proceedings. We must halt this descent into the abyss.

The cavalier disregard for the principles and norms of international law, such as limitations on the right to self-defense, and the willful blocking of the Security Council from fulfilling its "primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security," have been unconscionable. Senior UN humanitarian officials on the ground in Gaza have used phrases like "hell on earth" and "humanity giving up" to express their desperation. Few seem to be listening.

There is now a looming rupture between the West and the Arab and Muslim world, even as Western and Arab populations are directing anger toward their leaders. Dehumanizing, rage-filled rhetoric emanates from all sides and reverberates on city streets, university campuses, and in small towns the world over. All efforts to build bridges of respect and understanding

over the last few decades seem to have collapsed.

Moreover, the Arab and Muslim world has lost faith in perceived Western norms: international law and institutions, human rights, and democratic values. In their view, the West itself is showing that brute force trumps all else. Of course, the increasing belief that democracy and human rights - the liberal values that once inspired the Arab Spring - are simply tools for Western domination is music to the ears of autocrats and despots.

The war underscores two lessons. First, conflicts don't resolve themselves, and allowing them to fester is shortsighted and dangerous. UN Secretary-General António Guterres was viciously attacked by Israel after saying that Hamas's October 7 attack "did not happen in a vacuum." But he was acknowledging a truth - the pent-up humiliation and sense of injustice among the Palestinians - that most people who follow the Palestinian-Israeli conflict have long recognized.

The conflict has elicited calls for the revival of the ill-fated "peace process" that has been limping along for decades. But the same leaders now promoting a two-state solution silently looked on as Israel devoured (through annexation and settlement expansion) most of the land that was meant for a Palestinian state. The aftermath of today's violence may very well offer the last opportunity to reach a just and lasting peace before the entire region goes up in flames.

The other important lesson is that building a more robust and equitable global security system and financial architecture requires structural reforms. For starters, the veto power of the UN Security Council's five permanent members should be drastically curtailed, if not eliminated. The US and Russia must also resume nuclear arms talks and take meaningful steps toward disarmament. It is scandalous that there is no longer a single nuclear-arms-control agreement in operation between the world's two largest nuclear powers.

The Bretton Woods institutions - the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank - must give the developing world a fair say in global decision-making and equitable access to financial resources for development. Although policymakers have been calling for such an overhaul since the collapse of the Soviet Union more than 30 years ago, no progress has been made.

We must not permit an opportunity born of war to slip through our fingers. In the absence of radical reform of the international order, the Gaza war will herald a world spiraling out of control.

OP-ED

By Dixon Chibanda

The Global Mental-Health Crisis Demands New Thinking

LONDON - The world is in the grips of a mental-health crisis. From rising climate anxiety in rich countries like the United States to intense trauma in conflict zones like Ukraine and Gaza (especially among children), psychological suffering has become widespread, and traditional health-care services cannot keep up. This leaves tens of millions of people at risk of serious pathologies and suicide.

As it stands, more than 25% of the world's population reports feelings of social isolation and loneliness, and more than 150,000 people aged 15-29 die by suicide each year. Climate change threatens to increase these bleak figures. As the American Psychiatric Association reports, climate change can "lead to job loss, force people to move, and harm social cohesion and community resources, all of which have mental-health consequences." Moreover, contemplating climate change and its consequences for both "national security and individual well-being" can cause "significant distress."

No groups are spared. Young people fear for their future; older people grieve the destruction of the world of their childhoods; and activists and climate scientists suffer from emotional burnout and despair. And this is to say nothing of the post-traumatic stress and depression experienced by those already affected by climate-related disasters, particularly in vulnerable developing economies.

Traditionally, a psychiatric patient would engage in one-on-one therapy with a trained doctor. But even rich-country health systems lack the capacity to offer such services as widely as is needed: in the US, more than 150 million people live in areas with too few mental-health professionals. Within a few years, the country could be short by as many as 31,100 psychiatrists.

The situation is even worse in poor and conflict-affected countries, where traditional psychiatric interventions are often very difficult to access, if they are available at all. Consider my home country, Zimbabwe: despite being a country of 16 million, it has just 13 psychiatrists and 20 clinical psychologists.

The consequences of this shortfall became starkly apparent in 2019, when Cyclone Idai tore through parts of Zimbabwe. The storm's powerful winds and heavy rains - and the massive flooding and landslides they triggered - led to hundreds of deaths, displaced about 60,000 people, and demolished 50,000 homes. It also decimated unharvested crops, destroyed seed stocks, and killed livestock, leaving people without food or livelihoods. All of this contributed to mental-health problems, including post-traumatic stress disorder.

Barely a year later, things got much worse: the COVID-19 pandemic forced nationwide lockdowns that further undermined people's socioeconomic well-being. The resulting mental-health problems were well beyond the health-care system's capacity to handle.

But that did not mean Zimbabwe had no options. The Friendship Bench project, which I founded, trains community volunteers without any prior medical or mental-health training to provide talk therapy from wooden park benches in all ten provinces of the country. We have so far trained more than 2,000 of these "grandmothers" to provide counseling to their local communities.

The program works. In 2016, a randomized clinical trial found that patients with common mental disorders and indicators of depression who received Friendship Bench counseling had a significant decrease in symptoms. Communities with access to Friendship Bench services also experienced improvements in other areas, from HIV outcomes to maternal and child health. Even the grandmothers delivering the therapy report that they have benefited from a stronger sense of belonging and resilience.

Others in lower-resource countries have also been pioneering new, scalable models for delivering high-quality, low-cost psychiatric care to communities where it was not previously available. One trailblazer is Sangath, an NGO headquartered in the Indian state of Goa that trains ordinary people to deliver psychosocial treatments, particularly in areas with little access to mental-health services. Clinical trials have consistently shown that these "lay counselors" are effective in addressing a wide range of mental-health conditions, from depression and anxiety to alcohol-use disorders.

Similarly, StrongMinds trains "mental-health facilitators" to provide free group therapy to low-income women and adolescents with depression in Uganda and Zambia. The organization reports a powerful impact, not least in supporting communities affected by climate-related environmental disasters. And this impact is set to grow: StrongMinds founder and CEO Sean Mayberry expects the program to reach 335,000 people this year.

Western models of psychiatric care are too resource-intensive to be rolled out across the world, particularly in Africa and South Asia, where fast-growing populations and accelerating climate risks pose huge challenges. But well-crafted community-based initiatives are both cost-effective and highly scalable. Beyond improving individual mental health and resilience, such programs strengthen community cohesion and encourage collective problem-solving, both of which will become increasingly important as the climate crisis intensifies.

Tackling the global mental-health crisis effectively will require greater engagement from the international community. The World Health Organization's Special Initiative for Mental Health, which sought to deliver greater access to mental-health services across its six regions in 2019-23, was a step in the right direction. But it must be sustained and expanded. Meanwhile, local and national governments and philanthropies should embrace new, locally-based approaches that have proved their ability to help communities cope with growing risks to their lives, livelihoods, and well-being.

OPINION

By Gordon Brown

Britain Is Turning Its Back on International Law

EDINBURGH - Last month, UK Prime Minister Rishi Sunak made an astonishing admission: the United Kingdom would have all but abandoned the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR) were it not for the intervention of the Rwandan government. I cannot imagine any previous Conservative leader - from Winston Churchill, an early advocate of the ECHR, to John Major - ever suggesting that Rwanda, a country with one of the world's worst human-rights records, should serve as Britain's moral compass.

Most UK media coverage has focused on far-right politicians' claims that the legislation to send illegal immigrants and asylum seekers to Rwanda does not go far enough. But the bigger danger, which few Conservatives have acknowledged, is that it would seriously undermine Britain's long-term commitment to the rule of law.

It is no exaggeration to say that, as the Rwanda bill enters the crucial committee stage in the House of Commons this week, the United Kingdom, long viewed as the home of liberty and famed for exporting these values to the rest of the world, is about to cross the Rubicon. As the Bingham Centre for the Rule of Law explains in a recent report, "the central purpose of the Bill, to conclusively deem Rwanda to be a safe country in light of the recently concluded Rwanda Treaty, is contrary to the Rule of Law." By banning the courts from considering that question in the future, its adoption "would amount to a legislative usurpation of the judicial function."

The proposed bill would limit the right to challenge removal from Britain to asylum seekers who can prove that they risk ill-treatment in Rwanda (as opposed to onward refoulement) and thus prevent important sections of the ECHR and the Human Rights Act from being applied in the UK. It is likely to breach the right not to be returned to a country where one would face torture or persecution, as well as the right to an effective remedy (ECHR Article 13).

Already, Conservative ministers have advanced legislation to prevent people who arrive irregularly from claiming asylum. The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees has condemned this measure as effectively extinguishing "the right of refugees to be recognized and protected in the UK."

But the so-called "notwithstanding clauses" in the current Rwanda bill are of a different order of magnitude. They assert that the bill's provisions override "any interpretation of international law" by a court or tribunal and any domestic law. With no apparent sense of irony, a treaty whose primary purpose is "to ensure that the United Kingdom's international human rights obligations are met" is being given effect by legislation expressly overriding those obligations because the government does not trust the courts to apply the law as it wants.

Sunak contends that these laws are necessary to prevent time-consuming judicial reviews - deemed an abuse of human-rights legislation - and appears confident that they would deter British courts from agreeing to hear any further cases about Rwanda's safety. Moreover, he has added a clause to the Rwanda bill stating that only a "Minister of the Crown" may decide whether to comply with an interim injunction from the European Court of Human Rights (ECtHR) regarding the removal of a person to Rwanda, while domestic courts must disregard any such injunction. Not only is this a clear breach of the ECHR, but it also disregards the ECtHR's recent changes to its procedure for interim measures, which address the UK's concerns.

When Sunak became prime minister, he had an opportunity to reaffirm core British values; Boris Johnson and Liz Truss, his predecessors, had played fast and loose with them for years. But while stopping short of formally leaving the ECHR - which the Conservative ultra-right wants - he appears to have renounced its core elements, including the quintessentially British right to go to court to defend or protect yourself, a product of the UK's common-law heritage.

Still, Sunak could go even further. According to a recent statement from 10 Downing Street, the prime minister is considering "whether being part of the ECHR is in the UK's long-term interests." Sunak's administration has also systematically undermined international law - not just the ECHR, but also the UN's 1951 Refugee Convention and human-rights and humanitarian law more generally. The golden thread that connects the Magna Carta of 1215 and the Bill of Rights of 1689 to the ECHR of 1950 and the Human Rights Act of 1998 is being severed.

Ministers have been on this slippery slope for some time. Stripping asylum seekers of the right to have their claims decided in the UK follows from government decisions to house them in inferior accommodation and to deport them before completing the necessary checks to identify victims of modern slavery. (The legal requirement to investigate and prosecute the perpetrators of such offenses has also been ignored.) Moreover, the ministerial code was revised in 2015 to remove the obligation to comply with international law, while unprecedented new guidance requires government lawyers not to advise that a proposed policy is unlawful even if there is a high risk of a successful legal challenge.

Conservatives have targeted the ECHR for at least a decade. In 2013, then-Prime Minister David Cameron said that he would not rule out abandoning the ECHR if he won the next election, while his successors - Theresa May, Johnson, and Truss - and two of their home secretaries, Priti Patel and Suella Braverman, have explicitly called for the UK's withdrawal. Braverman even asserted, with scant evidence, that "there are 100 million people around the world who could qualify for protection under our current laws," and that she had to act because "they are coming here." More recently, former Immigration Minister Robert Jenrick said that the government should leave the ECHR to stop small-boat crossings.

The Conservatives' wholesale attack on the ECHR is born of their conviction that even a post-Brexit Britain does not enjoy enough "independence." They believe that UK sovereignty must be unlimited, unrestricted, and accountable to no one, especially not a European court. Such an insular and xenophobic worldview undermines any modern concept of human rights and is unfit for an interconnected world in which as many as 280 million people live outside their country of birth.

With its efforts to undermine the ECHR, Britain is setting in motion a chain of events that will chip away at the rule of law and human rights around the world. Countries like Hungary and Turkey will inevitably cite the UK's actions when they refuse to comply with the ECHR and similar instruments. The South African government recently proposed that it will choose which Refugee Convention obligations it should comply with. It will not be the last.

Article Article

Integrity as the Fulcrum for the Social and Economic Transformation of Liberia:

Authored: Austin S. Fallah-US-based Liberian Professional.

Liberia, once envisaged as a promised land for formerly enslaved people, has grappled with pervasive societal and economic problems that have kept it in an unending cycle of despair and poverty (Naiman, 2015).

This essay argues that the much-needed transformation of Liberia pivots on the people of integrity who have the capacity and the will to deliver Liberia and Liberians out of its current debilitating state. While honesty is a crucial virtue, the manifestation of integrity may be the ultimate salvation for the troubled country.

To comprehend the weight of these assertions, one needs to understand the endemic problems plaguing Liberia. International Monetary Fund Report (2020) highlights Liberia's worrying economic indicators, such as high unemployment, inflation, and poverty.

Notably, these problems do not exist in a vacuum; they are facilitated by pervasive corruption, bad governance, and a lack of integrity at different societal levels (Transparency International, 2019). Integrity, broadly defined as firm adherence to moral



and ethical principles, is essential in policy-making, implementation, and governance. It is a notch higher than honesty as it involves moral judgment and consistency in doing what is right.

Therefore, it is people of integrity, acting in their personal and professional capacities, who have the potential to turn Liberia's fortunes around. A person of integrity will not embezzle public funds for development projects, leading to better resource allocation to address Liberia's imploding unemployment and poverty rates. Instead, they will strive to abide by moral principles and implement policies framed democratically, thereby engendering a more equitable and just society.

Furthermore, integrity drives accountability and transparency in governance, two factors critical in the fight against corruption. According to Transparency International (2019), Liberia ranked 137th out of 180 in perceived corruption index. This disturbing statistic underscores the need for leaders and the citizenry guided by principles of integrity and transparency.

The practical implementation of these principles will result in more responsibly managed local and national economies and aid in the hastening of Liberia's much-needed social and economic progress. The importance of integrity in steering Liberia away from its financial crisis is boldly punctuated by historical precedence. A case in point is Botswana, a country that transformed from one of the poorest in the world to an upper-middle-income country. It did so mainly through integrity in governance and resource management.

In conclusion, as a call to transformative action, the citizens of Liberia should prioritize integrity as a cardinal virtue and guide in selecting leaders and, in general, societal engagement.

Those of integrity are best placed to lead Liberia to the much-desired restoration of social and economic prosperity.

Honesty is, without a doubt, a commendable virtue, but it is the sustained manifestation of integrity that will deliver Liberia and Liberians from its financial impasse.

Any society without honesty at its front row is doomed, but a society led by people of integrity stays and progressively thrives, just like the story of the phoenix.



Professor Tom Kaydor Profile

Prof. Tom Kaydor, Jr. is a PhD Candidate in the Department of Government and European Studies at the New University in the Republic of Slovenia, Central Europe where he is reading and researching International Development and Diplomacy with Security Aspects. He has completed his PhD dissertation. His dissertation topic is 'Reconceiving Africa's Regional Integration for Sustainable Development'. He earned his second master's as a Master of Public Policy (MPP) specialized in Development Policy with Distinction from the Crawford School of Economics and Government (now Crawford School of Public Policy), Australian National University, Australia. He also holds Master of Arts (MA) in International Relations (Highest Honor) and Bachelor of Arts (BA) Magna Cum Laude in Political Science from the University of Liberia where he currently serves as an Assistant Professor at the IBB Graduate School of International Studies. He holds a Diploma in Leading Economic Growth from the Kennedy Graduate School, Harvard University, USA. He holds several diplomas and certificates in other professional areas, and he is equally an Adjunct Professor of Development Studies at the AME University Graduate School in International Development. Prof. Kaydor is an evidence-based researcher and a published author.

Prof. Kaydor is an International Civil servant. He is a former UN Coordination Adviser in Ethiopia; and former United Nations (UN) Coordination Analyst in Liberia. He also served as UNICEF-Liberia National Consultant. First, he was UNICEF Liberia; Volunteer Engagement Initiative; and Then National Consultant for the Development of the Roadmap on the Protection of Children Living in Street Situations in Liberia. In these two countries, he coordinated UN support to democratic governance and state-building, peacebuilding, and conflict resolution. He mobilized resources for the United Nations Country Teams' joint programmes including Youth Empowerment; Gender Equality and Women Economic Empowerment; Food Security; peace building and peace consolidation. He conducted policy research on Africa and its regional economic hubs and shared reports and findings with the governments and the UN systems in these states. Thus, he is aware of the major socio-economic, political, and environmental challenges and opportunities African governments share regarding democratic governance and state-building and conflict resolution.

He served as Liberia's Deputy Foreign Minister for International Cooperation and Economic Integration. In this post, he coordinated Liberia's foreign policy, development cooperation, aid coordination, and provided policy advice to the government on how Liberia and Africa in part could curb extreme poverty, achieve economic growth and national development through international cooperation and democratic governance. Without peace, these issues cannot be achieved; hence, peace, rule of law and justice are preconditions for development.

As Deputy Foreign Minister for International Cooperation and Economic Integration, he also led Liberia's bilateral and multilateral negotiations, regional integration processes, governance, peace, and security dialogues et al. at the UN, African Union (AU), the Economic Community for West African States (ECOWAS), and the Mano River Union (MRU). This made him an astute policy maker, a peace builder and advocate on African and global affairs. Equally, he served as Liberia's Chief Negotiator at the Intergovernmental Negotiations on the Post-2015 Development Agenda, now the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). In this role, he researched Liberia's and Africa's binding constraints, prepared policy papers/notes and presented them to the High-Level Committee on the Common African Position, the Group of 77 plus China, the Least Developed Countries, et al. He, therefore, has a profound understanding of and hands on experience in global governance, peacebuilding and state-building prospects and challenges.

Additionally, he served as Liberia's Assistant Foreign Minister for Africa, Asia, and the Pacific. In this post, he was government's representative in charge of political and diplomatic affairs on all these regions. Hence, He has hands on experience on governance and state-building and peacebuilding issues in Asia, Africa, Middle East, and Pacific regions.

Prof. Kaydor was trained as a strategic planner in 2009 at the Galilee College (now the Galilee International Management Institute). Since then, He has been involved with supporting institutions (NGOs and INGOS in developing their strategic plans. For instance, He has developed the strategic plans for about eight National NGOs in Liberia. He has done strategic planning for the United Nations system particularly for the Interagency Programming Teams and the Operations Management Teams in Liberia and Ethiopia, etc. He has been serving as a National Consultant for UNICEF Liberia. My current assignment for the development of the National roadmap for the protection of children living in street situations ends on 14th January 2023.

Most recently, prof. Kaydor served as **ASSOCIATE EDITOR** for **"Encyclopedia of the Sustainable Development Goals: Transforming the World We Want"-Volume 16**. He was responsible to propose themes and edited 21 essays (scholarly submissions) on volume 16 that is focused on SDG16 as published by the Springer Journal I Switzerland. . Goal 16: Promotes peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable, and inclusive institutions at all levels. The "Encyclopedia of the Sustainable Development Goals: Transforming the World We Want" has been being produced by the World Sustainable Development Research and Transfer Centre and the Inter-University Sustainable Development Research Programme, published by Springer, as part of the award-winning "World Sustainability Series". With this background, one can say that his work has supported the Vision of 'a just, peaceful, and sustainable world free of violence, inequality, and oppression'. He is a Peer Reviewer for three renowned international journals.

Finally, Prof. Kaydor is a published author with the following publications, including three books, to his esteemed credit.

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Lawyer wants justice system overhauled

By Lincoln G. Peters

A Liberian lawyer has appealed to President-elect Amb. Joseph Nyumah Boakai to do a complete overhaul of the administration of President Weah's government, the Justice Ministry allegedly instructed insurance companies not to give

people to get bond because stopping them is not fair in the eyes of justice.

He pleaded that what happened in President Weah's government should not continue during the administration of President-elect Boakai.

"When defendants are charged with some of these criminal charges, they should be given the space to defend themselves," said Atty. Woiwar.

He suggested that the government should ensure that whenever someone is indicted, insurance companies should be free to issue insurance bonds to them.

The Liberian lawyer pointed out that if they are accused and don't have a bond, it makes access to justice difficult.

"Whenever people are accused, they should be given the right and freedom to secure bond to defend themselves," he noted.

He claimed that when Montserrado County Electoral District #10 Representative Yekeh Kolubah had a case, the government allegedly instructed insurance companies not to give him a bond because the government was interested in the case. "The court must hear before it condemns. But if you make the situation that people can't secure bond to come to court to defend themselves, it makes [the] justice system bad."

He alleged that under the administration of President Weah's government, the Justice Ministry allegedly instructed insurance companies not to give defendants bonds to defend themselves.

"The justice system needs to be strong, needs to be fully paid and given more attention. And cardinal among the many challenges that the justice system is faced with, the Justice Ministry should be a place that should afford all defendants the right to defend themselves," he added.

Atty. Woiwar argued that once the offense is bailable, the government should allow

the Liberian justice system to enhance access to justice across the country.

In an exclusive interview with this paper over the weekend, Atty. G. Alphonso W. Woiwar of the Supuwood and Associates Law Offices said that access to justice under the outgoing administration of President George Manneh Weah was a serious challenge.

According to him, access to justice remains a major challenge across the country.

Weah congratulates new Speaker and Pro-tempore

-as he dedicates LRRRC new headquarters

By Naneka A. Hoffman

President George M. Weah has congratulated Speaker-elect, Jonathan Fonati Koffa, for winning the speakership, and Grand Bassa County Senator, Nyonblee Karnga Lawrence, for winning the Senate Pro-Tempore position on white ballot.

Both officials will lead the 55th Legislature of Liberia.

Speaking in Tarr Town, Monrovia on Monday, January 15, 2024, during commissioning ceremony of a newly constructed National Headquarters of the Liberia Refugees Repatriation and Resettlement Commission (LRRRC) President Weah lauded the commendable work of the Commission and its affiliated agencies in catering to refugees and returnees.

"Today, as we inaugurate this complex, we are extending our capacity to provide much needed relief to those in search of solace and

stability", President Weah said. He thanked the dedicated management and staff of the LRRRC under the leadership of executive director Rev. Festus Logan and the chairman of the Board of Directors and Minister of Internal Affairs Varney Sirleaf, for their tireless effort in bringing the project to reality.

President Weah also hails the UNHCR family and partners for supporting the project.

"I am reliably informed that the commitment of the UNHCR to invest their resources in the development of the local office, for the administration of refugees by any refugee repatriation and resettlement organization is indeed an extraordinary gesture which we hereby acknowledge with grateful thanks and appreciation", The President said.

The dedication of the facility

▶ CONT'D ON PAGE 11



Pres. Weah

Agriculture Liberia debunks MOA

By Patrick N. Mensah, Maryland County

The Country Director of Agriculture Liberia, Chealy Brown Dennis, has accused the Ministry of Agriculture of black mail.

According to Mr. Dennis, the ministry had reported that a 75-hectare irrigated and well-laid-out field, 18-metric-ton capacity rice mill, along with accessories, storage, offices, generator, and garage were given to his company in October 2022. He notes that the ministry also claims that the CEO of Agriculture Liberia does not want to appreciate its effort, knowing the good the Ministry of Agriculture has done for him, pointing to role played by Deloitte in the Agriculture Liberia (AL) MOA-LACF grant and how it was misinterpreted by Mr. Jarba and that it was Deloitte that incorporated them, not the Ministry. But the ministry clarified that Deloitte's role was to conduct due diligence on business plans submitted by experts hired by the Ministry of Agriculture.

It said the actual champions of Agriculture Liberia (AL's) application for the grant were the

based on rumors circulating within the corridors of MOA that our CEO Mr. Armstrong Jarba, is one of those being considered by the incoming government to take over and steer the affairs of MOA, and I believe it is against this backdrop they are doing such. But we want to state emphatically that our CEO has no intention whatsoever to work in government because he is a businessman and has made a decision to stick with the private sector, just so they know."

Dennis continues, "A second reason could possibly be they don't want our Nimba grant to be approved, since its approval is tied to our Maryland County's operations and so they come up with these claims so as to deny our Nimba grant during each sitting of the funds approval committee, and that they use these false allegations against us to support their claims."

He says CEO Jarba has been financing operations of their company, including employees' salaries and buying everything the company needs.

He notes that despite claim by MOA, Agriculture Liberia single-handedly financed all of its farms in Liberia without borrowing from banks, and without receiving money



Country Director Chealy Brown Dennis

Ministry of Agriculture team in Maryland, the STAR project, and the Minister of Agriculture head office in Monrovia.

The ministry frowned at tendency of Liberians to downplay its efforts and glorify foreigners, stressing that credit should be given where it is due, and that in this case, it is MOA and the Government of Liberia.

But Agriculture Liberia in its response said it is not disputing the fact that it received support from the Ministry of Agriculture under Mill and LACF funds but that the grant was approved in June 2022 and disbursement made on July 5, 2023, while inputs were procured the same month and equipment received in November 2023.

Mr. Dennis explained that the MOA materials provided weren't turned over to his company after signing in June 2022 until mid-2023, as alleged by the ministry.

"We are saying, they are lying on us that we said we didn't receive the MILL and LACF fund, but it wasn't 2022. We think their recent action to lie against us is

from government or NGOs since 2014 to June 2023. "So yes, we received the LACF grant in July 2023 and the inputs received will be used at our farm in Maryland County this year 2024", he confirmed.

According to him, the LACF funds are not meant to finance entire operation of businesses but rather to help small businesses buy inputs and equipment aimed at supplementing their work.

"Our company has been preaching only one message for the past 10 years and our message hasn't changed, a message that we can grow our own food as Liberians. And so such wrong information about us not being appreciative needs to stop".

He said the only way Liberia can get better is for Liberians to stop depending on government and NGOs, which is exactly what they have be doing over the years and become successful.

"We can unite and add our little resources together to establish major corporations in Liberia to have a share of our economy, using our company as an example", he added. Editing by Jonathan Browne

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Article

Article

PAMA CO Movement inspires young people

By Lewis S. Teh

A local group, PAMA CO Live Authentically Movement, has encouraged young people in Liberia to cultivate self-confidence and self-love that will pave their

areas but one of its key focuses is the wellness summit that is meant to bring people together to discuss different issues surrounding growth, change of mind, career path drive, among others.

She said this year's focus is

and shed light and discuss things that affect them and find a solution to them."She pointed out that failure to tackle issues that affects people in the society often leads to mental issues including stress depression among others, saying so the message we sending out this year is that you are enough she adds.

Speaking to the participants at the start of the summit, Madam Ne-Suah Beyan Livingstone charged young people to do away with fear and doubt, and instead, have conviction that they can become whatever they desire or aspire for.

"As you become a new confident, your associate matters a lot, what you need around are group of people who will clap when you fail", she said.

Speaking on the topic "Becoming the New Confident You", she encouraged young people to surround themselves with group of people that will motivate and push them in whatever way.

She said if someone motivates an individual, it pushes said person to do more and become what he or she desire, adding you have to trust and believe in yourself; there will come a time where no one wants to believe you, that's exactly when you trust in your abilities and capabilities.

"You need a sense of control in your life if you must become the new confident you, your space should be so valuable, allowing people who should be people of your character.



way in identifying career paths.

Ms. Parnneh Mallobe, lead of the Movement says they work with everyone including youth and young adults in helping them to have confidence in themselves, saying "Our goal is to create a world where people can be themselves and truly for who they are."

Ms Mallobe spoke recently at Icampus on Carey Street in central Monrovia when the organization held the second edition of its wellness summit for dozens of youth and young adults.

According to her, the Movement works alongside different groups in different

on discovering oneself - a journey that leads to finding self-confidence."This wellness summit is intended to nourish the minds of the youth and adults to make them learn new things in order to have self-confidence."

She noted that the decision to establish PAMA CO Live Authentically Movement derived from bullying from friends during her high school days and up to present so it was necessary to bring people with similar experiences to come together and discuss ways to finding solutions.

"There came a time where I sat by myself and thought it was prudent for people who are victims of this to come together

Liberia Chess Federation kicks off 2024 Championship

By Naneka A. Hoffman

The Liberia Chess Federation 2023 National Individual Championship has officially kicked off here. The opening ceremony being held on Sunday, January 14, 2024 at the Sinkor Palace Hotel in Congo Town. The 2023 National Chess Championship that began on Sunday, 14th January is the 6th Edition since the establishment of the Liberia Chess Federation in 2014. FM Barcon Harmon, James Tondo, Thomas Saah, and Bobby Ballah won 2016, 2018, 2019, 2021 and the 2022 editions, respectively.

The two-week tournament, pitting Liberia's best 20 chess players will conclude on 28th January 2024. Twenty (20) players are competing in an 11-round cage fight to squeeze out the

2023 National Individual Chess Champion and fill the five Open Section slots at the upcoming World Chess Olympiad 2024 in Budapest, Hungary.

At the start of the championship, the federation completed the first set of events for 2023, which include the 2023 Rapid Chess Championship (won by Thomas Saah), and the National Blitz Chess Championship (won by Kennedy Zinnah Kengo).

Speaking during the opening ceremony, LCF President Thomas Karyah described this year's championship as an important event that is starting on a small note."This event is going to solve many of our problems about the quality of chess in Liberia and the country's representation in international competitions", he said.

Mr. Karyah said with the

national classical Championship that is live online with video feed for followers is going to directly and indirectly support all of the Federation's programs in order to create more opportunities for the game.

He noted that as people see the game being played in Liberia from the ongoing Championship, they are going to be motivated to participate or support based on the quality delivered by the federation especially, at the competition. Editing by Jonathan Browne



Forging a Path to Prosperity and Peace through National Reconciliation in Liberia:

By: Austin S. Fallah - US-based Liberian Professional

In the tranquility of Liberia's present, the reverberations of its tumultuous past persist—a poignant reminder of once-endured painful realities. The nation, formerly a brutal slaughterhouse of humanity tainted by corruption and inhumanity, now stands at a critical juncture.

Recalling these haunting memories may appear formidable, yet it serves as an immunizing reminder—a solemn oath declared, "Never again should Liberia descend into the abyss of corruption, a slaughterhouse for its people."

This commitment goes beyond mere words; it encapsulates a vision for our nation's future—a rallying call for national reconciliation, poised to facilitate socio-economic development and

development indices.

Transparency and accountability in governance are paramount to reconciliation. Truth-telling and justice deter the recurrence of past wrongs, signifying Liberia's commitment to eradicate corruption and cultivate a culture of honesty.

Enduring peace, the cornerstone of prosperity, cannot be separated from national reconciliation. Liberia's pursuit of tranquility symbolizes a departure from intergenerational struggles, instilling hope for a brighter future.

Education and skills development are integral to reconciliation. Empowering the youth reduces susceptibility to conflict, fostering socio-economic development.



foster enduring peace.

National reconciliation, validating collective experiences and aspirations, is crucial for post-conflict restoration, particularly in Liberia, marked by a history of civil disputes, despotism, and corruption. It provides an opportunity for social catharsis, bridging gaps across divided lines and addressing shared challenges.

Underscoring the role of reconciliation in promoting socio-economic development cannot be overstated. It creates an environment conducive to investments, effective governance, and civic trust, all pivotal for Liberia's ascent from the depths of global poverty and

Investing in education and vocational training emerges as a flagship strategy for Liberia's reconciliation and development—a dream envisioned by Mr. James A. S. Momoh of New York City, a candidate for a Ph.D. in Educational Leadership and Policy.

To reshape Liberia's narrative, confronting the past, embracing reconciliation, transparently addressing corruption, and investing in education are imperative.

This path leads to a future of socio-economic growth and enduring peace—a beacon of hope and tranquility for Liberia and the unborn generations. Together, we fulfill our sacred duty.

Français

Koffa en tête dans la course à la présidence de la Chambre des Représentants

Le vice-président de l'Assemblée nationale, Me Fonati Koffa, semble être en tête dans l'élection à la

Cependant, selon toutes les indications, le CDC de Koffa semble avoir le nombre, à en juger par les résultats des élections législatives du 10

pour vaincre le candidat du Parti de l'unité, Richard Koon, qui aurait besoin d'environ 26 votes supplémentaires.

L'avantage de Koffa dans la course à la présidence repose sur le fait qu'il est considéré comme un législateur capable de naviguer des deux côtés de l'assemblée et de trouver son chemin à travers les deux camps. Par conséquent, il est mieux placé pour succéder à Chambers par rapport à son rival, le Rep. Koon, qui manque de la capacité de manœuvrer à travers l'Assemblée pour mettre ses collègues en ligne.

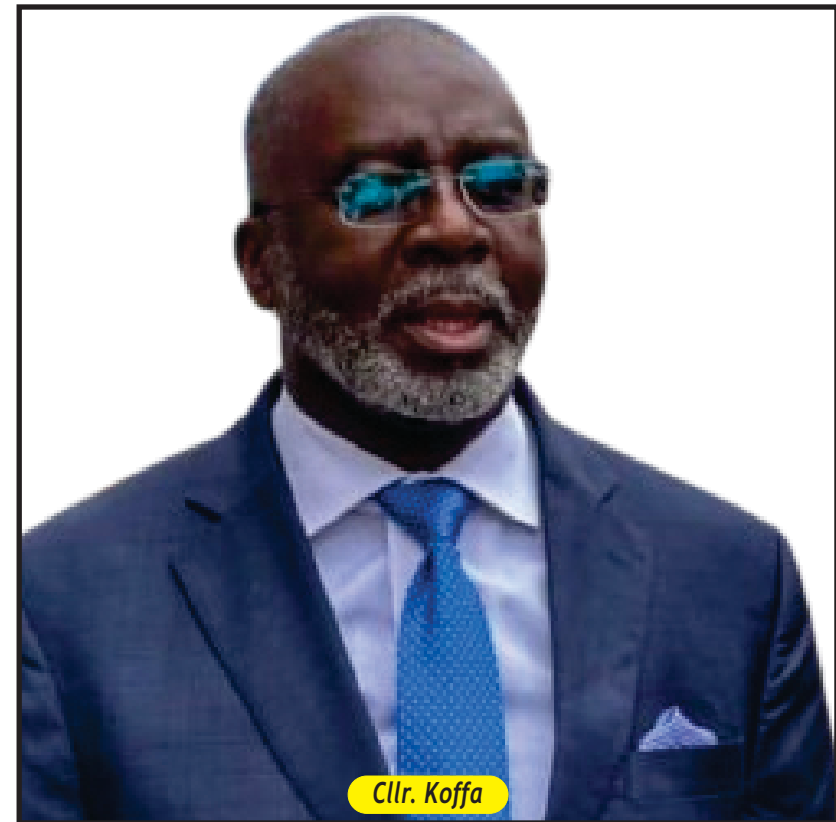
De plus, les chances de Koffa à la présidence ont également été renforcées par des allégations de corruption. On prétend que le président entrant a offert 5000 dollars à chaque législateur pour l'investiture dans leurs districts respectifs avant l'élection à la présidence de l'Assemblée.

L'ancien vice-président a été accusé d'avoir donné des pots-de-vin pour faire élire son candidat à la présidence, une accusation que ses collaborateurs ont niée en affirmant que l'argent n'avait rien à voir avec l'élection.

Les candidats : - Koffa et Koon viennent avec leurs qualifications et expériences respectives de différents horizons professionnels, mais pas sans quelques zones d'ombre.

Cllr. Koffa est un avocat chevronné avec des

▶ CONT'D ON PAGE 9



Cllr. Koffa

présidence de l'Assemblée d'aujourd'hui au Capitole, 37 représentants lui ayant déjà promis leur soutien.

Le vice-président Koffa, membre de l'administration sortante du Congress for Democratic Change (CDC), affronte le représentant du Unity Party, Richard Koon.

Les deux hommes sont à leur deuxième mandat en tant que législateur, ayant conservé leurs sièges lors des récentes élections.

octobre 2023, au cours desquelles le parti a remporté 27 sièges, contre seulement 11 pour le Parti de l'Unité.

Il y a un total de 73 sièges à la Chambre basse, mais plusieurs sièges font encore de litiges électoraux. Le nombre de législateurs censés participer à l'élection à la présidence de l'Assemblée est d'environ 67.

Cela signifie qu'avec la majorité de 27 du CDC, il faudrait environ des législateurs indépendants supplémentaires

Burkina Faso : l'ex-chef d'état-major de la gendarmerie nationale interpellé

À l'ex-chef d'état-major de la gendarmerie nationale, le lieutenant-colonel Evrard Somda, a été interpellé. Selon des témoins, l'ex-patron de la gendarmerie a été arrêté à son domicile le dimanche 14 janvier par des hommes armés. Pour le moment, aucune communication officielle sur cette arrestation, ni sur ses raisons. Selon les proches du lieutenant-colonel Evrard Somda, ce sont des hommes « lourdement » armés qui sont venus chercher l'ex-chef d'état-major de la gendarmerie du Burkina Faso. Son domicile, situé dans un quartier huppé de la capitale, a été encerclé, avant qu'il ne soit embarqué vers une destination qui est pour l'heure « inconnue ».

« La tension est devenue permanente dans la capitale » Cette interpellation intervient dans un contexte tendu. Depuis le samedi 13

janvier, des appels à la mobilisation pour faire barrage à un projet de déstabilisation de la transition ont été lancés sur les réseaux sociaux par les partisans de la junte au pouvoir. Certains soutiens parlent même d'un projet « d'assassinat » contre le président de la transition Ibrahim Traoré et ses proches. Selon des témoins, plusieurs personnes ont été également interpellées. Mais on ne sait pas encore si ces interpellations sont en lien avec

celle de l'ancien patron de la gendarmerie. « La tension est devenue permanente dans la capitale », confie une source sécuritaire sous anonymat. Débarqué de la tête de la gendarmerie nationale début octobre 2023 par le capitaine Ibrahim Traoré, les apparitions publiques du lieutenant-colonel Evrard Somda étaient rares depuis le passage du bâton du commandement à son successeur.



Éditorial

Les lamentations de la vice-présidente Taylor sur du lait versé

Les récentes révélations de la vice-présidente sortante Jewel Howard-Taylor sur les traitements qu'elle aurait subis au sein du gouvernement de la coalition du président George Manneh Weah, qu'elle a servi pendant six ans, ne sont rien d'autre que des lamentations sur du lait versé.

Comment une femme de son statut a-t-elle pu permettre de subir une telle humiliation psychologique sans réagir ?

Pourtant, elle a été assez courageuse pour défendre publiquement le CDC et critiquer à plusieurs reprises l'ancien vice-président, maintenant président élu, Joseph Nyumah Boakai, pour sa performance médiocre sous Madame Sirleaf. La même chose qu'elle disait de l'autre s'est retournée contre elle.

Madame Taylor a conduit le Parti patriotique national (NPP) au sein du Congress for Democratic Change (CDC) du président Weah dans le cadre d'une coalition qui a fait d'elle vice-présidente à l'issue des élections de 2017. Mais elle a été négligée après l'accession au pouvoir du CDC.

Au cours de la première année de l'administration, elle n'a pas repris son travail au Sénat qu'elle préside, car le palais présidentiel a retiré ses collaborateurs officiels et son cortège officiel, invoquant des allégations et des craintes au sein du parti au pouvoir selon lesquelles elle voulait éclipser le président Weah. La pression publique a été nécessaire pour que ses avantages soient rétablis.

Lors d'une émission en direct sur Internet récemment, la vice-présidente a déploré qu'elle n'ait jamais eu accès au cercle intérieur de l'administration Weah malgré son statut de deuxième commandant, tandis que sa valeur en termes d'éducation et d'expérience était minimisée dans le gouvernement. Comment cela peut-il attirer l'attention du public alors qu'elle est déjà sur le départ pour laisser place à une nouvelle administration ? La Coalition for Democratic Change a perdu le second tour de l'élection présidentielle du 14 novembre 2023 au profit de l'Unity Party, contrecarrant clairement la tentative du président Weah de briguer un second mandat.

Mais le fait qu'une femme qui a déjà été première dame de la République du Liberia avant d'être élue vice-présidente endure une telle humiliation pendant six longues années dans un silence total, est non seulement une déception sérieuse pour elle-même, mais aussi pour les femmes libériennes aspirant à des fonctions publiques.

Par ses révélations, Madame Taylor indique clairement qu'elle a été complètement mise à l'écart. Ce n'est donc pas étonnant que les appels à l'emploi au sein de la faction NPP soient restés sans réponse, car elle n'avait aucune influence sur le président Weah ou les principaux responsables pour faire valoir ses intérêts, et elle ne pouvait pas le dire publiquement.

"À un certain moment, j'ai été bloquée ; je ne faisais plus partie de l'équipe. En 2016-2017, j'ai fait partie de l'équipe ; nous nous sommes assis autour de la table pour discuter, et il (le président Weah) me demandait à la fin de chaque conversation de parler, 'Deputy SB, qu'en dis-tu,' et j'avais toujours la chance de dire ce que je pensais."

Mais elle a observé que tout cela a changé par la suite, et elle a été de plus en plus ostracisée au sein de la Coalition, regrettant "Ce manque de communication et de consultation a réellement atteint ma personne. Si je pouvais revenir en arrière, je dirais que c'était la partie la plus difficile pour moi. En tant que femme, vous savez, nous aimons parler. Et donc, j'ai toujours voulu avoir l'opportunité de parler de certaines des choses qui se passaient. Et j'ai toujours voulu dire que le président Weah et moi n'avions jamais eu d'échanges en face à face ; jamais."

Le fait de s'exprimer maintenant à la onzième heure est, comme on le dit souvent en parlant libérien, "de l'eau sous le pont" qui n'a pas une grande pertinence pour le moment. Tout ce qui lui reste maintenant, c'est de continuer sa vie après le 22 janvier.

Français

Rencontre Boakai-Koffa : Ce qui s'est réellement passé



Pre-Elet Amb Boakai

Les détails émergents de la réunion du dimanche 7 janvier 2024 entre le président élu, Joseph N. Boakai, et le vice-président de la Chambre, Me Fonati Koffa, font état d'une tentative infructueuse de Boakai de faire pression sur Koffa pour qu'il se retire de la course à la présidence de la Chambre des Représentants, à seulement quelques jours des élections à la chambre basse, a appris le New Dawn. Me Koffa, actuel vice-président de la 54e Assemblée législature, cherche à remplacer son supérieur, le président sortant Bhofal Chambers. Cependant, la réunion entre Boakai et Koffa ne s'est pas bien déroulée le dimanche. Le président élu aurait demandé au vice-président Koffa de se retirer de la course à la présidence de la Chambre des représentants pour ouvrir la voie au candidat du Parti de l'unité, le représentant Richard N. Koon, qui se présente également à la présidence de la Chambre, mais celui-ci aurait refusé. Selon des sources proches du président élu Boakai, Boakai aurait confié à Me Koffa qu'il était sous pression de la part des membres de son Parti de l'unité. Ils veulent qu'il le convainque de jeter l'éponge. Nos sources ont indiqué que Koffa aurait répondu à Boakai qu'il ne reculerait pas, car le faire serait tuer son ambition politique. C'est trahir la confiance de ses collègues qui ont placé en lui leur confiance pour le 3e poste le plus puissant du pays. Bien que le vice-président Koffa ait confirmé qu'il avait rencontré le président élu Boakai le dimanche, il a refusé de commenter les détails de leur rencontre. La réunion entre le président élu Boakai et le vice-président Koffa a eu lieu quelques jours avant sa rencontre avec 31 autres législateurs le mercredi 10 janvier, où il a promis de verser 5000,00 USD à chacun des 73 législateurs dans le cadre de son investiture dans les 73 districts électoraux du pays. "J'ai fait partie des 31 législateurs qui ont rencontré le président et le vice-président élus hier. Ce n'était pas nécessairement pour promettre notre soutien à son candidat à la présidence de la Chambre basse, mais c'était plutôt une opportunité ou un privilège de le rencontrer, de le féliciter et de lui expliquer et à son équipe ce que nous représentons en tant que districts et comtés", a écrit Jacob C Debee, l'un des législateurs nouvellement élus du comté de Sinoe, sur sa page de médias sociaux après sa rencontre avec Boakai. "Le président élu a réaffirmé son désir de remettre toutes les routes en état dans ses 100 premiers jours. Il a également promis de décentraliser la distribution des fournitures médicales, comme la construction d'un hub régional de stockage dans un comté central qui distribuera des fournitures médicales diverses. Il a

également promis de donner 5000,00 USD à chaque district électoral pour célébrer son investiture car il ne voulait pas que tout le monde vienne à Monrovia pour la célébration. Il a révélé que le gouvernement du CDC a mis à disposition 650 000 USD pour le programme d'investiture." a déclaré le représentant Debee. Pendant ce temps, le lobbying intense pour la présidence de la Chambre des représentants se poursuit sans relâche, car le vice-président Koffa, candidat de la Coalition pour le changement démocratique (CDC), a un avantage numérique sur son rival Koon. Alors que le CDC peut se vanter de plus de 27 législateurs avant cette élection, le gouvernement entrant du Parti de l'unité (UP) a pu sécuriser seulement 11 sièges aux élections législatives du 10

octobre 2023.

De plus, Koffa est considéré comme un législateur capable de naviguer des deux côtés de l'allée et de se frayer un chemin à travers les deux camps, et est donc le mieux placé pour succéder à Chambers par rapport à son rival Koon qui manque la capacité de manœuvrer pour obtenir le soutien de ses collègues. Cependant, le Parti de l'unité croit toujours qu'il peut sécuriser à la fois le poste de président pro tempore du Sénat et la présidence de la Chambre, arguant que le CDC a pu prendre le contrôle des deux chambres pendant le régime Weah.

Mais les analystes politiques ont réfuté un tel argument, affirmant que le CDC ne tirait aucun avantage du contrôle des deux chambres, et que en examinant le président George Weah, le président de la Chambre Chambers et le président pro tempore Albert Chie, seul Chie a pu conserver son siège. De plus, les experts disent que la politique est une question de nombres et que le Parti de l'unité n'a pas le nombre pour permettre à Koon de réussir, suggérant que Boakai devrait simplement se préparer à une présidence de Koffa.

Pourquoi une mémoire courte ? L'ancienne présidente Ellen Johnson Sirleaf a été confrontée à un défi similaire en 2006, contre le représentant Edwin Snowe du district de Montserrado. Il est maintenant sénateur pour le comté de Bomi. Il a dû se concentrer sur la conquête du siège plutôt que de tenter de faire pression sur Snowe ou de le forcer à abandonner son rêve de présidence de la Chambre.

Le président élu Boakai aurait pu retourner apprendre de son ancien patron qui a bénéficié d'une législature stable avant que des leaders corrompus n'entrent en scène. Mme Sirleaf a réussi à travailler avec des législateurs de l'opposition. Elle avait souhaité que quelques bons sénateurs dirigent le Sénat mais a été prise au dépourvu par une balle courbe servie par Armah Jallah et feu Geraldine Doe Sheriff. Ainsi, la question qui se pose est de savoir qui sont ceux qui agissent en tant que consultants législatifs pour le président élu et les gens du Parti de l'unité.

Les noms de Clearance Massaquoi, Hassan Kiazulo et Francis Doupo sont évoqués, mais quant à savoir s'ils ont le poids politique nécessaire pour donner du fil à retordre à Koffa du CDC est une autre histoire.

Starts from page 8 Koffa en tête dans

expériences locales et internationales, tandis que le Rep. Koon est un expert financier chevronné.

Cllr. Fonati Koffa est actuellement le vice-président de la 54e assemblée législative. Le législateur du parti sortant Congress for Democratic Change (CDC) est à son second mandat. C'est un avocat chevronné et associé fondateur du International Law Group (ILG).

Cllr. Koffa était membre fondateur du Liberty Party, aujourd'hui fragmenté. Il a acquis une notoriété politique lors des derniers jours du régime de l'ancienne présidente Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf, où il a été procureur principal dans l'affaire Sable Mining.

Koffa a abandonné le Liberty Party en 2017 pour se présenter d'abord comme candidat indépendant dans son comté natal de Grand Kru, avant de rejoindre officiellement le CDC. Il est devenu vice-président avec le fort soutien du président en exercice George Weah, se concentrant sur la présidence de l'Assemblée. Il entretenait une relation étroite avec le président sortant Weah.

Homme aux multiples facettes, Koffa a un passé mouvementé, que l'on croit qu'il a vécu avec des regrets après avoir été raffiné. Ses chances : Cllr. Koffa se présente à la course avec un large soutien du CDC sortant, qui compte actuellement environ 27 représentants à la Chambre basse. Un candidat n'a besoin que de 40 votes sur les 73 membres pour remporter la présidence de l'Assemblée. Bhofal Chambers ayant été écarté, le CDC est déterminé à conserver la troisième place la plus élevée dans le pays. Il leur faudrait au moins 9 législateurs indépendants pour gagner.

Le vice-président Koffa a vanté d'avoir le nombre pour remporter la présidence de l'Assemblée. Environ 40 législateurs auraient signé un protocole d'accord promettant leur soutien à sa candidature. Mais au Libéria, où l'intégrité en politique est souvent perçue comme volant par les fenêtres, il reste à voir si ces engagements se traduiront effectivement en votes.

Cependant, la quête du Parti de l'unité pour la position de président pro tempore du Sénat, une bataille que le CDC est prêt à abandonner facilement, pourrait être un avantage

supplémentaire pour le rêve de président de Koffa. Bien que cela ne soit pas gravé dans la pierre, car l'histoire récente a montré que le parti au pouvoir peut contrôler les deux chambres - UP et CDC en sont de bons exemples. Le représentant Richard Nagbe Koon : Le Rep. Koon représente actuellement le district n°11 du comté de Montserrado. Comme son concurrent, c'est un législateur qui est à son deuxième mandat avec le parti de l'unité. Expert financier chevronné, le Rep. Koon est enseignant au programme MBA de l'Université du Libéria, où il enseigne également la comptabilité au niveau du premier cycle. Outre son enseignement à divers niveaux à l'Université du Libéria, le Rep. Koon est auditeur. Il audite les dossiers comptables des clients, effectue des rapprochements bancaires, prépare des budgets, etc. Koon est un membre de longue date de l'Unity Party, remportant le district n°11 de Montserrado en 2017. Le Rep. Koon a promis de réduire le budget de la présidence de l'Assemblée, qui s'élève actuellement à 2,5 millions de dollars par an, affirmant que cette somme est trop importante pour un bureau compte tenu des priorités nationales concurrentes. Ses chances : Koon se présente à la course à la présidence avec un large soutien du président entrant Boakai. Mais avec le nombre minoritaire de son parti à la Chambre, il dépendrait fortement des engagements du bloc actuel de l'opposition et de certains législateurs indépendants pour le mener à bien. Cependant, ses chances restent maigres car le CDC est prêt à concentrer toutes ses énergies sur la course à la présidence de l'Assemblée et à céder le Sénat à l'UP. Koon se retrouve à la merci de ses collègues. À moins que le UP ne creuse plus profondément et ne travaille plus pour changer les variables en faveur de Koon, le CDC est prêt à prendre la Chambre. Cela signifierait des négociations difficiles pour le régime de Boakai afin de faire avancer certaines de ses agendas législatifs. Cependant, l'UP croit toujours qu'il peut sécuriser à la fois la position de président pro tempore du Sénat et la présidence de l'Assemblée, arguant que le CDC a pu prendre le contrôle des deux chambres pendant le régime Weah.

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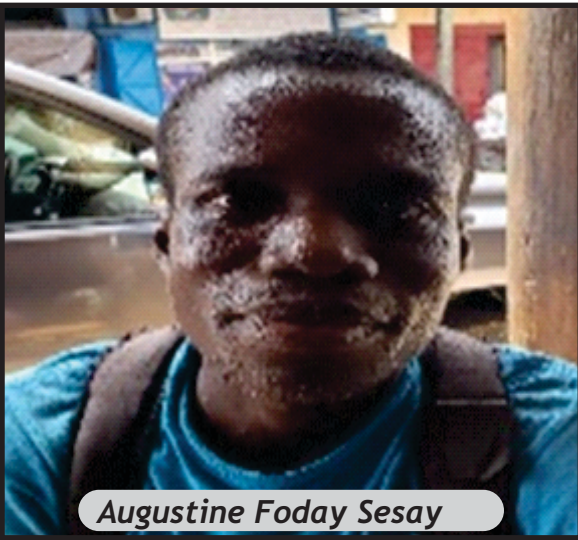
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LIBERIANS DEBATE

Topic: CDC without President Weah

By Naneka Hoffman

President Weah's statement that he would not re-contest in 2029 because of age has become an issue of discussion everywhere in Liberia. The NEW DAWN asked some Monrovia residents what this could mean for Mr. Weah's outgoing Coalition for Democratic Change. Can the CDC go to 2029 election without its iconic Standard Bearer, President George Weah and win? Read their responses, as compiled below.



Augustine Foday Sesay

in 2029 election is sad information that the CDC has to sit down and really think about it, because to my own belief as a Unity Party partisan, President Weah is the only person that can lead the CDC to a better level. But if President Weah says he isn't contesting in 2029, I think that is the ending of CDC we are looking at for now. I don't think that somebody can raise CDC up like the way George Weah did."

"As for me, it is C D C i a n s . sad information President Weah w e h a v e saying that he received as will not contest

"I believe that Finda Bundoo can be the face of the CDC because I know the type of person she is. She stands for the masses and she is somebody who has love for the people of this nation, because she has touched every life in the country, just how President Weah did. Because of the lot of people that he touched that's what brought him to the Presidency. So Finda Bundoo can do the same. People know her as a rescue mother and the entire country she touches lives. There are people who are still



Harrison R. Powell

talking about her good before she because of her came in the good ways. Others government. will say she came She is one to government person who can before she started stand for the doing good, but I Congress for will say no, Democratic because she Change." started doing



Andrew Tamba

"For my point of view, I don't see anybody because since 2005, 2011, 2017 and up to 2023, we have people who supported the Congress for Democratic Change, now Coalition for Democratic Change that said their support for CDC isn't about political party but love for President Weah. We support CDC because of the love we have for President George Weah. So, if President Weah move from the party, I am not seeing anybody else as a face."

"President Weah not contesting in 2029 election, I think it will be very difficult for CDC. But I think Jonathan Fonati Koffa can be the face of the CDC because he understands the party and he is very free in working with people. I think he can be the face for CDC, if he runs on the ticket of CDC.



Jefferson Slanger

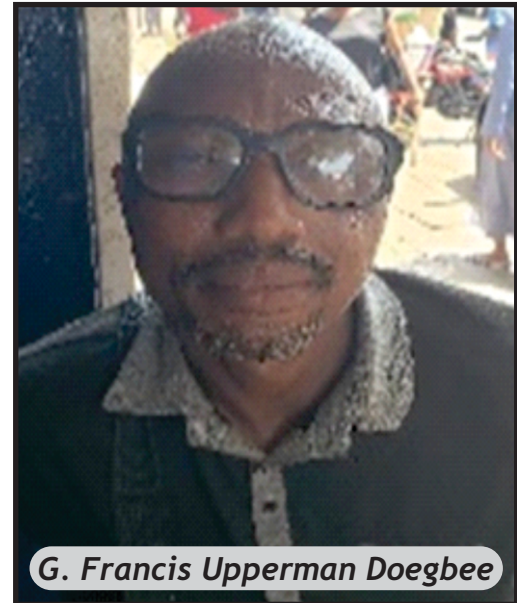


Sando Kollie

"If President means what he the 2029 election. I think he will said that he will not run 2029 be the best face for the CDC."

then I think it will be a very difficult situation for CDC in 2029. But the person I think can be a better face for CDC in the absence of President Weah if he chose to run, is Jonathan Fonati Koffa, because he is a free person when it comes to giving, and he is a man with integrity, so I think he is the best face for the CDC, if President Weah is not running in the 2029 election. I think he will be the best face for the CDC."

"If President Weah, doesn't run in the 2029 election, we have so many people that can run on the party's ticket. We have Saah Joseph and Jonathan Fonati Koffa, but the best person I think can be the face of the party if President Weah doesn't run in 2029, as he said, I think Saah Joseph could be the next face for the party because he is doing things almost like President Weah. He is generous like President Weah, and CDCians love him like President Weah. And he is the only Senator that won with the highest number of votes in Monsterrado County. So the CDCians love him and even



G. Francis Upperman Doegbee

besides, this gone election, people that voted for Saah Joseph, 35 to 40 percent weren't CDCians, so he can make it."

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CDC wins top legislative seats

By Bridgett Milton

Two executives of the ruling Coalition for Democratic Change (CDC), Cllr. J. Fonati Koffa and Mr. Thomas P. Fallah have been elected Speaker and Deputy Speaker of the House of Representatives at the start of the 55th Legislature. Winning the two highest seats in the House of Representatives is a boost for the outgoing CDC-led government which in October

Cllr. Koffa, the new House Speaker, is the immediate past Deputy Speaker who worked with former Speaker Bhofal Chambers.

In the speakership race, Cllr. Koffa defeated Unity Party-backed Richard Nagbe Koon of Montserrado County Electoral District #11 with a total of 36 votes against 31 votes.

Rep. Fonati Koffa was nominated by Montserrado County Electoral District #9

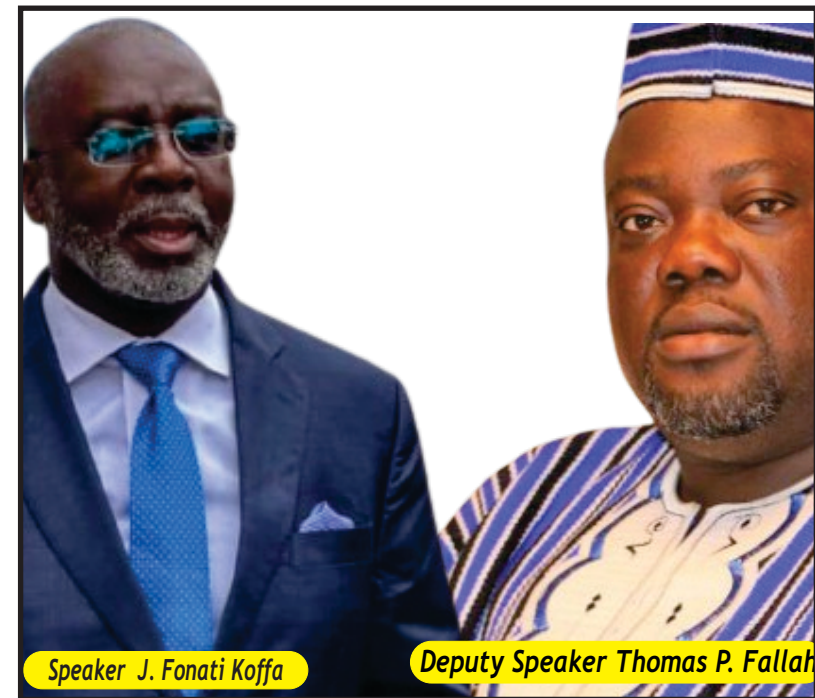
nomination and told his colleague that the country was watching so they shouldn't take the election process for a joke.

During the nomination process, Bong County Representative Robert Womba informed the August Body that Rep. Fonati Koffa could not be voted for because had dual citizenship.

Speaking after he was elected as Speaker, Cllr. Koffa thanked his colleagues for allowing him to lead them for the next six years as their Speaker. He said the time for politics was over and it was now time for governance.

He however promised his colleagues that the unfinished business by the 54th Legislature will be continued. At the same time, Rep. Thomas P. Fallah of Lofa County Electoral District #1 was elected as Deputy Speaker of the 55th Legislature defeating Rep. Musa Hassan Bility of Nimba County Electoral District #7 by 42 votes to 24 votes.

The House of Representatives now has a Speaker and a Deputy Speaker from the CDC who many here believe could be tough on the new government. Unlike the Liberian Senate where Committee Chairs are elected, the Speaker of the House of Representatives has the constitutional power to appoint would-be Chairpersons for all Standing Committees of that August body.



Speaker J. Fonati Koffa

Deputy Speaker Thomas P. Fallah

2023 won more seats in the lower house than the opposition Unity Party (UP) which heads the incoming government. Members of the 55th Legislature began their regular legislative session on Monday, 15 January 2024 after newly elected and re-elected lawmakers' induction.

Representative Saah Foko while Rep. Richard Nagbe Koon was nominated by Mehker Gay of Nimba County Electoral District #3. At the same time, Montserrado County Electoral District #16 Representative nominated Nimba County Electoral District #7 Representative Musa Bility.

Bility declined his

Starts from page 6 Weah congratulates new

underscores government's commitment to move public offices out of private buildings, adding that the decision to construct a multipurpose facility such as the LRRRC is in line with its desire for development.

Mr. Weah stated that this is a demonstration of effective utilization of meager resources to maximum potential.

He said that this is a reflection of government commitment to changing the landscape of the country and enhance the lives of its people. For his part, executive director Logan said few years ago, President Weah

instructed all government institutions housed in private buildings to construct their own buildings.

Mr. Logan said the LRRRC heeded this instruction and "Today, we are here to commission the first ever office complex built by the UNHCR in West Africa."

He said this achievement is due to hard work by the Government of Liberia to provide international protection for asylum seekers, refugees and other persons of concern within the borders of Liberia. The LRRRC boss notes that since the establishment of the Commission by the Liberian Legislature in 1993, it has been

operating from one privately-owned building to another, spending thousands of dollars, but this has changed with the completion of the new facility.

UNHCR Representative to Liberia Antony Akumu Abogi thanked President Weah for the dedication of the building and disclosed that the project started about 12 years ago when UNHCR purchased the piece of land for development of a joint office of LRRRC and UNHCR.

Mr. Abogi disclosed that in June 2022 UNHCR allocated 150,000 United States Dollars to commence the project that has yielded fruition. Editing by Jonathan Browne

Starts from back page I was betrayed

nomination process," she added. According to Briggs Mensah, she was so down-hearted that Rep. Koffa told her all the good things and she supported him, but he couldn't speak for her.

Mensah indicated that she knows that her colleagues were bought, and she doesn't have money to buy anyone to

vote for her. She lamented that what she has to offer her colleagues and the Liberian people is her service and not money. The Bong County lawmaker explained that from the way she was treated by her colleagues, she don't feel safe to even sit with them anymore.

Mensah did not take part in the voting process for the

Deputy Speaker election. She said the two candidates in the race, Rep. Musa Bility of Nimba County Electoral District #7, and Lofa County Electoral District #1 Thomas Fallah, were not the best choice for the Liberia people because they did not mean well for the country.

UP alliance takes over Senate

By Ethel A. Tweh

The Liberian Senate has voted on the white ballot a female lawmaker, Sen. Nyonblee Karnga-Lawrence, from the incoming Unity Party alliance as the new President Pro-Tempore, succeeding Grand Kru County Senator Albert T. Chie.

The Senate's leadership election was held Monday, 15 January 2024 at the start of the 55th Legislature. Nyonblee, a Grand Bassa County Senator, gets the strong backing of Liberia's President-elect Amb. Joseph Nyumah Boakai.

She vigorously supported Boakai's 2023 presidential bid even after she could not be picked as running mate to the Unity Party (UP) leader.

Following Monday's Senate election, the new leadership includes Sen. Karnga-Lawrence, President Pro-Tempore; Maryland County Senator James Biney, Chair on Executive; and Montserrado County Senator Abraham Dillon, Chair on Foreign Affairs. Former Senate President Pro-Tempore Albert T. Chie is the new Chair on Public Works; Sinoe County Senator Augustine Chea is the Chair on Judiciary; and

Francis Dopoe and Sinoe County Senator Crayton Duncan are the representatives to the International Parliamentary Union.

Speaking following her election, Liberian Senate Pro-Tempore Nyonblee Karnga-Lawrence said she is humbled and deeply honored to accept the tremendous responsibility and privilege of serving the 55th Legislature of the Republic of Liberia as the President Pro-Tempore.

She noted that this milestone accomplishment would not have been made possible without the consistent and unwavering support of her esteemed colleagues of the Senate, supervised by Sen. Jeremiah Koung, Liberia's Vice President-elect, and Sen. James Biney, the new Chair on Executive. She also hailed the Independent Senators, and the support staff, noting that this accomplishment is truly a life-changing moment for her, and the women of Liberia in general.

Pro-Tempore Karnga-Lawrence said the position she takes up carries with it a solemn obligation to uphold the principles of the doctrine of the separation of powers and to maintain the



Sen. Pro-Tempore Nyonblee Karnga-Lawrence

Sen. Abraham Darius Dillon

Bong County Senator Prince Moyer chairs the Ways, Means, Finance, and Budget Committee.

The Senate's new Chair on Defense and Security is Lofa County Senator Momo Cyrus; Maryland County Senator Gblehbo Brown chairs the Rules, Order and Administration Committee; while Margibi County Senator Nathaniel McGill chairs the Committee on Education.

Grand Cape Mount County Senator Daba Varpilar chairs the Committee on Health; Nimba County Senator Prince Y. Johnson chairs the Committee on Internal Affairs; Gbarpolu County Senator Amara Konneh chairs the Committee on Public Accounts; and Bomi County Senators Edwin Snowe and Alex Tyler are the new Senate Representatives to ECOWAS. River Gee County Senator

independence, credibility and integrity of the Liberian Senate.

The Grand Bassa Senator pledged to discharge these duties with firm dedication, impartiality, and a deep sense of respect for every Senator, irrespective of political persuasions.

Pro-Tempore Karnga-Lawrence indicated that her plan will focus on strengthening the legislative process, open and transparent legislative proceedings, enhancing legislative oversight, and improving the legislative work environment to include the welfare of legislative staff.

"This blueprint, when formulated in closed consultation with the leadership of the Liberian Senate, will outline key priorities and initiatives to help me effectively steer the affairs of this august body, foster positive change, and make an everlasting impact," she pledged.

I was betrayed

-Rep. Moima Briggs Mensah speaks out

By Bridgett Milton
Bong County Electoral District #6 Representative Moima Briggs Mensah comes out crying about being 'betrayed' by House



Speaker J. Fonati Koffa after allegedly supporting his speakership bid. After the internal legislative election on Capitol Hill on Monday, 15 January 2023, Mensah told journalists that she had supported Kofa's bid for the position of House Speaker and that she was given assurance to get his support for the Deputy House Speaker slot. But a few minutes after she

nominated for the Deputy Speaker position.

According to her, she was told that Montserrado County District #6 Representative Samuel Enders would have made the motion nominating her for that position, but that did not happen.

"It all started when the Speaker-elect called for a 20-minute break after the Speaker Election. I started to receive calls from my colleagues that I should step aside and let Rep. Thomas Fallah go. But my question to them was why I should step down?" Mensah explained.

She said no one could tell her anything, and she insisted that she was not stepping down.

"When we got to the chambers for the Deputy Speaker election, the nomination process opened and Rep. Enders did not nominate and even the female Representatives could not nominate me," she lamented.

"The most interesting part of it is that a lawmaker from Bong County was even rushing to close the

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