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**-LACC boss**



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# Continental News

## Togo opposition denounces presidential 'power grab'

The opposition in Togo has denounced a proposed new constitution as a power grab, intended to extend the reign of President Faure Gnassingbé.

The reforms would see the West African country move

continuing his family's 57-year rule.

President Gnassingbé came to power in 2005 after the death of his father, who had been president since 1967.

The constitutional changes were approved by lawmakers last

Last month, an opposition press conference under the banner of "Don't Touch My Constitution" was broken up by authorities.

Gerry Taama, the leader of the second-largest opposition party, the New Togolese Commitment, said he feels "disappointed with what is happening". One-time presidential candidate Brigitte Kafui Johnson, who leads the opposition CDPA party, described the constitutional amendments as a "power grab". In contrast, those supporting the constitutional changes argue they will strengthen democracy and improve political stability. "The aspirations of our people are not served by the current constitution," said Pacôme Adjourouvi, an adviser to the president.

Activists and opposition leaders had called for protests - but these were banned. Amid the turmoil, Mr Gnassingbé postponed this month's parliamentary elections, a move that only served to stir up the unrest.

Then the government announced that the elections would go ahead after all, rescheduling them for 29 April, just over a week later than the original date. The opposition insist they will not back down until the changes are withdrawn.

"We're not going to accept this, and we will fight against this constitution," said Brigitte Kafui Johnson. BBC

month. But in the face of mounting public anger, Mr Gnassingbé paused the reforms and said they would be subject to further consultations. Pro-government lawmakers have conducted visits around the country to "listen to and inform civilians on the constitutional reform". Customary rulers and selected groups were among the main target of the discussions - but no changes were made as a result.

There is widespread fear among people about expressing views in public in case they are targeted by the authorities, especially in light of police cracking down on anti-government protests.



President Faure Gnassingbé has been president since 2005, succeeding his father who became president in 1967

from a presidential to a parliamentary system. But the opposition says they are a ruse to keep Mr Gnassingbé - already in his fourth term - in power. The president's supporters say the changes would reduce the powers of the head of state by transforming the presidency into a ceremonial role. Human Rights Minister Yawa Djigbodi Tségan says they will "improve democracy in the country".

But the opposition says the reforms would allow him to remain president until 2031 and then be appointed to the new position of "president of the council of ministers" - in effect prime minister -

## Nigeria's Tinubu says country will no longer pay ransom to armed gangs

Nigeria will no longer pay ransom to armed gangs that have plagued the country with kidnapping and extortion, President Bola Tinubu said in an opinion piece published Monday.

He made the statement as activists commemorated the 10th anniversary of the kidnapping of 276 schoolgirls from the town of Chibok. Acknowledging that "legitimate concerns" over kidnappings persist, Tinubu said Nigeria must address the root causes of poverty, inequality, and a lack of opportunity if it hopes to eradicate the threat posed by criminal gangs. In the Newsweek magazine piece, titled "Ten Years Since Chibok - Nigeria Will No Longer Pay the Price," Tinubu said ransom payments to gangs only encouraged gangs to commit more crimes and said, "the extortion racket must be squeezed out of

no transparency." Tinubu said the government's response to the Chibok abduction in 2014 was slow.

But, the president said, Nigeria must recognize the changing nature of the threat. He said criminal gangs behind more recent kidnappings are primarily after cash rewards, unlike Boko Haram, which sought to impose Islamist rule. In 2022 Tinubu's predecessor, Muhammadu Buhari, tried to criminalize ransom payments to kidnappers, but the decision was met with resistance from activists and the families of victims.

Security analyst Senator Iroegbu said lack of accountability from authorities is the main concern. "There will not be ransoms in the first place if measures are on ground to prevent it," Iroegbu said. "Why is it easy for kidnappers to kidnap Nigerians and keep them for long? Ten years after Chibok girls, why are the cases still rising? It's not trying to blame victims who are desperate to do everything they can to



The remaining belongings of students abducted at Bethel Baptist High School are seen inside the school premises as parents wait for answers

## Women accused of booing Zimbabwe first lady freed

Nine women who had been arrested in Zimbabwe for allegedly booing the first lady have had the charges dropped, local media report. They were withdrawn on the instructions of First Lady Auxillia Mnangagwa, the reports said, citing presidential spokesperson George Charamba. "Both the first lady and police commissioner general agreed the officers on the ground overreacted," Mr Charamba was quoted as saying. The women, who ranged in age between 19 and 49, were said to have allegedly booed Mrs Mnangagwa after missing out on food and clothing handouts that she was distributing at a charity event in the eastern Manicaland province last Wednesday.

"Prosecutors charged that the women, who were seated

on the ground stood up and started booing the first lady while she was making her closing remarks during her address intending to disrupt her speech and show disgruntlement that they had not received anything from her," the Zimbabwe Lawyers for Human Rights (ZHLR), who represented the women in court, said. They had been accused of

"unlawful, abusive and insulting" behaviour towards the first lady and were subsequently charged with disorderly conduct, ZHLR added. The organisation said the women denied the charges, arguing that they had been arrested for leaving the event while the first lady was still speaking. BBC



The women had been accused of "unlawful, abusive and insulting" behaviour towards the first lady, their lawyers said

existence." The president said instead of ransom, perpetrators of the violence will receive the security services' counter actions. He cited the recent rescue of 137 school students kidnapped in Kaduna state. Their abductors had demanded \$600,000 in ransom, but the president said no ransom was paid.

Ndu Nwokolo, managing partner at Nextier, a public advisory firm with focus on security and economic issues, agreed that ransom payment emboldens perpetrators, but said Nigeria is not ready to take such a stance. "The Nigerian state is obviously very weak to do those things it says it wants to do. If you're someone, you have your [relative] kidnapped and you know that the state security agents can't do anything," Nwokolo said. "How come you were able to retrieve those numbers of kids without shooting a gun, and we know that those guys demanded ransom? The entire thing shows that there's no honesty, there's

rescue their loved ones. For citizens, that may be their last resort." Tinubu said Nigeria must ultimately address the triggers for insecurity, including poverty, inequality and lack of opportunity.

In the article, Tinubu also talked about his economic reforms. The Nigerian president said they were necessary to save public finances and encourage foreign investment. Tinubu scrapped fuel subsidies for the public and floated the naira just days after assuming office last year. The decisions sent prices soaring and were widely criticized, but have not been reversed. Tinubu said previous governments had failed to boost the economy, and 63 percent of Nigerians are multi-dimensionally poor. Iroegbu said blaming predecessors will not solve Tinubu's problems.

"This mentality of trying to blame past administrations, thinking you're better while you're not actually doing something different, needs to stop until there's a result that Nigerians can see and testify," Iroegbu said.

# GUEST EDITORIAL

## The Importance of Respecting Authorities: A Adda Study of Liberia

In every society, across all strata and societies worldwide, there lies a fundamental tenet that is the very bedrock of societal coherency and order, respect for authorities.

This notion, however, is multifaceted.

Not only does it entail public reverence and deference to those in power, but it also necessitates a reciprocal conduct from the authorities themselves.

The public's display of respect is contingent upon the quality of conduct exhibited by the authorities.

Integrity, dignity, and professionalism must underscore their actions, both in public and private spheres.

It is within this virtuous cycle of respect that societies can thrive towards enlightened discourse and progressive development.

This principle is not only crucial to the direct participants but also instrumental in instilling the values of respect in the succeeding generations. A probing look into the current Liberian society will illuminate this assertion. Liberia, a small country on the West African coast, offers a compelling adda study to elucidate this point.

In recent times, it has become apparent that exhibitions of disrespect among some members of the Liberian National Legislature have resulted in a pervading public alarm.

This unfortunate development vividly illustrates the implications of an authority that appears to disregard respect, leading to a detrimental ripple effect on the public's regard for them.

Those in positions of power in Liberia, particularly those holding constitutional authority, have a cardinal role to play in shaping public attitudes.

They have a moral obligation to demonstrate high professionalism, dignity, and integrity at all times - the vanguard of public respect and trust.

Any failure to uphold these values, as is witnessed in certain quarters, can lead to a significant erosion of public confidence, which in turn could undermine the very fabric of societal order.

The evidence and implications of such defiance to professionalism and respect are rife in Liberia, and they are captivating.

Take, for instance, the growing public alarm around the conduct of some members of the National Legislature.

Whatever the causes might be, such behavior is contributing to a disquieting public perception.

It sows the seed of mistrust and disrespect in the hearts of the public, subsequently affecting vital aspects such as cooperation between the populace and the government, social harmony, and national solidarity.

If we are to consider that respect breeds respect, then it stands to reason that any deviation in the conduct by those in authoritative positions presents an alarming precursor to societal discord.

For this reason, it is paramount for these individuals to encapsulate the ethos of respect in their engagements and leadership style.

By doing so, they model a pattern of respectful interaction that is integral to societal functionality, imprinting a lasting impression on future generations.

Public figures' adherence to this principle is not just a matter of expectation but a sacrosanct commitment that bolsters the entire societal edifice.

Instances of its non-adherence, as seen in Liberia, provide a cautionary tale that underscores how this neglect could chip away at societal respect for authority.

It also affirms that this respect is a reciprocal responsibility: authorities must first exhibit respect to earn it.

The dynamics of respect between the authorities and the society they serve is a delicate equilibrium that would do well to hinge on the principle of respect begets respect.

Through the lens of the unfolding scenario in Liberia, it is clear that any neglect of this symbiotic relationship poses a profound threat to societal harmony and, consequently, the proviso for development.

The country's situation emphasizes the paramount importance of upholding respect for authorities and, in turn, the authorities' obligation to act respectably for societal well-being.

It serves as a strong reminder that we must be mindful of the values and lessons that we impart to future generations, who will one day hold the reins of authority themselves.

Published by the Searchlight Communications Inc.,  
UN Drive, P.O. Box 1266 Opposite National Investment Commission,  
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# COMMENTARY

By Laurence Tubiana

## Taxing Polluters Is the Key to Climate Justice

**P**ARIS - After years of avoiding any explicit mention of the primary cause of climate change, negotiators at the United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP28) in Dubai last year finally reached an agreement calling for a "transition away from fossil fuels." But another uncomfortable question still looms large: How will that transition be financed? As Simon Stiell, the UN's climate chief, recently observed, "it's blazingly obvious that finance is the make-or-break factor in the world's climate fight."

Climate finance will be the single most important issue both at COP29 in Azerbaijan this year and at COP30 in Brazil in 2025. Notwithstanding recent pledges of money for a new "loss and damage" fund to help developing countries deal with climate change, current financing falls far short of what is required. The European Union estimates that it must invest €1.5 trillion (\$1.63 trillion) per year from 2031 to achieve net-zero emissions by 2050, and developing countries (excluding China) are expected to need \$2.4 trillion per year by 2030. Brazil alone will have to find an additional \$200 billion to reach its 2030 emissions-reduction goals.

There are no simple solutions. The sluggish growth and tight monetary conditions following the pandemic mean that even rich countries are operating with limited fiscal headroom. While more private capital is needed everywhere, its role will be smaller in low- and middle-income countries, owing to the significant premiums they face when borrowing for green projects.

Bold new policies are needed to mobilize public funding, and there is a strong case to be made for progressive taxes on carbon-intensive activities and extreme wealth. Both would generate revenues while also extending the principle of "common but differentiated responsibility" to industries and individuals.

Taxation is the standard instrument for states to raise funds reliably and at scale, and thus to commit to long-term spending and investment plans. For developing countries, in particular, the predictability of taxes makes them more useful than concessional finance. Moreover, new taxes can unlock additional resources for countries to dedicate to climate-related investments, sparing them from having to reallocate scarce funding within existing budgets. Globally, a 0.1% financial-transactions tax could raise up to \$418 billion per year, while a relatively modest levy of \$5 per ton of carbon dioxide emissions could bring in \$210 billion per year.

The International Monetary Fund has long advocated taxes on CO2 emissions and fossil-fuel extraction, both as a source of climate finance and to shape incentives by ensuring that polluters pay. The extra revenue from such taxes would help high-income countries (the leading historical source of emissions) fulfill their moral obligations toward poorer, more vulnerable countries. As matters stand, rich countries' financial assistance for developing countries needs to be an order of magnitude greater than the current pledge of \$100 billion per year.

Pollution taxes would also help to redress inequalities within countries. Even in those economies with lower historical and per capita emissions, there is a significant gap between most of the population's emissions and the highest emitters. The economist Lucas Chancel finds that "carbon inequality" is greater within countries than between them, and that it tracks

inequalities in income and wealth. This should come as no surprise. Globally, the wealthiest 1% emit the same as the poorest 66% combined.

This injustice is not lost on ordinary citizens. In fact, it increasingly threatens our ability to build and sustain a political consensus for effective climate policies. Taxes to ensure that those with the greatest means and the highest emissions pay their fair share would go a long way toward convincing the public that a "just transition" is not just an empty slogan.

But while the theoretical case for such taxes is strong, adoption and implementation has proven difficult. Capital, people (particularly the wealthy), and emissions all move easily across borders, undermining the efficacy of national or regional tax regimes. Though cross-border cooperation on taxation is never easy, an international agreement would give countries more leverage over their own resources, allowing them to protect those most in need. Multilateralism would be in every country's interest.

There are encouraging signs that the political taboo against taxation is weakening. The text agreed by all parties at COP28 explicitly called "for accelerating the ongoing establishment of new and innovative sources of finance, including taxation." And last November, UN member states passed a resolution to establish a Framework Convention on International Tax Cooperation, paving the way for a fairer approach to setting global rules.

Now, the G20, led by Brazil, is considering a global minimum tax on the world's 3,000 billionaires, who currently pay a much lower effective tax rate than the rest of the population. The EU Tax Observatory estimates that a 2% annual levy on their wealth - if properly coordinated - could raise \$250 billion per year.

Capitalizing on this momentum, a diverse group of countries has launched a new international tax taskforce. Chaired jointly by the leaders of Kenya, Barbados, and France, its mandate is to explore tax policies that could raise the equivalent of at least 0.1% of global GDP to finance sustainable development and climate action. The point is not to prescribe a single solution for all countries, but rather to assess the political and technical obstacles to many plausible options, drawing on a diverse range of experts and perspectives.

Many options are on the table, including taxes on aviation and shipping, in addition to fossil-fuel extraction and financial transactions. The taskforce will seek to advance our understanding of how such taxes could be applied equitably, perhaps paving the way for an agreement on particular policies.

Fair taxation could be a powerful lever for accelerating a just transition. By contributing fresh empirical findings and fostering trust and cooperation between countries, the new taskforce can help everyone to address the injustices at the heart of the climate crisis and unlock the resources they need to address it. Reducing the burden on poorer people and countries is not just a moral obligation. It is also necessary to win their support for a transition that cannot happen without them.

Laurence Tubiana, a former French ambassador to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, is CEO of the European Climate Foundation and a professor at Sciences Po, Paris.

# OP-ED

By David Alton, Helena Kennedy, Aarif Abraham

## Who Should Decide If It's Genocide?

**L**ONDON - On April 15, some of the world's leading international lawyers and cross-party UK parliamentarians sent a public letter to British Prime Minister Rishi Sunak and Foreign Secretary David Cameron, urging them to support the Genocide Determination Bill that is currently under discussion in the House of Lords. This legislation, introduced by one of us (Alton) in late 2022, aims to establish an independent and impartial mechanism for preventing mass atrocities and ensuring that the United Kingdom adheres to its obligations under the 1948 Genocide Convention.

In December 2023, the international community marked the Convention's 75th anniversary. But mass atrocities, including crimes against humanity and genocide, remain a prominent and seemingly permanent feature of our world.

Between 2000 and 2020, at least 37 countries experienced or came perilously close to experiencing mass atrocities. The impact of such crimes extends beyond the immediate harm to their victims. They also lead to massive displacement, threaten international peace and security, and contribute to the rise of authoritarianism, which heightens the risk of future atrocities.

Despite these risks, the UK and other major countries have long adhered to a flawed policy of delegating responsibility for identifying crimes against humanity to international courts and tribunals rather than taking direct action. But international law, especially the obligation to prevent genocide, requires that governments - not courts - regularly assess the risk of genocide and use "all means reasonably available" to prevent or stop it.

While international courts can assess wrongful actions only after they have occurred, political, economic, and legal interventions by the global community are necessary well before any harm is inflicted. Consequently, governments must take the lead.

Regrettably, governments often attempt to shirk their international commitments by refusing to classify mass atrocities as "genocide." While they argue that such determinations should be left to international courts, they decline to engage with tribunals that could help prevent, stop, or punish such crimes. Worse, these governments frequently maintain full and normal relations with countries accused of committing these offenses.

The Genocide Determination Bill aims to remove this impasse. Under the proposed law, if a UK foreign secretary did not acknowledge an ongoing genocide or a significant risk of one, a designated parliamentary committee could conduct its own investigation. Should the foreign secretary agree with the committee's findings, they may take appropriate action.

Conversely, if the foreign secretary rejects the committee's conclusions, a UK court would have the authority to issue a preliminary ruling on the existence or potential risk of genocide. Should the court affirm the occurrence or risk of genocide, the secretary would be required to outline the reasonable steps that the government intends to take and specify the referral mechanisms, such as international courts, that it plans to use. Thus, the threat of parliamentary action would compel the government to act.

The bill also aims to establish a practical framework for the UK to meet its obligations under the Genocide Convention, facilitating the prevention and punishment of such crimes through concrete policy measures without constraining foreign policy.

It is important to note that this bill is not tied to any particular situation or conflict. Given that labeling a mass atrocity as genocide or a crime against humanity is often politically and legally contentious, the bill authorizes an impartial, independent, and apolitical determination by a UK court when all other options have been exhausted.

By making preliminary determinations, UK courts can act as safeguards against inaction, apathy, and impunity, thereby reaffirming the idea that core international crimes are prohibited regardless of who commits them. Rather than introduce new international laws, the bill aims to enforce existing ones by ensuring meaningful action even when governments fail to respond.

While much more can be done, acknowledging the existing legal and political realities is a crucial first step. Without this bill or a similar measure, political expediency will continue to prevail, and mass atrocities are likely to become even more widespread.

The liberal rules-based global order is arguably facing its most perilous moment since the end of World War II, as long-established international laws are increasingly challenged and frequently violated. Against this backdrop, the Genocide Determination Bill provides the UK government with a historic opportunity to align its policies with the UK's commitments and stated values, thereby setting an example for other governments to follow.

# OPINION

By Ishac Diwan, Vera Songwe

## Developing Countries' Liquidity Crisis Is Not Over

**P**ARIS/BASEL - For the first time in two years, some low-income and lower-middle-income countries (LMICs) can access the bond market. But many others remain still in dire need of liquidity and face punishing interest rates. Amid this ongoing crisis, the Finance for Development Lab's proposal for a "liquidity bridge" that would enable developing economies to extend the maturity of their debts by 5-10 years and allocate resources toward climate mitigation and adaptation remains as necessary as ever.

The good news is that LMICs' external debt ratios remain relatively modest, at around half the level before the Highly Indebted Poor Countries debt-reduction initiative. In 2023, only one country, Ethiopia, defaulted on a \$1 billion Eurobond.

The bad news is that liquidity pressures on LMICs have continued to increase. After 2010, a spike in medium-term loans has enabled developing countries to fund critical infrastructure projects. Typically, these loans would be rolled over, but this became impossible as major economies embarked on quantitative tightening, causing a sharp rise in interest rates and net capital outflows. The liquidity crisis has been compounded by a series of exogenous shocks: reduced flows from China, the lingering effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, and a surge in fuel and food prices.

Moreover, global support for developing economies dwindled prematurely. By 2022, the G20 had ended its Debt Service Suspension Initiative, international financial institutions had reduced lending, and no new allocations of special drawing rights (SDRs, the IMF's reserve asset) were announced. This exacerbated the shock, forcing LMICs dealing with foreign-exchange shortages to devalue their currencies. To put this in perspective, the number of LMICs that devalued their currencies by more than 10% rose from eight in 2021 to 36 in 2022 and 24 in 2023.

Contrary to some analysts' expectations, the liquidity crisis is far from over. Net transfers in long-term debt to LMICs were negative in 2022, and estimates suggest that 2023 was even worse, as rising interest rates made floating-rate debt and new borrowing more expensive. Furthermore, the effectiveness of aid appears to have waned. While multilateral development banks (MDBs) and some bilateral creditors accounted for roughly \$42 billion in net-positive inflows to LMICs in 2022, these contributions were more than offset by large debt payments to private lenders and China.

Increased support from MDBs, advocated by the G20 under India's presidency, is crucial to facilitating a green transition. But to ensure that these funds are used to finance climate action, rather than to service existing debts, all creditors must share the burden and refrain from reducing their exposure too soon. The reduction in China's lending must be managed more smoothly. And sovereign bonds should be gradually replaced as an asset class by green bonds.

To be sure, Côte d'Ivoire, Benin, and Kenya have each issued bonds in the first quarter of 2024. Nevertheless, creating a liquidity bridge remains the most effective way to support LMICs' green transition and stabilize developing economies, for four reasons.

First, higher interest rates and the surge in currency devaluations have raised the domestic cost of servicing external debt. Up to 34 developing countries' debt-servicing obligations are now estimated to exceed 15% of revenue. For this group of LMICs, the median debt-service burden has increased from 13% to 23% of fiscal revenue between 2021 and 2023. Although some countries have regained access to financial markets, many continue to grapple with high debt-servicing costs, putting them at risk of being unable to refinance their liabilities.

Second, most LMICs continue to face very high interest rates. Consequently, countries like Nigeria, Pakistan, Senegal, or Tunisia, where debt-servicing costs have increased beyond 15% of revenues, must maintain primary surpluses, placing further strain on their budgets and foreign-exchange reserves. This forces governments to implement austerity measures, which impede investments in human and physical capital, aggravate social tensions, and hinder climate initiatives.

Third, MDBs are not equipped to finance every illiquid LMIC while also supporting the green transition. To help Kenya re-enter the bond market, the IMF increased its lending to five times its quota, while the World Bank pledged \$12 billion. Extending such substantial financial support to all debt-distressed developing countries would be unfeasible. The liquidity-constrained LMICs collectively owe more than \$40 billion annually to investors and China - more than three times the total flows from MDBs to them.

Lastly, even countries that have successfully regained market access are not out of the woods. Kenya's annual debt service, for example, stands at around 25% of exports. If it continues to roll over maturities at an interest above its growth rate, its debt will increase rapidly, raising the risk of default.

Countries that have previously defaulted are struggling to restructure their debts. Zambia's restructuring agreement, which required three years of intense negotiations with private investors, is a prime example. That is why preemptive refinancing is a preferable solution for illiquid countries, compared to risking mass insolvency in the future. This has become recognized by key actors, including the International Monetary Fund, the World Bank, and the US Treasury.

Kenya's recent liquidity injection offers a model for avoiding such a scenario, but there is significant room for improvement. Debt rollovers must become cheaper. International institutions should scale up their financing more rapidly. And LMICs need to develop ambitious medium-term plans for accelerating their climate transitions.

To achieve this, a concerted strategy is necessary. Encouragingly, the IMF and World Bank have already started to increase their support, and private-sector financiers have come back to the table. But improved coordination among these various stakeholders, along with more coherent and transparent rules, is crucial to the success of these efforts.

As president of the G20, Brazil is well-positioned to spearhead the efforts to restructure LMIC debts by encouraging a select group of countries to launch ambitious and innovative pilot projects. These efforts could then be scaled up during South Africa's presidency. By that point, the MDBs, one hopes, will be able to increase lending.

# ON 2ND THOUGHTS



with Othello B. Garblah

## How racism has kept Liberia poor and underdeveloped

In his 2020 article "What Racism Cost Us All," written for the International Monetary Fund, Joseph Losavio bemoaned the significant economic cost associated with racism.

"Systemic racism is a global problem. It is real, and a robust moral argument for addressing it exists. However, one factor that is often ignored in this critical conversation is the broader economic dimension.

Because it prevents people from making the most of their economic potential, systemic racism carries significant economic costs. A less racist society can be an economically stronger one." Mr. Losavio wrote.

This is exactly the situation Liberia is facing. The country's racist clause enshrined in its 1986 Constitution has made many non-negros or persons of non-negro decent rethink their investment in the country.

It is non-debatable that Liberia has been and remains a racist country since its independence in 1847, at least according to Article 27 (b) of its Constitution, which excludes non-black or anyone who does not have a black ancestry from becoming a citizen.

Article 27 (b) states that: "To preserve, foster and maintain the positive Liberian culture, values, and character, only persons who are Negroes or of Negro descent shall qualify by birth or by naturalization to be citizens of Liberia."

The law discriminates based on race. To say that only persons who are "Negro" (black), regardless of whether they were born on Liberian soil, jus soli, or abroad to Liberian parents, jus sanguinis, "shall qualify by birth or by naturalization to be citizens of Liberia," is racist- plain and simple.

According to Wikipedia, "Racism is discrimination and prejudice against people based on their race or ethnicity." It further explained that racism can be present in social actions, practices, or political systems that support the expression of prejudice or aversion in discriminatory practices."

Unlike Western countries, Liberia's racism is institutional because it is written boldly in its constitution. It perpetuates discrimination against non-negros and people of non-negro descent on the basis that they are not black or have no black ancestry. Legal institutions and systems do this.

This not only discourages non-negros or persons of non-negro descent who have lived all their lives in the country from making significant investment decisions but also prevents non-negros who were born here and have no other place as a home from becoming citizens.

These individuals, despite their strong family and economic ties with Liberia, would rather choose to invest in countries that are more welcoming and embracing than Liberia for fear that their descendants will always be denied the right to succeed them because they are not citizens.

Today, neighboring Ivory Coast, Sierra Leone, and others have opened their countries, granting citizenship to non-negroes in their pursuit of economic growth and development, while Liberia lies at the bottom due to its racist laws.

From its early foundation, the clause was inserted into the Liberian constitution by the colony's founding fathers as a refuge for free people of color and, later, former slaves to prevent economically powerful communities from obtaining political power.

However, today, this law has no significance, but it remains in place to protect a privileged few while impoverishing the entire country.

In 2022, the law was amended to remove discrimination in granting citizenship to children born outside Liberia. However, the amended law retained the statutory attribution of citizenship to every child born in Liberia (if of "negro descent"); the 1986 Constitution, meanwhile, provides explicitly for attribution of citizenship at birth only if either the father or mother is a Liberian citizen.

This law intends to prohibit dual citizenship for adults at all costs. A referendum to amend the Constitution to permit dual citizenship in all cases (among other propositions) failed in 2020. However, many blame the past regime for not doing much to publicize the proposition.

The 2022 amendments to the law allow a Liberian citizen who acquires another citizenship to retain Liberian citizenship. This amendment follows a 2019 Supreme Court decision that ruled that the statutory provision for automatic loss of citizenship was unconstitutional.

However, in the case of a person with one Liberian and one foreign parent, the Constitution requires the person to renounce the other citizenship when he or she turns 18 to retain his or her Liberian citizenship.

# COMMENTARY

## Help People You Do Not Know

On Friday, April 12, 2024, National Fast and Prayer Day in Liberia and the day of the unconstitutional change of government in Liberia, the Memorial Service for Cllr. Emmanuel Berry was held in the Fendall Community where he lived and built a school and a church. Cllr. Berry was eighty-seven years of age, having been born in 1937 and passed away in 2024.

The true story is told about the freeing of a prisoner from the Monrovia Central Prison by Cllr. Emmanuel Berry, who did not know the prisoner. On one of his usual visits to the Monrovia Central Prison to attending to the problems of the prisoners, one of the prisoners held on to the attire of Cllr. Berry tightly, pleading with him to secure his release from the prison. Cllr. Berry went to the Court and secured the release of the prisoner through the Rule of Law.



The true story goes on to point out that during the Civil War in Liberia, a Son of Cllr. Berry was about to be executed but one of the executioners, a rebel group leader, recognized the Son and said that he, the rebel leader, would execute him because the Son had killed many innocent people. So, the rebel leader took the Son away to be executed. On the way, the rebel leader whispered into the ear of the Son and told him to run away as fast as he could because his Father, Cllr. Berry, was a good man who released him from the Monrovia Central Prison although he did not know him.

The freed Son is alive and well today as you can see him and hear him speaking on behalf of the Cllr. Berry Family at the Memorial Service. Although Cllr. Berry has passed away, his works shall not pass away. From the Tributes of the Seventh Day Adventist Church of Liberia and other Churches in Africa, the Supreme Court of Liberia, the Liberian National Bar Association, the Movement for Justice in Africa (MOJA), the Liberian People's Party (LPP) and global entities, one can observe that the works of Cllr. Emmanuel Berry shall not pass away. His works are characterized by his honesty, humility and integrity. His works remain protected by his Darling Wife Martha and the Berry Family who continue the Berry Tradition of serving people although they do not know the people.

It is through this service to people that the prevailing unfair electoral system is being transformed into the enduring fair electoral system. It is only through this transformation that persons with good records can get elected to bring in the system of Justice, the indispensable ingredient for Peace and Progress in Liberia and in any other country.

### SURVEY NOTICE

April 8, 2024

The Public is hereby notified that, the undersigned Registered and Licensed Surveyor has been duly authorized by Administrator Vaani O. Baker of the Intestate Estate of the Late Christian Baker to conduct a re-survey of a parcel of Land containing one lot.

The Land in question is situated opposite the John F. Kennedy Medical Center, 22<sup>nd</sup> St., Sinkor, Montserrado County, Liberia.

Said survey will commence on Wednesday, April 17, 2024, at the hour 10:30 AM.

Therefore, all adjacent property owners and persons interested in the said survey should be present with his/her Deed(s), Diagram(s) and any relevant legal document(s) they may have, accompanied by their Technical Surveyor(s) to substitute their claims to avoid future land dispute.

This Notice should claim the attention of the following individuals:

1. Her Honor Jamesetta Howard-Wolokolie, Associate Justice, Supreme Court of Liberia
2. Madam Mercy Mulbah
3. The Roland Family
4. The Scott Family
5. Mr. Alfred G. Troyah
6. Mr. Ben Gartay
7. The Russia Family
8. The Late William Howard
9. The Community Chairperson
10. The Nearest Police Station.

Signed:   
Kempson S. Murray, Sr.  
Reg. & Lic. Land Surveyor

Contact: 0777-750-002

# MORE HEADLINE NEWS

# MORE HEADLINE NEWS

## CENTAL welcomes Ombudsman, but

*Integrity watch institution, Center for Transparency and Accountability in Liberia, applauds President Boakai's appointment of an ombudsman but wants the nominee to come with a clean hand.*

Monrovia, Liberia, Anderson Miamen made the statement in a news conference at his office in Monrovia recently. He said President Boakai's nomination aligns with



Executive Director Anderson Miamen

CENTAL, says President Joseph Nyuma Boakai's recent appointment of renowned lawyer Cllr. Findley Karnga to head the office of the ombudsman is a big boost in the fight against corruption in Liberia. "Considering the failure of past administrations to ensure the Office of Ombudsman is functional despite flagrant abuses of the Code of Conduct, CENTAL believes that the step by President Boakai, if followed to proper fruition, would represent a capstone in the country's anticorruption endeavors"

Part XII of the Code of Conduct, approved on March 31, 2014, which established the Office of Ombudsman as an autonomous body responsible for enforcing, overseeing, monitoring, and evaluating adherence to the Code of Conduct.

Mr. Miamen recalled that, in previous statements, CENTAL encouraged President Boakai to appoint the ombudsperson, as said office is critical to ensuring compliance with the Code of Conduct, which sets out standards of behavior and conduct for public officials and employees.

The CENTAL Boss also disclosed that he has read with

keen interest reports in some local dailies, alleging that Cllr. Findley Karnga holds loyalty to the Unity Party Alliance, which brought President Boakai to the Presidency.

"While we cannot independently verify the veracity of the allegations, we would like to register that allegations of such levied against an individual designated to occupy a role as critical as ombudsperson is concerning," he noted. He encouraged President Boakai to consider competitive recruitment processes in the future employment of individuals to critical roles, including institutions clothed with the authority to promote integrity and the fight against corruption.

According to him, transparent recruitment minimizes the likelihood that persons with questionable independence, competence, and credibility surface in public offices.

He added that if such a mechanism had been employed, the current situation regarding the President's nominee to the Ombudsman would have been avoided. "We must note that open and competitive vetting processes with participation of civil society, government, and other relevant stakeholders have now become the standard for recruitment to integrity institutions, even where the law does not explicitly require."

Miamen urged the government, through the

▶ CONT'D page 11

## "You can't selectively fight corruption."

*Former Presidential candidate and human rights lawyer Cllr. Gongloe is picking bones with President Joseph Boakai's Assets Recovery Team while calling for holistic and creditable enforcement.*

By Lincoln G. Peters

Renowned Human Rights lawyer Cllr Tiawan Saye Gongloe has cautioned President Joseph Nyumah Boakai's Assert Recovery Team against selective Investigation and prosecution.

Making a brief statement at the Alternative National Congress (ANC) headquarters in Congo Town at the deformation of the Collaborating Political Parties (CPP), Cllr. Gongloe urges that the fight against corruption be holistic and creditable. According to him, Liberia can't selectively fight corruption because selective Justice is injustice.

Cllr. Gongloe believes that nobody can selectively enforce the law, and any government policy.

"I like to see the Assert Recovery taskforce set by the President engage and investigate all of those big

companies in the country as to who supplies them with those trucks they are using. I'm talking about Western Cluster, Bea Mountain, AML, and GVL, among others," he noted.

Cllr. Gongloe stated that doing that would enable the Liberian people to believe and see that the task force is leaving no stone unturned.

The Liberian People's Party defeated Presidential candidate lamented that

Liberians need to know if the owners of the equipment rented are paying taxes and how they acquired those properties and contracts.

"Many of our people who get those contracts hold big government positions. We can't cover up and think the people down Waterside don't know the truth. You can't selectively fight corruption; it should be holistic and generally fight," he noted. -Edited by Othello B. Garblah



Cllr. Gongloe

## Budget hearing starts today

*The 2024 draft national budget is President Boakai's first fiscal instrument after the Legislature returned the previous version of the document left by his predecessor to allow the new regime to align the budget with its national development plans.*

Monrovia, April 17, 2024: Liberia's 55th Legislature is due to commence a public hearing on the 2024 draft National Budget today, 17 April 2024.

The Joint Committee on Ways, Means, and Finance will start the public hearing in the Capitol Building's joint chambers.

The hearing will be presided over by the joint committee, which is chaired by Rep. Dixon W. Seboe and co-chaired by Sen. Prince Moyer.

The public hearing will begin at 9:00 a.m., and various ministries, corporations, and government agencies will appear to defend their respective budgetary allotments.

will arrive mid-day from 11:00 am to 12:00 before legislators take their lunch break.

Other government institutions will appear after lunchtime. They include Health from 2:00 pm-3:00 pm, John F. Kennedy (JFK) Medical Center from 3:00 pm-4:00 pm, the National Public Health Institute (NPHIL) from 4:00 pm-5:00 pm, and the Jackson F. Doe Hospital.

More public hearings are expected in the coming days, and some government institutions to face the Legislature include the Ministry of Education, the University of Liberia, and William V.S. Tubman University.

The West African Examination Council (WAEC) [Liberia office], the Booker T. Washington Institute (BWI), the Monrovia Consolidated



This is President Joseph Nyumah Boakai's first fiscal instrument, as the Legislature returned the previous version of the document left by his predecessor, Mr. George Manneh Weah.

The move allowed the new administration to align the budget with its national development plans.

The Expenditure Hearing followed a week-long Revenue Component which was held behind closed doors.

Beginning at 9:00 am-10 Am on Wednesday, the Ministry of Finance Development Planning (MFDP) will take the stand to defend its budget.

It will be followed by the Liberia Revenue Authority (LRA) which is scheduled from 10:00 Am-11:00 Am.

The Ministry of Public Works

School System (MCSS), and the Ministry of Agriculture are expected to appear on Thursday.

On Friday, 19 April 2024, the Ministry of Transport, the Ministry of Justice, the Liberia National Police, the Liberia Immigration Service (LIS), the Liberia National Fire Service, and the Ministry of National Defense will defend their budgets.

Subsequent public hearings will continue on Monday, 22 April 2024, involving the Liberia Electricity Corporation (LEC), Commerce, Gender, and the General Services Agency (GSA), the National Elections Commission (NEC), and the Liberia Anti-Corruption Commission (LACC).

The Committee has requested that all Ministries, Agencies, and Corporations submit their Budget Performance Report for Calendar Year 2023 and their FY 2024 Draft Budget.

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# MORE HEADLINE NEWS

# MORE HEADLINE NEWS

## Let's serve as role models

**-LEVI Williams Student Council President**

A female student leader is rallying her colleagues here to serve as role models, for Liberia's future.

By Lewis S. Teh

Monrovia, Liberia, April 17, 2024—Following her recent induction as President of LEVI C. Williams High School

school administration hosted an inaugural program for the student council government of the school at Clar Marie Weah Event Hall on 12th Street, a suburb of Monrovia, Student



Student Council President Euphemia L.M. Gibson

in Monrovia, Student Euphemia L.M. Gibson has challenged her fellow students to serve as role models and safeguard the future of Liberia's next generation.

"To my fellow students, as your President, I want to challenge and encourage you; let's see ourselves as role models to the younger ones, who are Liberia's next future leaders," she said.

Her caution comes at the time when school-age children and youth are getting on the streets, taking narcotic substances, something that is hugely contributing to the number of disadvantaged youth alias zogoes in society.

But speaking when the

Gibson urged her colleagues to uphold good moral values and portray a positive image for the future.

"Today, I want to encourage you, my fellow students. Let us serve and see ourselves as role models because we are the future and next-generation leaders of Liberia," she said.

Her election saw seven students taking up leadership role in the institution.

Those elected include Euphemia L.M. Gibson, president; Peejay G. Mulbah, vice president; Nectar K. Kolison, secretary; David O. Tarpeh, speaker; Paris Satia, representative; Jonathan E. Toe, Jr., financial secretary, and Faith Jones, chaplain.

She disclosed that her leadership had purchased a new flag, whiteboard erasers, and markers for the school.

"We thought of more to do, and we work tirelessly to be good and shining examples to our students, who are going to be the next group of future leaders," Euphemia added.

She further challenged her colleagues to stay focused and persistent because, together, they can achieve great things and make lasting memories that will transform their lives in years to come.

"Let's support one another, lift each other up, and always remember that we are stronger together if we keep pushing to achieve our dreams."

She expressed gratitude to her parents, school staff, and fellow students, who supported her during the electoral period. She said, "I'm excited for the journey ahead and for the opportunities to collaborate with amazing people like you."

"We must all be innovative and positively impact our school; thank you for entrusting me with this important role; I promise to serve all of you with great enthusiasm."

She vowed to work with the administration to ensure every student on campus has a safe space and freedom of choice in decision-making.

The inaugural ceremony, held on April 11, 2024, at Clar Marie Weah Even Hall in Monrovia, brought together parents, students, visitors, and well-wishers.

It was characterized by a series of activities, including dance performances, poems, and songs, among others. Editing by Jonathan Browne

## APM Terminals Liberia renews sponsorship of National County Sports Meet with enhanced package

Monrovia, Liberia - APM Terminals Liberia is excited to announce its continued sponsorship of the 2023/2024 National County Sports Meet, reaffirming its steadfast commitment to sports development in Liberia. The County Meet tournament commenced on Sunday, April 14, simultaneously across four counties for the preliminary rounds, inaugurated by the esteemed Youth and Sports Minister, Cllr. Jeror Cole Bangalu.

Mr. Emeka Ogbaje, Chief Financial Officer and Deputy Managing Director of APM Terminals, expressed his enthusiasm for the continued partnership, stating, "We are proud to support once again the County Sports Meet, which serves as a vital platform for nurturing young talent and fostering unity across Liberia. Through sports, we can inspire and empower the next generation of leaders"

extending support to football and basketball teams. This expanded sponsorship underscores the company's deep-rooted commitment to empowering Liberian youths and promoting athletic excellence across multiple sports disciplines. Organized by the Ministry of Youth and Sports and the Ministry of Internal Affairs, the County Sports Meet is immensely significant as it provides young athletes with an opportunity to showcase their skills and compete at a national level. Through this event, APM Terminals aims to instill a sense of pride and belonging among participants while promoting a healthy spirit of competition. "We believe in the transformative power of sports to unite communities and inspire future generations," added Mr. Ogbaje. "By investing in the County Sports Meet, we are investing in the future of Liberia." As the tournament progresses, APM Terminals eagerly anticipates witnessing the talent, dedication, and sportsmanship of Liberian



Building on last year's successful sponsorship, APM Terminals has increased its contribution to \$20,000, athletes, confident in the positive impact of sports on the nation's development and unity.

## Speaker's wife recounts fire ordeal

Starts from back page

everywhere. However, she observes, "Before that, there were a couple of times LEC went off, and when we put the generator on, LEC came back, and very shortly after that, the incident occurred."

She describes the incident as devastating; however, she expresses gratitude to God because there was no casualty.

She notes that Liberia lacks a system for dealing with catastrophes, underscoring that only with systems will the country cope with frequent tragedies and prevent disasters. She laments that until this is done and systems are implemented, Liberia will continue to fall prey to devastating disasters.

"I think we need to build systems in this country across all sectors; the Fire Service

Department is one of those departments I think we don't take seriously in this country and need to take very seriously because it is having devastating results and must be taken with urgency," the Speaker's wife further reiterates.

Placing monetary values on her losses, she reflects on priceless memories, including photos of family members and other essential documents, which, according to her, a million couldn't give back. However, she states the value of the structure of their modern home as over a million United States Dollars.

Addressing a news conference on Monday, 15 April, Speaker Jonathan

Fonati Koffa described the incident as saddening while thanking his neighbors, who he noted were the first rescuers to prevent further damage.

He lamented that the incident left him and his family in complete shock, adding that while finding safety outside his home, former President George Manneh Weah, who resides in the same community, visited and provided him with two suitcases of clothes.

The Speaker revealed that besides the damage to properties worth more than a million dollars, there wasn't any monetary or documentary damage, as his private safe and documents were kept in the basement of the house in anticipation of such an incident. Editing by Jonathan Browne

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# Français

## Le meurtre de Tolbert continue de nuire au développement du Liberia, selon le fils de l'ancien président assassiné

Cela fait plus de quatre décennies que le président de l'époque, Tolbert, et certains de ses responsables ont été assassinés le 12 avril 1980 pour corruption et abus

«Cela fait exactement 44 ans que ce grand mal a été infligé à l'État. Assurément, ceux qui ne peuvent pas le voir, à part ceux qui ne veulent pas le voir, savent qu'un nuage noir s'est abattu sur nous», a-t-il déclaré au

été renversé sur des accusations de corruption endémique et d'abus de pouvoir, entre autres.

À la suite du coup d'État, le sergent-chef Samuel Kanyon Doe des Forces armées du Liberia (AFL) a pris le pouvoir.

Mais une dizaine d'années plus tard, en septembre 1990, Doe sera assassiné de manière horrible par d'autres rebelles opposés à son régime, plongeant à nouveau le pays dans des années de carnage.

«En fait, le 22 avril 1980, c'était littéralement un nuage très sombre qui planait sur ce pays depuis le 12 avril 1980, date de l'assassinat du président Tolbert», a-t-il raconté en larmes.

Pour de nombreux Libériens, le coup d'État du 12 avril 1980 a été un changement de garde nécessaire et une occasion indispensable de rectifier les erreurs du passé.

Pourtant, cette journée historique continue de rappeler aux Libériens, en particulier aux familles des défunts, le meurtre barbare de ces responsables. Le Dr Tolbert a lu une déclaration spéciale sur la tombe lors de leur visite du week-end au cimetière de Palm Grove. Il a déploré que

cimetière de Palm Grove le 12 avril 2024. Le 12 avril 2024, les familles de Tolbert et des 11 autres responsables tués lors du coup d'État de 1980 se sont rendues sur leurs tombes pour leur rendre hommage.

Le 19e président libérien a été assassiné de sang-froid dans son appartement au Palais exécutif, et son gouvernement a

de pouvoir.

Monrovia, 15 avril 2024 : Le Dr Richard V. Tolbert, fils du président libérien assassiné, le Dr William Richard Tolbert, déclare que l'assassinat de son père a provoqué un nuage noir qui continue de nuire à la croissance et au progrès du Liberia.



INFINIX HOT 8 LITE  
AT TRIPLE CAMERA

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## L'USAID accuse les pharmacies libériennes

Selon l'USAID, 90 % des pharmacies vendent des médicaments volés.

L'Agence des États-Unis pour le développement international (USAID) a indiqué que la vente de médicaments donnés par les pharmacies signifie que les médicaments ne sont disponibles que pour les patients qui ont assez d'argent pour les acheter.

L'évaluation 2023 de l'Agence des États-Unis pour le développement international (USAID) a inculpé la plupart des pharmacies ici pour avoir prétendument vendu des médicaments volés.

Dévoilant le scandale à Monrovia ce week-end, le directeur de la mission de l'USAID, M. Jim Wright, a déclaré que l'évaluation avait révélé qu'environ 90 % des pharmacies vendaient des médicaments volés qui étaient donnés au Libéria.

M. Wright a déclaré que cela signifiait que les médicaments n'étaient disponibles que pour les patients qui avaient assez d'argent pour les acheter. « En fait, une évaluation menée l'année dernière a montré

que bien plus de 90 % des pharmacies au Libéria vendent des médicaments volés », a déclaré M. Wright.

« C'est inacceptable. Cela signifie que les médicaments ne sont disponibles que pour les patients qui ont assez d'argent pour les acheter », a-t-il déclaré. M. Wright a pris la parole lors du lancement de la « Campagne pour améliorer la chaîne d'approvisionnement des médicaments donnés », organisée par le projet d'activité de la société civile (ASC) de l'USAID Liberia, en collaboration avec la Coalition de la société civile pour la santé.

En raison de la vente présumée de médicaments volés par les pharmaciens, le chef de la mission de l'USAID a expliqué que les patients qui n'ont pas assez d'argent souffrent.

« C'est injuste et immoral. L'USAID s'est engagée à mettre fin à la corruption et à la mauvaise gestion au sein de la chaîne d'approvisionnement du secteur public pour les médicaments donnés et à stopper les ruptures de stocks de médicaments », a-t-il poursuivi. Selon lui, l'USAID ne

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## Éditorial

### Le gouvernement libérien doit agir pour stopper l'extraction de sable noir

Le gouvernement libérien, par l'intermédiaire du ministère des Mines et de l'Énergie, semble garder le silence sur l'extraction, l'exportation ou la contrebande de sable noir du Liberia par une compagnie d'extraction de sable chinoise.

Des images vidéo récentes obtenues par le NEW DAWN montrent des centaines de sacs de sable noir collectés par des mineurs chinois de Virginia, dans le comté de Montserrado, prêts à l'exportation.

Dans la vidéo, un habitant de la communauté de Waterside, en Virginie, tire la sonnette d'alarme : des tonnes de sacs de sable noir sont exportées du Liberia chaque mois par des mineurs chinois. Ces derniers se livrent également à l'extraction de sable de plage, destiné à la vente aux personnes et aux institutions du secteur de la construction.

Or, l'extraction de sable noir à des fins d'exportation soulève des questions au sein de la population quant à savoir si les autorités du ministère des Mines et de l'Énergie sont au courant et ont donné leur accord pour une telle exportation.

Les autorités du ministère des Mines et de l'Énergie affirment enquêter sur la question. Cependant, on observe des lenteurs ou un manque total d'enthousiasme, alors que les plaintes des riverains se font de plus en plus pressantes.

Le sable noir, également appelé sable de magnétite ou sable de minerai de fer, est un minéral lourd que l'on trouve couramment dans les zones côtières. L'exploitation du sable noir, qui peut sembler banale à première vue, a de nombreuses applications importantes dans de nombreuses industries.

Les experts soulignent l'importance du sable noir dans l'industrie de la construction. En raison de sa teneur élevée en fer, il est utilisé comme additif dans la production de béton et d'asphalte. L'ajout de sable noir améliore la résistance et la durabilité de ces matériaux, les rendant plus résistants à l'usure. De plus, ses propriétés magnétiques le rendent utile pour la fabrication d'aimants utilisés dans les projets de construction.

Le sable noir joue également un rôle important dans la production d'acier car il contient des quantités importantes d'oxyde de fer. Le minerai de fer extrait du sable noir est une matière première essentielle pour la sidérurgie.

Grâce à des techniques de fusion et d'affinage, le minerai de fer est transformé en acier, largement utilisé dans le développement des infrastructures, la construction automobile et de nombreuses autres industries. Les propriétés uniques du sable noir en font un excellent milieu pour les systèmes de filtration de l'eau.

Les riverains et les propriétaires des terrains sur lesquels les Chinois opèrent illégalement qualifient ces agissements de désastreux et appellent le gouvernement à se « réveiller » et à protéger la zone du pillage. Les ravages environnementaux causés par l'extraction de sable noir suscitent de graves inquiétudes économiques parmi les populations locales.

Selon eux, les activités de ces mineurs illégaux ne font pas seulement détruire leurs terres, mais ont également un impact dévastateur sur l'environnement, ce qui, déplorent-ils, constitue une parodie de l'État, car le dragage sillonne la mangrove, zone humide pourtant préservée pour le bénéfice environnemental du Liberia.

Nous pensons que cette situation est importante et nécessite l'attention immédiate du gouvernement afin d'éviter que notre population ne se fasse voler ses richesses naturelles en plein jour, pendant que quelques fonctionnaires assis quelque part en profitent aux dépens de la majorité.

# Français

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## Le meurtre de Tolbert continue

ce soit il y a exactement 44 ans qu'un grand mal ait été perpétré non seulement contre la famille Tolbert, mais aussi contre le destin et le peuple du Liberia.

Il a déclaré qu'à ceux qui n'ont pas encore reconnu le grand mal qui a été fait, "je ne peux que dire, je vous laisse à Dieu."

Aussi douloureux que ce jour ait été et soit encore pour beaucoup, il a dit que chaque minute est fraîche dans leurs mémoires, comme si c'était hier.

"Nous disons que nous ne gardons aucune rancune dans nos cœurs contre nos ennemis passés ou présents", mais nous prions plutôt le Tout-Puissant avec toute la sincérité pour la levée de son jugement, s'il en existe un, contre les auteurs de ces actes iniques et cette nation", a souligné le Dr

Tolbert.

En tant que famille, il a dit qu'ils demandaient pardon à Dieu pour ceux-là et pour tous les péchés et les péchés de ceux qui ont orchestré ces actes diaboliques. Il a prié pour que l'âme du président Tolbert et de tous ceux qui ont été tués avec lui lors du coup d'État du 12 avril 1980, y compris A.B. Tolbert et Varney Dempster ... trouvent un véritable repos et une paix perpétuelle dans la lumière. Il a également rappelé comment, le 12 avril 1975, le ministre des Finances Steve Tolbert est mort mystérieusement dans un accident d'avion.

"Et depuis 1980 environ, lorsque A. Benedict Tolbert et l'ancien directeur de la police Varney Dempster ont été sortis de leur cellule de prison la nuit et assassinés, leurs corps n'ont jamais été retrouvés", a-t-il déclaré.

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## L'USAID accuse les

peut pas à elle seule mettre fin à la corruption dans le secteur de la santé publique.

Au contraire, M. Wright a déclaré que les partenariats sont la clé pour surmonter ces défis, et chaque partie prenante a un rôle à jouer.

Il a indiqué que la Coalition de la société civile pour la santé avait déjà identifié les problèmes, ce qui les aide à comprendre ce qu'ils doivent faire pour améliorer le système de chaîne d'approvisionnement.

« Nous soutenons fièrement ces efforts par le biais de l'activité de la société civile de l'USAID. En fait, je voudrais prendre un moment pour reconnaître les organisations libériennes extraordinaires qui forment la Coalition », a déclaré M. Wright.

Les six OSC comprennent l'éducation sanitaire et les services sociaux communautaires, l'Institut de recherche et de développement efficaces et la Fondation Humanité Avant Tout.

Les autres sont l'Initiative de santé publique du Libéria, les Volontaires unis pour le développement et le Réseau des jeunes pour le changement positif.

M. Wright a déclaré au public que ces OSC avaient travaillé sans relâche pour surveiller les distributions, résoudre les problèmes, plaider pour des améliorations

du système et sensibiliser le public au fait que les médicaments donnés sont gratuits et ne doivent pas être vendus.

M. Wright a qualifié le lancement de la campagne de moment pivot dans leurs efforts collectifs pour aborder un problème critique affectant la santé et le bien-être de chaque Libérien.

Il a profité de l'occasion pour remercier le gouvernement, soulignant la nécessité de reconnaître les efforts considérables des travailleurs de la santé libériens.

M. Wright a salué le travail inestimable des agents de santé communautaires au Libéria, ajoutant qu'ils jouent un rôle crucial dans la détection et le traitement de maladies comme le paludisme. Ils ont contribué au succès du Libéria en réduisant de moitié les cas de paludisme infantile, avec le soutien des États-Unis.

M. Wright a indiqué que dans le cadre de l'Initiative présidentielle contre le paludisme l'année dernière, des médicaments vitaux et d'autres fournitures médicales d'une valeur de 14 millions de dollars américains avaient été donnés au peuple libérien par l'USAID et le Fonds mondial de lutte contre le sida, la tuberculose et le paludisme.

Il a souligné que ces produits de santé essentiels réduisaient considérablement les décès évitables.

## COMMENTAIRE

Par Laurence Tubiana

# Taxer les pollueurs, la clé de la justice climatique

PARIS - Après avoir évité pendant des années toute mention explicite de la principale cause du changement climatique, les négociateurs de la Conférence des Nations Unies sur les changements climatiques (COP28) de Dubaï ont finalement conclu l'an dernier un accord appelant à une « transition loin des combustibles fossiles ». Une autre question délicate demeure néanmoins : Comment cette transition sera-t-elle financée ? Comme l'a en effet souligné récemment Simon Stiell, chef de l'ONU Climat, « Il est plus qu'évident que le financement constitue le facteur déterminant dans la lutte contre le changement climatique ».

Le financement climatique constituera la question la plus importante à la fois lors de la COP29 en Azerbaïdjan cette année, et lors de la COP30 au Brésil en 2025. En dépit des récentes promesses d'argent pour la création d'un nouveau fonds « pertes et dommages » destiné à soutenir les pays en voie de développement face au changement climatique, le financement actuel est bien inférieur aux montants nécessaires. L'Union européenne estime qu'elle devra investir 1 500 milliards € chaque année à partir de 2031 pour atteindre l'objectif zéro émission nette d'ici 2050, et les pays en voie de développement (à l'exception de la Chine) devront probablement investir 2 400 milliards \$ par an d'ici 2030. Le Brésil devra à lui seul trouver 200 milliards \$ supplémentaires pour atteindre ses objectifs de réduction des émissions d'ici 2030.

Il n'existe malheureusement pas de solution simple. Des conditions de croissance molle et de resserrement monétaire ayant suivi la pandémie, les pays même les plus riches opèrent avec une marge de manœuvre budgétaire limitée. Alors que les capitaux privés sont nécessaires partout en plus grande quantité, leur rôle diminuera dans les pays à revenu faible et intermédiaire, en raison des primes élevées que ces États doivent payer lorsqu'ils empruntent pour des projets verts.

De nouvelles politiques audacieuses sont nécessaires pour mobiliser les financements publics, et de solides arguments font pencher la balance du côté de taxes progressives sur les activités à forte intensité de carbone et sur les grandes fortunes. Ces deux démarches généreraient des recettes tout en étendant aux industries et aux individus le principe de « responsabilité commune mais différenciée ».

L'impôt constitue l'instrument standard permettant aux États de lever des fonds de manière fiable et à grande échelle, et par conséquent d'entreprendre des plans de dépenses et d'investissement à long terme. Pour les pays en voie de développement, en particulier, la prévisibilité des impôts rendent ceux-ci plus utiles que les financements concessionnels. Par ailleurs, de nouveaux impôts peuvent libérer des ressources supplémentaires permettant aux États de consacrer des investissements au climat, ce qui leur évite ainsi d'avoir à réaffecter de précieux fonds au sein de budgets existants. À l'échelle mondiale, une taxe de 0,1 % sur les transactions financières pourrait rapporter jusqu'à 418 milliards \$ par an, de même qu'une taxe relativement modeste de 5 \$ par tonne d'émissions de dioxyde de carbone pourrait générer 210 milliards \$ chaque année.

Le Fonds monétaire international plaide depuis de nombreuses années pour la mise en place de taxes sur les émissions de CO2 et sur l'extraction de combustibles fossiles, à la fois comme source de financements climatiques et pour façonner des incitations en veillant à ce que les pollueurs paient. Les recettes supplémentaires issues de ces taxes permettraient aux pays à revenu élevé (principaux émetteurs historiques) d'honorer leurs obligations morales vis-à-vis des pays les plus pauvres et les plus vulnérables. En l'état actuel de la situation, il est nécessaire que l'aide financière des pays riches aux pays en voie de développement atteigne un ordre de grandeur supérieur à l'engagement actuel de 100 milliards \$ par an.

La mise en place de taxes sur la pollution contribuerait également à corriger les inégalités au sein des pays. À l'intérieur même des économies qui enregistrent les plus faibles émissions historiques et par habitant, il existe un écart significatif entre les émissions de la majorité de la population et celles des plus grands émetteurs. L'économiste Lucas Chancel observe que cette « inégalité carbone » est plus importante au sein des pays qu'entre eux, et qu'elle suit les inégalités de revenus et de richesse. Cela n'a rien de surprenant, puisqu'à l'échelle mondiale, les 1 % les plus riches émettent autant que les 66 % les plus pauvres de manière cumulée.

Cette injustice n'échappe pas aux citoyens ordinaires. Elle menace d'ailleurs de plus en plus notre capacité à bâtir ainsi qu'à maintenir un consensus politique autour de politiques climatiques efficaces. La mise en œuvre de taxes garantissant que les plus fortunés et les plus grands émetteurs payent leur juste part contribuerait considérablement à convaincre la population générale que la notion de « juste transition » ne se limite pas à un slogan creux.

Mais bien que les arguments théoriques en faveur de ces taxes soient solides, leur adoption et leur mise en œuvre se révèlent difficiles. Les capitaux, les personnes (notamment les plus fortunées) et les émissions circulent tous librement à travers les frontières, mettant ainsi à mal l'efficacité des régimes fiscaux nationaux ou régionaux. Bien que la coopération transfrontalière en matière de taxation ne soit jamais facile, un accord international conférerait aux États davantage de levier sur leurs propres ressources, ce qui leur permettrait de protéger ceux qui en ont le plus besoin. Le multilatéralisme s'inscrirait dans l'intérêt de tous les pays.

Plusieurs signes encourageants indiquent un recul du tabou politique à l'encontre de la taxation. Le texte convenu par toutes les parties à la COP28 appelle explicitement à « accélérer la mise en place actuelle de sources de financement nouvelles et innovantes, parmi lesquelles la taxation ». De même, en novembre dernier, les États membres de l'ONU ont adopté une résolution pour l'établissement d'une Convention-cadre sur la coopération fiscale internationale, ouvrant la voie à une approche plus équitable de détermination des règles mondiales.

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# THE NATION

# Too Many Wars Too Soon Mr. President

By D. WA HNE JR.

The truth exists that there are overzealous and pro-government supporters who hold the conviction that no one can fight against government, and as such, the government can operate, and, even outside the legal perimeters.

But I have lived to experience events in Liberia and around the world that clearly demonstrate the opposite. The perceptions of the days of Tubman could not hold in the days of Tolbert.



Pres. Boakai

The days of Tolbert brought about a revolutionary change through the struggle launched by G. Baccus Matthew's. The days of Doe saw a woman, Mrs. Ellen Johnson Sirleaf stirring up crisis and war which brought the administration of President Samuel K. Doe to extinction. We must learn from history and make sound decisions for the present and for the future with intent to

avoid unwanted political and social infernos.

In my honest analysis, if the methods of implementation of critical decisions are not relaxed, reversed, or revisited, there may be presumed consequences.

As we clamor for war crimes court, let us remember the popular saying in Liberia which goes like this, "if you pull rope, rope will pull bush". The war crimes court extends not only to former war generals and their lieutenants, but also to other powerful politicians to include the former President of Liberia, Madam Ellen Johnson Sirleaf who Liberians claimed allegedly bears the greatest responsibility for the Liberian Civil Wars.

In the minds of analysts they think some of these battles are fierce from a deeper perspective, while the surface looks pleasant. They believe that it is too soon to engage all of them at the same time. They asked, is the Boakai's Administration prepared to handle all of these battle fronts at the same time?



Former Pres. Weah

There is an unusual national uneasiness as the War Crimes Court Resolution is being discussed. Critical questions are arising. What is its urgency now? How does it contribute to reconciliation now after 30 years of self-healing and national co-existence? How does it improve our economy and build new infrastructures that we are in dire need of? How does it de-harmonize civil servants salaries, give increments to civil servants, increase wages in the private sector, and create new employments? How does it address WAEC Fees and Tuition free studies at public universities etc?

### CONSENSUS BUILDING REQUIRED

The nation is not in consensus as it relates to the War Crimes Court timing. Experts are not in consensus as it relates to auditing the NSA and EPS. Professionals and legal minds are not in agreement as it relates to the establishment of the Asset Recovery Committee juxtaposing it to the LACC.



Former Pres. Sirleaf

On a serious note, questions are being asked about the interest and real motives of USA former Military General Allan White? What is his interest in prosecuting the black race for war crimes and leaving major progenitors and white actors in the Iraq, Afghanistan and Libyan wars where heinous war crimes were said to have been committed? What has he ever contributed to Liberia's

economic and social growth?

Amongst Liberians, there are renewed fears that this development would bring about another outbreak of rebel activity, especially so early at the beginning of President Boakai's realm, instead of addressing pressing economic problems.

For those who political and economic tables are being served, there are great smiles on the faces as they hope to dance their ways to the bank. Already generals are threatening chaos, while those who perceived themselves as being witch hunted are

planning resistance.



Sen. Prince Johnson

The Assets Recovery Committee is being described as another witch hunt war declared by the President and headed by Weah's administration formidable foe, Cllr. Edward Kla Martins who many talk show callers believe is prepared to go at any distance to ensure that the former President is antagonized, shamed, and demystified as an icon of

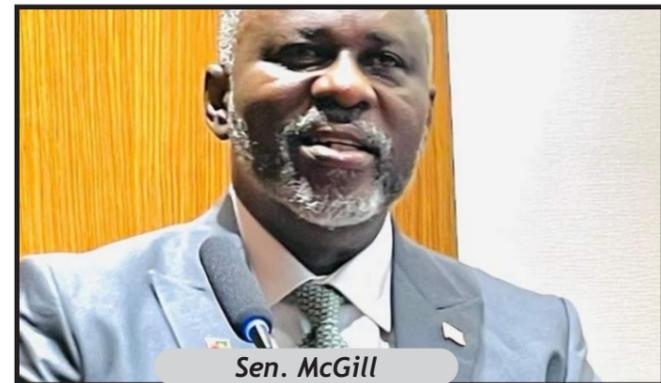
Democratic leadership in Africa. The Martin's Committee is expected to consume about US\$1.9m. Why him?

The Congress for Democratic Change through its Secretary General, Jefferson Koijee says the Congress will resist the Asset Recovery Committee. Senator Nathaniel McGill says the same. The extent of resistance is unknown. Would there be a bloody showdown between opposition and the police? We need to assess the ramifications. Consensus on a national level needs to be built.

The Center for Transparency and Accountability has criticized the setting up of the Asset Recovery Committee and calls for its scrapping as it is usurping the role of the LACC. It is believed that if Cllr. Martin was still LACC Chairman, he would have run to the Supreme Court and pray for prohibition as this Committee is a usurpation of LACC functions.

I wish to subscribe to views all over the place that the President is doing the right thing, but in the wrong way, with the wrong setups and with the wrong timings. There is the need for a quick and objective review of these decisions.

The LACC has records of all assets declaration of all former public officials and it is the Commission set up to pursue corruption cases and investigate acquisition of assets they find suspicious. They have all GAC reports and have been mandated by law to prosecute corrupt officials.



Sen. McGill

The question that requires answer is why set up another committee by Executive Order rather than utilizing the Commission established by Act of Legislature? The Martin's Committee is doing Lifestyle Audit and not forensic investigation to establish losses and corruption. Furthermore, GSA has all records of Government Assets and should be utilized to compile inventory of losses and go after them- not private properties.

President Boakai is my President and President of the Republic of Liberia, and we all have a responsibility to help guide his administration to success. We don't have to be appointed to Government or be a UP partisan to do so. This is why we use this platform. Views that we are being expressed should not be taken in the wrong democratic spirit and interpreted as opposition views.

And so, this article is a constructive one and not in opposition to his success, but in the interest of the programs of his administration which might benefit Liberians. It is my commitment to see this administration succeed and all promises executed to our benefits. To achieve this, we must collaborate and make valuable suggestions. Liberia is the "biggest political party", says the late President Doe.

In this light, it is important that the administration deals with the bread and butter issues, strengthen its security, sits firmly, execute populace policies that will deliver social benefits to the people and take on battles one at a time to avoid destabilizing its own programs and agendas.

Reconciliation and unity are cardinals to achieving development aspirations and goals. President George Manneh Weah utilized the right building blocks to keep Liberia peaceful and achieved un-quantified developments. We think this Administration Reconciliation process is being jeopardized, high-jacked by extremists and subjected to reactions that may distract and drive the nation into the "Mist of Avalon". Let us therefore give priority to actions that will reconcile and unite us as a people. The urgency of this cannot be overemphasized. Politics is not a UP and CDC War. We must cease from making it so.

# Verdier leaked Weah, others' assets

Liberian public officials are required to declare their assets upon taking office and do the same after leaving office. However, the same law does not compel them to publish unless through volition or a court subpoena. Thus, it is kept secret.

By Bridgett Milton

The assets of former President George Weah and his vice, Jewel Howard Taylor, including

leakage of his assets only made headlines a few days ago. This prompted the House of Representatives to summon former LACC boss Cllr. Edward



three of his former officials, were leaked to the public some three years ago by former Liberia Anti Corruption Commission (LACC) boss James Verdier, according to current LACC head Alexandra Zoe.

Martins and current boss Zoe explain how the former president and his lieutenants' assets were leaked to the public. During the hearing on Tuesday, Mme Zoe alleged that President Weah and his former lieutenants' assets were leaked by her predecessor, James Verdier.

The three Weah officials were former Finance Minister Samuel Tweah, former Minister of State Nathaniel F. McGill, and former Monrovia City Mayor Jefferson Kojjee.

Mme Zoe narrated that upon receipt of the House's invitation to explain how records on the assets of these individuals were leaked, she immediately conducted an internal investigation, and it was established that there was a leakage of assets declaration some two to three years ago by Mr. Verdier just before he could leave office.

Liberian Public officials are required by anti-graft laws to declare their assets upon taking and leaving office. However, for privacy and confidentiality reasons, only a court of competent jurisdiction can subpoena such documents in the event of a trial disputing said assets, or individuals can petition the LACC for their release through the Freedom of Information Act.

Mme Zoe added that there were traces of email exchanges between the former LACC boss and the asset deceleration team for verification purposes.

President Weah's government handed over power on January 22 this year, but the news regarding the

The House of Representatives invited the LACC bosses after Montserrado

County District #9 Representative Frank Saah Foko brought to the plenary's attention that on Tuesday, April 2, 2024, Spoon Network, on their widely followed Talk Show, released the Asset Declaration Form of former President Weah.

According to Rep. Foko, while the exercise is good, the LACC Act of 2022 is clearly guided by confidentiality, necessitating accuracy and compliance with legal standards.

"Asset declaration in no way constrains individuals to publish their assets as such. Pres. Weah opted not to publish, and the same with Pres. Joseph N. Boakai. The law says one can declare but doesn't force anyone to publish except doing so of one's own volition." He said it would interest you to note that Cllr. Kla Martin, the former LACC boss who was removed after a new Act came into force on March 21, 2021, told media outlets he had no record of former President George Weah filing for assets. That was fact-tracked to be false and misleading, as GAC confirmed that the former President declared his Assets.

He said since this confirmation and Martin's subsequent court appeals plus appointment to the Asset Recovery Team as Head, former Pres. Weah Asset declaration form is now available in the public space and on various platforms. But responding to Rep. Foko's assertions, Cllr. Martin said he was very clear when speaking to journalists and that he did not see former President Weah's asset deceleration.

Meanwhile, the House has instructed its Committee on Judiciary and National Security to report to plenary within two weeks. -Edited by Othello B. Garblah

## Starts from page 6 CENTAL welcomes Ombudsman, but

Executive and Legislative branches, to ensure that, building upon the Code of Conduct, legislation is passed clearly carving out the structure of the Office of Ombudsman, qualifications, and recruitment procedures, as well as providing for tenure, financial autonomy, and gender representation.

institution.

According to him, the Code of Conduct is scanty regarding the composition of the Ombudsman and other key elements described above. Accordingly, he said CENTAL believes that appointments under the current law can only suffice as a stop-gap measure until the Office of the Ombudsman is properly established and has all necessary insulations to truly equate it as an independent integrity

At the same time, he said the Office of the Ombudsman is adequately supported through the national budget, as there is no such support in the draft 2024 national budget currently before the Legislature for review and passage into law.

"We also want to urge Cllr. Findely and his would-be team and co-workers to lead by example in terms of fully complying with the Code of Conduct for Public Officials and other relevant laws and policies," he added. He admonished them to be independent, fair, efficient, and effective in carrying out their functions as they serve in this very important

capacity.

CENTAL reiterated its commitment to work with diverse stakeholders and partners to meaningfully support national efforts to fight against corruption and promote and mainstream the culture of integrity and accountability in Liberia across all sectors and institutions. Miamen called on Liberians to commend and appreciate their leaders, where necessary, while cautioning against settling for mediocrity or pettiness. He said Liberians should demand high standards and performance from their national and local leaders, especially in line with established laws, their mandates, and their commitments to citizens before, during, and after elections. Press Release

# EPS officer's death story not connecting

There were reports that EPS Agent Melvin Early allegedly killed himself through multiple gunshots, but some members of the public and the deceased's family rejected the initial government report during former President Weah's rule.

By Kruah Thompson

Monrovia, April 17, 2024: The Liberia National Police (LNP) under new leadership has uncovered conflicting reports surrounding the death of Executive Protective Services (EPS) agent Melvin Earley while on active duty in February 2021.

previous administration. Those cases include the death of Agent Earley.

Mr. Earley died on 19 February 19, 2021, with multiple bullet wounds during a presidential trip to Tappita, Nimba County.

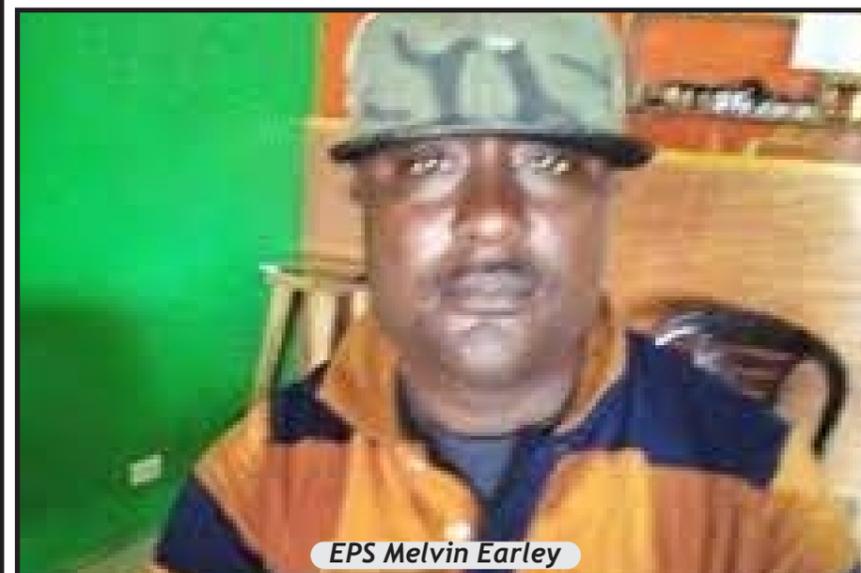
The police chief revealed that the officers are actively investigating these cases, as promised, and the findings will be published for public perusal in due time. Stating the importance of a thorough investigation, Col. Coleman pointed to contradictory information received regarding this case.

The initial government report under former President George Manneh Weah's regime suggested that Agent Earley had taken his own life at approximately 6:03 am while on duty. The family of the deceased rejected the government's account, and some members of the public questioned the possibility of anyone shooting themselves with a gun more

He also highlighted ongoing efforts to address crimes across Liberia.

In addition to Earley's case, the Police Inspector General revealed that they have successfully reduced violent crimes across most parts of the country, and police presence is enhanced nationwide.

He mentioned that they have strategized various ways to empower their structure across the country, collecting necessary intelligence to inform the deployment of new police forces. "We have been working on policies and procedures, envisioning our rules and regulations to include



than once. The family of the deceased disputed this claim, alleging that his wounds were inconsistent with self-inflicted injuries. Upon seeing the body, the deceased's family suggested that Mr. Early was allegedly shot in the abdomen, chest, and head. Liberia's new police chief, Col. Gregory Coleman, told a press conference this week that the police are investigating the matter further to validate the details provided in the two conflicting reports.

more gender-sensitive aspects," he stated. Col. Coleman detailed that the police have been engaging with international partners behind the scenes and receiving positive responses in collecting data to combat crimes in Liberia and transnational crimes affecting other countries. "We are collaborating with all other security agencies to enhance and increase security across Liberia," he explained. Also, the police chief expressed concern about the occurrence of crimes in Liberia, saying they are reviewing measures to curtail the situation and ensure people's safety.

Speaking at the Ministry of Information in Monrovia, Col. Coleman indicated that his leadership is not jumping to conclusions regarding Mr. Earley's death. "While we are not assuming this wasn't a suicide, we're investigating further to be able to substantiate what has been reported in the two documents," he said.

These measures include considering what is most feasible beyond announcing structural changes in deploying additional resources. He mentioned considering implementing curfews for safety purposes due to the alarming crime rate. On Sunday, he announced the launch of a community policing initiative. The initiative aims to build more trust in the police by reaching out to schools, churches, mosques, and community residents.

Colmen has disclosed that an ongoing investigation has uncovered conflicting reports surrounding the incident.

Meanwhile, the Police IG assured the public of continued measures to combat crimes and ensure safety.

Upon assuming office this year, Col. Colman announced his intention to reopen certain unexplained cases from the

## Speaker's wife recounts fire ordeal

House Speaker, Cllr. Fonati Koffa and family are still recuperating from Sunday's fire disaster that destroyed their luxurious home here.

By Emmanuel wise Jipoh  
Paynesville, Liberia, April 17, 2024—In the aftermath of Sunday's 14th April 2024 fire disaster at Speaker Jonathan Fonati Koffa's home, his wife, Mrs.

John Fitzgerald Kennedy Medical Center in Monrovia, told The NEW DAWN on Monday, April 15, 2024, that firefighters did little to save her home during the incident, leaving her and her entire family

unproductive and worthless. You cannot have a service like this here," she narrates in apparent frustration over a situation that rendered the Speaker and his entire family homeless.

She further narrates that the fire erupted in the theater of her multi-million dollar home situated on Rehab Road in Paynesville outside Monrovia. It was characterized by the rapid spread of flames, which firefighters had no answer to upon their late arrival on the scene.

Madam Koffa: "We were in our room, getting ready to retire for the evening, and I had gone downstairs to get some food to eat. Amid that, one of our guards came alerting us that there was fire in the theater, and there was so much black smoke everywhere coming out. We couldn't see anything, and there was uncertainty about where that fire actually was."

She suspects that it might have been caused by an electrical fault, noting that as she ate supper, the guard came and alerted her that fire was in the theater upstairs, and there was huge black smoke



Mrs. Dama Reter Yekeson-Koffa

Dama Reter Yekeson-Koffa, describes the late arrival of firefighters, especially from the Liberia Fire and Rescue Service, as unproductive and worthless.

devastated.

"There was nothing really much that was done; they were here after 45 minutes, but we couldn't appreciate anything really being done. As the blasting increased, we were left devastated, and I think the fire service was really

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