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# The New Dawn

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TRULY INDEPENDENT

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# Senatorial election faces uncertainty

## -as Senate summons NEC, political parties



Sen. Thomas Grupee



Sen. Darius Dillon



Sen. Dan Morais



Sen. Sando Johnson



Mr. Alexander Cummings



Ex-VP Joseph Boakai



Sen. Nyonblee Karnga - Lawrence



Mr. Benoni Urey



# CPP sets rules for candidates' selection

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# Continental News

## Burundi blocks social media on Election Day

Burundi has blocked social media platforms on election day as voters choose a leader to replace long-serving president Pierre Nkurunziza.

The BBC has confirmed

that Facebook, WhatsApp and Twitter are not accessible.

Only those using Virtual Private Networks (VPN), which mask a user's identity, can access the social media sites. The authorities have not responded to requests for

comment.

Polling stations for the election opened early on Wednesday morning.

A local journalist has tweeted a photo of the turnout at one voting station: The build-up to the

poll - in which seven candidates are vying to replace President Nkurunziza - has been marred by violence and accusations that the vote will not be free and fair.

The electoral commission has approved representatives from 53 foreign embassies, including some from the African Union, as poll observers. President Nkurunziza will be stepping down after 15 years but he will transition to a newly created position, "supreme guide to patriotism".

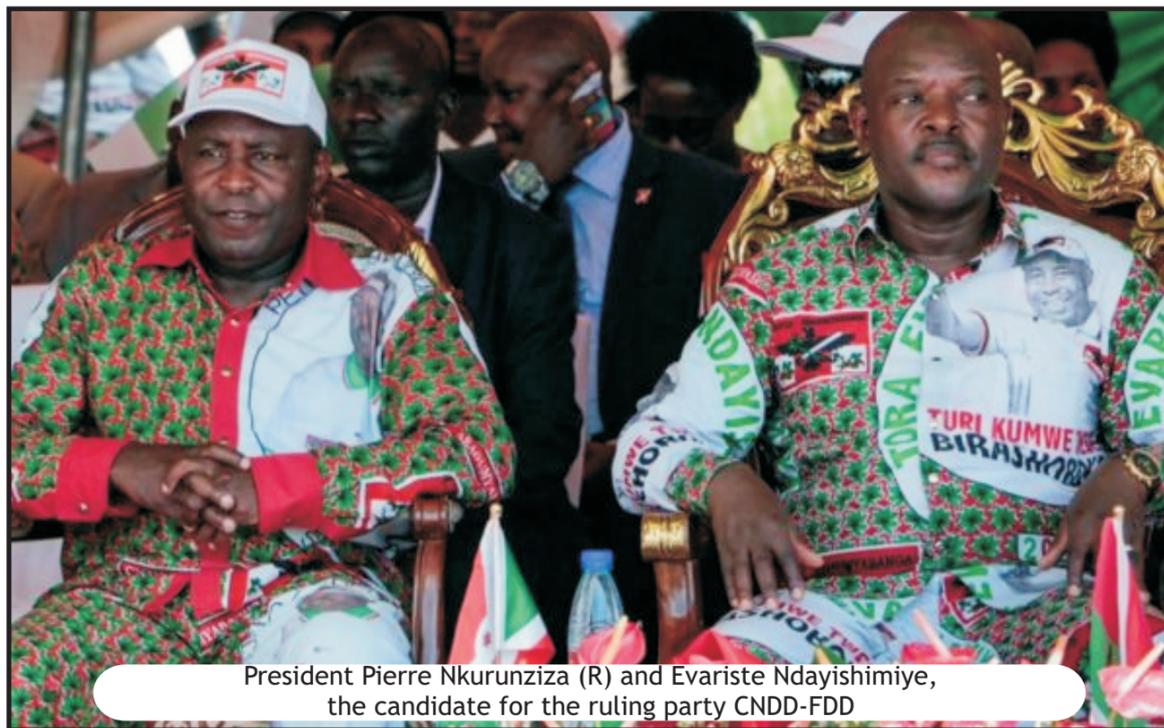
Of the seven candidates contesting the presidency, Evariste Ndayishimiye, candidate for the governing CNDD-FDD party, and main opposition leader Agathon Rwaasa, are seen as the favourites. Whoever wins will

be required by law to consult Mr Nkurunziza on matters of national security and national unity. But the election has been criticised for taking place during the coronavirus pandemic.

Burundi has recorded more than 40 cases of coronavirus, with one death, but it has been criticised for holding mass rallies.

A government spokesman said in March, when no cases had been recorded, that the country had been protected by God.

The authorities have resisted imposing tough restrictions, only advising people to stick to strict hygiene rules and avoiding crowds wherever possible - except of course in campaign rallies. BBC



President Pierre Nkurunziza (R) and Evariste Ndayishimiye, the candidate for the ruling party CNDD-FDD

## Cameroon's Biya breaks two-month silence on virus

Cameroon's President Paul Biya has addressed the nation for the first time since coronavirus spread to Cameroon on 6 March.

Mr Biya urged people in Cameroon to remain calm, trust the government and join the fight against the disease.

During his broadcast on state TV he also cancelled this year's National Day celebrations, marked on 20 May, because of a ban on gatherings.

The 87-year-old president praised health workers for their efforts in containing the spread of coronavirus.

He warned of economic challenges following the decline in commodity prices and trade.

Since the disease spread to Cameroon, there had been concerns about Mr Biya's whereabouts.

He had only appeared in two still photos and it was the Prime Minister Joseph Dion Ngute and Health Minister Malachie

Manaouda who had been leading government communications on the crisis.

They announced a lockdown and later the easing of measures, amid rumours of Mr Biya's failing health.

Apart for a few seconds at the start of the broadcast when his head trembled and his voice shook, his 18-minute broadcast seemed like his other broadcasts.

Cameroon has recorded 3,529 coronavirus cases including 140 deaths. BBC



People in Cameroon are used to not seeing their president for long stretches of time

## Niger wins ground despite virus

West African states are making progress in their fight against Islamist militants even as they grapple with the coronavirus pandemic, Niger President Mahamadou Issoufou said.

Affected states are working closely with international partners to keep up the fight against jihadists who have gained influence in recent years, with attacks spanning at least seven countries, Issoufou told a panel of African leaders

Niger has become the front line of the international effort to fight Islamist insurgencies in the Sahel, an arid area on the southern fringe of the Sahara Desert. The U.S. built a \$110 million drone base in the northern city of Agadez, while France has deployed 5,100 military staff in the region. The government also receives European Union funding to stop migrants who try to cross its northern borders on their way to the Mediterranean.



at a New York Forum Institute webcast on Tuesday.

"The crisis hasn't had an impact on military operations," said Issoufou, who's also chairman of the Economic Community of West African States. "Our armies and security forces are increasingly gaining ground on the terrorists," even though threatened states now face the triple threat of "security, health and economic crises," he said.

Landlocked Niger, one of the world's poorest countries, spent 19% of its budget on security last year in a bid to quell Islamist violence. Despite these efforts, attacks in the country rose fourfold last year, killing almost 400 people, according to the Armed Conflict Location & Event Data Project, a State Department-funded group that monitors conflict globally. AFP

# EDITORIAL

## Bracing ourselves for uncertainty

LIKE THE WORDINGS of President George MannehWeah's COVID-19 awareness song says, "What kind of world we live in today; there is no security; everything is possible", Liberia is at the crossroads in its novel coronavirus fight with uncertainty looming over the nation.

WITH CURRENT TOTAL deaths at 23 and total active cases at 85 plus 125 recoveries, the country, like many other states in Africa, is still in its embryonic stage of this rapidly devastating virus that has wrecked many western countries in both human capital and economic terms.

HEALTH AUTHORITIES HERE, including the Minister of Health doctor WilheminaJallah and her deputy, as well as the Country Representative of W.H.O. doctor Peter Clement and his colleague of the United States Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, doctor Desmond Williams, reported for testing Sunday, 17 May at the Samuel Kanyon Doe Sports Complex in move to encourage the public to go for testing. The director-general for the National Public Health Institute of Liberia, doctor MosokaFallah led his staff for testing Wednesday, 20th May.

BUT IN THE past two months (March 16th to May 16th) the Government of Liberia has been unable to move ahead of the curve or contain number of deaths in 14 or 21 days, which is very worrisome and scaring.

DESPITE A STATE of Emergency and lockdown, the country continues to incur new deaths from COVID-19 nearly every week, and the metrics is not reversing at all.

CURRENTLY, THERE IS a huge anxiety among the public for a pending food stimulus package from the government that may precede total lockdowns in communities to allow health authorities to conduct mass testing of residents.

AT THE SAME time, writings on the wall indicate the authorities are preparing to return to status quo ante or business as usual, which has already begun with the re-opening of churches, mosques and other worship centers across the country, while schools and businesses are watching to follow.

THIS COULD RAPIDLY increase infections among the population and correspondingly swell the present death toll, given the fact that doctors globally have found no cure for COVID-19.

WE WONDER THEN, what statistics or progress from the fight that is informing our leaders to desire easing the lockdown and resume full economic activities or are we copying from other countries when our own situation is completely unique.

THE MINISTER OF Education Dao AnsuSonii, said this week he looks forward to the Ministry of Health for green-light to re-open schools throughout the country, but with strict observance of health protocols.

DO WE REALLY mean this as a country? President Weah declared a State of Emergency and lockdown, which took effect on 10th April, 2020 when we had only 31 confirmed cases, including four deaths. How in the world could we resume normal activities at currently 233 total confirmed cases and 23 deaths? The government should rethink its strategy in this COVID-19 fight.

# COMMENTARY

By Enric Sala

## Nature Is Our Best Antiviral

*Many countries are already demonstrating how we can build stronger bonds between nature, our economy, and our health. And the Seychelles' recent marine-protection initiative offers hope that if every country, no matter how small, does its part, the planet can be safer and more prosperous for all of us - just as nature promises.*

WASHINGTON, DC - The Seychelles, a string of 115 verdant, rocky islands in the Indian Ocean, recently announced - in the midst of the coronavirus pandemic - that it would protect 30% of its glittering turquoise waters from commercial use.

Safeguarding some 410,000 square kilometers (158,000 square miles) of the sea will benefit wildlife on the shore and in the water, including 100,000 giant tortoises and some of the world's last pristine coral reefs. But, beyond helping such species, establishing the new Marine Protected Areas - which was made possible through an innovative debt-swap deal - will also bolster the health, wellbeing, and prosperity of the Seychellois, who number under 100,000 but cater to more than 350,000 visitors each year.

Currently hosting only a handful of tourists stranded by the pandemic, the country is under a lockdown aimed at preventing the further spread of the virus. President Danny Faure's decision to press ahead with this protection effort, even as his country deals with a public-health emergency, serves as a powerful reminder of the importance of nature to people's physical and economic wellbeing - and not just in the Seychelles.

The human, economic, and social consequences of the rapid and devastating global spread of the coronavirus will last for years to come. And with the pandemic still unfolding, the most urgent priority is to support those directly affected by the virus and its associated hardships.

But this pandemic has also provided us with unprecedented and compelling proof of how closely our fate is linked with the health of the natural world. And right now, our relationship with nature is broken. We have cut down forests, overgrazed grasslands, built ports and roads, and expanded our cities at a rapid rate, destroying countless natural habitats. At the same time, we trade wildlife globally, moving common and endangered species alike across the world as if they were inanimate commodities.

All of this is bringing us into closer and more frequent contact with viruses that can spread from animals to people, including the COVID-19 coronavirus and dozens of other deadly and debilitating illnesses, from HIV to Ebola. Likewise, our degradation of marine ecosystems causes blooms of pathogens that can cause potentially fatal diseases such as cholera.

The good news is that far-sighted political leaders and the United Nations are already formulating nature-focused action plans that could help to stop the next pandemic before

it starts. These strategies include conserving ecosystems and wilderness that are still untouched by human activity, clamping down on wildlife trade (including by educating people about the risks of consuming wildlife), and restoring and protecting significant areas of land and ocean.

The world already safeguards 15% of its land and 7% of the ocean. But, for the sake of our health and prosperity, we must do more. Indeed, there is increasing agreement among countries that we need to return half the planet to nature and use the other half responsibly, and that we should start by protecting at least 30% of it by 2030.

Both nature and people would benefit. Research shows that abundant animals, plants, insects, and microbes living in complex, mature ecosystems can limit the spread of disease from animals to people.

But natural places do much more than provide a safety net against illness. They also shield us from the destructive power of extreme weather, safeguard us from our own pollution, and supply us with food, medicine, and leisure opportunities.

The Seychellois depend on the land and sea for their incomes and food. Fishing employs 17% of the country's workforce and provides the population with a low-cost, sustainable source of protein. Tourism, which is concentrated along the Seychelles' coastlines and is driven by the country's natural beauty on land and underwater, employs some 25%.

Safeguarding 30% of the country's waters will end harmful activities within the fully protected areas while bolstering sustainable fishing around them. And keeping the country's natural places pristine - including, in addition to its seas, its mangrove forests, seagrass beds, and salt marshes - can help to ensure that the Seychelles remains the natural paradise that draws responsible visitors.

When the worst of the pandemic has passed and the world embarks on the hard work of nursing its people, societies, and economies back to health, we must not overlook the need to care for nature and let nature care for us. A healthy environment is our best antiviral, and protecting more of it will help us to rebound from this pandemic and stop the next one before it starts.

Many countries are already demonstrating how we can build stronger bonds between nature, our economy, and our health. And the Seychelles' recent marine-protection initiative offers hope that if every country, no matter how small, does its part, the planet can be safer and more prosperous for all of us - just as nature promises.

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## O-PED

By Mitali Das, sebnem Kalemli-özcan,  
damien Puy & liliana Varelak

## Emerging Markets' Hidden Debt Risk

*As the COVID-19 crisis continues, understanding the extent of emerging-market firms' unhedged foreign-currency borrowing will be critical. Central banks and regulatory agencies, which have access to such data, should use it to anticipate the damage arising from currency depreciations and design policy responses accordingly.*

WASHINGTON, DC/LONDON - Stark warnings about the COVID-19 shock's potentially devastating effects on emerging markets (EMs) have become ubiquitous. With the pandemic engulfing ever more countries, EMs face a mass exit by foreign investors seeking safe assets. As a result, capital outflows and currency depreciations have become unprecedentedly synchronized.

A first round of policy interventions to blunt the pandemic's financial and economic impact on EMs is already underway. But although these actions - mainly aimed at alleviating stress in foreign-exchange (FX) markets - are welcome, the ongoing currency depreciations present financial-stability challenges that have long-term implications going far beyond immediate liquidity problems.

When an EM currency depreciates, that country's foreign-currency-denominated debt burden - both its absolute value and debt-service costs - can escalate rapidly. Such balance-sheet effects often presage corporate defaults, financial instability, and output declines, as we saw during previous EM crises.

In devising an appropriate economic policy response to COVID-19, therefore, EM policymakers must answer a key question: how much financial trouble linked to balance-sheet effects is this wave of currency depreciations likely to cause? Estimating the potential damage is complicated by the fact that the magnitude of unhedged FX debt in EMs is hard to pin down.

Over the last 40 years, the debt landscape in EMs has changed dramatically. On one hand, EM governments have significantly reduced the extent of their "original sin" of relying on FX borrowing, owing to improved macroeconomic fundamentals and better fiscal and monetary discipline.

In the meantime, however, EM companies have gone in the opposite direction: as it became cheaper for these firms to borrow in global currencies, their FX borrowing grew. And recent research shows that when the cost of borrowing in foreign currency drops, more firms issue FX debt.

This migration of FX exposure from EM sovereigns to corporate borrowers has brought new challenges. In particular, private firms' finances are less regulated than those of governments and banks, so we know much less about their balance sheets.

Nonetheless, our research - using a variety of private and public sources - gives a sense of the magnitudes involved. Figure 1 shows the FX debt of households and non-financial firms in major EMs, both as a share of their total debt and as a share of GDP.

Encouragingly, Figure 1 suggests that private-sector FX borrowing in many EMs might be relatively limited. With a few exceptions (notably Turkey, Mexico, and Argentina), most countries have manageable levels of private-sector FX exposure relative to total debt. More important, this "raw" measure should be viewed as an upper bound of the FX debt problem in EMs.

That is because FX borrowing per se is not a problem when foreign-currency liabilities are sufficiently hedged (that is, matched by foreign-currency assets and revenues), which can be done either naturally or through financial instruments. A commodity exporter that generates foreign-currency revenues is a typical example of a natural hedger. Because many EMs with high FX exposure are large commodity exporters (such as Mexico and Chile), the numbers in Figure 1 might overstate the actual size of the problem.

The bad news is not only that this type of natural hedging may provide no buffer in the current environment of low commodity prices, but also that EM firms in non-tradable sectors could have substantial unhedged FX borrowing on their balance sheets. Although there is no systematic data regarding these companies' use of FX derivatives to hedge foreign-currency debt, evidence from Hungary (albeit based on 2010 data), Chile, and Turkey indicates that non-financial firms borrowing in foreign currency use such instruments infrequently.

And, as Figure 2 shows, the share of foreign-currency loans in non-tradable sectors has risen to about 40% in Hungary and Peru (for construction), and around 50% in Turkey and Mexico (for services).

The high levels of unhedged FX debt among private-sector EM firms are particularly worrisome in the context of the COVID-19 crisis. With significantly reduced income and sales, such firms will struggle to repay debt, and some might default. That would jeopardize financial stability, because most FX borrowing is intermediated through domestic financial systems.

We know surprisingly little about the extent of this problem in EMs. A common practice is to take central-bank FX reserves as a measure of a country's preparedness to fight a capital-flow reversal. But such an approach may offer false comfort, because it is impossible to know whether reserves adequately cover unhedged FX debt in the private sector.

As the COVID-19 crisis continues, EM countries with large amounts of unhedged private-sector FX debt should concentrate their efforts on securing stable access to external financing through, say, the US Federal Reserve or multilateral lenders.

But it will be critical to understand the extent of unhedged corporate FX borrowing, along with firms' ability to absorb the current income shock, potential spillovers to the rest of the economy, and the scope to contain the fallout from bankruptcies. Central banks and regulatory agencies, which have access to such data, should use it to anticipate the damage arising from currency depreciations and design policy responses accordingly.

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## OPINION

By Daniel D. Bradlow

## Detering the Debt Vultures in Africa

*The COVID-19 pandemic threatens to make African countries even more vulnerable to aggressive sovereign-debt speculators. But the crisis also presents financial institutions with an opportunity to change the way they do business and play their part in helping the continent's economies to recover.*

RETORIA - COVID-19 is creating Sub-Saharan Africa's worst social and economic crisis since World War II. The region's economy is set to contract by 1.6% in 2020, its worst performance on record. Global merchandise trade could shrink by 13-32% this year, which will hit Africa hard. And the World Health Organization warns that the number of coronavirus cases in Africa could increase to 29-44 million in the first year of the pandemic, with up to 190,000 deaths.

If these predictions turn out to be accurate, the pandemic would overwhelm African countries' health systems, devastate their economies, and threaten millions of people with unemployment, hunger, and homelessness.

Mindful of these potentially horrific consequences, 18 African and European leaders recently warned that, "only a global victory that fully includes Africa can bring this pandemic to an end." Among other measures, they called for "an immediate moratorium on all bilateral and multilateral debt payments, both public and private" until the pandemic has passed.

The international community is beginning to respond. At their recent virtual meeting, G20 finance ministers and central-bank governors agreed to suspend debt-service payments by the world's poorest countries on all official bilateral credits from May 1 until the end of 2020, and left open the possibility of extending the repayment freeze. Some G20 governments are also contributing to efforts to help the poorest countries meet their obligations to the International Monetary Fund.

The Institute of International Finance, which represents over 450 of the world's largest financial institutions, has expressed support for a temporary debt-service moratorium for poor countries. But neither the IIF nor its members have specified the terms on which they would implement such a suspension. Moreover, they have given no indication of whether they would commit to suspend trading in poor countries' debt instruments during the crisis.

This is a problem, because some \$117 billion of Sub-Saharan African countries' roughly \$150 billion in long-term debt to private creditors is in the form of bonds. Debtor countries owe the bondholders about \$8 billion per year. And markets are clearly not confident that these countries will meet their obligations: Angolan and Zambian sovereign bonds were recently trading at around 35 cents on the dollar, for example.

This situation is ripe for so-called vulture funds to exploit. These speculators have previously made enormous profits by buying deeply discounted debt in the expectation that they will be able to demand full repayment from debtor governments - and to sue any that demur. Vulture funds have used this strategy against about a dozen African countries and a number of other sovereign debtors, most notably Argentina.

Some countries have passed laws to discourage such activity. But these funds are adept at using their bond holdings to intimidate sovereign borrowers into prioritizing the debt owed to them over other obligations, including to their own citizens.

To mitigate the risk of such speculation, the international community should establish a Debts of Vulnerable Economies ("DOVE") fund. The fund could be based at an African institution such as the African Development Bank, but should be managed by an independent board representing all stakeholders, thereby demonstrating its independence from both debtor countries and creditors.

Governments, international organizations, foundations, financial institutions, private firms, and individuals could all contribute to financing the fund. For example, rich countries could donate a portion of their unused Special Drawing Rights to the IMF, which would convert them into foreign exchange that it then contributed to the DOVE fund. The IMF membership could also agree to sell part of the IMF's gold reserves, currently valued at \$138 billion, to finance the fund.

The DOVE fund would have two main roles. First, it would buy African sovereign bonds at market prices (that is, with the current steep discounts) and promise to implement a repayment standstill on this debt until the global health crisis abates.

The DOVE fund would also pledge to work with African governments to ensure that their debt does not unduly burden their economic rebuilding efforts when the global economy starts to grow again. It would stipulate that any future debt renegotiations be consistent with all applicable international standards, such as the United Nations' Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights, Principles for Responsible Investment, and Principles on Promoting Responsible Sovereign Lending and Borrowing. These measures, and their possible positive impact on African sovereign-debt prices, should help to deter speculators.

Second, the DOVE fund would urge all other private-sector creditors to commit to a standstill on African debt payments and trading for as long as the crisis lasts, and, on a case-by-case basis, to consider renegotiating this debt thereafter.

After all, leading financial institutions such as BlackRock, and influential groups including the US Business Roundtable, have recently argued that firms (including financial institutions) should serve the interests of all their stakeholders, instead of putting shareholders' interests first. Financial institutions' stakeholders include their borrowers and innocent third parties - such as citizens - who are affected by their actions and decisions. Moreover, many of the institutions that hold African country debt have environmental, social, and human-rights policies requiring them to comply with all relevant international standards.

The COVID-19 pandemic threatens to make African countries even more vulnerable to aggressive sovereign-debt speculators. But the crisis also presents financial institutions with an opportunity to change the way they do business and play their part in helping the continent to recover.

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## ARTICLE

## ARTICLE

# Despite Criticisms, Madagascar Moves Ahead With COVID-Organics

By Kester Kenn Klomegah\*

While Western and Europeans and Asians race to find vaccines for coronavirus, Africa can no longer wait for that scientific discovery that experts have said it would, most probably, be ready in a year or two. Some experts have argued that coronavirus would never disappear, but rather becomes endemic.

Indeed, the crisis has put the global science to practical test. Every individual country is busy fighting the pandemic in its own way, trying to make sure that it gains from the crisis. As the virus persistently sweeps across the world, southern African island of Madagascar seems desirous with an initiative to tap into its local herbal science to produce COVID-Organics to save human lives.

Madagascar, a southern African island in the Indian Ocean, has found an alternative to fight the fast spreading coronavirus, beginning on experimental basis and with a rudimentary approach at home. With increasing number of coronavirus, Madagascar is steadily depending on its natural resources to help Africa. As a result of the island's isolation, Madagascar is home to various unexploited plants found nowhere else on Earth. Many native plant species are used as herbal remedies for a variety of afflictions.

On April 21, the President of Madagascar Andry Rajoelina officially launched a local herbal remedy claimed to prevent and cure the novel coronavirus. The drink is simply called COVID-Organics and is derived from Artemisia - a plant with proven efficacy in malaria treatment.

During an African Union meeting late last month, he stressed the importance of the herbal cure - a variant of which prevents the virus, while another cures it. Speaking to colleague heads of state with a bottle of COVID-Organics on his table, he reiterated the viability of the herbal cure.

"There are two treatment protocols (curative and preventive). The state of health of COVID-19 patients who took Tambavy CVO CovidOrganics improved after 7 days and fully recovered after 10 days. These patients have taken no other product than COVID-Organics," Rajoelina said.

In an exclusive interview with FRANCE 24 and RFI, Rajoelina defended his promotion of a controversial homegrown remedy for COVID-19, stressing that COVID-Organics works really well. He further claimed that if a European country had discovered the remedy, people would not be so skeptical. "What if this remedy had been discovered by a European country, instead of Madagascar? Would people doubt it so much? I don't think so," the president told FRANCE 24's Marc Perelman and RFI's Christophe Boisbouvier.

"What is the problem with COVID-Organics, really? Could it be that this product comes from Africa? Could it be that it's not OK for a country like Madagascar, which is the 63rd poorest country in the world... to have come up with (this formula) that can help save the world?" asked Rajoelina, who claims the infusion cures patients within ten days.

"No one will stop us from moving forward - not a country, not an organization," Rajoelina said in response to the WHO's concerns, and added the proof of the tonic's efficacy was in the "healing" of "our patients", calling it a "preventive and curative remedy," according to the report.

In a similar argument, Dr. Charles Andrianjara, Malagasy Institute of Applied Research (IMRA) Director General pointed out straight "COVID-Organics will be used as prophylaxis that is for prevention, but clinical observations have shown a trend towards its effectiveness in curative treatment."

In a response to an email media query, an official at the presidency wrote: "We are committed to taking the traditional therapies through the same clinical trials as other medication. It's about time to participate and not only observe. As the opportunity emerges, we have the resources to use as a remedy against coronavirus, and to save lives. We need to think how to use it productively and profitably now."

The global scientific community has become curious. Scientists at Germany's Max Planck Institute in Potsdam are among a group of researchers from Germany and Denmark collaborating with the United States company,

with Madagascar's herbal initiative. China has already promised to scale up its assistance to Africa by creating a health care initiative that allow African countries to access funds to address challenges in the healthcare delivery. It plans to build the headquarters of the African Center for Disease Control and Prevention.

One area that presents the world with opportunity, and has been explored in the search for treatment is the field of herbal medicine. So far, many countries are adopting supportive care and non-specific treatment options to relieve patient symptoms. Chinese traditional medical practices in China and herbal preparation from Madagascar raise hopes for COVID-19. The potential here gives credence for consideration as traditional and herbal remedy for COVID-19, argued Justice Ray Prah from the Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology (KNUST).

Madagascar's scientific initiative has drawn wide criticisms, instead of encouragement and support. The World Health Organization (WHO), established to monitor and tackle global health problems, research for innovative ways to ensure health of people, was rather the first to punch Madagascar. It warns on its website that there is "no evidence to suggest that COVID-19 can be prevented or treated with products made from Artemisia-based plant material." The officials explained that the local African brew safety and effectiveness have not been assessed internationally, nor has any data from trials been published in peer-reviewed studies. Mainstream scientists have warned of the potential risk from consumption of untested herbal brews.

The African Union (AU), Southern African Development Community (SADC) and the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) have also made similar claims and said they would only support and endorse products that proved effective through scientific study. But, the African Union, all African Governments and Regional Organizations have to get committed to taking

"traditional therapies" through the same clinical trials as any other medication. It is worth to say that it is necessary to make collective or continental efforts toward finding a remedy against coronavirus.

African leaders have to understand that an effective COVID-19 vaccine, if it ever arrives, has to be treated as a public good for the whole of the global society, but at a cost not as a humanitarian aid. Acknowledging that profit-motivated global monopolies and market speculators in the health sector will nevertheless use the chance to their advantage. The combination of national self-interest and pressure for the pharmaceutical industry to make a profit is already triggering a geopolitical bust up over who actually gets access to the vaccine first.

Several media reports said an increasing number of African countries are opting for the COVID-Organics. About 10 African leaders have, already ordered for it since its launch in April. The countries include Chad, Comoros Islands, Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Equatorial Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Niger, Togo and United Republic of Tanzania.



ArtemiLife, to explore whether the Artemisia plant can really be used against the coronavirus. "It is the first study in which scientists are investigating the function of these plant substances in connection with COVID-19," the Head of the Study Group, Peter Seeberger, said in an interview with DW.

On April 28, while in a video conference with Foreign Ministers from Brazil, China, Russia and South Africa, the Indian Foreign Affairs Minister, Dr. Subrahmanyam Jaishankar noted that the pandemic not only poses a great risk to the health and well-being of humanity but also severely impacts on the global economy.

According to Jaishankar, India is providing pharma assistance to nearly 85 countries, including many countries in Africa, to support their response to the pandemic, and emphasized the need to provide support to businesses, especially small and medium scale enterprises, and the efficacy of traditional medicine systems.

Chinese are highly sensitive to opportunities, leverage indiscriminately to almost all sectors in Africa. Now China is showing interest in adopting and collaborating

# MORE HEADLINE NEWS

# MORE HEADLINE NEWS

## Officials prepare for mass testing

Health authorities here are leaving no stone unturned in the ongoing fight against novel coronavirus, including mass testing of the population as key officials lead the way.

The acting director-general of the National Public

at the Samuel Kanyon Sports Complex in Paynesville, outside Monrovia.

According to a post on the website of NPHIL, doctor Fallah underscores that "testing is a major way of getting communities free of COVID-

medical officer, doctor Francis Kateh, and international partners to the same venue where their specimens were taken for COVID-19 testing.

The move is an exemplary attempt to rally the public to come forth for testing in order to establish their status against the virus that has taken 23 lives with 238 confirmed cases from across the country.

Authorities of the Incident Management System and heads of partner institutions, including the World Health Organization Country Representative to Liberia, the United States Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, USAID and AFFENET tested for COVID-19 here Sunday to encourage public response to the exercise.

The Government of Liberia has opened three centers for specimen collection, including the Samuel Kanyon Doe Sports Complex in Paynesville, the William V.S. Tubman High School campus on 12th Street in Sinkor and the G. W. Gibson High School, Capitol Bye-Pass, central Monrovia.

▶ CONT'D ON PAGE 11



NPHIL boss doctor Fallah's specimen is being collected

Health Institute of Liberia or NPHIL (the government institute responsible for infectious disease) doctor Mosoka Fallah, is the latest high profile health practitioner to lead an array of staff for specimens testing

19." The acting NPHIL boss led his staff to the testing center Wednesday, 20th May barely three days after the Minister of Health, doctor Wilhemina Jallah, led her deputy, who is also chief

## IAA erects borders for crisis money

The Internal Audit Agency of the Government of Liberia says it has formulated a full Internal Audit Compliance Program for crisis management, aimed at ensuring accountability for the usage of public funds and assets during crisis period.

According to a press release, the document, which is coined Internal Controls Programs for Public Funds during Crisis Management, seeks to ensure that internal and operational verifications are effected to curtail leakages of funds to disaster and incidence-related catastrophes.

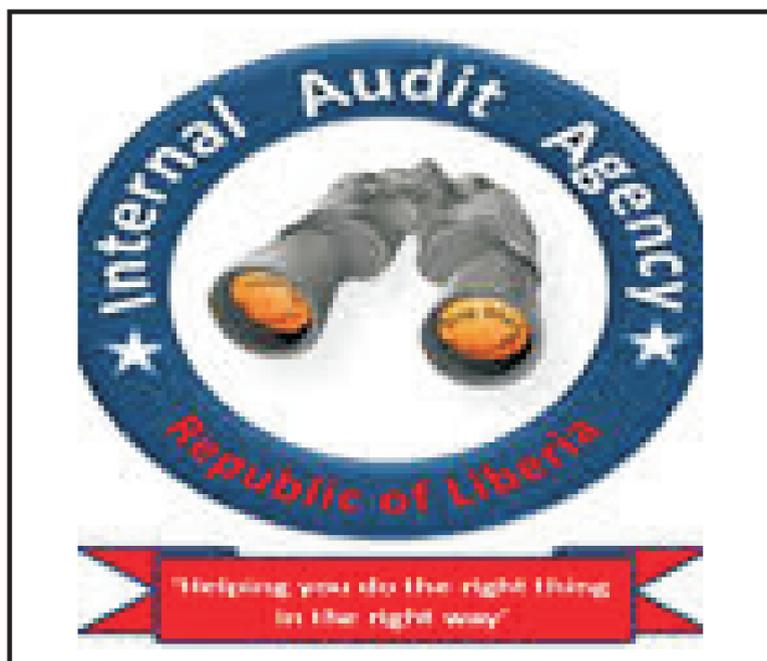
Relying on Part 2 section 2.2 (b) of the Act establishing the Internal Audit Agency of Liberia, which mandates the IAA to promulgate and ensure that common internal audit standards and systems are established and maintained, the institution believes that said Internal Audit Compliance document will, among other things, safeguard the usage of resources and maintenance of assets granted by the Government of Liberia and

foreign partners. The Internal Audit Compliance document places strong emphasis on Governance, Payroll and Personnel Management, as well as Procurement Controls. Other areas of focus include: Bank Accounts and Reconciliation, Accounting and Budgetary Controls, Assets and Inventory Management, among others.

Moreover, within the matrix are risks encountered, ranking for vulnerabilities and impacts

together with the related controls for crisis management.

The IAA is hopeful that personnel and/or public servants who have been designated to manage the ongoing crisis will adequately utilize the procedures contained in the Internal Audit Compliance document to provide full accountability for public funds being directed at the COVID-19 pandemic. -Press Release



## Obituary



The Management of the Searchlight Communications, publisher of the New Dawn newspaper regrets to announce the death of its Sports Reporter, Sally Gaye, who passed on Sunday, May 17, 2020 reportedly at the ELWA Hospital in Paynesville following a protracted illness.

Family meeting is scheduled for this Saturday, May 23, at the family residence behind the 72nd Barracks in Paynesville.

Funeral rites and burial are being scheduled for next Saturday, May 30th.

## PUBLIC NOTICE

The Administrators of the intestate estate of the late Alexander Moore Sr would like to inform the general public that a Joshua Ricks is illegally selling portion(s) of the intestate estate 20 acres of land situated in the township of Louisiana Montserrado County. To third parties person(s), the administrators of the intestate estate of the late Alexander Moore Sr hereby warns the general public that anyone buying a portion of the said 20 acres from Joshua Ricks is doing so at his/her own risks.

Priscilla N. Buxby

Signed Administrators

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# MORE HEADLINE NEWS

# MORE HEADLINE NEWS

## Lonestar Cell MTN reaches out to women at 14 Military Hospital

### -quarantined people benefit as well

Employees of local GSM giant Lonestar Cell MTN honored female caregivers at the 14 Military Hospital on Mother's Day, presenting care packages to 50 health workers (doctors,

nurses, and caretakers) who expressed warm thanks for the gestures.

Observing social distancing guidelines, Lonestar Cell MTN held posters hailing the female health workers and



thanking them for their work on the frontline helping Liberia fight COVID-19.

In an excited response to the kind gesture by Lonestar Cell MTN, the medical team made a special request for the song,

government and the people of Liberia to ensure that those in need are supported and that Liberia can be corona-free.

The company has also been giving out quarantine relief packages to people in need around Monrovia. Some residents of West Point, Popo Beach, Doe Community, Jacob Town, Tonpoe Village, Gardnersville (Chocolate City), Duala, Peace Community, GSA Road, Duport Road, ELWA community and members of the National Disability Union have received food and sanitation packages.

Lonestar also showed solidarity to Liberia National Police by distributing refreshment packages to checkpoints around Monrovia for police officers working to keep citizens safe. In the coming days, Lonestar plans to expand its donations to communities outside of Montserrado.

Since the start of the coronavirus outbreak in Liberia, the company has supported the national efforts through its Y'ello Hope initiative which has been instrumental in many ways. This includes keeping customers informed about the coronavirus/COVID-19 and

CONT'D ON PAGE 11

## Senatorial election faces uncertainty

By E. J. Nathaniel Daygbor

The board of commissioners of the National Elections Commission expresses uncertainties for the Special 2020 Senatorial Election due to lack of funding and the unstoppable Corona Virus spread here.

The commission, through a 14-page communication to the Senate Special Committee on elections, indicate that poll maybe held on December 15, 2020, but funding and the COVID-19 could further push the date ahead, probably to next year.

Grand Cape Mount County Senator, Cllr. Varney Sherman, notes that with the communication from the nation's electoral house, it means more should be done, if

senatorial race and the 2023 Presidential election by one year each due to the health crisis, some members of the opposition are vehemently opposed to such plan.

The decision to summon the NEC came from the Special committee headed by Senator Sherman. The recommendation was overwhelmingly endorsed by the full plenary of the Liberian Senate Wednesday, May 20, during its special sitting in Monrovia.

Speaking in plenary, Cllr. Sherman explains the hearing is expected to be witnessed by some interested international partners, non-governmental organizations, and duly registered political parties as well as the board of



Sen. Thomas Grupee



Sen. Darius Dillon



Sen. Dan Morais



Sen. Sando Johnson

## CPP sets rules for candidates' selection

By Winston W. Parley

The final Collaborative Framework Document signed by the Collaborating Political Parties (CPP) has set three steps that the four collaborating parties will utilize for nomination processes to determine the selection of CPP's candidates for both presidential and legislative candidates to guide this year's and the 2023 elections.

The CPP comprising Unity Party, Liberty Party, Alternative National Congress and All Liberian Party, has agreed to work with the document which says consensus shall be the first process conducted to select the ticket and that any decision emanating from there shall be binding on the parties and endorsed by the CPP.

15 of Liberia's 30 senators are expected to seek re-election this October, including Grand

Bassa's Nyonblee Karna Lawrence; Nimba's Thomas Grupee; River Cess' Francis Paye; Montserrado's Abraham Darius Dillon; Grand Kru's Peter Coleman; Maryland's Dan Morais and Bomi's Sando Johnson.

The CPP Collaborative Framework Document says the objective of the alliance is to present a single presidential ticket and or legislative candidates for all elections leading up to and including 2023 general and presidential elections.

It mandates all constituent political parties allocated slots for both the senatorial and representative elections are required to determine their nominees in compliance with their party's internal democratic selection processes.

The four constituent political parties are obligated under the arrangement to participate in the formal endorsement ceremony for all representatives and senatorial candidates

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the country is to remain within the constitutional timeframe.

Amidst speculations from some corners of the country that the executive branch of government is considering postponing the senatorial election due to the current pandemic, the Senate through its Special Committee has summoned authorities of the National Elections Commission, heads of political parties, and stakeholders today, May 21, in the Rotunda of the Capitol to discuss possibility of conducting the 2020 Special Senatorial Election, which is statutorily scheduled for October this year.

Amid speculations the government is contemplating on postponing both the

commissioners of the National Elections Commission.

The NEC is yet to carry out major preparatory activities such as voter's registration update, International Procurement, recruitment and training of thousands of temporary staff that should have been completed in a specific timeframe, if funds were provided.

Senator Sherman, who chairs the Senate Judiciary Committee, notes that any delay of the election could affect the constitutional function of the State and place the fate of his fellow 15 senators, who are seeking reelection in limbo. -Editing by Jonathan Browne

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# Français

## Un non-lieu a été prononcé en faveur du fils de l'ancienne présidente Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf

Le tribunal pénal de Monrovia a rejeté la requête du procureur empêchant le fils de l'ancienne présidente Ellen Johnson et d'autres anciens responsables de la Banque centrale de quitter le Libéria et prononcé un non-lieu en faveur de quatre des accusés.

Dans sa décision du mardi 19 mai, le juge Yamie Quiqui Gbeisaya a également ordonné que les cautions qu'ont payées les accusés pour leur libération sous caution leur soient

immédiatement remises.

En août de l'année dernière, la Cour a ordonné aux responsables et à l'ancien gouverneur exécutif de la Banque Centrale du Liberia Milton Weeks, de déposer chacun une caution de 1 058 000 000 LD, qui, combinées, totalisaient 5 290 000 000 LD après qu'un nouvel acte d'accusation pour blanchiment de capitaux avait été ajouté au dossier.

Tous les cinq ont été inculpés le 4 mars 2019 pour sabotage économique, complot criminel, sollicitation

criminelle et blanchiment d'argent pour leur rôle présumé dans le présumé scandale de 16 milliards de dollars libériens qui a secoué le pays tout au long de 2018 et a déclenché une enquête locale et internationale à la suite d'une série de manifestations ici.

Le scandale relatif à la disparition présumée de 16 milliards de dollars libériens a éclaté lorsque M. Weeks était gouverneur exécutif, M. Sirleaf, sous-gouverneur chargé des opérations, Dorbor M. Hagba, directeur des finances et Joseph Dennis directeur adjoint de la vérification interne de la Banque Centrale du Liberia. Cependant, les procureurs avaient abandonné les charges contre M. Sirleaf « avec préjudice » et Hagba, Walker et Dennis « sans préjudice ». Mais ce qui est arrivé aux 16 milliards de dollars en monnaie locale reste toujours un mystère.

Prononçant un non-lieu, le juge Gbeisaya fait savoir que l'accusation ayant été abandonnée, le tribunal n'avait plus d'autre choix que de prononcer un non-lieu.

"Bien que cette Cour sache que cette affaire est d'intérêt

▶ CONT'D ON PAGE 9



## Alexander B. Cummings prend les commandes de l'alliance des partis politiques de l'opposition

Le leader politique du Congrès national alternatif (ANC) Alexander B. Cummings a été choisi pour diriger la plateforme des quatre principaux partis politiques de l'opposition en tant que président. Les quatre partis politiques en collaboration sont l'ANC, le All Liberians Party (ALP), l'ancien parti au pouvoir (UP) et le Liberty Party (LP) de feu Charles W. Brumskine.

La sélection de M. Cummings fait suite à la signature d'un accord-cadre faisant de l'institution une alliance politique légalement reconnue. Il succède à l'homme d'affaires devenu politicien Benoni Urey de l'ALP qui présidait la plateforme depuis près de deux ans.

La signature précède également les élections sénatoriales spéciales, qui doivent désormais avoir lieu le 15 décembre, en raison de la pandémie de coronavirus.

Elles étaient initialement prévues pour octobre de cette année.

Dans une déclaration publiée le week-end dernier, la plateforme a indiqué qu'il y a environ trois semaines, elle a annoncé la finalisation du document-cadre qui

lie officiellement les quatre partis et définit les rôles et obligations de chaque parti membre.

La déclaration a ajouté que la finalisation du document est un immense progrès vers l'établissement d'une solide

▶ CONT'D ON PAGE 9



## Covid-19 : cinq (5) chefs d'État africains prennent part à une table ronde virtuelle de haut niveau

Le président de la République, Alassane OUATTARA, a pris part, ce mardi 19 mai 2020, en compagnie de plusieurs de ses homologues africains, à une table-ronde virtuelle de haut niveau du New York Forum Institute, sous le thème : « Pour une Afrique résiliente : quelles voies tracer? »

Le Président ivoirien était effectivement à ce rendez-vous avec quatre (4) autres de ses homologues du continent à savoir Issoufou Mahamadou du Niger, MackySall du Sénégal, Uhuru Kenyatta du Kenya et Julius Maada Bio de la de Sierra Leone.

Cette table-ronde a été l'occasion pour les Chefs d'Etat africains d'exposer leurs actions individuelles et collectives dans la lutte contre la pandémie de coronavirus, et de lancer un appel en faveur d'une nouvelle gouvernance mondiale.

Pour sa part, le Président

intervenir sur la question de institutions démocratiques fortes, capables de promouvoir une bonne gouvernance politique et économique dans les différents Etats du continent. Ce sont ces grandes questions qui doivent alimenter les débats au niveau continental et au niveau mondial, a rappelé le chef de l'Etat. Le nouveau paradigme COVID-19 doit être centré non seulement sur la lutte contre les inégalités mais aussi sur les études climatiques. Le nouveau paradigme doit permettre à l'Afrique de mobiliser des ressources financières pour sortir les populations des pauvretés, en permettant aux États de lever des impôts considérables (mobilisation de ressources internes) jusqu' à 24% du PIB contre moins de 20% pour la plupart des états africains. Ensuite renforcer les IDE et consolider la ressource de la diaspora africaine.

Intervenant sur la question de



Alassane OUATTARA a invité les pays africains à mettre un accent particulier sur la santé, l'éducation et la formation afin de permettre à la jeunesse africaine d'avoir des emplois et de demeurer sur le continent pour contribuer à son développement.

Globalement dans leurs différentes interventions, les chefs d'État se sont penchés sur les défis africains relevés à travers une série de tables rondes virtuelles.

Lors de la table ronde virtuelle, le président nigérien, Muhammadou Issoufou, a prôné pour un changement de paradigme après la pandémie du Covid -19. Ce nouveau paradigme, souligne-t-il, suppose une nouvelle gouvernance politique et économique mondiale plus démocratique. L'accélération de l'intégration politique et économique du continent africain passe par des

l'annulation de la dette africaine, le président sénégalais, MackySall, a proposé de trouver des mécanismes plus souples afin de restreindre la dette africaine. Le chef de l'Etat sénégalais a rappelé que l'encours de la dette de l'Afrique subsaharienne représente moins de 2% des ressources mobilisées au cours de cette pandémie pour les pays du G20. Dans son intervention, MackySall a aussi appelé les bailleurs à aider les pays africains à atténuer les dettes commerciales, ce qui permettra d'alléger les finances publiques africaines. "À l'orée d'une décennie décisive pour notre siècle et à quelques mois du prochain G20, nous entendons définir ce que sera le monde d'après, le monde que nous voulons pour nous-mêmes et pour nos enfants", a dit le président Sall.

L'objectif du NYF-Institute est

# Français

## Un non-lieu a été prononcé en faveurs du fils de

public, les millions de dollars allégués sont pour le peuple libérien, et en tant que tels, ils sont impatients de voir son issue, mais cette cour n'a pas pu produire de preuves », a dit le juge Gbeisay.

Par ailleurs, la Cour suprême du Libéria a renvoyé un mandat au tribunal pénal de première instance «C», l'ordonnant de reprendre compétence sur l'affaire du défendeur Milton Weeks et de se conformer à la loi.

Le mandat de la Cour suprême fait suite au retrait par M. Weeks de son appel déposé devant le tribunal grande instance, indiquant qu'il accepte désormais ladécision qui avait été rendue par le juge associé Yussif D. Kabadans l'affaire.

Les cinq accusés avaient saisi le juge Kaba à la suite de la récusation de l'affaire par le juge A. Blamo Dixon, alors président du tribunal pénal « C ». Mais le résultat de l'audience devant le juge Kaban'avait pas plu à Weeks car la récusation du juge Dixon n'avait pas été infirmée.

M. Weeks s'était ainsi ensuite séparé du reste des accusés qui ont accepté la décision du juge. Il avait saisi la Cour suprême tandis que Sirleaf, Hagba, Walker et Dennis étaient retournés au tribunal de première instance pour poursuivre leur

procès devant le juge désigné.

Mais, vu que l'accusation a abandonné les charges de ses co-accusés, M. Weeks, par l'intermédiaire de son avocat, a déposé une stipulation conjointe de retrait et de réduction dans laquelle il a accepté de retirer l'appel annoncé et accepté la décision du juge Kaba dans la procédure, à en croire la Cour suprême.

« Il a donc demandé à cette Cour de rendre les ordonnances nécessaires menant au retrait formel de cette affaire conformément au Règlement de la Cour suprême. À cette conclusion, le conseil du requérant intimé n'a interposé aucune objection », a déclaré la Cour suprême.

Après avoir examiné la stipulation conjointe de retrait et de réduction déposée par l'avocat de M. Weeks, la Cour suprême a déclaré que l'appel annoncé par le défendeur « le retrait de l'appel ».

« Le greffier de cette cour est demandé de supprimer ledit appel de cette cour, à délivrer un certificat de retrait en faveur de l'une des parties qui en font la demande et à envoyer un mandat au juge qui préside le tribunal de première instance pour reprendre compétence sur cette affaire et procéder conformément à la loi », a déclaré la Cour suprême.

## Alexander B. Cummings prend les commandes

collaboration entre les quatre partis, car toutes les questions en suspens qui ont retardé la signature du document ont été résolues à l'amiable.

La déclaration conjointe a souligné qu'une cérémonie officielle d'approbation du document n'a pas encore été organisée par les quatre partis politiques en raison de la crise actuelle de coronavirus dans le pays.

Cependant, selon la plateforme, compte tenu de l'exigence de préparation des élections sénatoriales spéciales de 2020, la cérémonie de signature était prévue ce mardi 19 mai 2020 à 11 heures.

L'alliance a déclaré que conformément aux mesures sanitaires d'urgence de lutte contre le COVID-19, la cérémonie se tiendrait virtuellement entre les quatre leaders politiques, présidents et autres cadres des partis membres de l'alliance.

Elle a indiqué que la presse serait informée pour couvrir l'évènement en direct. Elle encourage ainsi ses partisans et sympathisants à s'adresser à leurs partis respectifs pour toute autre information pertinente.

Le 21 février, les dirigeants des partis politiques d'opposition s'étaient réunis à Monrovia pour apposer leur signature sur un document de collaboration sur un « mémorandum d'accord ».

Ils s'engagent à forger, à marquer et à renommer et à soutenir un intérêt national commun, en veillant au bien-être du peuple et en ne permettant pas à leurs divergences politiques et à leurs ambitions personnelles de faire dérailler la coopération entre les partis politiques d'opposition.

Ils s'engagent également à collaborer sur divers sujets de préoccupation pour les personnes qu'ils représentent, et à prendre des positions nationales communes.

## COMMENTAIRE

Par Enric Sala

## La nature est le meilleur des antiviraux

WASHINGTON, DC - Archipel de 115 îles rocheuses à la végétation luxuriante, situé dans l'océan Indien, les Seychelles ont récemment annoncé, en pleine pandémie de coronavirus, qu'elles entendaient protéger 30 % de leurs eaux turquoise cristallines contre toute exploitation commerciale.

La préservation de 410 000 kilomètres carrés d'espace marin bénéficiera à la vie sauvage en mer comme sur les côtes, notamment à 100 000 tortues géantes et à quelques-uns des derniers récifs coralliens les plus immaculés de la planète. Mais au-delà des bienfaits pour ces espèces, la création de nouvelles zones marines protégées - rendue possible par un accord innovant de conversion de la dette - sera également bénéfique pour la santé, le bien-être et la prospérité des Seychellois, qui sont au nombre de 100 000 mais qui attirent chaque année plus de 300 000 visiteurs.

Accueillant actuellement quelques rares touristes bloqués par la pandémie, le pays applique un confinement destiné à stopper la propagation du virus. La décision du président Danny Faure consistant à protéger l'environnement, alors même que le pays est confronté à une urgence de santé publique, rappelle puissamment toute l'importance de la nature pour le bien-être physique et économique de la population - et pas seulement aux Seychelles.

Les conséquences humaines, économiques et sociales de la propagation mondiale rapide et dévastatrice du coronavirus s'observeront pendant des années. Mais à l'heure où la pandémie se poursuit, la priorité la plus urgente consiste à soutenir ceux qui sont directement impactés par le virus et par les difficultés qu'il engendre.

Cette pandémie fournit également une preuve sans précédent et indiscutable de l'étroite proximité entre notre destin et la santé du monde naturel. À l'heure actuelle, notre relation avec la nature est rompue. Nous abattons les forêts, surexploitions les pâturages, bâtissons des ports et des routes, et étendons nos villes à un rythme effréné, détruisant ainsi d'innombrables habitats naturels. Dans le même temps, nous faisons le commerce de la vie sauvage à travers le monde, déplaçant partout des espèces courantes ou menacées comme s'il s'agissait de produits inanimés.

Ce modèle nous expose plus étroitement et plus fréquemment à des virus susceptibles de se transmettre de l'animal à l'homme, à l'instar du COVID-19 et de dizaines d'autres maladies mortelles ou invalidantes, du VIH à Ebola. De même, la dégradation des écosystèmes marins entraîne une prolifération de pathogènes à l'origine de maladies potentiellement mortelles comme le choléra.

La bonne nouvelle, c'est que les dirigeants politiques les plus clairvoyants et les Nations Unies formulent un certain nombre de plans d'action axés sur la nature, susceptibles de contribuer à stopper la prochaine pandémie avant qu'elle n'apparaisse. Ces stratégies font intervenir la conservation d'écosystèmes et d'espaces sauvages encore préservés de toute

activité humaine, la lutte contre le commerce de la faune (y compris via une sensibilisation de la population sur les risques associés à la consommation d'animaux sauvages), ainsi que la restauration et la protection de vastes espaces terrestres et marins.

Le monde préserve à ce jour 15 % de ses terres et 7 % de ses océans. Pour notre santé et notre prospérité, nous devons faire mieux. Un consensus croissant entre les pays envisage en effet de restituer la moitié de la planète au monde sauvage, et d'exploiter de manière responsable l'autre moitié, avec pour objectif la protection d'au moins 30 % de cette deuxième moitié d'ici 2030.

Cette démarche ne pourra que bénéficier à la nature et aux êtres humains. Les recherches démontrent que l'abondance d'animaux, de plantes, d'insectes et de microbes, au sein d'écosystèmes complexes et matures, permet de limiter la propagation des maladies de l'animal vers l'homme.

Et les espaces naturels font tant d'autres choses que nous protéger contre les maladies. Ils nous protègent également contre la puissance destructrice des événements météorologiques extrêmes, et contre notre propre pollution, tout en nous offrant les moyens de nous nourrir, de nous soigner, et de nous épanouir.

Les revenus et l'alimentation des Seychellois sont dépendants de la terre et de la mer. La pêche emploie 17 % de la main-d'œuvre du pays, et fournit à la population une source durable et peu coûteuse de protéines. Le tourisme, qui se concentre sur le littoral des Seychelles, et qui bénéficie des merveilles naturelles du pays sur terre et en mer, emploie pour sa part 25 % des travailleurs.

La préservation de 30 % des espaces marins du pays mettra un terme aux activités humaines nuisibles dans les zones protégées, tout en contribuant à une pêche durable aux alentours. Le maintien d'une nature vierge dans le pays - y compris des forêts de mangrove, herbiers marins et marais salés - permettra également aux Seychelles de demeurer un paradis naturel qui attirera des touristes responsables.

Lorsque le pire de la pandémie sera derrière nous, et que le monde retravaillera activement pour remettre sur pied ses populations, ses sociétés et ses économies, nous ne devons pas oublier la nécessité de prendre soin de la nature, afin qu'elle puisse prendre soin de nous. Une nature saine constitue le meilleur des antiviraux, et c'est en la protégeant davantage que nous pourrions rebondir après cette pandémie, tout en étant capables de stopper la prochaine avant son même apparition.

De nombreux pays démontrent d'ores et déjà comment nous pouvons bâtir des liens plus solides entre la nature, notre économie et notre santé. La récente initiative de protection des espaces marins envisagée par les Seychelles offre l'espoir d'une planète sur laquelle chaque pays, quelle que soit sa taille, apporterait sa part de contribution, sur la voie d'un monde plus sûr et plus prospère pour tous - comme nous le promet la nature elle-même.

## ARTICLE

## ARTICLE

# Coronavirus Pandemic Worries BRICS

By Kester Kenn Klomegah\*

Cont'd from last edition

Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi echoed Sergey Lavrov's call for unity and solidarity. In an official statement released by the ministry, Wang said that the BRICS should "stand firm by multilateralism, by the UN-centered international system" and "champion the approach of consultation and cooperation."

"Through joint efforts, we will safeguard the legitimate rights and interests and space for development not just for ourselves but also for all other emerging market and developing countries," Wang Yi said.

With its rapid spread in many parts of the world, COVID-19 has put lives and health of people around the world under grave threat, seriously disrupted the global economy, and posed severe challenges to BRICS, the minister said, while acknowledging further that "as representatives of major emerging countries with global influence, BRICS countries must act in the interest of the well-being of humankind, and stand by justice and equity."

Wang Yi, however, proposed the following:



First, uphold multilateralism and improve global governance. The sudden onslaught of COVID-19 reminds again that BRICS interests are, closely entwined and the future. A challenge that respects no border and makes no distinction of ethnicity has only made global governance more important, not less, building a community with a shared future for mankind.

China's strategic assessment is that COVID-19 will not change the theme of the times which remains peace and development; it will not cut short the historical trend toward multi-polarity and globalization, and still less will it deter humankind from its firm pursuit of civilization and progress.

In a time of crisis, BRICS must stand firm by multilateralism, by the UN-centered international system, and by the purposes and principles of the UN Charter. BRICS needs to sustain coordination in the UN, the G20 and other multilateral frameworks to keep up secure and smooth functioning of global industrial and supply chains, and defend the multilateral trading regime with the WTO as the

cornerstone.

BRICS should continue to work for making development the centerpiece of the global macro policy agenda, and expedite the delivery of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

Second, BRICS should come together in the spirit of partnership to combat COVID-19. Under the personal leadership and direction of President Xi Jinping, the Chinese government and people have fought a people's war against COVID-19. China has acted according to the principle of shoring up confidence, strengthening unity, ensuring science-based control and taking targeted measures.

As the virus hits more countries around the world, China is doing everything it can to help those in need. In spite of substantial demand at home and growing pressures to meet foreign orders, China has provided a large amount of medical supplies to fellow BRICS countries, and facilitated the purchase of such supplies through commercial channels.

Going forward, China is ready to step up the sharing of information and experience with BRICS countries and conduct joint research and development of drugs and vaccines, respecting each other's sovereignty and

national conditions.

Third, BRICS should uphold unity and coordination to forge a powerful synergy. President Xi Jinping stated that the virus is a common enemy of humanity and can be defeated. Living in a global village, no one could stay safe when others' houses catch fire.

Likewise, in fighting COVID-19, victory can only be secured when the virus is brought under control in all countries. China has been a strong force behind international anti-epidemic cooperation because its own experience has made it fully empathetic with other peoples suffering from similar difficulties.

As countries battle the disease in light of their own

situations, China called for mutual understanding and respect for these efforts, and sharing and learning from each other's experiences. The global community should never be distracted in its collaborative response by finger-pointing or the blame game, allow new tensions and divisions to be created as a result of politicization or stigmatization.

In view of the weaknesses and inadequacies exposed during this crisis, BRICS needs to enhance global public health governance, make it a higher priority on the international agenda, and work together to build a community of health for all.

Fourth, China will work with all BRICS members to support Russia's Chairmanship. China also supports Russia's initiative to formulate a Strategy for BRICS Economic Partnership 2025.

On his part, Indian Foreign Affairs Minister Dr. Subrahmanyam Jaishankar noted that BRICS, which brings together almost 42 percent of global population, with impressive growth, investment and trade share, has an important role to play in shaping the global economic and political architecture.

He highlighted the initiatives and various decisive steps taken early by India. For example, India is providing pharma assistance to nearly 85 countries, including many countries in Africa, on a grant basis, to support their response to the pandemic. This has been widely welcomed.

He further emphasized that the pandemic is not only posing a great risk to the health and well-being of humanity but is also severely impacting global economy and output by disruption of global trade and supply chains. Economic activity across sectors has been negatively impacted leading to loss of jobs and livelihoods.

He emphasized the need to provide support to businesses, especially small and medium scale enterprises, and the efficacy of traditional medicine systems to strengthen immunity be recognized and that BRICS should support these efforts.

Jaishankar emphasized the current challenge that underlines the need for reform of multilateral systems and that a reformed multilateralism was the way forward. He referred to the centrality of development and growth in the global agenda. India reaffirmed its support for Russian BRICS Chair-ship in 2020 and under the theme "BRICS Partnership for Global Stability, Shared Security and Innovative Growth."

The BRICS member countries (Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa) collectively represent about 26% of the world's geographical area and are home to 3.6 billion people, about 42% of the world's population and with a combined nominal GDP of \$16.6 trillion.

\*Kester Kenn Klomegah is an independent research writer, who served previously as Moscow Bureau Chief for Africa Press Agency (APA) and Inter Press Service (IPS), and has won awards including the Golden Word Prize for a series of analytical articles on Russia's economic cooperation with African countries.

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# CPP sets rules for

preferably to be held in the constituency or county concerned, to be attended by the relevant district or county representatives as well as representatives of the National Executive Committee of the alliance.

Further, all constituent political parties are under obligation to be fully represented or to form part of any established campaign committee for the presidential, senatorial and representative elections, provided that the candidate shall select the head of any such committee.

The document further commits the four political parties to work toward an eventual merger of the constituent political parties in the future in line with the CPP's objective to reduce the number of political parties to an affordable number in response to the desire of the people.

Where consensus is not met in selecting a ticket, the framework document directs that the CPP shall conduct a Voters Perception Survey (VPS) as prescribed in Sections 10.5.2 of the agreement.

For the purpose of presidential nomination, the framework document notes that consensus shall be by unanimous choice made through a confidential medium, and that the presidential aspirants of the four initial parties shall have until December 1, 2021 to, by consensus, decide or agree on and name a presidential ticket, including a running mate.

The agreement gives the Standard Bearer of the CPP three months to name his/her running mate for subsequent endorsement by the National Executive Committee of the CPP in keeping with the electoral laws and Constitution of Liberia.

The Vice Standard Bearer nominee is required to hail from the CPP, but that such nominee should not come from the same constituent party as the Standard Bearer.

The Executive Committee may only reject the Vice Standard Bearer nominee on grounds established by law.

Where the presidential aspirants of the CPP fail or are unable to decide/agree on and name a presidential ticket, including a running mate on or before December 1, 2021, the framework document states that the CPP shall conduct a non-binding voters' perception surveys (VPS) funded by the CPP, for the purpose of informing the four parties and its delegates on the views of the public in preparation for primaries.

It says the VPS shall

include the four standard bearers or legislative candidates of each of the CPP constituent parties as survey subjects (SS), and in addition, also obtain voters' preference and perception about other influentially potential presidential and legislative aspirants from within and outside of the CPP, as SS.

Where the designated official of the CPP on legislative nomination are unable to decide/agree on and name the legislative candidate for a district or county, the framework document also mandates that the CPP shall conduct a Voter's Perception Survey funded by the CPP, for the purpose of informing the four parties and its delegates on the views of the public in preparation for primaries.

But the results from the VPS for presidential candidates will not be binding, except that the conduct of the VPS shall be mandatory and conducted no earlier than six months and no later than three months to the conduct of the primaries.

The results emanating from the primaries shall be binding on all parties in the collaboration," the document says.

Concerning legislative candidates, it also says the results from the VPS for legislative candidates will not be binding unless in the case of incumbent lawmakers as per Section (10.5.4).

But it notes that the conduct of the VPS shall be mandatory and conducted no earlier than four weeks to the conduct of the primaries.

Further, the document says an alliance member may lose his/her membership when a political party resigns from the alliance for cause or is dissolved by the National Elections Commission (NEC).

Other causes for losing membership include inaction of the other parties to probe a matter concerning the actions of a member party against the party in reasonable time; the party is consistently maligned, attacked and brought to public disrepute by officials and affiliates of a member party.

It cites also as further reason for losing membership, consistent violation of the agreement by one or more members of the alliance; the political party's consistently refusal or neglect to fulfill its financial obligations as provided in Article 8 of the framework, provided there is no pending/undetermined matter or grievance filed by the defaulting member.

The document gives the alliance the power to establish a single account to be managed by designated signatures as agreed by the authorities of the constituent political parties.

Agreement is reached for

each political party to make equal financial contribution to fund all activities of the alliance based on a 25% cost-sharing principle of the total expenditure required to fund any activity of the alliance as long as the framework is in place.

Members of the alliance are required to make an initial contribution of USD \$10,000 for the opening of the bank account to be paid upon the signing of the document and an annual due payment /contribution of USD\$ 24,000 to run the affairs of the Alliance.

The document says the total amount of annual contribution agreed to by the parties shall be paid in quarterly installments of US \$6,000 with the first quarter installment to be invoiced and paid within three months after the signing of the agreement.

In the guideline set in the framework document, a party is found guilty of violating the provisions of the agreement provided that due process is accorded and party's or its Executive Committee member(s) or official(s) are found guilty of promoting the activities of a political party that is not one of the members of the alliance.

It sets a punitive measure of suspending the violator's membership for up to one year or expelling them from the alliance if they are found promoting the activities or programs of a person or organization engaged in acts that are counterproductive to the objective of the alliance.

The document states equality, transparency & accountability, integrity, inclusiveness, respect for rule of law, peace & unity, discipline & hard work and gender equity as the core values of the alliance.

The CPP seeks to strengthen the democracy here through grassroots engagement with the people, using town hall meetings, community engagements, radio and technology.

Members of the alliance are to jointly and in equal proportion finance the operational costs of the office of the alliance which shall be rotated based on the chairmanship of the alliance.

The alliance says it is aware that the media have the power to shape public opinion and make or break the alliance's political mission, thereby committing to endeavor to enhance its activities with a tolerant media engagement strategy and seeking to empower media entities to voice the vision of the alliance in pursuit of its overriding objective.

# Officials prepare for

Cont'd from page 6

The Government of Liberia is planning an all out lockdown of communities and food distributions that would require residents to stay at home to allow mass testing of the population.

"We gather this morning to do our specimens collections in order to set examples for our citizens to follow", said the Health Minister, who is on record for disclosing that out of a total 20 COVID-19 deaths in the country, only one occurred in the treatment center at the 14th Military Hospital along the Robertsfield Highway.

She cautions that if the coronavirus would leave Liberia, every citizen, beginning with officials must go for testing, something, which she notes, would build citizens' trust in the health system.

Doctor Jallah explains that the decision to lead an arrayed of health officials, including the Country Representative of the United States Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), World Health Organization Country Representative to Liberia, Doctor Peter Clement, Liberia's Chief Medical Officer Doctor Francis Kateh, and the head of the USAID Mission, among other is to encourage the public to come forth to give their specimens for testing.

Dr. Peter Clement of the WHO says it is important that officials of government particularly from the health sector took the lead because it will certainly encourage others.

"Our gathering here today is

a clear manifestation that leaders are interested in curtailing the spread of the virus", Doctor Clement notes.

Deputy Minister of Health and Chief Medical Officer, Doctor Kateh notes that it was very prudent to have begun the sample test with themselves rather than waiting on the public, adding, "Now that we have started this process, we want to call on our people to follow; with this, we will defeat this virus."

Speaking earlier with ECOWAS Radio over the weekend, he explained that Ebola was not infectious as COVID-19, noting that with Ebola, you have to touch an infected person to contract the virus. "For Ebola, when a person dies, the body becomes more infectious."

Doctor Kateh: But for COVID-19, when a person dies, we take a specimen and put the body in a black bag and have it kept, pending the test result. You can keep the body as long as you want to, once it is placed in a freezer.

Meanwhile, the Country Representative of the United States Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Doctor Desmond Williams, is optimistic that now that health officials have taken the lead, it is time for citizens to follow their leaders' footsteps.

He emphasizes that government had made the pronouncement that people should have their samples taken for testing, and they deemed it necessary to key-start the process, so everyone should come out to do their test. **-Story by Jonathan Browne**

# Lonestar Cell MTN

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how to stay safe and protected and helped to inform customers on the various actions being taken by the Government to ensure the safety of all Liberians as well as clear up any myths related to the pandemic.

The company says it has sent out over 2 million messages have been sent out to Lonestar Cell MTN customers to provide them with health tips.

It said it has ease the cost burden for Lonestar Cell MTN's customers who have lost their sources of income in this period.

The company said it is offering a special bundle on \*156\*19#, which gives customers a daily allocation of minutes, data and SMS for work and staying in touch with friends and family has so far

helped subscribers save more than 2 million LRD.

On helping government, Lonestar Cell MTN says it has donated 500 phones, SIMs and airtime was made to MOH/NPHIL through the Office of the Vice President to be used for contact tracing and for people in quarantine to stay in touch with their friends and family.

At the company's offices and service centers, precautionary measures have been put in place to help slow down the rate of infection including enforcing social distancing protocols, temperature checks and washing of hands before entering the premises. 80% of the company's staff are working from home.

# The New Dawn

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# Sports

With **Emmanuel B. Juduh**

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## Covid-19 update as of May 19, 2020

**Liberia COVID-19 Daily Case Update by County** Report as of May 19, 2020

**Total Confirmed**  
**238** (5 new)

**Active Confirmed Cases**  
**87**

**Confirmed cases by County**

Gbarpolu	7 (0 new)
Grand Bassa	4 (0 new)
Grand Kru	1 (0 new)
Margibi	17 (1 new)
Maryland	1 (0 new)
Monts.	200 (4 new)
Nimba	6 (0 new)
River Gee	1 (0 new)
Sinoe	1 (0 new)

**Cases by Gender**

Female	85 (1 new)
Male	153 (4 new)

**Countdown** May 19, 2020

**5 new cases confirmed, No new death and 3 new recoveries reported as of 10:00 pm, 19<sup>th</sup> May 2020.**

**Total Deaths**  
**23** (0 new)

**Total Recovered**  
**128** (3 new)

Deaths by County	Recoveries by County
Gbarpolu	2 (0 new)
Grand Bassa	0
Grand Kru	0
Margibi	1 (0 new)
Maryland	0
Monts.	17 (0 new)
Nimba	3 (0 new)
River Gee	0
Sinoe	0

Deaths by Gender	Recovery by Gender
Female	6 (0 new)
Male	17 (0 new)
Female	46 (1 new)
Male	82 (2 new)

Location of Deaths	Count
Death in COVID-19 Treatment Unit	2 (0 new)
Death in health facility	8 (0 new)
Death in community	13 (0 new)

**Contacts under follow up**  
**596 (0 new)**

[www.nationalphil.org](http://www.nationalphil.org) | [www.moh.gov.lr](http://www.moh.gov.lr) | National Public Health Institute of Liberia-NPHIL | @nphil6 | For more info call 4455 (toll free)

NOTE: These data are subject to epidemiological reclassification | Data by: Liberia COVID-19 Incident Management System

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## UEFA's Ceferin losing sleep over COVID-19 cost

UEFA President Aleksander Ceferin says he is having sleepless nights due to the COVID-19 pandemic with European soccer's governing body set to lose "millions and millions" of dollars after the season came to a halt.

European leagues and UEFA competitions have either been suspended since March or had their seasons cut short due to the novel coronavirus outbreak.

While the German

Bundesliga resumed over the weekend, it is unclear when, or if, other major top flight leagues will restart, with the season set to spill over into August when the 2020-21 campaign is set to kick off.

"There is so much information (to take in) and so many calendar issues. So many millions and millions, dozens of millions of dollars, that we will lose," Ceferin told the Guardian.

"It's then hard to fall asleep at night. You would be quite

irresponsible if you could fall asleep immediately.

"The situation for UEFA is not that alarming, we're not in a dangerous situation, but we still care about the clubs and the leagues and the stakeholders so it is a lot of work."

Ceferin said he did not expect football to change once the situation returns to normal but added that Financial Fair Play (FFP) regulations could be adapted to the "new times".

**Birthday Greetings to the Don**

Happy birthday to you, Master Othello Barnabas Garblah Jr., the Garblah's treasure! Our American Football star! The true heir of the Garblah's dynasty.

May 21, has come and you turned 14 today. As you celebrate your natal day, we wish to remind you that there isn't a day that goes by where you don't bring a smile to our faces.

You are the most perfect kid a father, a mother and any one for that matter could ask for and we simply adore you, my boy!

We, as parents are hoping you continue to grow as fantastically as you already have!

All our love to you on your special day and a great big hug! From Mom and Dad, Aunty Sue, your little sister Olivia as well as family and friends especially the New Dawn family.

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