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VOL. 14 NO. 06

TUESDAY, JANUARY 30, 2024

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# Boakai disputes Weah's US\$40M balance story

**-But...**

Pres. Boakai (left) | Former Pres. Weah (right)



# Three branches of Gov't face audit

Pres. Boakai (top left) | Speaker Fonati-Koffa (bottom left) | Chief Justice Sie-A-Nyene Yuoh (center)

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# Continental News

## S Africa's ANC suspends Zuma after new party launch

South Africa's former President Jacob Zuma has been suspended from the party he once led, after refusing to vote for it and launching a rival organisation. The governing African National Congress (ANC)

exists to "erode the support base of the ANC". South Africa's current President, Cyril Ramaphosa, replaced then-President Zuma in 2018 and promised to clean up government. He now leads an embattled ANC into this year's general election. At MK's official launch in December, a statement was read on Mr Zuma's behalf saying he would "die a member of the ANC" but not vote for it, adding that some of its leaders behave in an "un-ANC manner" and it was now his mission to "rescue" the "once-great movement". Mr Zuma has also launched highly personal attacks on his successor, and former deputy, Mr Ramaphosa. The BBC's Daniel de Simone in Johannesburg says many South Africans see Mr Zuma as representing what is wrong with the recent past, and as having tainted the ANC.

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Yet he commands huge loyalty from some quarters. Thousands of South Africans rioted in protest at his 2021 jailing for contempt of court, and a recent poll estimates that almost one in three South Africans approve of him. It is not yet clear how far this will translate into popular support for his new MK party at the ballot box, but it is likely to cost the ANC votes. The ANC, which had its roots in the liberation struggle against apartheid, has

announced its decision on Monday. "Zuma and others whose conduct is in conflict with our values and principles, will find themselves outside the African National Congress," said Secretary-General Fikile Mbalula. Mr Zuma's nine years as president, from 2009, were dogged by scandal. An official inquiry said the former president placed the interests of corrupt associates

ANC had tolerated Mr Zuma, but the creation of a new party that may pose a threat was deemed a step too far. The party, uMkhonto we Sizwe (MK), meaning "spear of the nation", shares a name with the ANC's former armed wing he once served in. In a scathing letter, Mr Zuma's former ANC bedfellows accuse him of debasing the "proud history of armed struggle against the apartheid regime" through the "opportunistic use of military symbolism". They also say MK only

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Mr Zuma, 81, had been a lifelong member of the ANC

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## Clashes kill dozens at Sudan-South Sudan border

More than 50 people, including United Nations peacekeepers, have been killed in attacks in an area disputed between South Sudan and Sudan, the United Nations has said. It is the deadliest incident in a three-year-long spate of clashes in oil-rich region of Abyei. Two armed groups raided Abyei on Saturday, local authorities said. The day after, peacekeepers came under fire when transporting affected civilians to hospital, the UN said. South Sudan and Sudan jointly administer Abyei, and both claim ownership to the region in a dispute that has remained unresolved since the South's independence in 2011. The fighting at the weekend is reportedly linked to a land conflict between rival factions of the Dinka ethnic group - the Ngok and Twic - from Abyei and South Sudan's Warrap state respectively. According to a statement from the authorities in the Abyei Special Administrative Area, a group of "rebels" joined armed youths from the Twic faction and

carried out a series of "barbaric coordinated attacks", starting on Saturday morning. Forty-two people, mostly women and children, were killed on the first day of the attacks, the administration said. Saturday's fatalities include a Ghanaian peacekeeper, the United Nations Interim Security Force for Abyei (Unifsa) said, in a statement calling for a "swift" investigation into the violence. Unifsa also said that on Sunday, other peacekeepers came under fire "while transporting affected civilians from a Unifsa base to a hospital".

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A Pakistani peacekeeper was killed, and "four uniformed personnel and one local civilian sustained injury", it said. Unifsa's statement, released on Monday, added: "Currently, according to local authorities, 52 civilians have lost their lives, while 64 others are said to be gravely wounded." According to the AFP news agency Rou Manyiel Rou, secretary general for the Abyei Special Administrative Area, said on Saturday that the violence was tied to a long-running "conflict between Ngok and Twic (Dinka)" communities.



Social media footage captured locals gathering at a UN peacekeeper camp following deadly attacks

## One-time giant of African air travel mounts comeback

South African Airways - once a giant of African aviation - is back in the intercontinental market, but there are still doubts about its financial viability. It had disappeared from our skies altogether in September 2020, having fallen victim not just to Covid but also another disease that has plagued some other state-run carriers - corruption and mismanagement. It may be on the verge of a sale that would see a private consortium take a majority share in the business. However, its handling of finances has recently come in for severe criticism by the country's public spending watchdog. In a scathing report, Auditor-General Tsakani Maluleke said that the financial statements SAA had drawn up dating from the 2018-19 financial year lacked credibility. The airline recorded losses in the four years from 2018 of a staggering \$1.2bn (£1bn). But interim chief executive officer (CEO) John Lamola said this did not reflect the current position of

business rescue. This was a process which saw the airline placed under the temporary supervision of experts who were asked to return the company to financial health. They pared back the fleet from 44 aircraft to six and focused on the African market. Now it is aiming further afield. "The choice of São Paulo was as a result of a very meticulous economic and market research analysis," Mr Lamola told the BBC. He added that the intercontinental flights hoped to enhance trade and tourism ties between the two countries as members of Brics - an expanding group of emerging economies originally comprising Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa. Prior to the Covid pandemic, SAA operated five other intercontinental routes from Johannesburg to destinations including New York and Hong Kong. That route encapsulates the prestige that used to accompany the airline. Once the largest in Africa, SAA faced profound challenges in the last decade. "South African Airways notoriously has gone through a



In 2011, the airline marked the arrival of new planes but its fleet has now been pared back

the airline, which is under new management. He said the situation had improved in the most recent financial year, with the airline now "running on financial resources generated from its own operations". Towards the end of last year, in a sign that SAA wants to be a major player again, it reopened its routes from Cape Town and Johannesburg to São Paulo, Brazil. And now it is selling tickets for flights to Perth, Australia. These are the airline's first long-haul destinations in three years. It did return in September 2021, making a surprise profit serving a limited number of African destinations after coming out of voluntary

process in South Africa called 'state capture', where there are well-recorded incidents of corruption that characterised the life of the airline," said Mr Lamola, adding that investigations were ongoing. An official inquiry into state capture released at the beginning of 2022 showed that the airline had been wracked by corruption between 2012 and 2017. As a result of the mismanagement, SAA was forced to rely entirely on government financial assistance over a 10-year period to stay afloat, a situation made worse by Covid. "In that period... the government had to put in some 40bn rand (\$2.2bn) into SAA," said Public Enterprises Minister Pravin Gordhan.

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# EDITORIAL

## UP government should come with clean hands

Circumstances surrounding the expenditure of US\$650,000 for the poorly organized inaugural ceremony of President Joseph Nyumah Boakai have a very high likelihood to taint the image of the new administration that campaigned on integrity and accountability to ascend to power, if nothing is urgently done to set the record straight and erase suspicions both within and outside the ruling UP.

By every account so far, nothing seems to be clear on how funds allotted for various aspects of the inaugural ceremony at which people fainted because of severe heat and dehydration, were expended, with tales of diverse shades being told.

Hell broke loose when a total of US\$365,000 allotted by President Boakai for ordinary citizens to celebrate his inauguration in all 73 districts across the country with each district apportioned US\$5,000 is greeted with noise and discrepancy. As if this was not enough, the woman who headed the President's inaugural committee, Auntie Miatta Fahnbulleh, told a media briefing Thursday, January 25, 2024 in Monrovia that she was never in control of activities for which she reportedly received huge cash.

Rather, she blames the former administration, security officers, protocol personnel everyone else, but herself, as head, for everything that went wrong on Inauguration Day, January 22, 2024 that was characterized by severe heat, lack of seats and water for guests, which nearly turned fatal for President Boakai himself!

Auntie Miatta is yet to account clearly how funds received for the program she presided over was expended, with people she claimed to have given money for specific activities, such as media, US\$50,000, and several thousands to an entertainment group "Kukatono" (we are one) refuting that they received far less than the amounts announced. Addressing the Ministry of Information's regular press briefing on Thursday, January 25, on Capitol Hill, she pointed fingers at the former Director-General of the General Services Agency (GSA) Madam Broh, revealing that the former GSA boss allegedly received funding for the renovation and preparation of the Capitol Building where the inauguration was held, but due to the poor management, progress was only halfway.

According to her, every time she tried to inquire, the consistent response she received was that the responsibility fell on the GSA.

She narrates that prior to the ceremony, she decided to confront Madam Mary Broh, but the meeting ended in deadlock, alleging that Broh obstructed preparations for the inaugural ceremony.

But reacting on Spoon Talk last week Thursday, Madam Broh said she didn't receive a dime, contrary to allegation by Auntie Miatta that the former GSA boss received a larger chunk of the US\$650,000 inaugural budget for logistical purposes. She explains that she has in her possession vouchers for cars that were rented for the occasion.

Besides, the National Chairman for the now ruling Unity Party, Rev. Dr. Luther Tarpeh is vividly struggling to account for the US\$3650,000 allotted by the President for the 73 electoral districts to celebrate. Without consultation with other party executives in Monrovia, Chairman Tarpeh explains that UP county chairpersons from all 15 counties requested for some of the money to have their own celebrations, so he authorized disbursement of US\$1,000 from the amount to each county chair for said purpose.

It is hard to comprehend how a party that preached equity, accountability and moral leadership throughout the entire campaign could entangle itself and have its hands stained in the disbursement and expenditure of the first public money it handled right from the onset of its six-year rule.

Published by the Searchlight Communications Inc.,

UN Drive, P.O. Box 1266 Opposite National Investment Commission.

Monrovia-Liberia. Tel: +231-06484201, +231-77007529, +231-0555422200 /

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

# COMMENTARY

By Ishac Diwan and Vera Songwe

## Developing Countries Need Debt Relief to Act on Climate Change

**W**ASHINGTON, DC/PARIS - If developing economies found it hard to manage their debts in 2023, they are likely to face even more formidable challenges this year. Though most possess relatively small debt stocks and are not considered insolvent, many are in dire need of liquidity. As long as this remains true, they will struggle not only to manage their debts, but also to invest in the green transition.

Developing economies have faced a series of external shocks in recent years, including the COVID-19 pandemic, war-related disruptions of food and energy supply chains, and an uptick in global inflation. Moreover, their access to capital markets has been curtailed, preventing them from rolling over maturing loans, as they would do in normal times. As a result, countries have been forced to channel a large share of their tax and export revenues to service their debt, avoiding default at the cost of priorities like infrastructure investment, social-welfare programs, and climate action.

The outlook for these countries is likely to worsen in the next few years. According to estimates by the Finance for Development Lab (FDL), large debt payments are coming due in 2024 and 2026 for at least 20 low- and lower-middle-income countries. As countries hit this "debt wall," their already fragile fiscal positions will deteriorate further. This does not bode well for climate action.

Climate change is not some distant menace; its effects are already being felt worldwide, especially in climate-vulnerable developing economies. But international summits on the topic last year sent a disappointing message: while developed economies pledged to increase climate financing by 2030, developing-economy policymakers are struggling against severe fiscal constraints. With medium-term strategies being used to address a short-term threat, developing and emerging economies have been expressing frustration, including at the Summit for a New Global Financing Pact that was held in Paris last June.

Multilateral development banks can provide an essential lifeline, but their capacity would have to be strengthened - and quickly. According to World Bank data, the new concessional loans the world's poorest countries received from MDBs in 2022 were smaller than these countries' debt-service payments, a large share of which went to private and bilateral creditors. Increasing capital flight from the developing world - driven not least by monetary tightening in advanced economies - will intensify the needs of illiquid lower-income countries. But it is not only a matter of financial capacity. MDBs have so far been inconsistent, at best, when it comes to supporting countries struggling to repay their debts. For example, both Kenya and Ethiopia have been under pressure to repay their private and Chinese creditors, which are now collecting more in debt-service payments than they are providing in new loans. But only Kenya received enough

support from the International Monetary Fund, the World Bank, and others to refinance its debt that is maturing this year.

By contrast, assistance to Ethiopia has declined in recent years. As a result, Ethiopia recently defaulted on its external debt, even though it amounts to just 25% of GDP. While the Kenya approach is not the solution - providing similar levels of support to all illiquid countries would require a tripling of MDB flows - this is clearly unacceptable.

A better approach would focus on closing the gap between short-term debt concerns and long-term investment needs, by unlocking net-positive inflows for countries facing liquidity constraints. As the FDL has proposed, an agreement among debtors, creditors, and MDBs to permit countries to reschedule debts coming due - delaying maturities by 5-10 years - would create fiscal space for climate-friendly investments, financed by MDBs.

For this liquidity bridge to work, MDBs would have to accelerate progress on implementing existing reform plans and increase funding substantially, while the IMF helps manage debt-rollover risks. Importantly, private and bilateral creditors would have to agree to the rescheduling. That is why, compared to the Debt Service Suspension Initiative that the G20 introduced in 2020, the proposal includes stronger incentives for private-sector creditors to participate, in addition to longer time horizons.

There are good reasons to believe that creditors can be convinced to join the program voluntarily. It is, after all, in their best interest to remain invested in solvent countries with strong growth prospects; no one benefits from debt crises like those that have ensnared Zambia and Sri Lanka. In any case, creditors would continue receiving interest payments, and as global interest rates fall and economic-growth prospects improve in the coming years, debtors may well be able to return to capital markets and resume repayment of the principal.

Shaping a workable blueprint along these lines is a task for upcoming international gatherings, such as the G20 summit in Brazil later this year. Logistical and financial coordination will be needed to ensure sufficient liquidity. Coordination among the IMF, the World Bank, and regional development banks will also be essential to ensure that participating debtor countries pursue investments that genuinely support green growth.

If nothing is done to help countries facing liquidity crises, the world will risk a wave of destabilizing debt defaults, and progress on the green transition will be severely undermined, with catastrophic implications for the entire world. Because promising solutions like the liquidity bridge can prevent such outcomes, they deserve broad global support.

Ishac Diwan is Research Director of the Finance for Development Lab. Vera Songwe is a senior fellow at the Brookings Institution and the Finance for Development Lab.

**OP-ED**

By Imme Scholz

**The Sustainability Transformation Needs a New Narrative**

**B**ERLIN - In 2015, all 193 members of the United Nations agreed to achieve 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) - a broad policy agenda aimed at ending poverty, protecting the planet, and promoting well-being for all - by 2030. Now, eight years on, the UN's Global Sustainable Development Report 2023 (GSDR) warns that the world is far from meeting these targets. Poverty and hunger are increasing, greenhouse-gas (GHG) emissions have continued to rise, and, at the current rate of progress, it will take 300 years to achieve gender equality.

The COVID-19 pandemic's devastating social and economic impact certainly pushed us off track, as did the war in Ukraine. But the transformative action required to meet the SDGs has also been lacking. As the GSDR shows, incremental steps and targeted interventions will not suffice. Instead, we need sweeping reforms that pursue several SDGs at once.

According to the GSDR, the sustainability transformation is a process in which new technologies, infrastructure, and decision-making approaches replace old ones, addressing the negative effects of the existing versions and producing better results. This change is usually met with resistance and can lead to conflict, because it has a cost: companies need to find new business models and markets, and workers are forced to retrain and then find new jobs. Policymakers should anticipate and plan for these outcomes.

One such innovation is renewable energy. But in most countries, renewables are a complement rather than replacement for fossil fuels. Making a full switch, however, is necessary to reach net-zero GHG emissions, which the European Union aims to achieve by 2050. In addition to the large-scale deployment of renewables and clean technologies such as electric vehicles, it will be crucial to scale up investment in energy infrastructure, especially in Africa, and improve energy efficiency. Social innovations that emphasize the collective provision and use of space and mobility services can also help reduce energy use.

Sweeping changes are also needed to end hunger and halt biodiversity loss. People in wealthy countries should drastically reduce their meat consumption, adopt plant-based diets, and halve food waste. Globally, agriculture must adopt low-input and multifunctional production systems that preserve land, water, and biodiversity, and the use of persistent pollutants such as heavy metals and plastics must be cut significantly to ensure a healthy environment.

To promote human well-being and inclusion, policymakers must relentlessly pursue gender-equality objectives, which requires strengthening women's legal status and economic autonomy. Moreover, putting a price on carbon in high-emitting countries could generate revenue for a global fund for social protection that low-income countries can use to improve education and health services. This would go a long way toward reducing poverty.

Transformation on this scale will not be easy to achieve. That is where the power of narrative comes in: people must be convinced that these changes are the best way to build a livable future, and that our current trajectory leads only to catastrophic outcomes that threaten human existence.

To shift the narrative, policymakers will have to learn how to shore up and maintain broad-based political and societal support for wholesale change. That means focusing more on common purpose than partisan conflict, developing long-term strategies that can achieve a just green transformation, and being proactive about identifying and resolving conflicts over the distribution of costs. It also means working with civil society, the private sector, and trade unions to identify implementation problems and adjust policies accordingly. Developing partnerships that enable mutual learning and exchange within and across regions can help build this capacity.

Democratic processes are fundamental to designing policies that fairly distribute the costs of transformation. The magnitude of the change required, however, is so enormous that anyone whose business or livelihood is affected will resist reform. Especially in societies with high levels of income and wealth inequality, people are more likely to believe that they will be worse off during such a paradigm shift.

That is why policymakers must put equity and justice at the center of this transformation and commit to transparency and accountability in determining how costs should be shared across different income groups and generations. Monitoring progress against agreed targets, in particular, would enable the public to hold government accountable, strengthening the rule of law and building trust in institutions.

As much as achieving the SDGs depends on democratic consensus, pursuing these radical but necessary reforms could in turn strengthen democracy.

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**OPINION**

By Jorge G. Castañeda

**Mexico's Democracy Is at Stake in 2024**

**N**EW YORK - Many countries, from the United States and Uruguay to India and Indonesia, will hold elections in 2024. Although pundits, politicians, and political scientists tend to portray each one as "historic" and "momentous," Mexico's June 2 presidential election may be one of the few to warrant such superlatives, if only because the country has limited experience with truly democratic votes.

It is not a stretch to say that Mexico experienced its first free and fair presidential election in 2000. This implies that over the course of two centuries of independence, the country has elected its leaders democratically on only four occasions. If things go well, this year's vote would be the fifth.

But things might not go well, posing a challenge for Mexico's political and business establishment, the military, and the US - always a key actor in the country. For starters, the playing field is tilted so far in favor of Claudia Sheinbaum, the ruling party's presidential candidate, that it recalls the heyday of one-party rule under the Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI).

Moreover, the outgoing president, Andrés Manuel López Obrador (AMLO), entered office in 2018 with an unusually broad social base and will leave with his popularity intact, becoming the country's most powerful former president since 1940. Lastly, while the opposition has fielded a competitive candidate, Xóchitl Gálvez, she represents an unholy alliance between the PRI, the right-of-center National Action Party (PAN), a tiny splinter left-wing party, and a host of civil-society groups, some more representative than others.

Sheinbaum, AMLO's protégé and a former mayor of Mexico City, enjoys the backing of a large majority of Mexico's governors, all cabinet ministers, the media, and the state machinery (including access to the federal budget). The chairwoman of the weakened National Electoral Institute is closely allied with AMLO's party, while the president of the Federal Electoral Tribunal, the country's highest electoral authority, was forced to resign in December and replaced with a colleague sympathetic to the government.

Every week, pollsters, many of whom are newly established or have ties to the ruling party, release survey results showing Sheinbaum with a commanding lead, in some cases 60 points, the aim being to convince Mexicans that the election is already a done deal. Why bother voting, or contributing money, or canvassing door to door?

This unlevel playing field raises the question of whether AMLO will leave office if Gálvez ekes out a victory. The president's drive for power, starting from his first run for governor in his home state of Tabasco in 1988, suggests that the answer may be no, and the electoral authorities would likely be too debilitated to oppose him. Moreover, several analysts have cast doubt on the Mexican military's loyalty to the Constitution. The armed forces, normally removed from politics, have become increasingly powerful since AMLO took office, building and administering massive infrastructure projects, operating a new commercial airline, and running the country's customs operations.

Even if Sheinbaum wins, currently the most likely outcome, AMLO may seek to maintain his grip on power. Historically, outgoing Mexican presidents who have attempted to extend their rule - Miguel Alemán in 1952, Luis Echeverría in 1976, and Carlos Salinas in 1994 - have failed miserably, largely because their base had eroded and they were deeply unpopular by the end of their term.

Already, there are signs that AMLO is stacking the odds in his favor. He has appointed a Supreme Court justice whom his successor normally would have named; selected the leaders of the Senate and lower house should his party achieve a majority; and outlined the constitutional reforms that must be approved during the transition period. Sheinbaum would owe her victory entirely to his influence, and she seems to lack the charisma and stature to break with him.

Lastly, the opposition is facing enormous challenges. Gálvez is a formidable campaigner, but also a micromanager who belongs to none of the political parties that nominated her, giving her little leverage. And she is running against not only Sheinbaum, but also Mexico's state apparatus.

At the beginning of Gálvez's campaign, I said that "the message was the messenger." This has proven true, insofar as her personal history of rising from humble, indigenous origins to become a successful businesswoman, cabinet member, and senator has struck a chord. But it is not enough to win the election, and Gálvez has understandably struggled to find a more substantive message that both resonates with the electorate and placates the parties backing her.

Gálvez's best option would be to focus on security, law enforcement, and reducing the high levels of violence that have plagued the country during AMLO's administration, as well as those of his two predecessors. On average, nearly 100 homicides occur each day, and more than 100,000 people have been reported as missing or disappeared. Polls show that this is the most important issue for Mexicans, and that AMLO's approval rating on the issue remains stubbornly low.

While grave dangers - including democratic backsliding, AMLO retaining his grip on power, creeping militarization, a largely unproductive informal economy, and an unending cycle of violence - lie ahead, this year's election could put Mexico on a new course. The opposition could win; AMLO could accept defeat; near-shoring could give the economy a much-needed boost; and the cartels could go back to their core business (drugs), bringing a dramatic decline in violence. Admittedly, such an outcome is a long shot, but there is no harm in dreaming.

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The Intestate Estates of the Late Eugenia Stevenson and the Late Benjamin Wordsworth by and thru their Administrator William Wordsworth and Attorney-in-Fact Marjann W. Bakar of the City Of Monrovia, Republic of Liberia.....PETITIONERS

VERSUS

International Petrol Line Incorporated, by and thru its CEO, Musa A. Sheriff and all other officers of the Corporation, acting under its authority, of 11<sup>th</sup> Street, Sinkor, City of Monrovia, Montserrado County, RL.....RESPONDENT

PETITION FOR THE CANCELLATION OF LEASE AGREEMENT

PLAINTIFF'S AFFIDAVIT

PERSONALLY APPEARED BEFORE ME, a duly qualified Justice of the Peace in and for Montserrado County, Republic of Liberia, at my office in the City of Monrovia, Mark M. M. Marvey, Counsellor-At-Law, and one of the Counsels for Plaintiff in the above-entitled cause and made OATH according to law that all and singular the allegations of both law and facts set forth and contained in the foregoing and annexed PETITIONER'S PETITION FOR CANCELLATION OF LEASE are true and correct to the best of her knowledge and belief; and as to those matters of information, she verily believes them to be true and correct.

SWORN AND SUBSCRIBED TO BEFORE ME AT MY OFFICE THIS 15 DAY OF DECEMBER, A.D. 2023.



JUSTICE OF THE PEACE FOR MONTERRADO COUNTY, REPUBLIC OF LIBERIA

Handwritten signature of Mark M. M. Marvey

Mark M. M. Marvey / Deponent  
Counselor-At-Law AND ONE OF  
COUNSELS FOR PETITIONER

REPUBLIC OF LIBERIA) IN THE CIVIL LAW COURT FOR THE SIXTH JUDICIAL  
MONTERRADO CO.) CIRCUIT SITTING IN ITS SEPTEMBER TERM A.D. 2023

BEFORE HIS HONOR: J. KENNEDY PEABODY.....RESIDENT JUDGE

The Intestate Estates of the Late Eugenia Stevenson and the Late Benjamin Wordsworth by and thru their Administrator William Wordsworth and Attorney-in-Fact Marjann W. Bakar of the City Of Monrovia, Republic of Liberia.....PETITIONERS

VERSUS

International Petrol Line Incorporated, by and thru its CEO, Musa A. Sheriff and all other officers of the Corporation, acting under its authority, of 11<sup>th</sup> Street, Sinkor, City of Monrovia, Montserrado County, RL.....RESPONDENT

PETITION FOR THE CANCELLATION OF LEASE AGREEMENT

PETITIONER'S PETITION

The Intestate Estates of the Late Eugenia Stevenson, Benjamin Wordsworth, and Edna Wordsworth represented by and thru their Administrator William Wordsworth and Attorneys-In-fact, Marjann W. Bakar, Petitioners in the above-entitled cause of action, most respectfully prays Your Honor and this Honorable Court for the entry of a decree cancellation of a Lease Agreement consummated between Petitioner and Respondent for factual and legal reasons as showeth to Wit:

- 1. Petitioner submits that as the duly appointed administrator of the intestate estates of Late Eugenia Stevenson, Benjamin Wordsworth, and Edna Wordsworth, William Wordsworth has (in order to institute this suit), executed a Power of Attorney, in favor of Marjann W. Bakar, who is also a joint Heir with him. Attached and marked as Petitioner's Exhibit "P/1" Bulk are the copies of the Monthly and Probate Court's April 21, 2023, Letters of Administrator granted Mr. William Wordsworth to Administer all properties the late Edna Wordsworth, including the Estates' 11<sup>th</sup> Street property; as well as Powers-of-Army mentioned above, to form a cogent part of Petitioner's Petition.
- 2. Further to Count One (1) above, Petitioner says that Respondent is believed to be a Liberian business primarily engaged in the sale of Petroleum products and is a party, lessee in the June 10, 2023, Lease agreement for the estates' 11<sup>th</sup> Street and Tubman Boulevard, opposite Ecobank, where the Respondent currently operates a segment of its business on the leased property.
- 3. That under Section 3 of the June 10, 2013 Lease Agreement (the "Lease Agreement"), Respondent undertook to, and is obligated to pay rentals to Petitioners in advance for the first three years and thereafter to pay rentals in advance annually, as and when due, vis-à-vis, on the 16<sup>th</sup> Day of June of each year, the effective date of the Lease Agreement as a condition for its continued use and occupancy of the subject property;
- 4. Additionally, Section 6 of the Lease Agreement further requires Respondent to pay the real estate and realty taxes for the leased property during the time of the lease agreement, which obligations Respondent fully undertook as an obligation for the Lease with Petitioners. However, Petitioner has reasons to believe that Respondent has failed, refused, and neglected to honor this obligation. Hence, Petitioner gives notice that it will subpoena the Liberia Revenue Authority (LRA) to produce the realty and Real estate tax records in connection with the said obligation of the Respondent as emanating from the June 10, 2013, Lease Agreement.
- 5. Petitioner says that although, in accordance with the terms and conditions of the June 10, 2013, Lease it has dealt with the Respondent in good faith by surrendering its property to the Lessee and ensured its quiet enjoyment; thereby fulfilling its obligations under the Lease Agreement, Respondent on the other hand has grossly breached of Clause 3 of the lease Agreement for the past six (6) years, by its intentional failure, refusal and neglect to make annual rental payments to Petitioners as and when due.
- 6. Further to Count Six (6) above, Petitioners say that the Respondent has further been in gross breach and violation of Clause 6 of the Lease Agreement from the inception of this Agreement by its refusal to pay taxes on the property as and when due, and Petitioner's request to Respondent to furnish it with copies of the proof of underwriting the agreed tax obligations have gone without answer.
- 7. Petitioners submit that the pre-condition for Respondent's continuous quiet enjoyment, possession, and use of the leased premises are more fully described/stipulated in Clause 10 of the Lease Agreement, which state as follows:

"the Lessors hereby covenant and warrant that the Lessee, paying the rental and performing all the prescribed terms and conditions herein contained shall have, hold and possess the said demised premises without any hindrance molestation from the Lessors or any person acting under their authority..."

- 8. Petitioners submit that on several occasions through oral discussions, telephone conversations, email, text exchanges, and other sundry means of communications, it has notified Respondent about the intentional and gross breach of duties/obligations voluntarily assumed under the Lease Agreement, but that Respondent has despite its repeated assurances of honoring its obligations, failed to comply with its undertakings under the lease agreement. There have been various commitments made through emails by the Respondent's CEO, Musa A. Sheriff. Copies of the email exchanges and notices served on Respondent during the period of its breach are accordingly, attached and marked as Petitioners' EXHIBIT P/2" IN BULK to form Part of Petitioners' Petition
- 9. Petitioners submit and say that in spite of the several communications and the repeated assurances, Respondent has failed to pay as agreed, in advance the rent due and payable as per the term of the lease. However, the Respondent continue to occupy and use the demised premises without fulfilling the condition precedent.
- 10. Petitioners say and submit that the failure of Respondent to pay annual rental as and when due for the last six years, together with Respondent's gross failure to pay real estate and realty taxes from the very inception of the lease agreement are gross/material breaches of the said Lease Agreement for which a Court's decree for cancellation of the Lease Agreement ought to lie. Petitioner submits that as a consequence of the Respondent decided failure to honor its contractual obligation, despite numerous promises to do so, Petitioner here, filed an action in debt and obtained a judgment against the said Respondent, copies of which proceedings and the resultant ruling is hereby annexed and marked as Petitioners' EXHIBIT P/3" IN BULK to form a cogent Part of this Petitioner's Petition.
- 11. Petitioner submits that gross/material breaches are ip so facto legal basis for the Cancellation of any contract, and the Lease Agreement, consummated between the parties on June 10, 2013, having been honored by Petitioner by its tendering of the subject premises to the custody, and use of the Respondent for rent, will lie to prevent the said Respondent from unjustly enriching itself at the expense and detriment of the Petitioner and also for breach of the lease agreement by the Lessee. Hence, this Petition for Cancellation of the June 10, 2013, Lease Agreement. And the petitioner so prays.

WHEREFORE AND IN VIEW OF THE FOREGOING, Petitioners pray Your Honor and honorable Court to:

- Enter a judgment of liability against the Respondent for breach of the June 3, 2023 Lease Agreement; i) for not honoring its rental payment obligation; ii) also for not honoring its obligations to pay realty and real estate tax (as irrespective of numerous requests to provide Petitioner with receipt/deposit slips have all proved futile);
- Enter a Decree of Cancellation against the Respondent, canceling the Lease Agreement of June 10, 2013;
- Order that Petitioner be forthwith placed in sole and exclusive possession of the Property Subject lying and situated on the corner of 11<sup>th</sup> Street Sinkor and Tubman Boulevard in keeping with the June 10, 2013 Lease Agreement;
- Rule the cost of these proceedings against the Respondent; and
- Grant unto Petitioner any and all other relief this Court may deem just, legal, and equitable.

PECTFULLY SUBMITTED:

PETITIONERS BY AND THRU THEIR LEGAL COUNSEL: BEYOND LAW CHAMBERS, 2<sup>ND</sup> FLOOR, BOBBY A. AWAR BUILDING, ADJACENT CONEX FILLING STATION, 5<sup>TH</sup> STREET SINKOR, MONROVIA, LIBERIA; CELL: 0777-529-389/0886-529-389

CLLR. MARK M. M. MARVEY

ed this \_\_\_\_ day of December A. D 2023

REPUBLIC OF LIBERIA) MONTERRADO COUNTY)



IN THE SIXTH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT, CIVIL LAW MONTERRADO COUNTY SITTING IN ITS DECEMBER TERM, A.D. 2023

BEFORE HIS HONOUR: GOLDA A. BONAH ELLIOTT..... ASSIGNED CIRCUIT JUDGE

The Intestate Estates of Eugenia Stevenson the late Benjamin Wordsworth by and thru administrator, William Wordsworth and Attorney-In-Fact, Marjann W. Bakar of the City of Monrovia, Republic of Liberia.....PLAINTIFF

VERSUS

International Petrol Line Incorporated, by and thru its CEO, Musa A. Sheriff and all other officers of the Corporation, acting under its authority, of 11<sup>th</sup> Street Sinkor, City of Monrovia, Montserrado County, Republic of Liberia .....DEFENDANTS

PETITION FOR THE CANCELLATION OF LEASE AGREEMENT

TO WHO IT MAY CONCERN

TO: ANY LICENSED/REGISTERED NEWSPAPER OPERATING IN THE CITY OF MONROVIA, MONTERRADO COUNTY, REPUBLIC OF LIBERIA

SUBJECT: AUTHORIZATION FOR LEGAL PUBLICATION

FROM: RANDOLPH B. SNEH, ASSISTANT CLERK OF COURT, SIXTH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT, CIVIL LAW COURT, MONTERRADO COUNTY, REPUBLIC OF LIBERIA.

GREETINGS:

UPON PAYMENT OF YOUR REQUIRED FEES, YOU ARE HEREBY AUTHORIZED TO PUBLISH THE PLAINTIFF'S COMPLAINT, WRIT OF SUMMONS AND AFFIDAVIT IN THE ABOVE CAPTION CAUSE OF ACTION/CASE: ONCE A WEEK FOR FOUR (4) WEEKS.

AND FOR SO DOING THIS SHALL SERVE AS YOUR LEGAL AND SUFFICIENT AUTHORITY.

COURT SEAL:

DATED THIS 5<sup>TH</sup> DAY OF JANUARY, A.D. 2024.

# MORE HEADLINE NEWS

# MORE HEADLINE NEWS

## 10,000 youth to get empowered in digital education

Over ten thousand Liberian youth will be empowered in digital education during the first six months of President Joseph Nyumah Boakai's

He disclosed that in his quest to expand the economy, the administration will leverage Information Communication Technology (ICT) to create jobs, especially for youth.

bring back 'The Made in Liberia' quest for inclusive and sustainable growth and jobs. Regarding the educational system, he said education remains a beacon of hope, but the educational system has seen a downward spiral over the years, leaving countless Liberian children without the tools they need to build a better tomorrow. Mr. Boakai said this is a problem that Liberians must confront head-on.

"Education is not a privilege; it is a fundamental right. We cannot turn a blind eye to the fact that a significant portion of our population is struggling with a lack of access to quality education," said President Boakai. "And there is no other way that we can genuinely seek to successfully fight poverty without the provision of quality education for our people."

Additionally, President Boakai noted that starting now, his Administration is making a steadfast commitment to revitalize the educational system. He said they will invest in education infrastructure and provide adequate resources.



tenure. Mr. Boakai announced the plan in his first State of the Nation Address (SONA) at the Capitol on Monday, 29 January 2024. He assured lawmakers that the Liberian middle-class goal must be a reality in the next six years.

President Boakai disclosed the plans because he said the unemployment rate in the country remains high.

Under his Administration, Boakai said the empowerment of Liberian entrepreneurship through more support will help

## Liberians assured road expansions

Liberia's new President Joseph Nyumah Boakai has vowed road expansions and improvements as a top priority for his Administration. This commitment was contained in his first State of the Nation Address (SONA) delivered on Monday, 29 January 2024.

Boakai campaigned on road development as a top priority in seeking to relieve the country of years of economic stagnation and ensure better transportation access across the oldest African Republic. In his address on Monday, he said there has been some progress in the road and transport sector during the reviewed period but there are considerable challenges in road development.

"...The total paved roads in our national road network amount to only 1,131.1km, representing 8.7 percent of the 13,000 km road network we need," Boakai said.

According to the Liberian

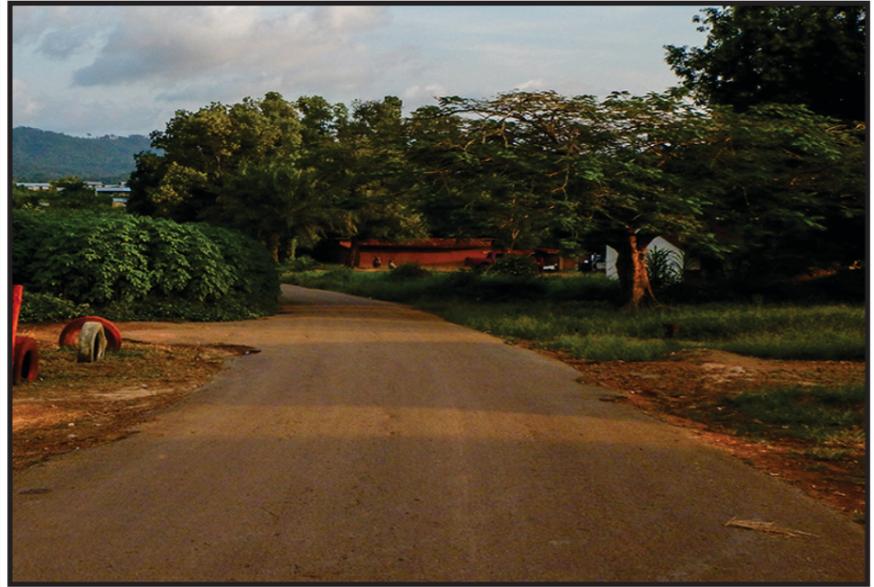
accomplished. "To access all county capitals, my Government will work to alleviate the problems faced by commuters using our primary roads, especially during the rainy season," Boakai assured.

"This situation also causes major impediments to the economic development of our people, as these primary routes are major economic corridors to all parts of our country."

He said the restoration of the County Road Maintenance Stations will be a key deliverable and this is why he has commissioned a "NO CAR STUCK IN THE MUD" 100-DAY DELIVERABLE to make all major primary corridors pliable.

Boakai noted that this flagship road delivery program will include the Freeport to St. Paul Bridge Road. He disclosed that having received funding through the Government of Japan, they will begin construction of a 4-lane road from the Gabriel Tucker Bridge to the Freeport of Monrovia.

"Additionally, the Government of



## Boakai, Koung to take drugs test

**-urges officials to do same in war on drugs**

In his 44 minutes Annual Message before the 55th Legislature sitting in Joint Chambers at the Capitol, President Joseph Nyumah Boakai elevates Liberia's fight against narcotics, announcing here that he and his Vice President, Jeremiah Kpan Koung, will lead test against use of dangerous substances, urging all of officials to similarly go for test as part of his government's commitment to raiding the country of drugs that is consuming the youth.

Presenting his first legislative agenda before the 55th Legislature on Monday, 29 January President Boakai described Liberia's drug epidemic as an existential threat that is eating away the future of Liberian youth and the entire country.

"We must stand up and face this national security risk together. Given the need for immediate action to make good my pledge to the thousands of families burdened by this crisis, I am hereby declaring Drugs and Substance abuse as a Public Health Emergency", the President says. Immediately, President Boakai establishes a multisectoral steering committee comprising the Ministries of Health, Justice,

Youth and Sports, Gender, Children and Social Protection, Finance and Development Planning, and the Liberia Drug Enforcement Agency to coordinate the drug fight.

Liberia is inundated with dangerous drugs, including marijuana, cocaine, and kush that are being publicly sold at street corners and in communities across the country. The country had an unprecedented influx of drugs under the previous administration with cocaine valued at about US\$140 million brought at the Freeport of Monrovia. Culprits arrested and put on trial, all foreign nationals, were subsequently released because of lack of evidence. Former President George Manneh Weah signed an

amended drug act into law on July 12, 2023, after its enactment by the 54th Legislature. The amended law is titled the Controlled Drugs and Substances Act of 2023. It seeks to regulate, restrict, control, limit, or eradicate illegal export and importation of drugs and their flagrant use, abuse, and proliferation in the country.

Violators risk felony of the first and second degrees respectively with 10 years imprisonment and not exceeding 20 years consistent with provisions of the Penal Code 1, section 50.5 and 50.6, while traffickers risk second-degree felony punishable by not less than five years and not exceeding 10 years pursuant to the provisions mentioned above. Editing by Jonathan Browne



Boakai & Koung

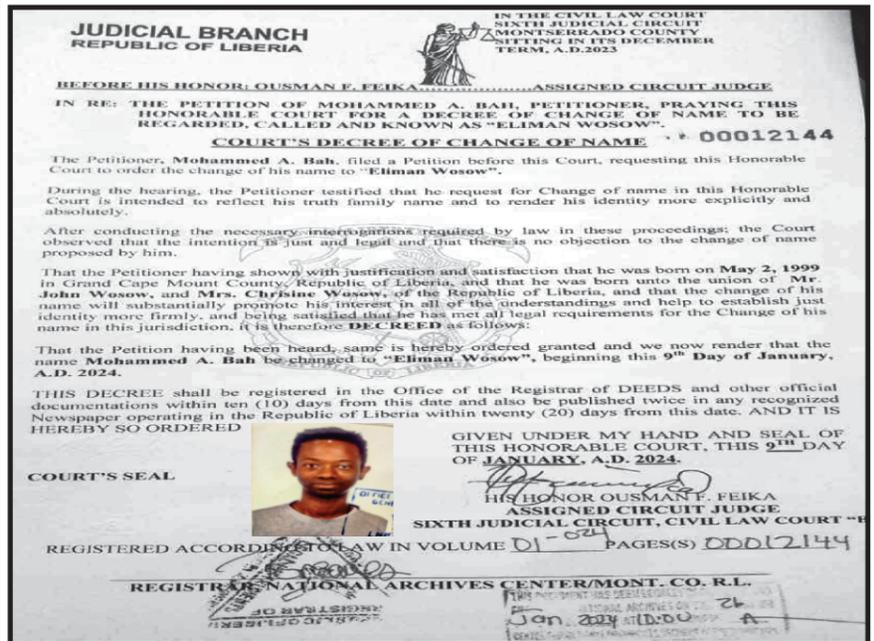
president, the fact underscores considerable challenges in road infrastructure and the urgent need to fund road development in the country.

He also noted that with the assistance from friendly partners, the country made notable progress in paving some primary roads, including the Gbarnga to Salayea, the Ganta to Saclepea, the Ganta to Yekepa, and the Sanniquellie to Logueta corridors.

In addition, he said as of now, 37.7 percent of work on the ELWA to RIA Road Project has been

Japan is expected to provide funds to expand the Gabriel Tucker Bridge to 4-lanes," said President Boakai. He said the Government has also secured additional support from Japan for the conduct of feasibility studies for the expansion of the Freeport to St. Paul Bridge corridor, and his government will allocate funds to complete the 6.5 km Freeport to St. Paul Bridge Road.

At the same time, Boakai assured the Legislature that his Government will ensure that funding from the National Road Fund is utilized to maintain and rehabilitate roads for the good of the public.



# Annual Message

## By His Excellency Joseph Nyuma Boakai, Sr. President of the Republic of Liberia The Capitol Building, Monrovia

January 29, 2024

The Rescue Mission: Rebuilding Public Trust

MR. VICE PRESIDENT,  
MR. SPEAKER,  
MADAM PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE,  
MEMBERS OF THE LEGISLATURE,  
MADAM CHIEF JUSTICE AND JUSTICES OF THE SUPREME COURT,  
THE DOYEN AND MEMBERS OF THE DIPLOMATIC CORPS,  
HEADS AND OFFICIALS OF POLITICAL PARTIES,  
REPRESENTATIVES OF OUR INTERNATIONAL AND DEVELOPMENT PARTNERS,  
PRELATES AND IMAMS,  
OUR TRADITIONAL LEADERS,  
MEMBERS OF THE FOURTH ESTATE,  
MY FELLOW LIBERIANS, DISTINGUISHED LADIES, AND GENTLEMEN

We are thankful to the Lord Almighty, the Preserver of our State for His abundant blessings upon us. As the world confronts various crises - wars, pandemics, climate change, and migration - we pray for a better, more peaceful, sustainable, and inclusive global order.

Exactly one week ago, Vice President Jeremiah Koung and I took the oath of office as an array of world leaders, friends, and citizens of Liberia at home and in the Diaspora looked on. That solemn occasion marked yet another historical moment in our democracy as we carried out a transfer of power.

In obedience of my constitutional duty, it is an honor to come before this august Body, the people's representatives, to report on the national situation as we met it and present our agenda for development in the coming year.

We must acknowledge the harsh realities that face us, as we report that the state of our nation is not what we desire. It is important to note the problems that confront us: Poverty, drug epidemic, corruption, poor infrastructure, and an underperforming economy. The current challenges present us with a unique opportunity to embark on a new journey of hope. This is our commitment to rescue the nation!

### Our Vision

Our vision, as revealed in ARREST (meaning, Agriculture, Roads, Rule of Law, Education, Sanitation, Tourism) shall guide the preparation of the new Medium-term National Development Plan for the welfare of our people. We must harness opportunities in agriculture, roads, and other infrastructure development; improve the rule of law, rethink the education sector, improve sanitation, and unlock the potential of tourism.

We believe that creating economic linkages between these development facets and reinforcing them will help reverse years of economic downturns.

### The State of the Economy

The state of the economy is a cause for concern, with many of our citizens facing perennial unemployment and economic instability. We must not just recognize the pain and frustration that permeate our society, but also work together to introduce and pass legislations that will prioritize economic reforms that foster sustainable economic growth and job creation.

Distinguished Legislators, economic growth slowed between 2022 and 2023, from 4.8 percent to 4.6 percent. The rate of growth averaged about 1.5 percent, compared with 3.1 percent between 2012 and 2017 due in part to an underperforming economy and the existing geo-political global environment. During the past six years, the economy faced challenges in terms of growth, job creation, and poverty reduction.

Inflation during the period 2023 rose to 10.1 percent at the end of December, from 7.6 percent in 2022. Revenue collection as reported for 2023 stood at US\$710.23 million while expenditure totalled US\$796.32 million; hence, a large budget deficit of over US\$80 million.

We intend to change this state of the economy by thinking "outside the box"; a paradigm shift away from reliance on primary commodity export to focusing on value addition with the private sector as the engine to drive the economy. Under my Administration, the empowerment of Liberian entrepreneurship through more support will help bring back THE MADE IN LIBERIA quest for inclusive and sustainable growth and jobs. In our quest to expand the economy, we will leverage Information Communication Technology (ICT) in creating jobs, especially for our youth. To achieve this, my Administration will train up to 10,000 young people in various digital skills in the first half of 2024. The Liberian middle-class goal must be a reality in the next 6 years.

The net international reserves position reported at the end of December

2023 was US\$220 million. The report of US \$40 million as the GoL's consolidated account balance as at January 19, 2024 is not supported by the fact. The balance reported by the CBL as of the same date was US\$20.5 million, highly encumbered, NOT US\$40 million. To this end, we re-emphasize our earlier commitment to audit and ensure that regular audits will be a culture across all branches of government, not only the Executive.

The stock of public debt at End-December 2023 stood at US\$2.21 billion, an increase of 8.67 percent compared to end-December 2022 stock of US\$2.08 billion. This represents a sharp increase of US\$1.33 billion compared to the end of December 2017 stock of US\$878.17 million (representing 601.8 percent rise). Our debt burden has clearly grown astronomically. Certainly, the rescue mission was a necessity for Liberia's transformation.

As I am speaking, Liberia is under sanction for lack of payment of dues to the African Union and the African Development Bank. Also, a default in payment of about US\$650,000 to the European Investment Bank is preventing a disbursement of over US\$13 million for the Sanniquellie-Loguato road.

We will reintroduce the Fiscal Rules and Travel Ordinance in addition to other measures to help address waste and abuse and ensure the return of prudent fiscal management. We will ensure that the executive leads by example.

### Agriculture

Liberia is endowed with abundant natural resources. With over 40% of West Africa's rainforest, our country is home to a diverse array of flora and fauna that should help provide economic and agricultural growth opportunities. Liberia is also a leader in the discussion on climate change mitigation, further emphasizing the importance of international partnerships for sustainable agricultural production and development.

However, it is important to recognize that our available arable land is underutilized. My Government is committed to harnessing the right resources and strengthening collaboration with international partners and local farmers to improve production.

### Legislative Agenda

Our legislative agenda is aimed at working with you in doing the business of the people for which proposed legislation will be submitted in the coming months. We will focus on shaping the outcomes we desire from our development agenda. The following constitute our agenda:

#### The Presidential Transition Act

A Presidential Transition Act was drafted in 2017 to provide the appropriate legal framework for the seamless transition from one democratically elected president to the other. The draft bill has since been lingering with little or no action to move it to legislation. Given the difficulty in establishing the appropriate framework to guide the recent presidential

transition, my Government will immediately review the draft bill for submission to the legislature for passage. When passed, the Presidential Transition Act will provide the legal basis for smooth transfer of political power.

#### Bill for the Establishment of the Ministry of Local Government.

This bill is aimed at advancing modalities to operationalize the Local Government Act passed in 2018 to fast-track the transitioning of the Ministry of Internal Affairs to the new Ministry of Local Government. The Ministry of Local Government will have the authority to drive the Government's decentralization program.

#### Operationalizing the Revenue Sharing Law

The Revenue Sharing Law needs to be synchronized with existing laws including the Project Financial Management Act (PFMA), and the current Revenue Code. The Revenue Sharing Law (passed in 2022) and these two other instruments were designed for different systems of Government.

While the new Revenue Sharing Act is designed to facilitate fiscal decentralization in a decentralized system of governance, the other two cater to a centralized system where the sub-national bodies do not have any authority to use a portion of locally generated revenue. This has left County Service Centers that should be functioning and raising revenue, often stranded to raise operational costs. We will work with the relevant institutions of Government to align the new Law with the existing Law; popularize the Law and ensure adherence and enforcement across the Country.

#### Passage of the National Tourism Bill

One of the major recommendations that came out of the mandate and functional review of the Ministry of Information, Cultural Affairs, and Tourism was the need to divest culture and tourism from the Ministry of Information. A National Tourism bill has since been sent to the Legislature with a first public hearing. Improving tourism is one of the pillars of the ARREST agenda. We will work with the Legislature on the status of this bill pending necessary actions to complete this process. Once passed, Liberia will have a National Tourism Authority mandated to draw up regulations and the appropriate governing framework for the tourism sector.



TO BE CONTINUE NEXT EDITION

# Français

## Chambers admet finalement sa défaite et félicite son adversaire, William

Le représentant du district n°2 du comté de Maryland et ancien président de la 54e législature, Bhofal Chambers, a finalement

adversaire vainqueur, arguant de perturbations lorsque des habitants auraient perturbé les danseurs masqués dans les bureaux de vote.

S'exprimant sur une station

qui toutes ont contribué à faire de moi ce que je suis. N'eut été vos coups constants, ma résilience humaine innée n'aurait pas été éveillée", a affirmé Chambers.

"Permettez-moi de prendre ce moment en tant que véritable croyant en la démocratie de notre pays pour féliciter le représentant élu de notre district, Anthony William, et vous appeler tous à lui accorder le même respect qu'à moi. Je vous exhorte à travailler avec lui pacifiquement dans l'intérêt de notre district. Nous voulons féliciter M. William pour la force qu'il a démontrée pendant toute l'élection, et nous devons respecter ce qui a été dit par ceux qui sont en charge de notre démocratie. Un merci spécial et une appréciation vont également à la Commission électorale nationale pour un processus pacifique."

"Notre district et ses habitants ont gagné, donc à notre vainqueur, nous voulons exprimer nos sincères félicitations et nous vous souhaitons le meilleur. Nous voulons que les années à venir soient des années d'accomplissements car nous avons été là pour nos concitoyens, et c'est pourquoi vous avez vu ces réalisations que nous avons apportées à notre peuple. Nous ne voulons pas que notre district soit en proie à la

▶ CONT'D ON PAGE 9



Bhofal Chambers,

admis sa défaite et a félicité le nouveau représentant élu, Anthony F. William, à la suite d'une nouvelle élection dans deux bureaux à Old Sodokan, district n°2, comté de Maryland, le 10 octobre 2023.

La Cour suprême du Liberia a ordonné à la Commission électorale nationale de procéder à ce nouveau vote après que l'ancien président Chambers ait contesté le résultat initial qui avait déclaré son

de radio locale le vendredi 26 janvier 2024, le député sortant du district n°2 a salué la population de Pleebo pour son soutien massif lors de l'élection.

"Nous restons des guerriers engagés et véritables, qui ne sont pas découragés par des revers momentanés. En fait, cela représente une grande victoire - un moment pour se concentrer sur une mission bien plus importante pour vous, mes partisans, et pour le pays."

"À nos opposants, je vous aime et j'apprécie les critiques,

## Le gouvernement garde le silence sur le budget du message annuel

Le gouvernement du Libéria maintient le mystère sur le budget alloué au premier Message Annuel du président Joseph Nyumah Boakai devant la 55e Assemblée Législative.

Malgré les assurances publiques concernant la bonne santé du président pour prononcer le Message Annuel, le gouvernement n'a toujours pas divulgué les détails financiers de l'événement.

S'exprimant lors d'une conférence de presse spéciale le dimanche 27 janvier au ministère de l'Information, des Affaires culturelles et du Tourisme à Monrovia, le représentant du district n°7 du comté de Montserrado, Emmanuel Dahn, qui préside le Comité exécutif de la Chambre, a ouvertement déclaré qu'il ne pouvait pas divulguer pour le moment le montant d'argent dépensé en préparation de la cérémonie, indiquant que puisqu'il n'y avait pas de

budget approuvé, ils ont sollicité des fournisseurs et des entrepreneurs de différents endroits pour financer à l'avance le programme.

"Comme il n'y a actuellement aucun ministre des Finances pour signer le budget et personne pour fournir l'argent, les dirigeants des deux chambres ont décidé de se réunir pour agir, invitant des entrepreneurs et des fournisseurs libériens à financer à l'avance le processus", explique le représentant Dahn.

L'article 58 de la Constitution du Libéria stipule : "Le président doit, le quatrième lundi ouvrable de janvier de chaque année, présenter le programme législatif de l'administration pour la session à venir, et doit une fois par an rendre compte à la Législature de l'état de la République. En présentant la situation économique de la République, le rapport doit

▶ CONT'D page 9



## Éditorial

### Le nouveau gouvernement doit faire preuve de transparence

Le gouvernement du Parti de l'Unité (UP) se trouve à un carrefour critique, alors que les circonstances entourant l'utilisation des 650 000 dollars pour la cérémonie d'investiture du président Joseph Nyumah Boakai risquent de compromettre sérieusement l'image de la nouvelle administration. Ayant fait campagne sur des principes d'intégrité et de responsabilité, le gouvernement actuel doit agir rapidement pour rectifier la situation et dissiper les suspicions qui planent aussi bien au sein du parti au pouvoir qu'à l'extérieur.

À ce jour, la gestion des fonds alloués à divers aspects de la cérémonie d'investiture, marquée par des incidents tels que des pertes de conscience dues à la chaleur intense et à la déshydratation, demeure floue, avec des récits contradictoires qui émanent de différentes sources.

La controverse a atteint son paroxysme avec l'allocation de 365 000 dollars par le président Boakai pour permettre aux citoyens ordinaires de célébrer son investiture dans les 73 districts du pays.

Cette décision a suscité des réactions bruyantes et des divergences d'opinions. Pour aggraver la situation, Aunty Miatta Fahnbulleh, la responsable du comité d'investiture présidentielle, a déclaré lors d'une conférence de presse à Monrovia le 25 janvier 2024 qu'elle n'avait jamais eu le contrôle des activités pour lesquelles elle aurait prétendument reçu des sommes importantes.

Au lieu de prendre la responsabilité, Aunty Miatta a pointé du doigt l'ancienne administration, les agents de sécurité, le personnel du protocole, et tous les autres, se déchargeant de toute responsabilité pour les problèmes survenus lors de la cérémonie d'investiture du 22 janvier 2024.

Cette journée a été marquée par une chaleur intense, un manque de sièges et d'eau pour les invités, mettant même en danger la santé du président Boakai lui-même.

Aunty Miatta doit rendre des comptes clairs sur la manière dont les fonds alloués à son programme ont été dépensés. Des témoignages indiquent que certaines personnes ont reçu des montants bien inférieurs aux annonces officielles, notamment dans les médias (50 000 dollars) et auprès du groupe de divertissement "Kukatono" (nous sommes un).

Lors d'une conférence de presse régulière du ministère de l'Information le 25 janvier, Aunty Miatta a accusé l'ancienne directrice générale de l'Agence des services généraux (GSA), Madame Broh, d'avoir reçu des fonds pour la rénovation et la préparation du bâtiment du Capitole où s'est tenue l'investiture. Cependant, en raison de la mauvaise gestion, les progrès n'ont été accomplis qu'à moitié. Madame Broh, réagissant sur Spoon Talk la semaine dernière jeudi, a nié avoir reçu un centime, détenant des reçus pour les voitures louées pour l'occasion.

Le président national du parti au pouvoir, le Rév. Dr Luther Tarpeh, se retrouve également dans une position difficile pour rendre compte des 365 000 dollars alloués par le président pour que les 73 districts célèbrent. Sans consulter les autres dirigeants du parti à Monrovia, le président Tarpeh explique que les présidents de comté de l'UP des 15 comtés ont demandé une partie de l'argent pour organiser leurs propres célébrations, et il a autorisé le versement de 1 000 dollars à chaque président de comté à cet effet.

Il est difficile de comprendre comment un parti qui a prêché l'équité, la responsabilité et le leadership moral tout au long de la campagne pourrait s'embourber et avoir les mains tachées dans la distribution et la dépense du premier argent public qu'il a géré dès le début de ses six années au pouvoir.

Il est impératif que le gouvernement de l'Uttar Pradesh prenne des mesures immédiates pour rétablir la confiance du public. Une enquête approfondie et transparente sur les dépenses d'investiture est nécessaire pour dissiper les doutes et garantir la responsabilité. La transparence et l'intégrité doivent être les piliers fondamentaux de cette administration, et il est temps de montrer au public que le gouvernement est déterminé à respecter ces principes. La crédibilité de l'administration en dépend.

# Français

## Starts from page 8 Chambers admet finalement sa défaite

confusion et aux conflits", a-t-il révélé.

Il rappelle qu'au cours de l'élection, il y a eu plusieurs remarques offensantes de la part des partisans, quelque chose qu'il souligne ne correspondant pas au caractère du peuple du district de Sodoken, exhortant le représentant élu William à résoudre les divisions parmi le peuple.

"Je veux dire ceci ; nous sommes les habitants de Pleebo et nous devons maintenir la paix en tant que citoyens car l'élection est terminée."

Il appelle les habitants de Pleebo à s'unir et à travailler ensemble dans l'harmonie car Dieu est un Dieu de paix.

La NEC avait annoncé Anthony F. William vainqueur après l'élection du 10 octobre 2023, mais les résultats avaient été fortement contestés par l'ancien président Chambers, invoquant l'implication de personnes traditionnelles dans deux bureaux de vote dans le code de bureau de vote n°27020, Old Sodokan, district n°2, comté de Maryland.

Il avait fait plusieurs appels auprès de la Commission électorale nationale mais n'avait pas réussi à renverser le résultat, se tournant

finalement vers la Cour suprême du Liberia, qui a statué en sa faveur. La Cour suprême a souligné que la menace de violence par des personnes traditionnelles pour effrayer les électeurs avait gravement affecté les élections du district, en particulier dans les deux bureaux de vote mentionnés à Old Sodokan, étant donné les marges étroites.

La Cour suprême a noté que la décision de la Commission électorale nationale de rejeter les arguments de Chambers, sans tenir compte des problèmes soulevés concernant la violence par des personnes traditionnelles pendant le processus de vote, était injuste. Par conséquent, elle a ordonné à la NEC de procéder à un nouveau vote, qui a eu lieu le 25 janvier 2024, sous des mesures de sécurité strictes, avec un total de 811 votants sur les 960 inscrits dans les bureaux de vote et 11 de Old Sodoken.

Sur les 811 votants qui ont participé au nouveau vote, le candidat Anthony F. William du CPP a obtenu 671 voix, au lieu de 643 précédemment, tandis que le candidat du CDC et député sortant Bhofal Chambers, cherchant la réélection, a obtenu 120 voix plutôt que les 95 précédentes le 10 octobre 2023, perdant le siège au profit de William. Edité par Jonathan Browne.

## Les citoyens demandent des compteurs pour réduire le vol d'électricité



# Liberia Electricity Corporation

Des résidents de Monrovia, principalement ceux de West Point, font appel de manière pressante au gouvernement du Liberia, par le biais de la direction de la Liberia Electricity Corporation (LEC), pour étendre l'accès aux compteurs à travers le pays. Ces citoyens mécontents estiment que la généralisation de l'accès aux compteurs dans tout le pays contribuera à réduire le vol d'électricité et permettra au gouvernement d'augmenter les revenus de la LEC, contribuant ainsi au Trésor national. Selon eux, le problème du vol d'électricité représente une menace latente qui pourrait compromettre la stabilité financière de la nation s'il n'est pas

correctement résolu par la distribution étendue de compteurs dans chaque foyer du pays. Lors d'une rencontre avec des journalistes le week-end dernier, le directeur de l'Academic Treasury Academy (ATA) à West Point, M. Ponnyenneh D. Jay, a qualifié le vol d'électricité de défi majeur qui mine la base de revenus du gouvernement. "Si les compteurs sont disponibles, cela réduira le vol d'électricité dans le pays. Le vol d'électricité est l'un des principaux défis qui sapent la base de génération de revenus du gouvernement", a déclaré M. Jay.

Il a souligné que la distribution de compteurs à chaque foyer contribuera à résoudre ce problème, ajoutant que les Libériens sont disposés à contribuer au développement, et que la disponibilité de compteurs pour les clients et les citoyens améliorera le climat des affaires dans le pays. M. Jay a également affirmé que la plupart des ménages à West Point sont impliqués dans le vol d'électricité, car des personnes formées par la LEC sont principalement impliquées dans des branchements illégaux dans la communauté à des fins personnelles.

## Secteur halieutique et économie bleue : Le Maroc tient une série de rencontres bilatérales au Libéria



Le ministre de l'Agriculture, de la pêche maritime, du développement rural et des eaux et forêts, Mohammed Sadiki, a tenu, vendredi au Libéria, des rencontres bilatérales avec la Directrice Générale de l'Autorité Nationale des Pêches et de l'Aquaculture du Libéria, Emma Metieh Glassco, la ministre de la Pêche et de l'économie maritime de la République de Guinée, Charlotte Daffé, et le ministre des Ressources animales et halieutiques de la Côte d'Ivoire, Sidi Tiémoko Touré, sur le secteur halieutique et l'économie bleue.

Tenues en marge du lancement de la campagne scientifique conduite par le bateau scientifique Al Hassane Al Marrakchi de l'INRH au Libéria le 26 janvier 2024, ces rencontres se sont concentrées sur des aspects cruciaux de la coopération sud-sud, mettant en avant l'expérience réussie du Maroc dans le développement du secteur halieutique, indique un communiqué du ministère de l'Agriculture, de la pêche maritime, du développement rural et des eaux et forêts.

Cette dynamique a donné naissance à une première série de propositions englobant des actions concertées dans des

domaines clés tels que la formation maritime, la recherche scientifique, l'échange d'expertise, et le renforcement des capacités des gestionnaires et des opérateurs du secteur de la pêche, fait savoir la même source.

Les pourparlers ont également examiné des initiatives telles que l'organisation de visites d'études dédiées aux hauts responsables en charge de la pêche et de l'aquaculture marine, ainsi que la promotion du partenariat privé par le biais d'échanges de visites entre les opérateurs économiques du secteur de la pêche, ajoute le communiqué.

Parallèlement, une réflexion approfondie a été lancée sur la nécessité d'organiser des sessions de la commission mixte, visant à raviver la coopération halieutique entre les pays. Ces sessions, en tant que moteur essentiel de la relance de la collaboration, seront étroitement surveillées pour garantir la mise en œuvre cohérente et efficace des initiatives convenues.

Cité dans le communiqué, M. Sadiki a souligné que la tenue de ces rencontres bilatérales témoigne de l'engagement profond du Maroc envers le continent africain et de sa volonté d'établir une coopération sud-sud durable, permettant de dynamiser le secteur halieutique en tenant compte des enjeux du développement durable du secteur halieutique et de la préservation des ressources marines vivantes et la protection de l'environnement marin.

## Starts from page 8 Le gouvernement garde le silence

couvrir les dépenses ainsi que les revenus."

C'est cette obligation constitutionnelle que le président Boakai devrait remplir aujourd'hui, alors qu'il présente son programme pour la première année au peuple libérien, les préparatifs étant rapportés à près de 98 % d'achèvement.

Le représentant Dahn met en avant les efforts de collaboration avec le président de la Chambre J. Fonati Kofa, le vice-président Thomas Fallah et la présidente du Sénat Nyonblee Karnga-Lawrence pour assurer le bon déroulement de l'allocution présidentielle. Initialement prévue pour 350 billets, il indique une augmentation potentielle à 500 billets en raison de facteurs non divulgués.

Dans le cadre des mesures de

sécurité, le chef de la Sécurité publique de la Police nationale du Libéria (LNP), John Saah, annonce une pause temporaire de tout trafic passant devant le palais présidentiel.

L'inspecteur Saah précise que la circulation normale sera autorisée jusqu'à 15h00, après quoi les véhicules de ELWA Junction à travers Tubman Boulevard en direction du centre de Monrovia seront redirigés de Vamoma House Junction à Sinkor, tandis que ceux du centre de Monrovia à Sinkor seront dirigés vers l'itinéraire de Jallah Town.

Il précise que la circulation normale reprendra immédiatement après le départ officiel du cortège présidentiel des locaux du Capitol. Les résidents sont invités à rester éloignés du Capitol s'ils n'ont rien à voir avec le Message Annuel du Président.

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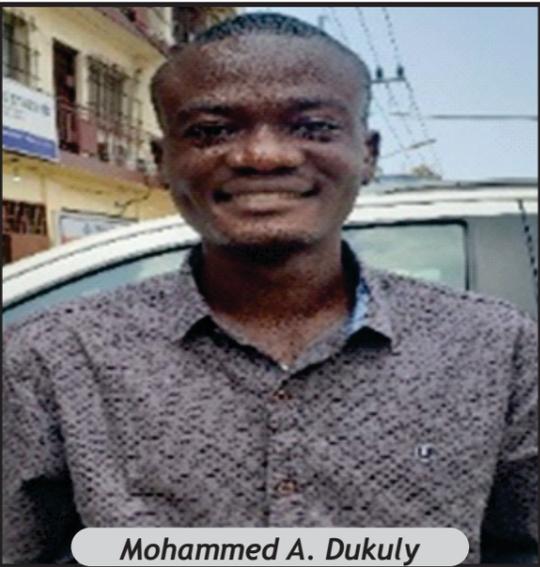
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# LIBERIANS DEBATE

**Topic:** Boakai's appointments

**By Naneka Hoffman**

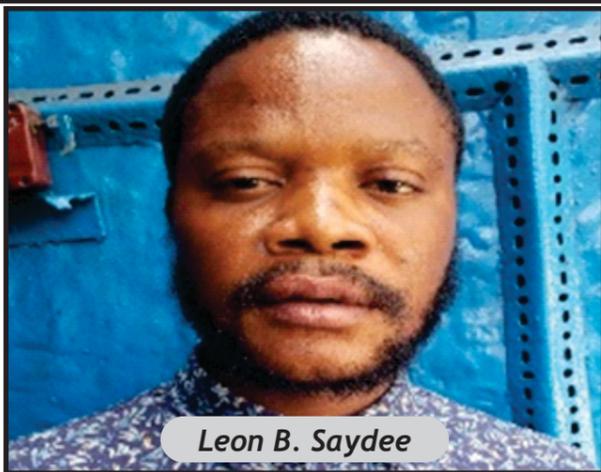
President Joseph Nyumah Boakai continues to form his government with nomination of officials. In this random sampling, The NEW DAWN asked some ordinary citizens what they make of the President's pick so far particularly, the first batch of nominees. Read their responses, as compiled below.



**Mohammed A. Dukuly**

"From my personal perspective and professional perspective President Boakai's first appointments are good. And the appointments are not based on who knows you; those are competent people for the work. Looking at Gregory Coleman, Boimah Kamara, Samuel Kofi Woods, Sam Gaye and Sylvester Grigsby, they are competent with experience and integrity. I believe that they will performance well in those positions. President Boakai didn't make a mistake to appoint those guys; these are people with integrity, good working network (relations) and free of corruption saga."

"Firstly, when I take on the microphone of The New Dawn, I love to appreciate them for this kind of conversation, sampling people's views on critical national issues. I think this is very much important for ordinary people to have their say on issues that are affecting and making progress in our nation. For me, I am not a supporter of the Unity Party or a lover of President Boakai but, my view is based on professionalism, integrity and accountability, so I appreciate President Joseph N. Boakai, for being very much far-sighted and independent in his appointments. According to his own investigation, those people were not appointed on the basis of politics. Those people were not appointed on the basis of the kind of capital you have in your community that you can bring to the Unity Party for 2029 election. These are people who were appointed on the basis of their personal contacts out there across the global. And the professionalism they bring to the job, their integrity and respect they have and the environment has also for them. So I believe that they will deliver on their duties. I listen to other people saying that they are recycled



**Leon B. Saydee**

people coming back; the same people from Madam Sirleaf government, but President Boakai is not a recycled individual, he worked also in the former Unity Party government. He worked under Madam Sirleaf as Vice President, so if we want to take it that way then Boakai, should not contest if we want to talk about recycle. Secondly, he is also a Liberian, so on that basis, they have their fair share when it comes to the distribution of employment more especially, when they are willing and up to the task to perform those identical duties for which they were nominated. Also, they are people who will not be liability for the government, like in the past regime when we had so many government officials, who were liability, always there waiting for government pay without using the platform given to them by the Liberian people to attract investors. However, my little dissatisfaction is that President Boakai appointed three persons from Lofa County. We want to have regionally balance employment. President Boakai should get away from tribalism in his regime, the same thing we cried on former President Weah during his regime."

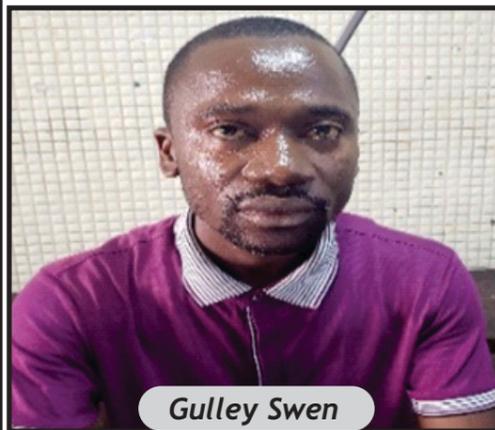
"Presently, as I look at it, I am not seeing anything new from now, these are people that we experienced before from the past 12 years before President Weah could ascend to power. People like Kofi Woods, Boimah Kamara, these are the same people that Liberians voted against in 2018. And those are the people President Boakai is bringing back, so we are not seeing anything new. But again, that is the President's business. He appoints who he wants to appoint."



**Augustine T. Focko**

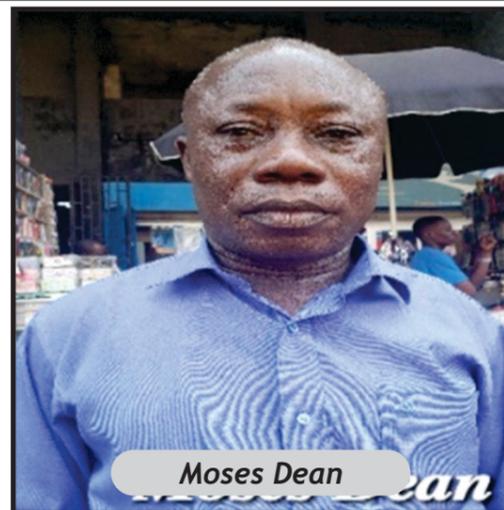
"I feel as a person that the President's first batch of appointments is very good; you can't judge anything for now, even though those that are appointed are not taken offices for us to see their performance but, our anticipation as citizens of this country we hope for better things. We believe that the first appointment will do their best because they are all experience people. From their track records, we know they are Liberians and there are no other people that can do the work other than Liberians themselves. And they are Liberians 100 percent, and for qualification yes indeed, they have worked in various areas in government

"I think the appointment is in the right direction, because the names that the President nominated like Boimah Kamara, Samuel Kofi Woods, Gregory Coleman and the rest of them. I think that they are experienced public servants, and they have demonstrated that few years ago while they were in government. So like Boimah Kamara, he was an outgoing Finance Minister when the Unity Party was leaving office. He demonstrated his competence and integrity. I think he is going to make a change. He never served for long but,



**Gulley Swen**

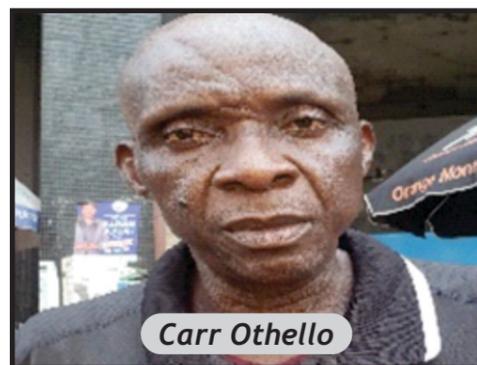
"The first appointment from President Boakai is good. One of my colleagues Boimah Kamara, is one of the men that were dandy in my Economic Department; he graduated with two stars; he was in the Finance Ministry in Ellen's last term. He is a religious man, and a straight forward man. He is not involved in any corruption or bad activities. That is one of the appointments I saw and was very happy. And another person, Samuel Kofi Woods, as security advisor, with another Professor Dorbor Jallah from the Mass Communication Department, his appointment to LRA is another straight forward guy, so most of those people President Boakai is appointing are people that are competent for the positions. But the past government had a lot of limited educated people that were causing a lot of troubles around here, that's why the hard time was increasing in the country. People were doing a lot of



**Moses Dean**

and they have performed in the past. We believe that they can still do the same thing."

the way the President put confidence in him, I am very much sure he will be a good Finance Minister. For Gregory Coleman too, he also was in the same situation like Boimah Kamara. He never had the opportunity to serve for long during Madam Ellen Sirleaf regime as police IG. And he was one of the more celebrated police IG, so giving him the opportunity now to serve I think he's going to bring lots of changes to the police. Samuel Kofi Woods is another experience public servant, who served from the Ministry of Labor and then to Public Works. We know some of the changes that he brought to those ministries, while serving there. And serving as National Security Advisor, I think he will be able to communicate issues that are effecting the citizens and security, in terms food, youth employment. For me, the first appointments are people of characters because none of them has been listed in corruption saga."



**Carr Othello**

different things. You can't get government and you can't make changes; the person will be there for three or four years and they're still committing a lot of funny things, so I am very much happy for most of the people appointed. They are very competent people like Gregory Coleman. During his time as Police IG, polices used to be clean. And the new appointee at the LDEA is very good. I must congratulate him."

# Boakai disputes Weah's US\$40M balance story

By Othello B. Garblah

President Joseph N. Boakai has disputed claim by outgoing President George M. Weah that he left USD40million in the state's Consolidated Account as balance for the year ending

GoL's consolidated account as balance left behind by the Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf Government, and around US\$150M in the country's international reserves, something the Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf administration

that amount was left in the Government of Liberia (GoL) Consolidated Account as balance.

"The net international reserves position reported at the end of December 2023 was US\$220 million. The report of US \$40 million as the GoL's consolidated account balance as at January 19, 2024 is not supported by the fact. The balance reported by the CBL as of the same date was US\$20.5 million, highly encumbered, NOT US\$40 million," President Boakai said.

The issue of balance being left in both the country's international reserves and consolidated accounts has been a bone of contention between succeeding governments in the country's most recent history.

In 2018, Weah argued that he met around US\$7million in GoL's consolidated account as balance left behind by the Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf Government, and around US\$150M in the country's international reserves, something the Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf administration refuted at the time.

Thus, the public awaits the Weah's administration response to the latest revelation coming from President Boakai disputing Weah's account.

President Boakai also re-emphasized his government's commitment to periodic audits across all branches of government and not only the Executive.

"To this end, we re-emphasize our earlier commitment to audit and ensure that regular audits will be a culture across all branches of government, not only the Executive." President Boakai indicated. However, a document in the possession of the New Dawn purported to be that of the Central Bank data shows the balance as quoted by former President Weah in his speech.

# Three branches of Gov't face audit

Liberian President Amb. Joseph Nyumah Boakai says regular audits will be a culture across all branches of government, not only the Executive. Mr. Boakai's anti-corruption campaign message was re-emphasized in his first State of the Nation Address (SONA) delivered at the Capitol on Monday, 29 January 2024 in Monrovia.

Liberia's Legislative and Judicial branches have over the years been avoided by auditors despite public outcry for all public offices to account for taxpayers' money.

Much of the pressure for accountability has been on the Executive branch, even at a time when lawmakers now allot funds in the national budget to enable individual legislators to finance projects in their constituencies that should be carried out by the Executive.

According to President Boakai, the Liberian middle-class goal must be a reality in the next six years. The 79-year-old Liberian president said the net international reserves position

encumbered, NOT US\$40 million," said Amb. Boakai.

"To this end, we re-emphasize our earlier commitment to audit and ensure that regular audits will be a culture across all branches of government, not only the Executive," he noted.

Boakai detailed that the stock of public debt in End-December 2023 stood at US\$2.21 billion, an increase of 8.67 percent compared to the December 2022 stock of US\$2.08 billion.

He indicated that this represents a sharp increase of US\$1.33 billion compared to the end of December 2017 stock of US\$878.17 million (representing 601.8 percent rise).

He noted that Liberia's debt burden has grown astronomically. Certainly, he said, the rescue mission was a necessity for Liberia's transformation. As he spoke Monday, he said Liberia was under sanction for lack of payment of dues to the African Union and the African Development Bank. Also, President Boakai said a default in payment of about US\$650,000 to the European Investment Bank is preventing a



Pres. Boakai

Former Pres. Weah

December 31, 2023, during his State of the Nation Address here on Monday, January 29, 2024.

Instead, President Boakai argued that only a little over half that amount was left in the Government of Liberia (GoL) Consolidated Account as balance-US\$20.5 million.

"The net international reserves position reported at the end of December 2023 was US\$220 million. The report of US \$40 million as the GoL's consolidated account balance as of January 19, 2024, is not supported by the fact. The balance reported by the CBL as of the same date was US\$20.5 million, highly encumbered, NOT US\$40 million," President Boakai said.

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"To this end, we re-emphasize our earlier commitment to audit and ensure that regular audits will be a culture across all branches of government, not only the Executive." President Boakai indicated. See full text below President Joseph N. Boakai has disputed claim by outgoing President George M. Weah that he left USD40million in the state's Consolidated Account as balance for the year ending December 31, 2023, during his State of the Nation Address here on Monday, January 29, 2024.

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Pres. Boakai

Chief Justice Sie-A-Nyene Yuoh

Speaker Fonnati-Koffa

reported at the end of December 2023 was US\$220 million. He added that the report of US \$40 million as the Government of Liberia's (GoL's) consolidated account balance as of January 19, 2024, is not supported by the fact.

"The balance reported by the CBL as of the same date was US\$20.5 million, highly

disbursement of over US\$13 million for the Sanniquellie-Loguato road. "We will reintroduce the Fiscal Rules and Travel Ordinance in addition to other measures to help address waste and abuse and ensure the return of prudent fiscal management. We will ensure that the executive leads by example," he promised the Liberian people.

GOL CONSOLIDATED CASH BALANCES FOR FY2023 AND FY2024 AS AT JANUARY 17, 2024				
GOL BALANCES 2023-2024 FOR 17 B/S	FY2023	FY2023	FY2024	FY2024
	USD	LRD	USD	LRD
GOL DEBT ACCOUNT LRD		299,118,714.98	0.00	
GOL DEBT ACCOUNT USD	23,952.53			0.00
GOL Expenditure Account Balance LRD		392,240,760.42		521,881,071.07
GOL Expenditure Account Balance USD	7,913,113.16		8,821,712.46	
GOL Health Social Secu Sec LRD		140,804,641.99		0.00
GOL Health Social & Secu Sec USD	409,856.13		0.00	
Obligation Escrow USD	0.00		0.00	
Obligation Escrow LRD		0.00		0.00
GOL PAYROLL ACCOUNT LRD		69,722,323.92	0.00	
GOL PAYROLL ACCOUNT USD	7,749,107.32			0.00
GOL Revenue Account - USD	17,818.19		3,309,700.66	
GOL Revenue Account - LRD		0.00		690,707,355.99
GOL OPERATION ACCOUNT LRD		122,597,106.71	0.00	
GOL OPERATION ACCOUNT USD	25,042.42			0.00
FY2023	16,138,889.75	1,024,483,548.02	12,131,413.12	1,212,588,427.06
TOTAL USD FY223 and FY 2024	12,131,413.12	1,212,588,427.06		
TOTAL USD FY2023 and FY 2024	28,270,302.87	2,237,071,975.08		
TOTAL LRD EQUIVALENT FY2023/2024	11,774,063.03			
TOTAL CONSOLIDATED CASH IN USD	40,044,365.90			

## Starts from back page Liberia's debt at US\$2.21bn

partnerships for sustainable agricultural production and development. Mr. Boakai stressed the importance of recognizing that the available arable land is underutilized, committing his government to harness the right resources, and strengthening collaboration with international partners and local farmers to improve production.

Providing his legislative agenda for Liberia, Amb. Boakai

told the Legislature that his legislative agenda is aimed at working with lawmakers in doing the business of the people for which proposed legislation will be submitted in the coming months.

He stated that they will focus on shaping the outcomes they desire from their development agenda.

## Liberia's debt at US\$2.21bn

### --Boakai

By Lincoln G. Peters

President Joseph Nyumah Boakai says Liberia's current public debt stock stands at US\$2.21 billion,

increase of US\$1.33 billion compared to the end of December 2017 stock of US\$878.17 million (representing 601.8 percent rise). According to him, the

default in payment of about US\$650,000 to the European Investment Bank is preventing a disbursement of over US\$13 million for the Sanniquellie-Loguato road.

Amb. Boakai further indicated that his administration will reintroduce the Fiscal Rules and Travel Ordinance in addition to other measures to help address waste and abuse and ensure the return of prudent fiscal management.

He assured Liberians that his administration will ensure that the executive leads by example.

"Agriculturally, Liberia is endowed with abundant natural resources. With over 40% of West Africa's rainforest, our country is home to a diverse array of flora and fauna that should help provide economic and agricultural growth opportunities," said Amb. Boakai.

He stated that Liberia is also a leader in the discussion on climate change mitigation, further emphasizing the importance of international



Pres. Boakai

an increase of 8.67% compared to previous debt stock.

"The stock of public debt at End-December 2023 stood at US\$2.21 billion, an increase of 8.67 percent compared to end-December 2022 stock of US\$2.08 billion," Amb. Boakai said in his first State of the Nation Address (SONA) on Monday, 29 January 2024.

country's current debt burden has grown astronomically, adding that certainly, the rescue mission was a necessity for Liberia's transformation.

"As I am speaking, Liberia is under sanction for lack of payment of dues to the African Union and the African Development Bank," said Amb. Boakai.

He said this represents a sharp

Also, he noted that a

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