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# The New Dawn

**French Version Inside**

TRULY INDEPENDENT

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**#Revoke rock and sand mining licenses from Chinese and Lebanese#**



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Vice President Jewel Howard Taylor

# VP Taylor sick?

# Senate must return impeachment bill

**-Cllr. Gongloe**



**P11**

Cllr. Tiawan Gongloe



# Continental News

## Strikes kill 62 al-Shabab fighters, US says

The US military says it has killed 62 fighters from the Islamist group al-Shabab in six air strikes in Somalia.

Four air strikes on Saturday killed 32 militants and a further two on Sunday killed 28, it said in a statement.

These were the deadliest air attacks in Somalia since November 2017 when the US said it had killed 100 militants.

Somalia has seen a sharp increase in the number of air strikes and casualties since President Donald Trump took office in the US in January 2017.

A tally by the Bureau of Investigative Journalism reveals that at least 400 people have been killed in air strikes since the beginning of 2017, far more than the previous 10 years combined.

The latest strikes bring to at least 40 the number carried out in Somalia so far this year, compared with 35 recorded in 2017.

The US has a huge military base in neighbouring Djibouti, from where it launches attacks

on the militants.

Mr Trump gave the US military greater authority in March 2017 to attack militants in Somalia.

Traditionally, US presidents have been wary of intervening in Somalia since 18 special forces soldiers died fighting militias in the capital Mogadishu in 1993, a battle

dramatised in the film Black Hawk Down.

'Terrorist safe haven'

No civilians were killed in the latest air strikes, which were carried out in co-ordination with the Somali government, the US military said.

"Alongside our Somali and international partners, we are

committed to preventing al-Shabab from taking advantage of safe havens from which they can build capacity and attack the people of Somalia," the US Africa Command said.

Al-Shabab, which is linked to al-Qaeda, has not yet commented on the latest strikes.

Somalia-based security think tank the Hiraal Institute said in a report published in November that al-Shabab had been forced to change tactics following the upsurge in air strikes.

The institute said the group was now conducting fewer mass attacks on military bases, but attacks on government offices and businesses which refused to pay it taxes had increased markedly.

The US state department, in its most recent report on terrorism, described Somalia as a "terrorist safe haven" and said al-Shabab remained a threat, despite suffering setbacks.

The group retained control over large parts of the country, and the ability to carry out high-profile attacks using suicide bombers, explosive devices, mortars and small arms, the report added. -BBC



Image copyright AFP: The US says it is committed to eradicating al-Shabab safe havens in Somalia

## Ghana 'bribe-taking' judges sacked

Ghana's President Nana Akufo-Addo has sacked three high court judges - three years after an investigating committee found them to have been involved in alleged corruption.

They had been suspended after the report was

journalist Anas Aremeyaw Anas, known for his undercover work, caught them on tape taking cash bribes - some demanding sex and others bribes, including goats.

President Akufo-Addo referred the three judges' case to the police for further



Image caption: Over 100 judiciary staff were caught in the 2015 corruption scandal

released, but it's unclear why Mr Akufo-Addo chose to act now.

They were part of over 100 judges and court staff implicated in a corruption scandal that shocked Ghana in 2015.

Ghanaian investigative

investigation and possible prosecution.

The judges - who had already filed a suit at the ECOWAS court to challenge their suspension - expressed disappointment at the president's decision. -BBC

## The man trying to outdo his father to lead DR Congo

Felix Tshisekedi Tshilombo is one of the main opposition candidates vying for votes in Sunday's presidential election in the Democratic Republic of Congo.

The 55-year-old father of five is mostly known for being the son of the late veteran opposition leader Etienne Tshisekedi, but he insists he is not trying to compete with his father's reputation.

"I don't have any ambition to rival my father. He is my master, and you don't rival the master," Felix Tshisekedi told the BBC.

"But I'm going to try my best to perpetuate his dream, his dream of a country of rule of law, of a better Congo, where our sons and daughters can flourish - that's what I am pursuing," he added.

If elected on Sunday, Mr Tshisekedi has said he will make the fight against poverty a "great national cause". He aims, for example, to increase the average per person income to \$11.75 (£9.30) a day, compared to \$1.25 today.

"It's really the minimum we can do I think, and the minimum people expect from us," the candidate told the BBC in an interview in the capital, Kinshasa.

He says his programme can be accomplished over two presidential terms - a period of 10 years - and will cost an estimated \$86bn. -BBC



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# EDITORIAL

## GOL must pay debts owed media institutions

**THE GOVERNMENT OF** Liberia is paying domestic debt arrears dating as far as the era of jailed ex-president Charles Ghankay Taylor. This is not just welcome news, but a great relief to the business community of Liberia, especially Liberian-owned businesses and local vendors.

**LOCAL VENDORS, INCLUDING** Liberian-owned businesses have endured unpaid arrears from government that continue to affect their smooth operation despite the fact that they have tax obligations to the state.

**BUT ONE SECTOR** of Liberian-owned businesses that had suffered and continue to suffer a great deal as a result of unpaid debts owned by government is the local media. The media in Liberia is part and parcel of the economy, but it has been overlooked and unfairly treated when it comes to payment of domestic debts.

**MEDIA INSTITUTIONS IN** the country are legitimately registered businesses that are required to meet all obligations to the state, including taxes, social security and other levies. But they have suffered the brunt of deliberate neglect when it comes to debt arrears owed by the government.

**THE RECORDS FROM** past administrations, especially, the government of former President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf paint a very bleak future for the media. With debt arrears totaling over a million United States dollars, the former administration forced media managers here to a so-called “golden handshake” at the Ministry of Information, compelling them to waive their debts.

**NOTWITHSTANDING, MEDIA INSTITUTIONS** like all other businesses, have staff that they must pay monthly besides other overheads such rentals, bills, logistics and equipment to procure and maintain.

**THEY CANNOT MEET** these obligations when government is reluctant in paying legitimate debts owed media institutions. A financially weak and incapacitated media is a disservice not only to the state, but detrimental to the promotion of democratic tenets, peace and conducive environment.

**THIS IS WHY** we are calling on the government to consider the media in the ongoing payment of domestic debts to vendors. The media provides important services to government ministries and agencies, including public corporations for which they should be paid.

**HOWEVER, THIS HAS** not been the case. On the contrary, media institutions have been used and put aside. Just imagine being indebted to a media entity for services provided over two to three years and yet, expect that outlet to pay taxes.

**THE MEDIA IN** Liberia enjoys no capacity building or stimulus package from the state. Government would organize empowerment programs for Liberian-owned businesses and leave out the media. We challenge the Weah administration to cultivate the Liberian media not only as a faithful partner, but a business that is contributing to the economy thru job creation, payment of taxes and other legitimate obligations. We only ask for fair treatment in the payment of debt arrears.

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# COMMENTARY

By Kevin Rudd

## Prospects for US-China Relations in 2019

*China's leaders will attempt to re-stabilize bilateral ties and ease tensions in its non-US relationships. At the same time, they are likely to use the next year to form a deeper judgment about the future of US politics and foreign policy.*

**N**EW YORK - Throughout 2018, much of Asia has been shaken by the new and increasingly unpredictable dynamics in Sino-American relations. One year ago, US President Donald Trump returned from Beijing after his “state-plus” visit, which China hoped had finally laid his anti-Chinese campaign rhetoric to rest. Twelve months later, China and the United States are caught in an unresolved trade war, and Trump’s administration has replaced US “strategic engagement” with China with “strategic competition.”

One year ago, moreover, the US, European, and Chinese economies and markets were roaring. Now, there is deep instability in financial markets, with growth slowing in China and Europe, and higher interest rates beginning to bite in America. Uncertainty over the future of the North Korean nuclear negotiations is also darkening the picture.

So what are the prospects for US-China relations in 2019? It’s probable that by March there will be an agreement on reducing the bilateral trade deficit and the import decisions that China will make to see it through. An agreement on tariff reductions by then is also possible, although its complexity may lengthen the timeline. A tariff-by-tariff approach could take a year. But if Chinese economic reformers take a more dramatic approach, by committing to zero tariffs over time and challenging the Americans to reciprocate, it could be concluded more rapidly. But this would run counter to decades of Chinese trade bureaucrats’ training to give away little, let alone be seen as giving away everything at once.

The reform of so-called forced technology transfer should be relatively straightforward. Nonetheless, reform is different from how contractual arrangements may be interpreted in practice, even in the absence of any specific technology transfer provisions.

Intellectual property protection, however, is deeply problematic. Previous agreements reached under President Barack Obama’s administration could be reconstituted. But the jurisdictional enforcement of breaches is still hopeless. One possible mechanism is to subject relevant contracts between Chinese and foreign firms to international commercial arbitration bodies located in Singapore or Switzerland, designed to deal specifically with the enforcement of IP protection.

If China objected, it might be possible to develop China’s own domestically based international commercial arbitration system. But the country would need to appoint qualified foreigners to its panel of arbitrators to build international credibility. No one has any confidence in China’s commercial courts. For its own domestic reform needs, China needs to move toward fully independent commercial and civil divisions of its court system, even if the criminal division remains subject to political control.

American concerns about Chinese state subsidies under the country’s Made in China 2025 strategy will be almost impossible to resolve. The reality is that all countries use degrees of government support for their indigenous technology industries, although China uses the most. Even if we mandated a maximum level of state support for a given firm, compliance would be difficult to measure. I am not confident of a negotiated outcome in this area. America may simply need to outcompete China by increasing public investment in research and development across the information technology and biotechnology sectors.

We should also not rule out the possibility of China

pitching tariff reforms to the wider international community as well. For example, China could make a dramatic commitment to zero tariffs over time not just to the US, but to all World Trade Organization member states. This would represent an almost irresistible opportunity for China to champion global free trade and arrest the trend toward protectionism.

Such a turn by China could include approaching the Trans-Pacific Partnership’s member states for accession, in an ironic effort to outflank the US (which Trump withdrew from the TPP immediately upon taking office) in the Asia-Pacific region. When it sees a political and market opening, China can be remarkably fleet of foot. Negotiations would be difficult, but Japan’s reservations about China’s TPP accession have softened since Prime Minister Shinzo Abe’s recent visit to Beijing.

On the wider foreign policy and security front, China in 2019 is likely to “de-conflict” itself in its relations with other countries, given the core strategic challenges posed by the US. There is already some normalization in relations with Japan. Recent Japanese Coastguard data indicate a drastic reduction in Chinese incursions into the Senkaku/Diaoyu area in the East China Sea.

China also wants to de-escalate tensions with the Association of Southeast Asian Nations over the South China Sea through the accelerated negotiation of a “code of conduct.” China is also likely to enjoy a calmer relationship with India, following the bilateral summit in Wuhan in April. And China may begin to moderate its stance on Taiwan, given the poor results of Taiwanese President Tsai Ing-wen’s pro-independence Democratic Progressive Party in last month’s local government elections. This would, of course, change radically if the US proceeds with further significant arms sales to Taiwan, as is likely. Maritime incidents with the US in the South China Sea have continued, and the conflict may sharpen if the US pursues its Freedom of Navigation program more vigorously next year.

Across Eurasia, China will continue to roll out its Belt and Road Initiative. However, in recent months, the BRI has attracted less domestic political fanfare. There is already debate among Chinese officials about revising certain BRI modalities, following negative reaction to Sri Lanka’s handover to China of the Hambantota Port, and concerns over the BRI’s long-term affordability. We may therefore see less Chinese BRI triumphalism in 2019.

Moreover, China is likely to consolidate and expand its role within the existing United Nations and Bretton Woods institutions, rather than emphasizing new institutions of international governance. It will likely continue to be the WTO’s new champion, and to sustain its posture on global climate change as agreed under the 2015 Paris climate agreement. To the more sober minds in China’s foreign policy establishment, it is better to focus on the existing machinery of the global rules-based system, particularly when the US is demonstrating systematic contempt for it.

As China seeks to re-stabilize its relationship with the US, and ease tensions in its non-US relationships, its leaders are likely to use 2019 to form a deeper judgment about the future of US politics: the impact of the Mueller investigation on Trump and his administration, and whether a new president in 2020 (or sooner) would in any way change the emerging new US strategy. While they have already concluded that a deep shift in American attitudes to China has occurred, they remain uncertain about what precise form that shift is taking, and whether a fundamental shift in their strategy (as opposed to tactics) is warranted.

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## O-PED

By Robert Skidelsky

# The Continuing Agony of Brexit

**L**ONDON - So British Prime Minister Theresa May lives to fight another day. The Conservative Party in the House of Commons reaffirmed its confidence in her leadership by a far-from-resounding 200-117 vote. It is hard to think of another British prime minister whose leadership has been in such continuous crisis. Not so much an iron lady as a stubborn and dogged one, May has begun another round of effort to extract a few further concessions from European leaders to make her divorce agreement more palatable to her party, if not a majority of the public.

The British people decided in June 2016 to leave the European Union, by a slim 51.9%-48.1% margin in a national referendum. After invoking Article 50 of the Treaty of Lisbon, the United Kingdom is due to leave on March 29, 2019. But the Irish question, the Conservative Party's internal politics, and parliamentary arithmetic have made the Brexit process anything but straightforward.

The UK and the Republic of Ireland share a land border separating the latter, which will remain in the EU, from Northern Ireland, which is part of the UK. Brexit, therefore, would leave Northern Ireland outside the EU's customs union, and the Irish Republic inside it. Hence May's agonized efforts to secure a deal that prevents a "hard" border with customs checks.

This is not just a matter of economic convenience. It is literally a matter of life and death. When Ireland won its independence from Britain in 1922, six mainly Protestant counties remained in the UK under a system of devolved government. Two legacies of the truncated United Kingdom survived: free trade and free movement of labor between Britain and the new Irish state.

The incomplete victory over Britain rankled in the predominantly Catholic Republic of Ireland; until 1999, the Irish constitution included a commitment to the "reintegration" of the whole island. At the same time, Northern Ireland's dwindling Protestant majority clung ever more fervently to the British connection. Following three decades of violent conflict between the province's Irish nationalist and Protestant groups, resulting in over 3,600 deaths, the Good Friday Agreement in 1998 established a Unionist-Nationalist power-sharing executive in Northern Ireland, along with a British-Irish Council as a nod to harmonious relations with the Irish Republic.

Any hardening of the frontier would jeopardize the fragile peace secured by the Good Friday Agreement. If the power-sharing agreement breaks down, men of violence on both sides would be waiting in the wings. To avoid this outcome, May's plan provides for Britain to leave the EU but remain "temporarily" in the customs union, pending the negotiation of a free-trade agreement with the EU, with the "backstop" of a guaranteed open border between Northern Ireland and the Irish Republic, come what may.

As if this weren't bad enough, Parliament is split between those who want to leave and those who want to remain. This cleavage cuts across the ruling Conservative and opposition Labour parties.

The Remainers fall into three groups: those on the left who see the EU's "social market" approach as a source of protection for British workers; business and financial interests who count the economic costs of Brexit; and idealists who want Britain to play a constructive role in the political unification of Europe. The Leavers also comprise three groups: Thatcherites who view Brussels as a "super-state" bent on stifling free enterprise; a partly overlapping group that envisages Britain as an independent part of a global free-trade system; and the "left-behinds" who want to preserve Britain's cultural identity and keep out foreigners.

The parliamentary arithmetic matters, despite the referendum result, because May was forced to concede that Parliament would have the last word on any deal she reached. This has given Remainers hope of reversing the 2016 outcome in a second "people's vote."

The composition of parliamentary forces reflects May's disastrous decision to call a snap general election in 2017, which resulted in her losing a Conservative majority. And the 317 Conservative MPs who remain are split about 200-100 between those who back May's proposed Brexit plan and those who want Britain to "crash out" without a deal.

Support for May's deal from the opposition - 257 Labour MPs, 35 Scottish Nationalists, and a few others - is uncertain, at best. Likewise, the ten MPs of Northern Ireland's Democratic Union Party, on whose support the government now depends, are torn between wanting free trade with the South and fear of being sucked into the Irish Republic if and when the rest of Britain leaves the customs union. The DUP has denounced all talk of a special arrangement or "backstop" to enable Northern Ireland to remain in the customs union in lieu of a UK-EU free-trade deal.

Given the divisions in her own party, May will be forced to depend on Labour MPs to get her agreement through Parliament. No one knows how Labour MPs will vote, and the incentives facing the party are mixed. On the one hand, voting with the Leavers to scupper May's deal would probably lead to a general election, which Labour could win. On the other hand, Jeremy Corbyn, the party's leader, can have no great appetite to accept the poisoned chalice that May would pass on to him.

There's an understandable temptation to say, "If Parliament can't decide, let's throw it back to the people." But there's no clarity about what exactly "the people" would be asked. It is playing with fire to seek a second vote on the ground that you did not like the result of the first one. And there's one further issue to bear in mind: Leavers detest the EU more intensely than Remainers love it. If the Remainers win a second vote, a passionate resentment will sour British politics for years. So we must hope that May gets her amicable divorce when Parliament finally votes on it in January.

## OPINION

By Ana Palacio

# A Reprieve for Global Governance

**M**ADRID - The last-minute deal struck at the United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP24) in Katowice, Poland, offers a glimmer of hope for the future not just of climate action, but also of global governance. After a year in which leaders reverted time and again to the failed policies of the past to address shared challenges, COP24 showed that there might still be room for innovative instruments for responding to common threats. To navigate the current era of global turbulence, the world will need forward-facing ideas. Looking backward will get the international community nowhere.

There is, however, a general lack of political will to take bold action, and domestic upheaval, such as the "Yellow Vest" protests in France, reinforces this reluctance. At the same time, today's leaders lack ideas. Amid shifting global power dynamics, diminished political legitimacy, and disruptive technological change, it is more difficult than ever to devise promising solutions. Unless and until that changes, we will not escape our current cycle of dysfunction and insecurity.

A couple of years ago, the world seemed to be stepping up to the challenge with innovative governance models in a range of areas that rested heavily on soft or non-binding mechanisms, rather than the strict rules of the past. Some of these models incorporated non-state actors. All of them are now on life support, replaced by traditional policy measures that have proven ineffective in the past.

The 2015 Iran nuclear deal, or Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), is a leading example. After nearly two decades of failed efforts to conclude a deal covering all of the international community's grievances against Iran, negotiators decided to aim for a narrower, nuclear-focused agreement. This would lay the groundwork for future talks on other issues, such as Iran's missile development and support for terrorist groups.

But then, after winning the 2016 US presidential election, Donald Trump decided that unless the JCPOA addressed every issue exactly as he would have wanted, it was worthless. So he decided unilaterally to withdraw the US from the deal and re-impose strict economic sanctions on Iran.

But the sanctions-based approach didn't work even when there was an international consensus behind it. With the US going it alone, it will be virtually impossible to generate the pressure needed to compel Iran to negotiate a more comprehensive agreement. Europe's effort to keep the JCPOA alive by shielding European companies from American penalties is also unlikely to succeed. A unilateral sanctions regime will most probably lead Iran to restart its nuclear program, implying renewed hostility with the West.

Likewise, until Trump took power, the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) represented a next-generation trade agreement linking the United States with 11 other Pacific Rim economies. Following the failure of the Doha Round of World Trade Organization negotiations, the international trade agenda came to hinge on the pursuit of mega-regional deals. The TPP, in particular, would not only offer a new approach to multilateral trade negotiations; it would also counter China's growing influence in Asia.

Here, too, by withdrawing the US from the TPP immediately after taking office, Trump crippled the agreement. Though the other 11 countries have continued to move the deal forward, in the form of the Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership (CPTPP), America's departure has undermined momentum toward greater trade multilateralism. Trump's subsequent actions, most notably his trade war with China, recall the disastrous protectionism of the 1930s.

Cooperation on migration has similarly regressed. On September 19, 2016, the UN General Assembly unanimously adopted the New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants - a tentative step toward broad, non-binding, internationally accepted general principles for responding to the growing migration challenge. In July, the General Assembly took this a step further, producing the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration, which set out universal best practices.

The Compact was supposed to be adopted at an inter-governmental conference in Marrakesh earlier this month. But as the conference approached, a growing number of countries, led by the US, complained that the Compact enabled the imposition of binding obligations in the future, thus infringing on their sovereignty. While the agreement was ultimately adopted, there is little reason to believe that countries will, overall, choose a common approach.

That brings us to the 2015 Paris climate agreement, which was hailed as both a breakthrough in addressing climate action and a pioneering approach to global governance. By establishing a framework of overlapping soft and hard obligations, the Paris accord evaded objections that had previously blocked progress.

But, again, Trump decided to withdraw the US from the agreement, undermining its legitimacy and effectiveness. Although the US cannot officially renounce the Paris accord until 2020, Trump's move hampered the next phase of the process: agreement, at the climate conference in Katowice, on specific rules for implementation and monitoring.

At first, prospects looked bleak, as leaders became distracted by peripheral dramas, such as Poland's promotion of coal and a Saudi-US-Russian-Kuwaiti effort to block a key scientific report. But, motivated by rapidly worsening climate conditions - global carbon dioxide emissions rose in 2017 for the first time in four years - negotiators ultimately managed to secure a last-minute deal.

The JCPOA, TPP, New York Declaration, and the Paris agreement all have their flaws. But they reflect the kind of foresight and experimentation that will be needed to address transnational challenges in a deeply interconnected and fast-changing world. Allowing them to be undermined in favor of retrograde policies is a recipe for disaster.

The deal struck in Katowice - to which even the US agreed - shows that, when the stakes are high enough, cooperation is possible. Successfully addressing the world's myriad shared challenges requires nothing less. But it also requires something more: new ideas about how global governance should be organized. We can no longer afford the failed approaches of the past.

# LIBERIANS DEBATE

With Sally H. Gaye Cell#: 0886726282 Email:sh0770291004@gmail.com



**United States Ambassador to Liberia, Christine Elder disclosed recently in Monrovia that scooping investigation into the alleged missing 16 billion Liberian bank notes is complete and findings will be shortly released to the public. In a spot-check, the New Dawn asks some residents of Monrovia what they make of the disclosure by Ambassador Elder.**



## Soon Prestige Noring

“My thanks and appreciation go to the American government in advance for the splendid agreement. I hope this agreement is not the offspring of Eton and Ebomaf. I’m patiently waiting to seeing the impacts of this agreement in the lives of Liberians. Congratulations to My Black President Dr. George M. Weah for his simultaneous love and blessings towards this country. Bravo to America for their excellent contribution to Mama Liberia.”



“President George Weah asked you the last time to be patient and calm until the investigation is concluded before he left for the UN General Assembly in New York. You did not listen to him as your President, and our President; you went and show the entire world how stupid and uneducated you guys are by staging unnecessary demonstration/protest and Read Petition of Economic Sanction

against the George Weah-led government and the Liberian people when there have been no investigation conducted. Now the US Government has accepted President Weah’s request to come in to do forensic investigation into the matter. The US Government is now asking you to be patient and calm until the investigation is concluded as George Weah did. I wonder what will be your response this time around? Demonstration or reading petition again? You guys need to calibrate your brains to be very analytical.

## Janet Weh

“With the signing of the US\$112 million dollars grant to Liberia through USAID, I congratulate the United States government for assistance to our country. Just to make it clear, this grant money is not a raw cash to go in the hands of people in government, so no worries about corruption. I also read lots of congratulatory messages directed to President George Weah for job well done. What were his efforts in obtaining this assistance? The money will be controlled and disbursed by USAID on various projects in Liberia.”



“The Weah-led Administration needs to be careful about how international organizations receive grants on behalf of Liberia; otherwise, the same will be said about his administration. These organizations receive aids/grants on behalf of Liberia, and expend them anyhow. All these monies that are received go back to paying huge salaries to people they would import, and nothing is actually realized in the end. I think Government should relook at the ways these organizations are expending funds intended to help Liberia.”



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## MORE HEADLINE NEWS

## MORE HEADLINE NEWS

# Weah wants 'County Meet' as platform for peace and unity

President George Manneh Weah is encouraging County Sports Meet participants and all Liberians to see the games as a unifying force and promoter of peace in the country.



His call came Sunday, 16 December when he officially declared open the 2018-2019 edition of the National County Meet in Sanniquellie, Nimba County.

President Weah, Liberia's

former international soccer icon took the kickoff at the commencement of the County Meet. He urges participating teams to show discipline and sportsmanship as they compete for titles during the

"I am happy to be here to witness the opening of this all-important County Meet," he says.

According to President Weah, the County Meet is an annual event that brings Liberians together as one people and one nation.

He admonishes scores of Liberians who attended the opening of the National County Meet to use the games as platforms to promote unity and athletic talents in the country.

President Weah reflected on the significance of the legendary number that he wore during his days playing for the Lone Star of Liberia.

He said: "If you are here and a follower of the Gospel, you will understand the meaning of #14. It is not just another number. It is of great significance. It describes the time Jesus was born. Throughout the ages, from Abraham to David, number 14 stands out as special number for special people."

President Weah told the cheering crowd of football enthusiasts at the Sanniquellie sports pitch that anyone who is counted 14 must consider themselves blessed.--Press release

prestigious national tournament.

President Weah also calls on all Liberians to use the event, which is held annually, to come together in the spirit of national unity and peace.

# PPCC Boss wins Integrity Idol Award

By Bridgett Milton

Public Procurement and Concession Commission (PPCC) Executive Director Dorbor Jallah has won the 2018 Integrity Idol award.

He was awarded on Friday, 14 December by Accountability Lab.

Accountability Lab Country Director Lawrence Yealue recalls that Integrity Idol started from 2015, founded by a great man who believes that the best way to transform the

through text messages and online [voting].

Further, Mr. Yealue indicates that the team went into various communities and workplaces.

In a keynote address, Liberia Revenue Authority (LRA) Director General Mr. Thomas Doe Nah said Mr. Jallah is one of the persons he holds in high esteem. The LRA Boss says there are too many people in the country that are working [to fight against] corruption



(PPCC) Executive Director Dorbor Jallah

# Dubious road investor jailed

By Winston W. Parley

The foreign national who allegedly attempted to dupe Liberia of US\$32 million from its Federal Reserve's account has been jailed at the Monrovia Central Prison following his re-arrest Monday, 17 December.

Mr. James Lamin Kargbo, believed to be a Sierra Leonean national, is accused of criminally gaining access to Liberia's swift code and account number at the United States Federal Reserves as a result of engaging in dubious business talks with government officials from the Ministries of State and Finance, according to police findings.

He is accused of posing himself as an investor intending to give Liberia loan to finance its road projects.

But Montserrado County Attorney Cllr. Edwin Martin told Criminal Court "C" that defendant Kargbo "is one of those con-artists, fraudsters and imposters who is within the basin of West Africa



Mr. James Lamin Kargbo

purporting to be an international personality.

President George Manneh Weah's quest for roads across Liberia has pushed his administration into engaging a number of individuals and companies, including the signing of nearly a billion dollar agreement with controversial Singaporean

financing firm Elton private limited and Burkinabe group EBOMAF which are yet to bring results.

So, upon gaining access to the country's swift code, Kargbo and his alleged criminal enterprise demanded a transfer of US\$32 million which would have significantly robbed Liberia of its reserves

world is to get young people involved in activities to make them responsible citizens.

It comes as a result of corruption around the world which had the vision bearer thinking that people who make exceptional contribution be celebrated.

According to Mr. Yealue, he is one person who believes that there is more good people in this country than bad people.

He says they set up a team of judges that did the vetting

and integrity, but you don't see them.

For his part, Mr. Jallah thanked the organization and the people that voted him for recognizing his work over the past time.

He says he hopes this process will continue to encourage people to earn that award.

Mr. Jallah adds that integrity is the key to success in everything that one does.--

Edited by Winston W. Parley

at a time of harsh economic conditions.

He was jailed at the Monrovia Central Prison on the order of the Monrovia City Court following his re-arrest by police and court officers on Monday.

He had just been released from government custody by Criminal Court "C" Judge J. Boima Kontoe on the basis of prosecution's violation of his constitutional rights by detaining him beyond 48 hours, before being rearrested and jailed.

Judge Kontoe says under the constitution, every person

arrested or detained is mandatorily required to be charged and presented before a court of competent jurisdiction within 48 hours.

But Kargbo was later arrested on the order of the Monrovia City Court and subsequently jailed. He will face trial following his indictment by government.

The accused was first arrested by police on 5 December at the Ministry of Finance, but on 12 December his lawyers filed a writ of habeas corpus, accusing the State of violating

## MORE HEADLINE NEWS

## MORE HEADLINE NEWS

# China wants graduates employed

By Emmanuel Mondaye

Chinese Training Coordinator for overseas vocational and skills training program at the Chinese Embassy in Liberia Wang Wei (Tony) urges the Government of Liberia (GOL) to help find employment for students graduating from the program.

Mr. Wang made the appeal on Saturday, 15 December while giving an overview of the training program under the Shan Dong Foreign Trade Vocational College during graduation of 120 Liberian youth.

The program is part of China's AID 2018 in partnership with the Ministry of Youth and Sports at the Monrovia Vocational Training Center (MVTC) in Paynesville.

Mr. Wang notes that the students, who were selected from the MVTC, have studied hard and demonstrate great eagerness to learn by listening attentively to lectures, stressing the need for government to find jobs that would enable them to

transform their lives.

He recalls that during the past 45 days, the participants were divided into three classes: electricity, auto repair, and construction, with a representative from each class representing their training achievements.

He emphasizes that Chinese teachers involved in

the program worked hard to prepare lectures and practical exercise for students.

He says besides lectures, students also engaged in field trips at Qingdao Construction Group which is also famous for its Qingdao Beer and the auto repair class went to a Chinese auto repair company.



Graduates of the 45 days training program at MVTC

Mr. Wang discloses that the program was organized by Shandong Foreign Trade Vocational College with four experts invited from Dezhou Vocational and Technical College, including 66 foreign aid programs.

In a related development, the Economic and Commercial Counselor at the Chinese Embassy, Ambassador Li Jiang, notes that human resource development is a significant field of China-Liberia collaboration.

He says China has helped Liberia by constructing the Fendell Campus of University of Liberia, the Monrovia Vocational Training Center

and primary schools, besides providing several thousand short-term training opportunities and scholarships to young Liberians to attend short-term seminars and scholarship in China as well as trained 119 graduates locally, among others.

Ambassador Li discloses that in the next three years, China will provide Africa with 50,000 government scholarships and 50,000 training opportunities for seminars, workshops and train more professionals in various disciplines. **Editing by Jonathan Browne**

## Dubious road

Cont'd from page 6

his rights.

Habeas corpus compels authorities to produce the living bodies of persons detained beyond 48 hours.

Montserrado County Attorney Cllr. Martin says there is proof to validate Kargbo's nationality as Sierra Leonean and his capacity as a businessman.

He says the defendant failed to show any formal communication exchanged between the Ministry of State for Presidential Affairs and the

Ministry of Finance who he claims had entered transactions and negotiations with him on behalf of the Liberian Government.

Cllr. Martin says Kargbo attempted to collect the international swift code for Liberia's international savings abroad in order to criminally dupe the government of Liberia of millions of dollars, a plan which was cleverly arrested by the Liberia National Police (LNP). **-Edited by Othello B. Garblah**

## UNDP donates vehicle to LRA

The Liberia Revenue Authority (LRA) receives a brand new Toyota Hilux Pickup from the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) to boost the Authority's capacity in the collection of lawful revenues.

According a press release, the vehicle will be used specifically to enhance the implementation of the country's Domestic Resource Mobilization (DRM) Strategy outreach programs.

Receiving keys to the vehicle Friday at the One UN House in Sinkor, LRA Commissioner General Thomas Doe Nah applauds the UNDP for

the generosity, describing the donation as a 'milestone support to the LRA'.

The donation is a demonstration of a vital partnership between the two institutions that continues to be strengthened aimed at enhancing revenue collection, he says.

CG Nah notes the donation will bring more dynamism to the work of the LRA, particularly the DRM process, saying "The vehicle has come at the right time, and I can assure you that we will use it for the purpose intended."

The DRM is a vital link for self reliance and a major pillar

for achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

CG Nah meanwhile turns over keys of the vehicle to LRA Deputy Commissioner General for Administrative Affairs, Aaron B. Kollie for operations and maintenance. UNDP Team Leader for Sustainable Economic Transformation, Dorsla Farcarthy, praises the UNDP's outstanding relationship with the LRA, noting that the LRA remains one of its responsible and compliant partners.

"We have a very good and strong partnership with the LRA and the LRA has been one of our most responsible and compliant partners and we enjoy the relationship," Mr. Farcarthy says.

He reaffirms the UNDP's commitment of support to the implementation of the DRM Strategy and other initiatives still in the pipeline.

The UNDP has been a major financial and technical contributor towards crafting the country's DRM, involving financial support to four regional dialogues, covering all 15 countries and a National Revenue symposium in 2017.

In November 2017, the UNDP commissioned two modern scanners at the Roberts International Airport to facilitate clearance of baggages of arriving passengers. **Press Release**



CG Nah receiving the keys to the vehicle from UNDP's Dorsla Farcarthy Friday at the UN HQ in Monrovia

## Finance denies

Starts from back page

company to be inactive since 2003, when the country had just emerged from civil war.

However, Deputy Minister Flomo notes the news story published by the local daily is not only false, but it's also misleading.

Mr. Flomo adds that the story is intended to bring the government to public ridicule and to give citizens false impression on the workings of the government.

Minister Flomo narrates that the domestic debt service flows at the Finance Ministry goes through huge processes.

According to him, a potential claimant encourages people that have claims to make request to the Ministry of Finance, after which the

Finance Minister will send it down to his deputies and assistant ministers.

Minister Flomo explains that these processes are observed before it arrives at the Debt Management Unit.

He argues that there is no way the government can make any payment without bringing all these facts, adding that the Debt Management Unit consists of the Finance Ministry, Central Bank of Liberia, Ministry of Justice and Ministry of State.

Meanwhile, Minister Flomo says Finance Ministry is requesting the paper to retract its story to avoid embarrassment. **--Edited by Winston W. Parley**

**#Stop prioritizing foreign businesses over Liberian businesses!#**

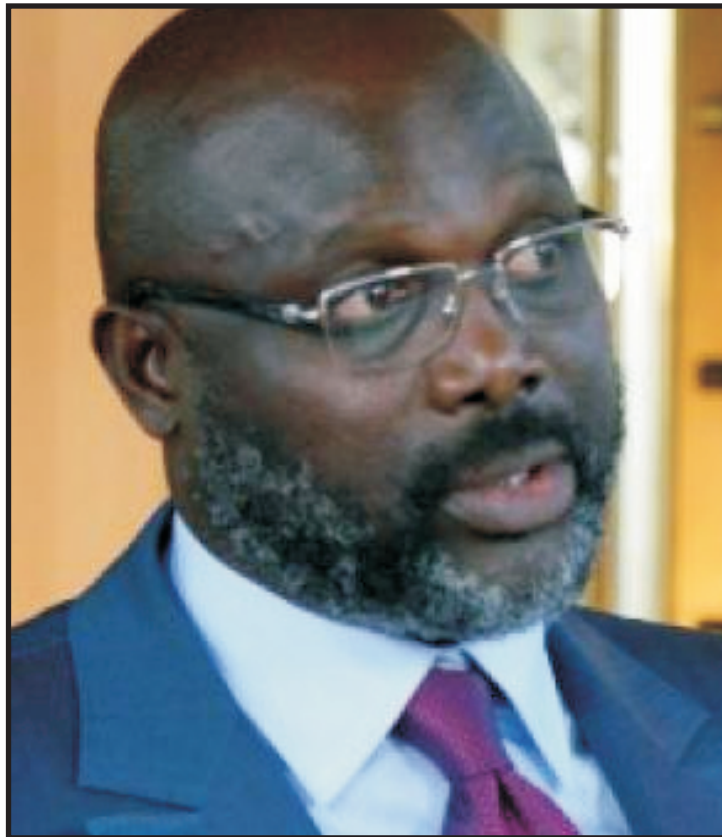
# Français

## Suppression des postes à durée déterminée : le député Koffa soutient le Président Weah

**L**e représentant du comté de Grand Kru Jonathan Fonati Koffa croit que les postes à durée déterminée créés par une loi de l'Assemblée législative limitent d'une manière ou d'une autre les pouvoirs du président et porte atteinte à l'article 56 de la Constitution de 1986.

S'adressant aux journalistes le vendredi 14 décembre à Monrovia, M. Koffa, Juriste de son état, et qui préside le comité parlementaire pour les affaires judiciaires, a affirmé que tous les arguments juridiques soulevés actuellement par ce gouvernement sont légaux.

Ses propos semblent appuyer la demande du président George Manneh Weah de supprimer les postes à durée déterminée. A noter que la Chambre des représentants a déjà adopté un projet de loi qui porte suppression de plusieurs postes à durée déterminée et examen du statut des institutions d'intégrité ou de lutte contre la corruption telles la Commission Anticorruption du



Libéria et la Commission de Passation des marchés publics et des concessions.

L'article 56 (a) de la Constitution de 1986 donne au président le pouvoir de nommer tous les ministres et leurs adjoints et assistants, les ambassadeurs et les consuls,

les surintendants de comté et autres représentants du gouvernement, ainsi que les postes militaires et civils. Et selon cette disposition de la loi, toutes ces personnalités nommées restent à la discrétion du président qui peut les radier à tout moment.



Au représentant Koffa de rappeler que la démocratie est une lutte interdépendante entre les pouvoirs de l'Etat et que, dans le cas du Libéria, elle progresse bien sous le gouvernement dirigé par la Coalition pour le changement démocratique (CDC) au cours de sa première année.

Il a fait observer que le Président Weah n'a pas fait usage de la force pour imposer sa volonté, mais il a fait recours à la voie constitutionnelle.

M. Koffa n'a toutefois pas abordé le cas Konah Karmo qui a été jeté de force hors de son bureau par des éléments des forces de l'ordre et de sécurité au début de cette année pour installer de force M. Gabriel Nyenkan après sa nomination à la tête de la LEITI par le président Weah.

Sous la supervision de Me Koffa en tant que président du Comité parlementaire pour les affaires judiciaires, la Chambre a adopté le projet de loi soumis par le président Weah visant à supprimer les postes à durée déterminée.

Il est convaincu que la procédure est légale. Il y a eu cependant une bourde générale contre la suppression de ces postes, en particulier

dans les institutions d'intégrité censées moraliser la vie publique. D'aucuns estiment qu'il est nécessaire que ces postes bénéficient d'une protection sans la crainte d'un limogeage arbitraire de la part du chef de l'Etat.

Selon Koffa, les présidents diffèrent quant à la manière dont ils veulent utiliser les pouvoirs constitutionnels qui leur sont conférés légalement à l'article 56 (a). Cela signifie qu'un président n'est pas obligé de faire ce qu'a fait son prédécesseur.

Il rappelle que ces postes indépendants ont été créés par les anciens présidents, en particulier par la présidente sortante Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf, [avec l'approbation de l'Assemblée législative], pour des raisons qui lui sont propres. Un autre président est libre d'avoir un jugement inverse. Il n'y a donc rien qui soit inconstitutionnel. Le président Weah a procédé de façon légale en vertu de la loi. Le député Koffa croit qu'il est juridiquement inapproprié de critiquer cet acte.

En ce qui concerne la destitution du juge associé de la cour suprême, Kabineh M. Ja'neh, le juriste Koffa croit que là aussi, il n'y a rien d'illégal. « Le président ne s'est pas réveillé un beau matin pour dire qu'il voulait déshonorer Kabineh Ja'neh. Ce projet d'impeachment a été conçu par la législature à la suite d'une pétition présentée par les législateurs et s'est déroulé comme prévu par la loi », a-t-il poursuivi.

Par ailleurs, M. Koffa a démenti les rumeurs selon lesquelles il viserait la présidence de la Chambre des Représentants, ajoutant qu'il n'a aucun problème avec le leadership de l'actuel président. « Je n'ai pas de problème avec le leadership en général. S'il y a un problème spécifique, nous pouvons en discuter mais je ne pense pas que nous ayons un problème pour le moment », a-t-il déclaré.

## L'affaire Global Witness refait surface

**D**e hauts responsables libériens, anciens et actuels, sont sur le point de retourner dans le box des accusés dans le cadre du procès de sabotage économique initié par le groupe de surveillance basé au Royaume-Uni, Global Witness, dont le rapport faisait état d'actes de corruption.

L'affaire a été déclenchée

par Global Witness en 2016. Selon l'Organisation non Gouvernementale internationale basée au Royaume-Uni, Sable Mining, une société minière également basée au Royaume-Uni, a offert des pots-de-vin d'une valeur de 950 000 dollars US à des responsables libériens afin d'influencer une loi sur les concessions de sorte que la

société se voie attribuer le mont Wologizi situé dans le comté de Lofa pour son exploitation. À la suite d'un mandat émis par la Cour suprême en août 2018, enjoignant au tribunal pénal « C » de reprendre l'affaire, le procès devait s'ouvrir le vendredi 14 décembre, mais on ne voit pas bien pourquoi cette affaire n'a pas encore commencé. Cependant, les travailleurs judiciaires ont eu leur convention vendredi et tous les tribunaux seraient fermés, ce qui pourrait en être une raison. Les procureurs ont porté l'affaire devant la Cour suprême en raison de la décision de la juge Yamie Quiqui Gbeisaye et présidente de la Cour pénale « C », de marquer temporairement certains des éléments de preuve documentaires dont ils disposaient et qui, pour les accusés, avaient été piratés.

L'ancien président de la Chambre des représentants, J. Alex Tyler, l'ancien président du parti au pouvoir, l'actuel sénateur H. Varney G. Sherman et l'ancien président de la Commission nationale de l'investissement, Richard Tolbert, se sont opposés à ces

preuves, affirmant que l'accusation les avait obtenues illégalement en piratant la ligne de courrier électronique de M. Sherman ou de Sable Mining Africa. L'affaire a débuté au cours des dernières étapes du second mandat de

six ans de l'ancienne Présidente Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf, mais le procès a été reporté à une date ultérieure en 2017 afin de permettre la tenue des élections présidentielles qui ont vu la victoire du président George.



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# Français

## Libération de Laurent Gbagbo et Charles Blé Goudé: C'est une situation totalement ubuesque.

C'est une situation totalement ubuesque. Des scènes de joie dans plusieurs points chauds de la capitale économique ivoirienne, Yopougon en tête, et dans la résidence de Simone Ehivet Gbagbo, épouse de l'ex-chef d'État, à Cocody-rivera golf.

La rumeur de la libération de Laurent Gbagbo et Charles Blé Goudé n'a pas fait qu'affoler la toile. Elle a amené de nombreux partisans de l'ex-chef d'État à une rare démonstration de joie. Dans les rues de la réputée gbagboïste commune de Yopougon, on aurait cru, ce vendredi 14 décembre 2018, à un sacre de l'équipe nationale de football. A la résidence des Gbagbo, à Cocody-riviera golf, dignitaires du Front populaire ivoirien et proches de famille étaient en fête. Simone Gbagbo s'autorisait, au passage, des déclarations à la presse : « c'est fait, c'est un jour de victoire ! ». Sur les réseaux sociaux, on pouvait écouter l'ex-députée d'Abobo et constater l'explosion de joie à sa résidence. Mais d'où est venue cette rumeur ? On ne saurait, par définition, mettre en cause, une personne précise. Une certitude cependant, de nombreux internautes, y compris l'avocat de Simone Gbagbo, Ange Rodrigue Dadjé, avaient annoncé la libération de l'ex-chef d'État, avant de se rétracter.

« Nous devons rester lucides, patients, sereins mais déterminés et toujours mobilisés », déclare Raphaël DAGBO Libération de Gbagbo et Blé Goudé : « Nous devons rester lucides, patients, sereins mais déterminés et toujours mobilisés », déclare Raphaël DAGBO

La faute de la rumeur n'incombe sans doute pas à la Cour pénale internationale (Cpi), qui n'a pas dit formellement si elle rendrait, ce vendredi, une décision relativement au maintien en détention des deux accusés de crimes contre l'humanité, Laurent Gbagbo et Charles Blé Goudé. L'inter a pu contacter, vendredi en fin d'après-midi, un membre des équipes de défense, basé à La Haye. La source s'est voulue formelle : « il n'y a aucune décision jusqu'ici. Il n'y en aura pas certainement aujourd'hui. Les juges n'ont

donné aucune date ». Jusqu'à quand faudra-t-il attendre pour être situé sur l'éventuelle mise en liberté provisoire des deux Ivoiriens ? « On ne peut pas donner de date. Nous espérons que cela se fera jusqu'à la fin de l'année ou peut-être en début d'année », note la source. Fait remarquable : les vacances judiciaires d'hiver ont débuté, à la Cpi, ce vendredi 14 décembre 2018, à 17h30. Elles se poursuivront jusqu'au lundi 7 janvier 2019, à 9h.

Le défaut de confirmation de la libération de Laurent Gbagbo et Blé Goudé a douché les ardeurs de nombreux pro-Gbagbo, vendredi soir. Simone Gbagbo, passée l'euphorie, a invité, via sa page facebook, « les uns et les autres à la modération ».

Rappelons qu'une audience s'était tenue, jeudi 13 décembre 2018, afin d'examiner la détention de Laurent Gbagbo et Charles Blé Goudé. La particularité de cette audience, c'est qu'elle avait été convoquée par les juges. A la lumière des interventions ayant meublé la journée du 13 décembre, l'éventualité d'une mise en liberté provisoire n'avait jamais été aussi proche pour l'ex-leader des jeunes patriotes, Charles Blé Goudé, mais aussi et surtout pour l'ex-chef d'État, Laurent Gbagbo. Le procureur Eric McDonald a, d'abord, développé les arguments qui militent pour le maintien en détention des deux prévenus, puis il a expliqué que toute mise en liberté provisoire devrait « être octroyée sur les bases de conditions strictes ». Pour Laurent Gbagbo, en cas de liberté provisoire, il devra résider dans un pays signataire du statut de Rome et respectant ses principes. Il devra se présenter de manière hebdomadaire devant les autorités, porter un bracelet électronique avec un Gps et ne sera pas autorisé à quitter sa résidence territoriale. Le procureur a aussi suggéré le dépôt d'une caution de garantie auprès de la Cour. Pour Charles Blé Goudé, la liste des conditions est longue et beaucoup plus restrictive. Le procureur recommande, par exemple, qu'il se présente deux fois par semaine auprès des autorités du pays d'accueil et qu'un couvre-feu quotidien, de 23h à 3h du matin.

## COMMENTAIRE

Par Kevin Rudd

## Perspectives des relations USA-Chine en 2019

NEW YORK - Tout au long de l'année 2018, une grande partie de l'Asie a été secouée par la dynamique nouvelle et de plus en plus imprévisible des relations sino-américaines. Il y a un an, le président américain Donald Trump revenait de Pékin après sa visite « état-plus », que la Chine espérait à même de mettre finalement terme à sa rhétorique de campagne anti-chinoise. Douze mois plus tard, la Chine et les Etats-Unis sont pris dans une guerre commerciale non résolue et l'administration Trump a remplacé un « engagement stratégique » des USA avec la Chine par une « concurrence stratégique ».

Il y a un an, par ailleurs, les économies et marchés des États-Unis, d'Europe et de la Chine étaient en pleine croissance. Aujourd'hui, il existe une instabilité profonde sur les marchés financiers, à cause du ralentissement en Chine et en Europe, et les taux d'intérêt plus élevés commencent à impacter l'économie aux Etats-Unis. L'incertitude sur l'avenir des négociations nucléaires nord-coréennes assombrit également le tableau.

Quelles sont donc les perspectives des relations sino-américaines en 2019? Il est probable qu'en mars, il y aura un accord sur la réduction du déficit commercial bilatéral et les décisions d'importation que la Chine devra prendre pour y parvenir. D'ici là, un accord sur les réductions tarifaires est également possible, bien que sa complexité pourrait demander plus de temps. Une approche tarif par tarif pourrait prendre un an. Mais, si les réformateurs économiques chinois adoptent une approche plus drastique, s'engageant à arriver à des tarifs zéro à terme et sommant les Américains de faire de même, cela pourrait être conclu plus rapidement. Cependant, cela irait à l'encontre de décennies de formation des bureaucrates commerciaux chinois, à qui l'on apprend à céder le moins possible, sans parler d'être perçu comme cédant sur toute la ligne et en une fois.

La réforme de ce qui est appelé le transfert de technologie forcé devrait être relativement simple. Néanmoins, une chose est de faire passer une réforme, et une autre est de changer la façon dont les arrangements contractuels peuvent être interprétés dans la pratique, même en l'absence de dispositions de transfert de technologie spécifiques.

Or, la protection de la propriété intellectuelle est très problématique. Les accords précédents conclus sous l'administration du président Barack Obama pourraient être réinstaurés. Mais la mise en application juridictionnelle des violations est toujours sans espoir. Un mécanisme possible serait de soumettre les contrats entre des entreprises chinoises et étrangères concernés à des organismes d'arbitrage commercial internationaux situés à Singapour ou en Suisse, conçus pour traiter spécifiquement l'application de la protection de la propriété intellectuelle.

Si la Chine s'y opposait, il serait peut-être possible de développer un système d'arbitrage commercial international propre à la Chine. Mais le pays devrait nommer des étrangers qualifiés à son panel d'arbitres pour établir sa crédibilité internationale. Personne n'a confiance dans les tribunaux commerciaux de la Chine. Pour ses propres besoins de réforme interne, la Chine a besoin de se diriger vers des divisions commerciales et civiles de son système judiciaire totalement indépendantes, même si la division criminelle reste soumise à un contrôle politique.

Les inquiétudes des Américains à propos des subventions de l'État chinois dans le cadre de la stratégie Made in China 2025 seront presque

impossible à dissiper. La réalité est que tous les pays utilisent des degrés divers de soutien gouvernemental en faveur de leurs industries technologiques indigènes, bien que la Chine y ait davantage recours. Même si nous fixions un niveau maximum légal de soutien étatique en faveur d'une mesure entreprise donnée, la vérification serait difficile. J'ai peu d'espoir qu'un résultat négocié puisse être obtenu dans ce domaine. L'Amérique pourrait simplement devoir concurrencer la Chine en augmentant les investissements publics dans la recherche et le développement dans les secteurs des technologies de l'information et de la biotechnologie.

Nous ne devrions pas non plus exclure la possibilité que la Chine mette en œuvre des réformes tarifaires s'appliquant également à la communauté internationale élargie. Par exemple, la Chine pourrait prendre un engagement spectaculaire d'annuler progressivement les droits de douane non seulement pour les États-Unis, mais pour tous les Etats membres de l'Organisation mondiale du commerce. Cela représenterait une opportunité presque irrésistible que la Chine devienne le champion mondial du libre-échange et que la tendance au protectionnisme cesse.

Une telle décision de la Chine pourrait comprendre une demande d'adhésion au Partenariat Trans-Pacifique, ce qui représenterait un effort ironique de déborder les États-Unis (que Trump a fait sortir du TPP immédiatement après sa prise de fonction) dans la région Asie-Pacifique. Quand elle perçoit une ouverture politique et de marché, la Chine peut être remarquablement rapide. Les négociations seraient difficiles, mais les réserves du Japon sur l'adhésion de la Chine au TPP se sont adoucies depuis la récente visite à Pékin du Premier ministre Shinzo Abe.

Sur le front plus large de la politique étrangère et de la sécurité, la Chine est susceptible de « pacifier » ses relations avec d'autres pays en 2019, compte tenu des défis stratégiques fondamentaux posés par les Etats-Unis. Il y a déjà une certaine normalisation dans les relations avec le Japon. Des données récentes en provenance des garde-côtes japonais indiquent une réduction drastique des incursions chinoises dans la région du Senkaku / Diaoyu dans la mer de Chine orientale.

De plus, la Chine est susceptible de consolider et d'élargir son rôle au sein des institutions des Nations Unies et de Bretton Woods existantes, au lieu de pousser à la création de nouvelles institutions de gouvernance internationale. Elle continuera probablement à être le nouveau champion de l'OMC et maintiendra sa position sur le changement climatique mondial tel que convenu dans l'accord de Paris 2015 sur le climat. Pour les esprits les plus sobres de l'establishment de la politique étrangère chinoise, il est préférable de se concentrer sur les mécanismes existants du système mondial fondé sur des règles, en particulier lorsque les États-Unis démontrent un mépris systématique pour celui-ci.

Alors que la Chine cherchera à rééquilibrer ses relations avec les États-Unis et apaiser les tensions dans ses relations non-américaines, ses dirigeants utiliseront probablement 2019 pour former un jugement plus profond sur l'avenir de la politique des États-Unis: l'impact de l'enquête Mueller sur Trump et son administration, et comprendre si un nouveau président en 2020 (ou plus tôt) ne modifiera en rien la nouvelle stratégie américaine émergente. Bien qu'ils aient déjà conclu qu'un changement profond dans l'attitude des Américains envers la Chine s'est produit, ils restent incertains quant à quelle forme précise que prendra ce changement, et si un changement fondamental de leur stratégie (et pas simplement de leurs tactiques) est justifié.

## ARTICLES



# Analysis of the Tale of Liberian Media: The High Price Journalists Paid For Press Freedom in Liberia

By: Josephus Moses Gray  
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CONT'D FROM LAST EDITION

**A**mong Doe's victims was a veteran journalist, Rufus Darpoh (late) was kidnapped and detained by government security agents for allegedly writing anonymous articles. Mr. Darpoh, Ghanaian-Liberian was held for over six months at a notorious military prison, once Belle Yalla, and was reported subjected to routine beating and other forms of torture.

On March 20, 1990, Klohn Hinneh (late) of The News newspaper was detained on the orders of Emmanuel Gbalazeh, former Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of Liberia while on April 6, 1990, Mark Huband, a British reporter working with UPI, was kidnapped by anti-government rebels. He was released four days later and said he was not mistreated. On March 7, 1981, Tom Kamara (late) formerly of the New Liberian newspaper was arrested for a story he supposedly published against the police.

In 1984, Willis Knuckles (late) of the Daily Observer and BBC was detained, held without charge at the once Bellah Yallah prison, and reportedly tortured. He was released several days later while on June 1, 1984 Rufus Darpoh of the New Liberian was arrested and detained until 17 November. On January 17, 1985, former Justice Minister Jenkins Scott announced that the Daily Observer would not be permitted to print after it carried a series of stories and articles the Doe's regime termed as "anti-governmental" reports.

Ex-president Doe, on August 1, 1985, announced plans for a nationwide radio service that would reach all areas of Liberia. On December 1, 1985, Charles Gbenyon, a senior journalist for the LBS was killed by AFL soldiers. In January 1986, the Doe's regime placed a three-month ban on the Press Union of Liberia (PUL) but lifted it six days after the attempted coup led by the late Tmoas Quiwonkpa, a native of Nimba County. On March 5, 1986, the offices of the Daily Observer were destroyed by fire while on May 14, 1986, PUL issued a complaint concerning the government's non-response to anonymous crimes against journalists.

On March 7, 1988, the once Sun Times was banned for printing while on April 11, 1988, Thomas Nimely (late) of the Sun Times was arrested and held without charge for refusing to reveal the source of an article. Mr. Doe on April 12, 1988 accused the media of trying to undo progress by systematically publishing misinformation, while on the 13th of the same month the Footprints Today was banned by the government with five of its journalists arrested. Both Sun Times and Foot Prints Newspapers no longer exist.

## The Analysis: Johnson-Sirleaf and the Media

The level of attacks on journalists and media houses in the country compared to past regimes has gradually decreased, but journalists still faced threats and intimidation in the course of exercising their responsibility. There are several instances under this administration violence against journalists by public officials especially the security apparatus, deepening the unfavorably ties between the two—government and the independent media despite of efforts by the President Johnson-Sirleaf to cement the transactions.

These days Liberia enjoys an unprecedented high level of free press and freedom of speech in this blossoming democracy; the status of the media in Liberia in term of quantities are overwhelmed but in substances of quality and ethical adherence, most need to be done as the impact of the media in context of positivity cannot be mentioned by quantities but quality and knack.

In 2012, President Johnson-Sirleaf became the Second African head of a democratic government to endorse the Table Mountain Declaration, which calls on African governments to abolish criminal defamation laws, while in 2010 Liberia became the first to enact West Africa's first freedom of information law. The purpose of the freedom of information law was to give both journalists and the general public the leverage of unrestricted to access to public document, with exclusions of those border on national security.

During the summer of 2006, Johnson-Sirleaf established a blue ribbon || committee in response to international concerns about the numerous attacks on journalists by police officers. However, implementation of the law, as well as public awareness regarding how to use it. But the PUL has since described the blue ribbon || committee as weak.

corruption and mismanagement in government and private sectors, but the patriots of yesterday who were once ordinary citizens and who now hold state power are furious that the media on whose backs, they made their name and rode to power, is looking into their every life, actions and deeds as they abuse the people's trust.

It can be recalled that West African Journalists Association (WAJA) on several occasions has criticized the Unity Party-led government for what WAJA described as "the unfortunate closure of media houses in the country", accusing the regime of an unjustified attacks on free press. Corruption and bribes in the judicial sector also contribute to a largely unfavorable environment for journalists under this current regime.

Although no journalist is in detention, few media institutions have been closed through the legal process either for allegedly failures to pay tax or ethical transgression but several journalists have come under several attacks in execution of their professional responsibilities. The government is credited for press freedom and free press, free speech and media independence to report, but all have not been charming for the media.

Under this regime, police officers have also violated the rights of journalists, but some of these officers were punished while others unpunished by the government. During the first term of President Johnson-Sirleaf, she contributed US\$100,000 to the Headquarters project of the Press Union of Liberia, but the status of the amount remains unknown.

However, several reports point to mismanagement by the media, this act has ruined the media and persistently sparked claims and counter-claims, thus haunting the Liberian media in general. Besides, the Sirleaf's administration also hired the services of journalists; some are still occupying their positions in the government while others have since left to move into other professional discipline.

The media-government relations in most cases have been up and down with the president persistently accusing the private media of distortion, blackmail and sensationalism and called for media reform and adherence to higher journalistic standards. It must not be forgotten that President Sirleaf successfully sued the New Broom, and the New Democrat newspapers. The New Democrat was lucky and was able to settle out of court, but not the New Broom that was sued for five million United States dollars for ethical transgression and yellow journalism.

In 2013, the then chief bodyguard, Othello Warwick threatened the Liberia media when he said: "Any press member that surpasses his/her responsibility to get involved in presidential intelligence; trust me, we will restrict you," Warwick said. "Be careful, because you have your pen and we have our guns. This conflict has manifested itself further through criticism of the administration by the press and physical assaults on journalists by officers of the national police.

In February 2013, three newspaper publishers were ordered to appear before the Supreme Court on possible charges of contempt following the publication of an article that accused the judges of embezzling funds. According to report, in February 2013, police attacked and threatened journalist Edwin Genoway of New Dawn after he attempted to photograph officers harassing motorists. In March the same year, the then acting Mayor of Monrovia, Mary Broh, allegedly ordered the beating of journalists Francis Nyan and Charles Yates.

On one occasion, dozens of armed police without a court order on August 14 2014 stormed the National Chronicle Newspaper offices on Carey Street an operation that caused panic in the streets of Monrovia. Following the incident, the Paper's publisher, Philibert Brown informed the Press Union in a complaint that three truckloads of heavily armed police from the Emergency Response Unit (ERU), threw tear gas in the office before breaking the door to the main entrance. The police is said to have taken away "two laptops and arrested two of the paper's senior staff," according to Mr. Brown.

The police action followed a series of publication of the paper, including one on the alleged formation of an interim government to replace the Johnson-Sirleaf administration. Two days after the police action, the Ministry of Information revoked the Chronicle license to

operate. After months of legal wrangling before the Supreme Court of Liberia over the force closure of the National Chronicle Newspaper by the Government of Liberia, the high Court later ruled in favor of a petition filled by the newspaper through the Press Union of Liberia ordering the reopening of the newspaper.

In November 2011, four radio stations and three television stations were found guilty of propagating hate messages but a court order to have these radio stations shut down was quickly rescinded. The Frontpage Africa's (FPA) editor, Rodney Sieh was also incarcerated for months on woozy libel charges wrapped up in political undertones. However journalist Sieh was later released after he wrote a letter apologizing based on the counsels of the paper legal counselors and other central figures in the body politics of Liberia. Mr. Sieh released was celebrated by journalists in the country.

Editor Rodney Sieh was taken into custody following a Supreme Court ruling that the paper should pay US\$1.6 million for defaming the ex-Minister of Agriculture Dr. J. Chris Toe. The FPA's succession of publications on the subject were reported based on the audit reports of the General Audit Commission (GAC), but the Ministry of Justice under the then Minister, Christina Tah rejected the audit findings.

The former Managing Director of the National Port Authority, Matilda Parker, also suit the FPA for 1million USD, after the paper reported that she lied to the Liberian Anti-corruption (LACC) Commission on her asset declaration forms.

According to media publication in the media, in 2014 traditional leaders reportedly threatened to kill reporter Mae Azango and her 9-year-old daughter for reporting on the health hazards of female genital cutting grabbed international attention. That story touched off urgent debates and forced the government and development organizations to act

It can be recalled that the then Liberian National Police Inspector General Col. Chris Massaquoi physically assaulted a journalist on the grounds of the Temple of Justice, which the home of the Liberian Supreme Court. The former police boss reportedly assaulted the journalist because the journalist took his picture and "the camera light flash in my face!"

Pundits believe the administration, frequent lawsuits against the media on a label charges is an attempt to silence dissent in Liberia.

Also a former Minister in the current government, Vaflor Gayflor threatened to sue the New Vision newspaper for exposing her reported corrupt practices. She demanded that the paper retract the story or face lawsuit, but the paper stood by its accurate report, it is over eleven years now since she issued the threats to file the legal action. Sadly, media houses that were threatened with lawsuit were persistent in reporting and investigation corrupt practices in the public sector. Theses newspapers have been busy investigating corruption cases and nepotism in the Liberian government.

Henry Costa, a radio talk show host was on March 21, 2014, arrested, detained at the Monrovia Central Prison and charged with "Terrorist Threat, Menacing, and Criminal Coercion".; he was later released.

Reporting the incident, *The Analyst* newspaper said the arrest was based on a complaint filed against Costa by Fombah Sirleaf, Director of National Security Agency. The station, which is very critical of government, institutions and individuals was on several occasions interrupted before finally be close down by the government through the court for reportedly failures to settle its tax obligation.

Another Journalist George Borteh, the Acting Vice President of the Judicial Reporters Association of Liberia (JURAL) and a reporter for *The New Republic* newspaper, was thrown in prison on 12 October, 2012, after taking a photo of Police Director Chris Massaquoi at the Temple of Justice in Monrovia. Borteh was detained for over three hours. There have been several other cases of violations against the media by state security personnel; however, some of these accusations published are subject to further inquiries for exactitude. But in most instances, actions have been taken against state security officers that manhandled journalists while others accusers remain scot-free.

TO BE CONT'D

# VP Taylor sick?

By E. J. Nathaniel Daygbor

The oil continues to spill here, soaking deep and leaving a dingy stain on relationship between President George Manneh Weah and Vice President Jewel Howard Taylor, even as the ruling Coalition for Democratic Change faces serious internal fight from Jewel's National Patriotic Party.

Multiple media reports persistently indicate that camaraderie between the two is far from being cozy, and Madam Taylor herself has more than once publicly issued apology, reassurance and expressed solidarity for President Weah.

But fresh claims by Liberia's Finance and Development Planning Minister, Samuel Tweah reveals Vice President Taylor is sick.

Minister Tweah made the disclosure at an intellectual discourse on Bushrod Island, Monrovia over the weekend in response to a question posed to him.

The Minister had gone at the intellectual center to interact with members of the group and the public on the

workings of the Coalition government, the economy and fiscal policy of the state.

Minister Tweah's interaction was thwarted by a question from the audience, seeking to understand relationship between the Vice President Taylor and President Weah.

He describes the relationship as close and cordial, but disclosed that last

week, President George Weah had gone to visit VP Jewel Taylor when officers of the Executive Protection Service, the elite presidential guard informed the President that the Vice President is ill and doctors advise she takes bed rest.

Based on the information, the NewDawn visited Vice President Taylor's office at the

Capitol on Monday 17 December to authenticate the information.

The spokesman in the Vice President's office, Solomon Ware, declined to comment on grounds that the information came from a "key and influential" Minister of the government, who may know a lot about the health status of the Vice President as compared to him.

Relationship between President Weah and Madam Taylor appears gloomy in public since their ascendency to the nation's highest offices.

Jewel in March this year revealed on live television that her relationship with President Weah has not been good, but added that issues have been ironed out.

In November, the embattled Chairman of Madam Taylor's National Patriotic Party James Biney, alleged that Jewel has ambition to contest for the Presidency against President

Weah in 2023.

"This is the real issue; Mrs. Taylor invited me and told me she wants to contest the Presidency [in] 2023, and that she needs people to join me to remove the Party from the Coalition and I said, 'Mrs. Taylor, that will be the saddest mistake you will make because we have a lot of work to do so, if that is what you are thinking about, wait for 12 years' and she said the Party is her husband's party and if I cannot conform to her proposal, I should leave the party", Biney narrates to this paper.

A member of the governing Coalition for Democratic Change, the NPP is split right in the middle with embattled Chairman Biney leading one faction, while the other faction that is loyal to Jewel, is being headed by ex-vice president John Gray, a stalwart of the NPP.

Both factions are currently before the National Elections Commission in a leadership battle. *-Editing by Jonathan Browne*



## Senate must return impeachment bill

By Winston W. Parley

Liberia National Bar Association (LNBA) president-elect Cllr. Tiawan Gongloe is calling on the Liberian Senate to send back to the House of Representatives the impeachment bill presented against Associate Justice Kabineh M. Ja'neh because it is a product of disrespect to the Supreme Court of Liberia.

In an interview with this paper, Cllr. Gongloe argues that there was a prohibition issued by the Supreme Court against impeachment processes initiated by the House following Justice Ja'neh's petition for a writ of

prohibition, but the House defied the Court and proceeded with the impeachment bill against Ja'neh.

In the wake of this disregard to the authority of the Supreme Court by the House, Cllr. Gongloe says the bill of impeachment crafted, passed and submitted to the Senate to subject Ja'neh to trial is a product of disrespect to the Supreme Court.

He notes that while majority members of the Supreme Court bench had voted contrary to Justice Ja'neh's request for prohibition against his impeachment process, the

House of Representatives acted illegally inasmuch as a Supreme Court stay order was disrespected by the lawmakers.

Further, Cllr. Gongloe thinks that no justice including the Chief Justice Francis S. Korkpor, Sr., should preside over the impeachment trial at the Senate if Senators refuse to return the bill of impeachment to the House of Representatives which drew the instrument out of disrespect to the Court.

He equally reminds that lawmakers here took oath to protect the Constitution, and they cannot be seen as violating the very Constitution that they should protect.

The LNBA president - elect warns that if constitutional crisis develops as a result of the lawmakers' action, they will be blamed, [particularly where Justices boycott the impeachment trial in retaliation to the disrespect] shown the Court.

Justice Ja'neh stands accused of alleged proved misconduct, abuse of power and abuse of judicial description, and the engine behind these allegations are ruling party Coalition for Democratic Change (CDC) Representatives Moses Acarus Gray and Thomas Fallah.

On 15 November, the House of Representatives presented to the Liberian Senate, instruments intended to be

used to impeach Justice Ja'neh, in spite of two separate challenges against the process at the Supreme Court.

While Justice Ja'neh was challenging the process, four members of the Liberian Senate similarly filed a separate action against their colleagues for amending Rule 63 of the Senate's Standing Rule which they did to pave the way to impeach Ja'neh.

In the case at the Supreme the Ministry of Justice strangely stood as legal representative against Justice Ja'neh in the interest of the House of Representatives which remains on record to date that it would not appear before the Supreme Court in hearing Ja'neh's petition for prohibition.

The Ministry was simply invited by the Supreme Court to argue on the side of the law, but suddenly the Ministry took sides to fight against Ja'neh.

Majority members of the Supreme Court bench including Chief Justice Korkpor, Associate Joseph Nagbe and ad hoc justice J. Boima Kontoe said the House did nothing in violation of Ja'neh's due process right, terming his petition for prohibition as premature.

But in their dissent, Associate Justices Jamesetta Howard - Wolokolie and Sie-A-Nyene Yuoh termed the majority's decision as troublesome precedence and hilarious. They refused to be part of the majority's decision. *-Edited by Othello B. Garblah*



**#Revoke rock and sand mining licenses from Chinese and Lebanese#**

## Finance denies payment to Rocktown



By Lewis S. Teh

The Ministry of Finance and Development Planning (MFDP) has refuted a report by FrontPageAfrica on Monday, 17 December under the Title Liberia: Kickback Suspected in US\$180K Taylor-Era Debt Paid

to 'Inactive' New York Company.

The Ministry of Finance says as far as its records show the payment request in question is still in internal audit and no such payment has been effected.

Deputy Finance Minister for

Economic Management Augustus F. Flomo says the payment is still being processed through the internal system at the Ministry.

"There has been absolutely no payments made to Rocktown up to and including the call of the press conference on Monday, 17 December," he added.

Mr. Flomo accuses the newspaper of allegedly being in the habit of releasing false report to the general public.

In its December 17, 2018 edition, FrontPageAfrica says in one of those documents it was releasing, Finance Minister Samuel Tweah had allegedly approved a payment of US\$182,000.00 to a purported US-based construction company.

The local daily says a memo approving the payment to Rocktown Tool & Equipment Corporation of New York, USA was dated September 24, 2018, but alleges that its probe has found the



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## Public Service Announcement

The New Dawn will take its usual annual break beginning December 24, 2018 to return on the newsstand immediately January 4, 2019. We thank our many loyal readers and subscribers for standing by us in 2018 despite a rather tough business climate. We look forward to a very peaceful and prosperous New Year. Merry Christmas.

The Management

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