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CENTRAL BANK OF LIBERIA
MARKET BUYING AND SELLING RATES
LIBERIAN DOLLARS PER US DOLLAR

DATE	BUYING	SELLING
MONDAY, NOVEMBER 18, 2024	LS181.4106/US\$1.00	LS183.3451/US\$1.00

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

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French Version Inside

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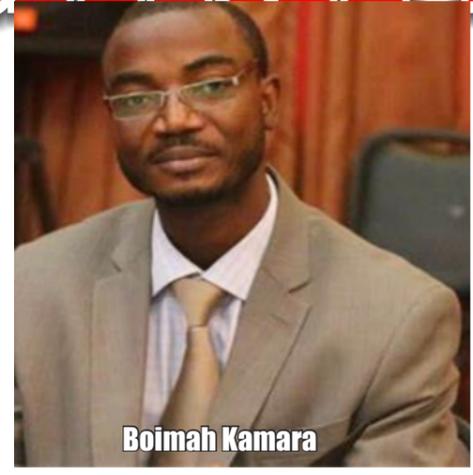
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Boakai not playing



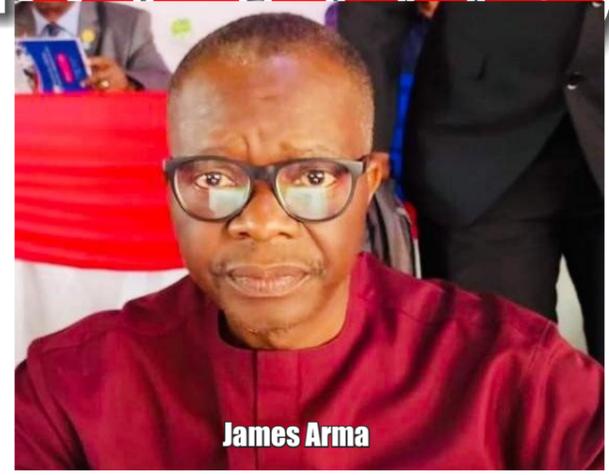
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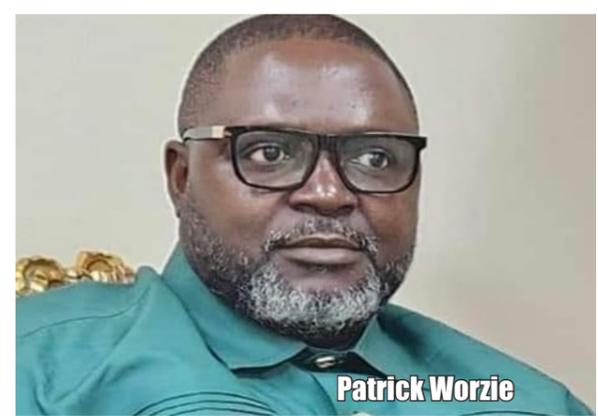
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Matthew Nyanplu



James Arma



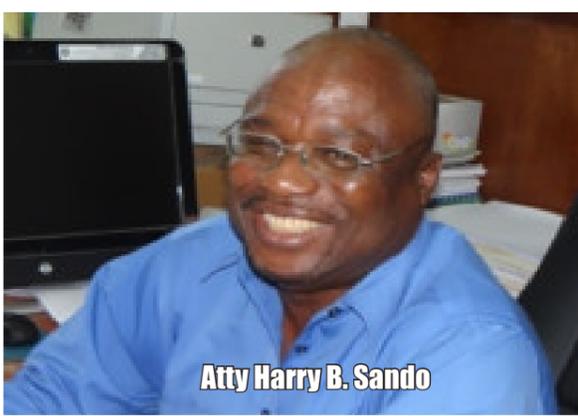
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-Dismissals, suspensions and resignations galore



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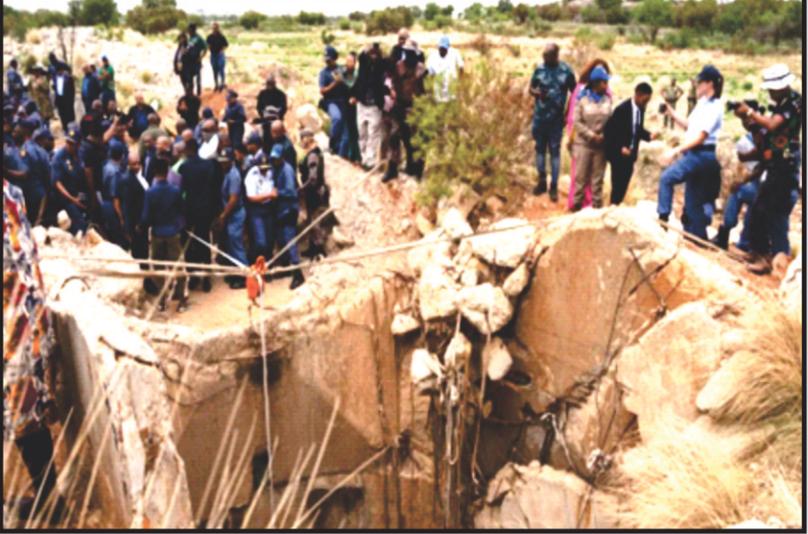




Continental News

Police vow to arrest South African miners as standoff continues

South African police say they will continue to arrest any illegal miners who emerge from a disused gold mine where hundreds, possibly thousands, of undocumented migrants who also fear deportation. Some South Africans have heavily criticised the government's hardline policy and, in recent days, the police



people are in hiding. This follows a court order which said the mine-shaft in Stilfontein, around 90 miles (145km) south-west of Johannesburg, should not be blocked. Emergency services have been at the site, for several days. Police have been preventing food and water entering the mine to, as one government minister put it, "smoke them out". The miners - who have been underground for a month - have so far refused to exit the mine over fears of being arrested. Among them are

treatment. The two others were arrested. Some reports suggest the miners had resorted to eating vinegar and toothpaste to survive. Volunteers said they pulled a body from the mine on Thursday. Police have called in experts to assess the integrity of the mine shafts, to inform a decision as to whether they would conduct a forced evacuation, according to the AFP news agency. Yasmin Omar, an attorney who helped bring the court case, told state broadcaster SABC that the ruling was a temporary order "that will at least allow us to get emergency relief to the people [who] need it". She said a full hearing on the matter would take place on Tuesday. "These people underground are dying," Ms Omar said, adding that the ruling means officials "must do all that is reasonable to give medical care to the people who are underground". In a statement, the South African Police Service (SAPS) welcomed the court order, which it stressed did not prevent officers from making arrests. It said: "All those who resurface will continue to be assessed by emergency medical personnel on site, as has been the case. -BBC

have been allowing volunteers to go down to see the miners and some have been taking small amounts of food and water. On Saturday, a court in Pretoria ordered that the mine "shall be unblocked and may not be blocked by any person or institution whether government or private". It also said that any person in the mine should be allowed to exit, and that "no non-emergency personnel may enter the mine shaft". Three of the miners surfaced on Saturday, one of whom was taken to hospital for medical

Miss Nigeria's pride after defying trolls to challenge for Miss Universe

Getty Images Chidimma Adetshina, wearing a shiny green bra-top and a Miss Nigeria sash at the Miss Universe competition in Mexico City on November 16, 2024. Getty Images

Chidimma Adetshina is the highest placed black African woman in Miss Universe since South Africa's Zozibini Tunzi won in 2019. her of her identity papers, following allegations that her mother, who has Mozambican roots, had committed identity fraud to gain South African nationality.



Miss Nigeria, Chidimma Adetshina, has spoken of her pride at coming second in the Miss Universe competition, as well as being named Miss Africa and Oceania. "I'm so proud of myself and I just made history," she said, shortly after losing out to Miss Denmark, Victoria Kjær Theilvig. Adetshina originally competed in the Miss South Africa contest, as she was born and grew up in the country, however she was subjected to trolling and xenophobic abuse because her father is Nigerian. Last month, the South African authorities said they would strip

Neither Adetshina nor her mother have commented on the allegations. South African authorities pointed out that Adetshina could not have participated in any alleged fraud as she was an infant at the time. After the furore in South Africa, and the doubts about her nationality, she competed in the Miss Nigeria competition, which she won to qualify for the Miss Universe contest held in Mexico City. The eventual winner of Miss South Africa, Mia le Roux, pulled out of Miss Universe last week citing an undisclosed medical condition. She was the first deaf woman to become Miss South Africa. -BBC

Niger: Thousands march in Niamey to denounce "destabilization plots"

By Rédaction Africanews & Joël Honoré Kouam- ANP
Thousands of Nigeriens marched Saturday (Nov. 16) in the streets of Niamey in support of the ruling CNSP and to denounce foreign destabilization attempts. A coalition of civil society organizations had called for a protest after authorities said they arrested a French 'spy'. Many protesters also voiced their support of Burkinabe and Malian authorities. Niger with these two countries form the Alliance of Sahel States or AES. "On the 17th of September, I was in Bamako when they tried to destabilize Mali [Editor's Note: a deadly terror attack shook Mali's capital on that day]. But that was not enough for them, they tried to destabilize Ibrahim Traoré in Burna Faso. That is why we are sending a strong message to all those imperialists. Know that we are standing by our military. We are

with our security forces," Mohamed said. Members of the junta ruling under the name CNSP attended the march including Colonel Ibro Amadou Bacharou, the President's Chief of Staff. Students and pupils' unions were also in attendance. The demonstration took place amid broader accusations of French plots to overthrow the regime which deposed Mohamed Bazoum and

oversaw the withdrawal of French and US troops. "Losing Niger is a great catastrophe for France," Abdourahmane, a civil society leader says. We must be able to build the tanks we will use to fight. Industrial units have to be built. You need to develop the economy," The march comes days ahead of an international conference set to take place in Niamey in support of the AES states. -Africanews



Nigerians In Niamey

Voter turnout in focus as Gabonese await referendum results

Alain-Claude Bilie-By-Nzé, a former Prime minister of Gabon, speaks after voting in Makokou on Nov. 16, 2024. He campaigned for the "no" to the draft constitution. Cleared In Gabon, about 860,000 registered voters were expected to cast their ballot Saturday (Nov. 16) on whether to adopt a new constitution.

By Rédaction Africanews
A win of the "yes" or a "no" vote is not the only key figure; voter turnout is widely talked about as the people await official results from the interior ministry. "For a major polling booth, there was no big turnout here at the Ngouabi voting center. when I cast my ballot in voting booth, I saw a lot of ballot paper in the bin, which I regret.," former prime minister Billie Bi-Nzé told the media. "I think that maybe the population didn't quite understand the assignment. Unfortunately, many left in the bin what they didn't vote for. But this will note count, it will be an invalid vote." Now that vote has ended, many Gabonese say the focus should go to the restoration of institution, a pledge of the ruling junta known as the

Committee for the transition and restoration institutions promised when seizing power. "It's time to accelerate the reforms that the president of the transition announced when ascending to power," one resident said. "If the draft constitution really seeks to put Gabon on the road to bliss, then Gabonese, all Gabonese should benefit from the country's resources. Secondly, people who come here to unlawfully take advantage of this country while Gabonese continue to suffer, these people should face sanctions," another resident said. -Africanews



EDITORIAL

Liberia's dealing with ECOWAS

In less than six months the Economic Community of West Africa is back in Liberia for mediation amid current leadership crisis in the House of Representatives at the Capitol Building. Forty-three of the 73 members of the House are opting to oust Speaker Fonati J. Koffa, accusing him of conflict of interest and corruption, charges the Speaker has denied.

On the other hand, 30 lawmakers are standing with the Speaker though no side has been able to obtain a quorum to conduct business in the main chamber, holding the business of the Liberian people hostage.

About three months ago ECOWAS was in the country following a bloody standoff between riot officers of the Liberia National Police and partisans and supporters of the former ruling Congress for Democratic Change (CDC) of Ex-president George Weah.

Though the regional bloc denied that its visit then had nothing to do with the fracas that left both police officers and stone-throwing rioters wounded, it came just after former President George Manneh Weah officially complained to the United Nations, African Union and ECOWAS for alleged witch-hunt of his former officials by the government of President Joseph Nyuma Boakai. Mr. Weah also complained of the government denying usage of the VIP Lounge at the Roberts International Airport, which sent his supporters protesting.

Despite the denial, the ECOWAS delegation did meet with President Boakai and former President Weah separately, while the country.

This time around, it is the ECOWAS Parliamentary Mediation Mission visiting Liberia. It is here to mediate between the factions in the House.

On November 8, 2024, the Economic Community of West African States sent a formal communication to embattled Speaker Jonathan Fonati Koffa, informing him and his colleagues about the presence of its Parliamentary Mediation Mission in the country. The mediation is scheduled to take place from November 11 to 15, 2024, aimed at addressing the ongoing political impasse within the 55th Legislature, specifically in the House of Representatives, that has stalled legislative works.

But how does Liberia, a member country, want to work with the regional bloc, when in one instance, the Government of Liberia arrogantly ignored ruling from the ECOWAS Court, and in another instance, it seeks intervention of the body in its political impasse.

The House of Representatives under the former 54th Legislature impeached Supreme Court of Liberia Justice Kabineh Ja'neh, and Ja'neh took a complaint before the Court and got ruling in his favor, calling for reparation. But the Government of Liberia is yet to respond accordingly.

In its ruling, the regional court ordered the Government of Liberia to award Justice Ja'neh a sum of US\$200,000, as reparation for moral prejudice suffered in violation of his right. But the government is yet to pay to this date.

Now it needs the intervention of the very body to resolve the crippling crisis in the House of Representatives that is stalling public hearing of the National Budget, leading President Boakai to beg the legislature for additional days in submitting the budget. It is important that we as a country, learn to treat international bodies that we are a part of with respect to sustain such relationship because we will always need them, as in the current case.

COMMENTARY

by Peter Singer

What Progressives Must Learn from Trump's Campaign

SINGAPORE - In the aftermath of Donald Trump's victory in the US presidential election, The New York Times reported on a clash of views between two Democratic members of Congress. "Democrats spend way too much time trying not to offend anyone rather than being brutally honest about the challenges many Americans face," said Representative Seth Moulton of Massachusetts. "I have two little girls, I don't want them getting run over on a playing field by a male or formerly male athlete, but as a Democrat I'm supposed to be afraid to say that."

Representative Pramila Jayapal, of Washington, the chair of the Congressional Progressive Caucus, took a different view. Describing herself as "the proud mom of a daughter who happens to be trans," she said: "We need to create space for people's fears and let them get to know people [...] and we need to counter the idea that my daughter is a threat to anyone else's children."

My purpose in citing this exchange is not to ask who is right, but to urge that in the context of Trump's triumph over Vice President Kamala Harris, we ask two other questions. Did Harris's stance on the transgender issue contribute to her loss? And among the many important issues on which US policy would have differed under Harris from what is likely under Trump, where does the transgender issue rank?

The Trump campaign repeatedly hammered Harris on the issue. One ad that ran more than 17,375 times in the last three weeks of October, at a cost of more than \$10 million, refers to a convicted murderer sentenced to life imprisonment in California and told viewers: "Kamala Harris pushed to use tax dollars to pay for his sex change.... Kamala's agenda is they/them, not you." Another ad, aired 13,445 times, used similar language, but also accused Harris of "letting biological men compete against our girls in their sport." According to an analysis conducted by Future Forward, a leading pro-Harris political action committee, watching that ad moved 2.7% of viewers in favor of Trump (who won the popular vote by 2%).

Harris never responded to these attacks. Trump's campaign directors presumably believe that their expenditure on more than 30,000 airings of these ads was money well spent. They may be right.

So, let's turn to the second question: among all the issues affected by Trump's victory, where does the transgender issue rank? Suppose that we pose this question from the standpoint most favorable to advocates of transgender rights. Assume that transgender people are not a threat to anyone else, whether

in public bathrooms, prisons, or sports. Also assume that the belief that they are is a mere prejudice that harms trans people, prevents them from participating in sporting activities, makes them more vulnerable to mental illness than they otherwise would be, and, most tragically of all, drives some to suicide.

Even on these assumptions, nothing that Trump is likely to do on the transgender issue can compare in importance with other actions he is likely to take. If the United States reneges on its commitments under the Paris climate agreement, as Trump has said it will under his leadership, why would countries like China, with much lower greenhouse-gas emissions, feel any need to do their share? But without the US and China taking strong action, global warming will exceed the 2° Celsius limit set by the Paris accord, with consequences far more catastrophic than those we have already seen in recent years.

Likewise, if Trump stops or even reduces US support for Ukraine, that democratic country of nearly 40 million people is likely to fall to Russian dictatorship, and Russian President Vladimir Putin's aggression may not stop there. Then there is the threat that Trump poses to democracy in America, the damage he is likely to do to health-care access and welfare provisions for people in need, and of course his sweeping plans to deport millions of undocumented aliens.

Progressives face an acute dilemma. Should they stand up for every cause that they believe to be right, irrespective of its importance compared to the other issues at stake, or are they justified in taking a more centrist position on some less significant questions on which they have been unable to win over an important section of the electorate? In my view, our focus should be on the issues that matter most to the world as a whole.

The Trump campaign, in a one-minute ad released in the final days of the campaign, targeted what it sensed was another Democratic weakness. The ad starts by saying that under the Biden-Harris administration, America "took a wrong turn." One aspect of this is that those who "dared to speak the truth" were accused of "hate speech."

Of course, what the Trump campaign considered to be "the truth" was often very far from that. But the accusation that the label of hate speech has been used to shut down open debate resonates with Moulton's sense that, "as a Democrat," he was barred from expressing any reservations about trans athletes.

If our fellow progressives are afraid to speak out on sensitive issues, how will we ever discover what people really think - or what the truth really is?

OP-ED

By Andrés Constantin,
Katherine Mayall

Self-Managed Abortion Saves Lives

GENEVA - The World Health Organization estimates that 29 million unsafe abortions take place globally each year, leading to roughly 40,000 preventable deaths. Many of these deaths are the result of dangerous procedures performed in regions where restrictive laws limit or prohibit access to safe, legal abortion care.

Of course, there is a simpler, proven alternative: self-termination of unwanted pregnancies using drugs like mifepristone and misoprostol, which the WHO recognizes as both safe and effective. But legal and policy barriers continue to limit women's access to these vital options, too. To reduce maternal mortality, governments worldwide must remove these barriers and make self-managed abortion accessible to all.

A recent analysis of abortion laws across 35 countries and four US states underscores the extent of the problem, finding that just 10% allow abortion without the involvement of health-care providers. Worse, nearly half of these jurisdictions require in-person visits or mandate that abortion pills be taken in a clinical setting, depriving individuals of the privacy and autonomy that self-managed abortion can provide.

These restrictions not only limit access to safe abortion but also push people toward the unsafe methods that policymakers often claim to oppose. In countries with restrictive abortion laws, individuals who cannot access safe options are more likely to resort to such methods. In fact, according to the WHO, 97% of unsafe abortions occur in developing countries, where abortion laws often are particularly strict. These legal barriers have profound public-health implications, as pregnant women risk their lives simply because their governments deny them the right to make their own reproductive choices.

Not all countries remain stuck in the past. Colombia, Ireland, and New Zealand have updated their laws and policies to better align with WHO recommendations, showing that it is possible to foster a legal environment that facilitates self-managed abortions. Likewise, jurisdictions like Mexico City and US states such as California and New York have embraced telemedicine, enabling individuals to make decisions about their reproductive health and gain access to abortion care safely and discreetly from the privacy of their homes, without unnecessary barriers and government interference.

To be sure, opposition to liberalizing access to abortion pills often stems from health and safety concerns. Without clinical supervision, critics argue, medical complications could arise, putting patients at risk. But a growing body of evidence shows that self-managed abortions, when provided with proper information and access to medication, are just as safe as clinic-based procedures. Moreover, restricting access to drugs like mifepristone does not eliminate the demand for abortion - it merely pushes people toward unsafe alternatives.

Nor is there empirical evidence to support the view that loosening restrictions on abortion pills could lead to misuse or overuse. Studies show that women who opt for self-managed abortions seek medical assistance when complications arise, and that adequate information can prevent adverse outcomes. Moreover, when people are not penalized for seeking help, they are far more likely to receive the care they need if something goes wrong.

The overwhelming weight of evidence counsels governments to trust people's reproductive-health choices. Decriminalizing self-managed abortion and lifting unnecessary restrictions, such as prescription- and medical-supervision requirements, are crucial first steps. More importantly, governments should expand access to telemedicine for self-managed abortions, especially in remote and underserved areas where clinics are scarce.

Of course, reforming abortion laws will not remove all obstacles to safe abortion care. In many areas, social stigma and misinformation will continue to fuel efforts to undermine reproductive rights. But legalizing and expanding access to self-managed abortion would significantly reduce the global toll of unsafe procedures and promote reproductive justice for all.

Governments that claim to care about maternal health can no longer afford to ignore reality. If policymakers are truly committed to reducing preventable deaths and defending women's bodily autonomy, they must establish legal frameworks that support and facilitate self-managed abortion. The price of inaction is far too high.

OPINION

by Ajay Mathur,
Fatih Birol

Unleashing Solar Power's Bright Future

PARIS - Solar power has been the star of the clean-energy transition, delivering major benefits for the climate, the cost of living, and energy security. With an average annual growth rate of almost 30% over the last decade, the market for solar power has undergone a rapid transformation. What was once a heavily subsidized renewable-energy technology is now a readily available mainstream solution - whether one needs to power skyscrapers in large cities or deliver electricity to small businesses in rural areas.

Solar has become an increasingly attractive option for electricity producers and consumers alike. In 2023, additions to the world's renewable power capacity grew by 50%, and most of that was solar PV. With supportive policies already in place in more than 130 countries, solar power looks set to continue playing its starring role for the rest of this decade. Compared with the previous five years, solar PV deployment through 2030 is expected to more than double in major economies such as the United States, China, the European Union, India, and Brazil.

Falling costs have been a key driver of this growth, with solar-panel prices declining by almost 50% in 2023. The combination of lower costs, scalable manufacturing, and quick installation means that solar PV is cheaper than new fossil-fuel power plants in most markets. Moreover, the benefits of solar can be amplified when paired with energy storage such as batteries or connected to larger, flexible systems via grids to deliver reliable power supplies.

Still, despite the unprecedented growth of solar power in recent years, the world needs to triple its renewable-energy capacity by 2030. At the United Nations Climate Change Conference in Dubai (COP28) last year, all countries agreed that meeting this goal is necessary to keep the 1.5° Celsius target for global warming within reach. The task for policymakers is to provide regulatory certainty for the private sector; ramp up investments in solar and other renewables, electricity storage, and grid infrastructure; cut red tape and remove administrative barriers; and improve access to finance, particularly for projects in emerging and developing economies.

Fortunately, even high inflation and tightening supply chains have not prevented the cost of solar PV from falling dramatically. But since this trend is largely due to China's massive investments in solar-panel production, the international solar supply chain has become highly concentrated. As the growth of solar PV continues, manufacturing will need to become more diversified to ensure resilient supply chains. Initiatives such as the US Inflation Reduction Act, India's Production-Linked Incentive, and the EU's Net-Zero Industry Act will be crucial to building and revitalizing homegrown clean-energy industries.

Solar will be essential to meet growing energy demands, not least in emerging and developing economies, where policymakers are seeking to help their citizens realize their economic aspirations while limiting greenhouse-gas emissions. For many countries, renewables like solar can also reduce reliance on energy imports, limit exposure to global supply disruptions, and improve energy security over the long term. But as technologies and consumer behavior evolve, the need for more sophisticated energy infrastructure will grow.

As matters stand, investments to expand grid infrastructure are not keeping pace with the growth of clean-energy technologies, and this is delaying the rollout of new projects, including for solar. New electricity networks often take 5-15 years to plan and complete, whereas new renewables projects take only 1-5 years. Making matters worse, investment in grids - which needs to reach more than \$600 billion per year by 2030 - is not flowing to the regions that need it most. Grid investments in many emerging and developing economies have been well below the levels needed to meet robust growth in electricity demand and to expand access.

This shortfall represents an opportunity that must not be squandered. Solar PV has enormous potential to provide electricity to the many millions of people who currently lack it, most of whom are in Africa. But access to finance is crucial. Many emerging and developing economies (with the exception of China) are missing out on the current wave of clean-energy investments because of the high costs of capital for new projects. The risk premium that investors demand to enter less-established markets is directly undermining solar power's competitiveness.

Removing this obstacle requires action from governments, multilateral development banks, and others to bring down the cost of capital in these markets. The situation is urgent. To limit global warming to 1.5° C, we must more than triple annual clean-energy investment in emerging and developing economies within the next decade.

Solar's growth shows what is possible. If policymakers can overcome the remaining technological, regulatory, and financial barriers, the COP28 goal of tripling renewable-energy capacity by 2030 will be well within reach - with solar leading the way. But if these barriers remain unaddressed, the energy transition will leave many countries behind, and it will fall far short of what the world needs.

ON 2ND THOUGHTS



with Othello B. Garblah

What's driving Liberia's foreign policy?

Recent reports that Russia has announced plans to open an embassy in Liberia as part of its effort to expand its diplomatic footprint across Africa have ignited a new debate and raised questions about what is driving Liberia's foreign policy. In plain English, Liberia's foreign policy is firmly rooted in its political ideology of liberalism, democracy, and capitalism. It is modeled after the pattern adopted by the United States.

However, a foreign policy generally is a compendium of different strategies a country uses to guide its relationships with other countries and international organizations influenced by interests. Mutual interests are expressed in every relationship. How the parties maximize those expressed interests is left to them individually. A bilateral relationship between two countries is established through diplomatic interactions, trade agreements, and cultural exchanges to enhance mutual benefits. These mutual benefits are spelled out.

Thus, countries should have clear-cut goals or agendas before entering any bilateral relationship; they should know what they want and who to befriend to get it. These clear-cut goals should be tied to the country's national development agenda, which should be the driving force for entering into bilateral relationships with strategic partners.

National Agendas are long-term plans whose implementation spans ten years and requires periodic updating and revisions. They include a set of national indicators in education, healthcare, economy, police and security, housing, infrastructure, and government services. The ultimate purpose of National Agenda is to achieve sustainable development through a transformation program. It promotes an inclusive environment that integrates all segments of society.

This is where strategic partners come in, and choosing these partners strategically to target individual pillar within a national development agenda is very important. Rather than a country spreading its net or its leader traveling around with a laundry list of development needs and wishing for any country to come to its aid, it is not strategic. It leaves donor partners confused. Each strategic partner has its unique strength. Therefore, when deciding to enter a bilateral relationship with another country, it is important to know what you want from that country. Your interests and having a clear-cut goal for that relationship are more important than wasting resources.

For example, the United States could be a strategic partner in energy and electricity, Germany for Hospitals and vocational schools, China for roads and bridges, Israel for security and counter-terrorism training, Education the United Kingdom, Japan for airports and technology, The Netherlands for seaports and so on. Meanwhile, in the absence of a clear-cut national agenda and targeting strategic partners to serve your country's agenda, such a bilateral relationship is a waste of state resources.

It is critical to note that a national agenda without a clear, developed roadmap to achieve it is mere words on paper. Knowing what you want is one thing but knowing what to do to achieve it and committing to that is another. It is good for a country to expand its diplomatic footprint across nations, but it should do so based on its interests. What can this country offer my country, and how does it contribute to my country's development agenda? Are key questions to consider when entering diplomatic relationships the cost-benefit factors.

Liberia's national vision should be a working tool for all administrations and a desire to implement the right programs to achieve it. This vision should be legislated to compel every government to commit to such an agenda by law. The indicators within the vision should be stand-alone items in the budget. Liberia's National Budget has been recurrent expenditure-based and not development-oriented year on year, hindering progress in achieving the country's development goals.

The Boakai regime can get this right if it has a clearly defined goal and looks for strategic bilateral partners for each pillar of the ARREST Agenda. The author holds a master's degree in International Relations from the University of Liberia, with high distinction.

AS I SEE IT



with By Prof. Tom Kaydor, Jr., PhD.

Government of Liberia Needs to Investigate the Nekoteck STEM Scholarship

The Government of the Republic of Liberia through the Ministry of Foreign Affairs announced a **Stem Scholarship** for Liberian students wishing to undertake master degrees studies in the United States of America and Canada. STEM stands for **Science, Tehcnology, Engineering and Mathematics**. This means that for any Liberian student to qualify for such master program, he/she must have obtained a Bachelor degree in the natural Sciences. According to the Foreign Ministry, "the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs are handling the processes for this scholarship and the scholarship has been negotiated by a third party named NEKOTECH under a loan scheme" (MFA Press Briefing, 2024). The Liberian Constitution indicates that if any entity in the government would like to contract or secure a loan for Liberia, such loan must first be ratified by the Liberian National Legislature. What are the terms and conditions for the loan to fund this scholarship? Has the National Legislature ratified the loan? The President of the Republic of Liberia officially launched the scholarship program. After this, debates abound in public that the scholarship program is a "scam." Was the President made to launch a "Scammed scholarship program"? God forbid. The President launched the scholarship program out of love for building the capacities of Liberia's future generations. It is therefore my hope that the Scholarship program is not a "scam" as is being debated.

From my experience, the Foreign Ministry does not need a third party company to find scholarships for Liberian students wishing to write their master degrees in the Stem or any other areas. The Foreign Ministry gets scholarships from several countries around the world. For instance, the governments of Israel, India, China, Australia, Pakistan, Austria, Morocco, Nigeria, Ethiopia, Italy, the United States, Ghana, Canada, Indonesia, Japan, Turkey, Mexico, and several other countries have been offering scholarships to Liberia through the Foreign Ministry. Simply put, most if not all governments in the world have given Liberian scholarships. So, why should the Foreign Ministry get third parties like NEKOTECH involved to front for government scholarship program that is being considered a "scam"? Traditionally, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs gets scholarships for technical, undergraduate, master, and even doctoral degrees in some instances. All that is required is that the Foreign Ministry needs to express Liberia's interest in the areas of preference (s) that the country wants its citizens to gain an education. Interestingly also, this is a "loan scheme" that must be ratified by the National Legislature. Has the National Legislature ratified the Loan of about \$26Million US?

AS I SEE IT, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs can attract thousands of undergraduate, graduated/post-graduate or tertiary scholarships. The Ministry simply needs to express its interest and lobby with friendly governments. So, why should Liberia vouch for a loan scheme for 250 Liberians to study abroad for master's degrees in the STEM area? The government does not need loan (s) and third parties to negotiate scholarships with other governments. In time past, some governments gave about five hundred scholarships annually to graduates of high schools to study from bachelor's to doctoral degree levels. Thousands of scholarships have come through the Foreign Ministry. For example, this writer competed for and won the Australian Awards Scholarship. This was how he studied for his second master's degree (master's in public policy-MPP) at the Australian National University where he specialised in Development Policy or Development Economics with distinction in 2014. Why going to school, he was paid \$3,000 Australian Dollars monthly (\$1,500.00 biweekly) by the Australian Government. This was not a "loan scheme." After graduation, you were required to return home and work for your county for at least 3 years before migrating back to Australia if you wanted to. Today, Liberia does not qualify for the Australia Awards Scholarship Program. Why? Because the Government through the Foreign Ministry has not requested the Australian Government to renew the program. Why can't they? The Ministry simply needs to write a justification why Liberians need to benefit from such program again. I am certain that the many graduates from Australian Universities could help the Ministry/Government to prepare the documentation for this process based on request from the Government.

AS I SEE IT, the Government of the Republic must investigate news about the scholarship program being a "scam" so that it can quickly inform the public on the truth because students have already applied and are applying. Many more will apply because they believe in the Government. Immediate steps should/must be taken to arrest this globally embarrassing situation. Adequate steps must also be taken to tell Liberians the truth. The Government needs to urgently address this embarrassment. Therefore, the Government needs to thoroughly investigate the veracity about this scholarship program to get the facts and share with the public as soon as possible. The Government and people of Liberia are not prepared to belief this information about a "fake scholarship" deal led by the Government. It is hoped that the Government will do the right thing.

About the Author: Prof. Tom Kaydor, Jr. holds a PhD from the Department of Government and European Studies, the New University, Slovenia where he researched *International Development and Diplomacy (with Security Aspects)*. His dissertation topic was *'Reconceptualizing Africa's Regional Integration for Peace and Sustainable Development'*. He also holds a Diploma in Leading Economic Growth from the Kennedy Graduate School, Harvard University, USA; and he holds other diplomas and certificates in professional fields from Italy, UK, Pakistan, China and Israel. Prof. Kaydor is equally an Adjunct Professor of Development Studies at the AME University Graduate School. Dr. Kaydor is an evidence-based researcher, a blogger, a columnist, and a published author. One can reach him via (kaydorth@ul.edu.lr or thkaydor@gmail.com).

MORE HEADLINE NEWS

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UMC commits to traditional practice

Bishop Quire urged members to dialogue constructively and positively on the Regionalization plan to move the church forward.

By Lincoln G. Peters

Monrovia, November 18, 2024: The United Methodist Church (UMC) has held a dialogue on the Regionalization Rectification Plan in Gbanga,

of the Regionalization Plan seeks to restructure the UMC's governance, allowing for more localized decision-making and responses tailored to the diverse needs of its global congregations. This initiative is part of the

to discuss and refine the church's approach to regionalization.

Meanwhile, there were several banners at the event displaying messages that affirmed the church's traditional beliefs.

Some of the banners read: "The United Methodist Church is not a gay church; We reject same-sex marriage;" and "The United Methodist Church of Liberia believes in the Bible and holds to traditional practices."

Remarking at the opening of the dialogue, Bishop Samuel J. Quire, Jr., head of the Liberia Annual Conference, highlighted the importance of the dialogue and denounced same-sex marriage in the UMC. According to him, the rectification process is crucial for ensuring that the church remains relevant and responsive to the needs of all its members.

Bishop Quire added that by embracing regionalization, they can empower local conferences to serve their communities more effectively. "I want to clarify this misconception regarding the church's stance on same-sex marriage," said Bishop Quire. "As you go through the education of regional legislation, our reorganization has nothing to do with same-sex marriage. The UMC is not a gay church," he noted.

Bishop Quire encouraged

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United Methodist Church Commits

Bong County. The UMC's dialogue on the Regionalization Rectification Plan was concluded in Gbarnga over the weekend. The dialogue aims to grant increased autonomy to regional conferences, enabling them to address unique challenges within their specific cultural and socio-economic contexts while maintaining the unity of the global church body. Furthermore, the objective

church's efforts to ensure greater inclusivity, cultural sensitivity, and operational efficiency across its ministries. The event, held from November 14-16, 2024, at the Saint John United Methodist Church, brought together church leaders, clergy, conference lay leaders, and district superintendents. The church leaders came from the Lofa River, Kokoyah, Weala, Jorquelle, Gbarnga, Tappita, and Gompa districts

NTAL urges aggrieved members to accept the court ruling

The NTAL president says the action of the aggrieved members is aimed at bringing the National Teachers' Association of Liberia into public disrepute.

By Lewis S. Teh

Monrovia, November 18, 2024: The President of the National Teachers' Association of Liberia (NTAL), Madam Mary Mulbah-Nyumah has urged aggrieved members of the association to accept the latest ruling of Sixth Judicial Circuit Civil Law Court for Montserrado County.

After the court ruled in favor of the leadership, Madam Mulbah-Nyumah urged the aggrieved party to accept the ruling to foster reconciliation, unity, and peace among all members.

On Monday, November 11, 2024, the assigned Judge of Sixth Judicial Circuit Civil Law Court, Cllr. Golda A. Bonah Elliott passed a final ruling in a case involving the aggrieved members and the NTAL

leadership. The case involved Mr. Samuel Y. Johnson, Sr., former Secretary General, and other aggrieved members of the NTAL and Madam Mulbah-Nyumah. The Court declined to honor a vote of no confidence against the National President earlier passed by the aggrieved members.

"The Court also declares that the Constitution of the NTAL has no provision of a vote of no

confidence," the ruling stated.

A copy of the court document in the possession of this paper also maintained that the National President being a member of the Representative Council, may be impeached by the Council based on evidence but subject to review by the National Convention. The National Convention is the highest decision-making body of the NTAL.

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NTAL Members Group Photo

Massacre survivors crave for War Crimes Court

In May this year, President Joseph Boakai issued an executive order calling for the establishment of the WECC.

By Kruah Thompson

Monrovia, November 18, 2024: Liberia's Massacre Survivors Association has issued a warning that it will seek revenge if the establishment of the War and Economic Crimes Court (WECC) fails.

The group said if no action is taken to investigate and prosecute those responsible for war and economic crimes in Liberia, it will seek revenge.

Peterson Sonyah, head of the Liberia Massacre Survivors Association, is a survivor who lost seven family members in the 1990 Lutheran Church massacre at the age of 16.

He spoke to the New Dawn in a phone interview, emphasizing the urgency of justice.

He pointed out that many perpetrators of these atrocities are either dying or aging, raising concern that survivors may not live long enough to see justice. "Who will testify if we all die?" he asked.

He argued that the next generation of survivors might resort to seeking revenge as their pain remains unaddressed. Bill Horace, a Liberian fighter,

for serious crimes have been cases prosecuted abroad."

He urged the government to act swiftly to deliver justice to those still suffering from the trauma of the civil war.

Between 1981 and 2003, Liberia endured two civil wars that devastated the country.

It was estimated that over 250,000 people were killed and others were displaced.

The civil crisis witnessed horrific war crimes, including mass rapes, amputations, and other atrocities.

In 2003, a comprehensive peace agreement was signed in Accra, Ghana, bringing an end to the civil war that lasted from 1981 to 2003.

The agreement called for the establishment of a Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC).

Subsequently, in 2005, the TRC began its work and, in its findings, recommended the establishment of a criminal tribunal to hold accountable those responsible for war crimes and atrocities.

Following this event, the Liberian Senate passed legislation requiring the establishment of the court, but it was never implemented.

Both former Presidents Ellen Johnson Sirleaf and George



and former Vision Bearer Bishop Sam Oroge made promises to establish the court, but they did not.

In May this year, President Joseph Boakai issued an executive order calling for the establishment of the WECC.

The executive order mandates the office to investigate, design, and outline the methodology, mechanisms, and processes for the establishment of the two courts.

Additionally, the office was tasked with recommending ways to secure funding for the court's operations.

It is reported here that the court will cost at least \$60 million.

This cost is said to cover expenses such as the construction of court buildings and detention facilities and salaries for judges, lawyers, and administrators.

It is reported that it will also cover security and witness protection, among others.

"The only steps toward justice

MORE HEADLINE NEWS

MORE HEADLINE NEWS

Starts from page 6 **NTAL urges aggrieved members**

"This Court hereby declares that as per the Constitution of the NTAL, the National Executive Committee is clothed with the power to mandate an audit of the accounts of the Association," the ruling added.

Madam Mulbah-Nyumah addressed a news conference on Friday, November 15, 2024, at the NTAL national headquarters.

Madam Mulbah-Nyumah lauded the court for its latest ruling, stressing that the ruling has finally settled the internal disputes within the institution.

"The court has already ruled and so we expect our colleagues who have had some disagreements to put aside those issues," she noted.

"Come back to the Association so we can sit around the table and solve our own problems," she stated.

The NTAL president emphasized respect for the rule of law by her colleagues and urged them to abide by the legal decision.

Asked about her leadership's preparedness should the aggrieved members take flight to the Supreme Court, she said, "We are ready to face any further legal proceedings if they take an appeal to the Supreme Court."

She expressed optimism of winning the aggrieved members at any court on the matter.

The aggrieved members had accused Madam Nyumah of illegally suspending and dismissing the Secretary-General, Mr. Samuel Y. Johnson, Sr.

They also alleged that the National president withdrew L\$625,000 from the NTAL account for her benefit.

Among other things, the aggrieved party further accused the president of refusing to conduct an audit of the organization's accounts from 2018-2022.

They also claimed that the 66th National Delegates Convention was allegedly hijacked and done illegally under the watch of Madam Nyumah.

But Madam Nyumah revealed

during the news conference that Johnson and the other members of the National Executive Committee who were impeached by the Association have continued to spread misinformation and falsehood about her leadership.

"Few months ago, Mr. Samuel Y. Johnson, Sr. and few impeached members of NEC from the 2018 National Delegates Convention appeared on several radio stations and online television platforms, spreading misinformation and falsehood," she explained.

She said their action is aimed at bringing the National Teachers' Association of Liberia into public disrepute.

"Let it be clear that the former Secretary General and other officials of the NTAL undermined and misled themselves," she stated.

She further indicated that the actions of those members misrepresent the institution and are not in the interest of the teachers and educational workers.

Thousands parade for GCK Liberia 2024

GLOBAL CRUSADE WITH KUMUYI or GCK Liberia 2024 gathers steam here, as churches across Monrovia parade in pre-crusade awareness exercises.

Monrovia, Liberia, November 18, 2024 - Monrovia, and its surrounding towns and cities, experienced a tsunami of believers on Friday 15th October 2024, as churches paraded in an octopus model from Brewerville, Bushrod Island, Gardnerville, Paynesville and Broad Street, the city center to the Samuel Kanyon Doe Sports Complex, where the GLOBAL CRUSADE WITH KUMUYI will be hosted for Liberia, from 28th November to 3rd of December 2024.

Liberia is gearing up for the apostolic visit of Pastor Dr. W.F. Kumuyi, the Prince of the Preachers. For over 5 decades, the founder and General Overseer of Deeper Life Ministry has served the Lord and led a church organization that has now spread into every continent

Pastor Kumuyi is bringing the word of God and free medical services to this nation.

His organization works with the Ministry of Health, sponsoring medical professionals, who will offer free medical treatments and diagnosis. He will be ministering specially to the youth, as GCK organizes exclusive programs for the young people of our nation. He also seeks to empower other preachers during the ministers' conference.

Pastor Soji Ajayi-Albert is National Coordinator of Deeper Life Ministry's operations in Liberia, and also the direct representative of Pastor Kumuyi in the nation. He encourages all Liberians to turn out for God's blessings, because God's servant, Dr. Kumuyi, is sent by the Lord at this time, for a reason.

He prayed for all churches that participated in the parade and the nation as a while, as he led the



of the earth.

Pastor Kumuyi is a wonderful preacher to his generation and our generation. As an octogenarian, he still preaches actively from state to state in Nigeria, from country to country in Africa and nation to nation in the continents of the earth. His messages and preaching sessions come with sign and wonders, miracles that only God can do. The nation of Liberia is so blessed to experience the grace upon this man.

parade alongside other members of the planning executives.

The media consultant for the GCK Liberia 2024, Bishop Sam B. Oroge, the apostolic shepherd of the Grace Churches, is one of the most excited persons to have the elder preacher in Liberia.

He told journalists in an interview that when he was just a boy, he never recovered from the move of God he witnessed through Dr. Kumuyi. *Editing by Jonathan Browne*

Starts from page 6 **UMC commits to traditional practice**

positive engagement while urging members to dialogue constructively and positively to move the church forward. "I proudly commend the Central Region for being committed and steadfast. Let's do everything in our power to defend and strengthen our church."

During his presentation, Cllr. Dr. Tolbert Nyeswah emphasized that the United Methodist Church of Liberia will uphold its traditional beliefs.

"With my sweat, blood, and the Bible, I will give my all to ensure we remain UMC."

"The United Methodist Church preaches the Bible, not just its Book of Discipline. Same-sex marriage is against our country's constitution, and

we will not accept it in our church."

Rev. Caleb S.G. Dormah, Chairperson of the Taskforce on the Regionalization Plan Rectification Committee, also reaffirmed the church's commitment to its traditional values.

"This regionalization rectification dialogue is very educative and will provide a foundation for regionalized worship according to our tradition, culture, and constitution," Rev. Dormah noted.

"We reject same-sex marriage, and the UMC is not a gay church," he concluded.

The dialogue featured plenary sessions, breakout discussions, and feedback from church members on implementing the plan.

Key facilitators included Cllr. Dr. Tolbert Nyeswah (Lay Leader), Dr. E. Julu Swen, and Rev. Caleb S.G. Dormah led the sessions at Saint John UMC in Central Liberia.

Topics covered included: The presentation of the General Conference 2024 on Regionalization, The UMC / Liberia Annual Conference's stance on same-sex marriage, and Liberia's constitutional laws regarding same-sex marriage.

The topics also covered Biblical perspectives on regionalization and its application within the Liberian context and the steps and processes for Regionalization Rectification within the global church setting.

Leadership crisis emerges in LCC
-Concerned churches call for election

The Liberia Council of Churches appears to be in a leadership crisis, as some member churches are calling for election.

Monrovia, Liberia, November 18, 2024 - What appears to be a potential crisis has hit the Liberia Council of Churches, with some concerned member churches of the LCC calling for an emergency assembly on November 26, 2024, at St. Peter's Lutheran Church Compound in Monrovia, to elect new leadership for the Council.

A press statement issued here

says all heads of member churches, including incumbent churches in leadership are to send delegates for the pending election.

The concerned churches have decreed, resolved, affirmed, and covenant that they no longer consider Rev. Christopher W. Toe as Secretary General of the LCC effective Friday, November 8, 2024, and will cease to do any and all businesses with him.

The press release notes that five delegates for full members; three delegates for associate members; and two delegates for fraternal members have been asked to attend the emergency assembly.

It continues that because the assembly is an emergency, all dues and registration for delegates will be suspended, but there will be a fundraising led by the Ecumenical Women Organization to support emerging new officers that will be elected for immediate induction.

The concerned churches: "The resolution from the concerned churches to the President of LCC

July 18, 2024, on counts of Constitutional violations that we recommended to him that the new Constitution that was adopted and still in a draft form should not be used and should be silenced."

According to the concerned churches, the LCC has allegedly ignored this and continues implementation, setting up an executive board chatroom where decisions are made and circulated.

They maintain that outcome of a meeting with Bishop Samuel Quire, Jr. the 1st VP of the LCC which was with the approval of President of LCC to discuss the resolution of these concerns were

not addressed, which is a continued violation of the LCC constitution by not holding a General Assembly and conducting unconstitutional executive board meetings.

They claim that if the new LCC constitution was adopted in May 2021 at an assembly held with the current leadership presiding, it is a 'Conflict of Interest breach' and mediocre on the part of the incumbent leadership to insist on its implementation; secondly, they argue that the intent is overshadowed prejudicially by an increment in LCC assessment dues by 400%, from \$300 to \$1200 that has made several member Churches to stay away.

Français

Ultimatum de 72 heures : la justice exige la présentation d'un présumé mercenaire guinéen

La Cour criminelle « A » de Monrovia, dirigée par le juge Roosevelt Willie, a ordonné au gouvernement libérien de produire dans un délai de 72 heures le présumé mercenaire guinéen Ibrahim Kahli Cheriff. Celui-ci, selon des informations portées à la

Le habeas corpus, instrument clé de l'État de droit, permet à un détenu de contester la légalité de sa détention et oblige les autorités publiques à fournir des explications sur son incarcération. L'ancien juge-associé Kabineh M. Ja'neh accuse de hauts responsables de la sécurité,

dimanche 3 novembre 2024, entre 3 h et 4 h du matin, une équipe dirigée par le colonel Coleman a pénétré de force dans l'établissement pénitentiaire pour extraire M. Cheriff sans l'autorisation du tribunal.

Me Ja'neh soutient que cette opération a été menée sur instruction de hauts responsables de la sécurité nationale, en violation flagrante des lois et des procédures judiciaires.

Face aux rumeurs affirmant que son client serait de nationalité guinéenne, Me Ja'neh a fermement réagi. « Bien que M. Cheriff ait passé une partie de son enfance en Guinée à cause de la guerre civile au Liberia, il reste un citoyen libérien », a-t-il déclaré.

Il accuse par ailleurs les forces de sécurité d'avoir saisi illégalement une somme importante d'argent ainsi que deux véhicules lors de la perquisition du domicile de son client. À ce jour, ces biens n'ont pas été restitués malgré des ordonnances claires du tribunal.

Me Ja'neh a dénoncé ce qu'il qualifie de « mépris systématique pour l'État de droit » sous l'administration Boakai. Il a juré d'utiliser tous

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connaissance du tribunal, aurait disparu de la prison centrale de Monrovia où il était détenu.

Cette décision intervient après le dépôt d'une requête en habeas corpus par les avocats de M. Cheriff. Le juge Willie a exigé que les autorités expliquent et justifient la disparition avant l'expiration de cet ultimatum.

notamment le ministre de la Justice Oswald N. Tweh et le chef de la police Gregory Coleman, d'avoir orchestré l'enlèvement de son client.

Selon Me Ja'neh, la maison de M. Cheriff a été perquisitionnée il y a plus de six semaines, et celui-ci avait été placé en détention à la prison centrale de Monrovia conformément à une décision de justice. Cependant, il affirme qu'aux premières heures du

Le Liberia n'a jamais rompu ses relations diplomatiques avec la Russie, affirme le gouvernement

Le gouvernement libérien a déclaré qu'il n'a jamais rompu ses relations diplomatiques avec la Russie depuis leur établissement en 1972, précisant que la fermeture de l'ambassade russe à Monrovia était une conséquence directe de la guerre civile prolongée et non une décision politique.

Le 14 novembre 2024, des médias locaux ont rapporté que la Russie envisage de rouvrir son ambassade au Liberia dans le cadre de ses efforts pour renforcer sa présence en Afrique. Ces informations faisaient suite à la participation du vice-ministre libérien de la Coopération internationale et de l'Intégration économique, Ibrahim Al-Bakri Nyei, au premier forum de partenariat Russie-Afrique, où il représentait

la ministre des Affaires étrangères, Sara Beysolow Nyanti, et le président Joseph Nyuma Boakai.

Lors de son intervention, le vice-ministre Nyei a exprimé l'intérêt du Liberia à collaborer avec la Russie dans divers domaines, notamment le

commerce, les échanges techniques, la consolidation de la paix et la lutte contre des enjeux mondiaux tels que le changement climatique, l'insécurité, la pauvreté et les inégalités.

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Éditorial

Pour des contributions de solidarité mondiale

Par Emmanuel Macron, Mia Amor Mottley et William Ruto

BAKOU - De Bridgetown jusqu'à Nairobi en passant par Paris, aucun pays n'échappe aux effets de plus en plus graves de la crise climatique. D'année en année, nous assistons à toujours plus de destructions liées au climat. L'année 2024 a été marquée par un triste ensemble de [nouveaux records](#) : les incendies au Chili ont ravagé plus de 14 000 habitations, les pluies extrêmes ont dévasté 478 villes au Brésil, et plongé dans la détresse près de deux millions de personnes au Bangladesh, tandis que le monde a connu au mois de juillet sa [journée la plus chaude](#) jamais enregistrée.

Alors qu'elle n'a contribué qu'à hauteur de 3 % aux émissions historiques de gaz à effet de serre, l'Afrique subit certaines des plus terribles catastrophes d'origine climatique. Ces événements extrêmes coûtent désormais au continent [15milliards\\$](#) chaque année, les sécheresses et les inondations liées au climat ayant provoqué en 2023 une insécurité alimentaire pour plus de 40 millions d'Africains.

Convaincus qu'aucun pays ne devrait avoir à choisir entre lutter contre la crise climatique et combattre la pauvreté, nous avons décidé de contribuer à une réforme ambitieuse de l'architecture financière internationale. Le [Pacte de Paris pour les peuples et la planète](#), l'[Initiative de Bridgetown](#) et la [Déclaration de Nairobi](#) visent chacun à fournir une pièce du puzzle. L'actuelle dynamique internationale nous donne de l'espoir : de nombreuses pistes de réforme ont été ouvertes, dont certaines produisent des résultats. De nombreux efforts supplémentaires demeurent toutefois nécessaires, et aucune option ne doit être négligée.

Un outil clé demeure aujourd'hui insuffisamment exploité : les « contributions de solidarité ». Les politiques de ce type sont nécessaires pour faire en sorte que chacun apporte sa juste contribution à ce qui doit être un effort mondial. Certains pans de l'économie restent largement sous-imposés alors même qu'ils polluent la planète. C'est le cas du transport maritime, de l'aviation, et bien entendu de l'industrie des combustibles fossiles, qui bénéficie de faibles taux d'imposition effectifs en raison de subventions publiques (dont le total s'élevait à environ [7000milliards\\$](#) en 2022, selon le Fonds monétaire international).

Ces contributions pourraient se révéler précieuses en allouant une part des recettes aux pays en voie de développement. Un prélèvement mondial de 0,1 % sur les transactions d'actions et d'obligations pourrait rapporter chaque année jusqu'à [418milliards\\$](#). Un prélèvement de 100 \$ par tonne de dioxyde de carbone issu du transport maritime pourrait rapporter [80milliards\\$](#) par an. Un prélèvement de 5 \$ par tonne de CO₂ émanant de l'extraction de combustibles fossiles pourrait rapporter tous les ans [210milliards\\$](#). Une redistribution même partielle au travers de contributions de solidarité garantirait une importante source de financements climatiques prévisibles pour ces pays, complétant ainsi les flux d'aide publique au développement sans alourdir les dettes existantes.

Les bienfaits de cette démarche seraient considérables. Malgré la vulnérabilité climatique de l'Afrique, malgré son immense potentiel dans l'exploitation des énergies renouvelables et des minéraux critiques, ainsi que son rôle de puits de carbone mondial, le continent reçoit beaucoup moins de financements climatiques que ce dont il a [besoin](#). Les contributions de solidarité pourraient apporter les fonds nécessaires pour stimuler un développement écologique en Afrique et à travers le monde, en particulier dans les pays à revenu faible et intermédiaire ainsi que les petits États vulnérables disposant d'une marge budgétaire insuffisante pour bâtir la résilience ou agir pour le climat.

Les auteurs sont coprésidents du Groupe de travail sur les contributions de solidarité mondiale.

Emmanuel Macron est président de la République française. Mia Amor Mottley est Première ministre de la Barbade. William Ruto est président de la République du Kenya.

Français

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Ultimatum de 72 heures

les moyens légaux pour garantir la libération de son client. Dans une déclaration publique, il a annoncé son intention d'organiser des manifestations contre les abus des forces de sécurité. « Ces protestations se poursuivront jusqu'à ce que le tribunal soit respecté et que M. Cheriff soit libéré sans condition », a-t-il affirmé. Cette affaire survient dans un contexte déjà tendu. Le 8 octobre 2024, M. Cheriff avait été libéré sous caution après que les avocats de l'État n'ont pas réussi à présenter des preuves

solides pour le poursuivre. Selon des sources judiciaires, les procureurs n'avaient soumis qu'une feuille volante et une somme d'argent comme pièces à conviction, prétendument liées à une tentative de renversement du président guinéen Mamady Doumbouya. Malgré cette libération conditionnelle, M. Cheriff a été à nouveau placé au centre de tensions juridiques et politiques, exacerbant les critiques contre l'ingérence des autorités dans le fonctionnement indépendant des tribunaux.

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Le Liberia n'a jamais rompu ses relations

Cependant, Jefferson Kojee, secrétaire général du principal parti d'opposition, le Congrès pour le changement démocratique (CDC), a critiqué cette démarche, affirmant qu'elle pourrait compromettre les relations stratégiques du Liberia avec les États-Unis.

Réagissant à ces accusations, le ministre de l'Information, Jerolinmek Mathew Piah, a rejeté ces affirmations comme étant erronées. Lors d'un point de presse tenu le 15 novembre 2024, il a précisé que le Liberia n'a jamais interrompu ses relations avec la Russie. Il a ajouté que les discussions mentionnées par le vice-ministre Nyei portaient uniquement sur la possibilité de rouvrir l'ambassade russe, une décision qui serait prise par le président Boakai, en tant que principal architecte de la politique étrangère du pays.

Le ministre Piah a également souligné que le gouvernement n'a publié aucune déclaration

affirmant un renforcement des relations bilatérales avec la Russie. « Depuis la fermeture de l'ambassade russe en raison de la guerre civile, nos relations bilatérales n'ont pas connu de changement significatif », a-t-il déclaré.

Concernant la participation du Liberia au sommet Russie-Afrique, Piah a expliqué qu'il s'agissait d'un engagement en tant que membre du bloc africain. Cet événement, qui a réuni 50 pays africains, a permis des échanges sur des questions économiques et politiques d'intérêt commun.

Le ministre a conclu en réaffirmant l'engagement du Liberia à promouvoir la paix et le développement sur le continent africain, tout en aspirant à une représentation accrue sur la scène internationale, notamment par le biais d'un siège non permanent au Conseil de sécurité des Nations Unies.

Le rapprochement avec la Russie suscite des inquiétudes : La société civile libérienne avertit des risques pour la stabilité nationale



Une organisation de la société civile libérienne, Solidarity and Trust for a New Day (STAND), a exprimé de profondes préoccupations concernant le récent rapprochement diplomatique entre le Liberia et la Russie, le qualifiant de potentiellement dangereux à long terme.

Dans un communiqué publié à Monrovia le 13 novembre 2024, STAND a mis en garde contre l'influence croissante de la Russie en Afrique, soulignant que ses intérêts stratégiques pourraient introduire des complexités géopolitiques susceptibles de compromettre la sécurité nationale et le développement économique du Liberia.

Ces inquiétudes font suite aux déclarations de la délégation libérienne, conduite par le vice-ministre de la Coopération internationale et de l'Intégration économique, le Dr Ibrahim Nyei, lors de la Conférence ministérielle inaugurale du Forum de partenariat Russie-Afrique à Sotchi. Selon STAND, cette délégation aurait exprimé l'intention du Liberia de renforcer ses relations diplomatiques avec la Russie, un geste perçu comme un changement majeur et inattendu de la politique étrangère libérienne.

L'organisation a souligné que ce réalignement pourrait compromettre les alliances historiques du Liberia avec les États-Unis et leurs partenaires européens. Ces alliances ont été essentielles pour fournir au Liberia des milliards de dollars d'aide et garantir sa sécurité et son développement pendant des décennies.

« Ce virage diplomatique inattendu soulève des questions fondamentales sur l'impact à long terme sur la sécurité et l'économie de notre pays », a déclaré STAND.

STAND a également critiqué la demande de coopération en matière de sécurité adressée à la Russie, notant que

l'implication de Moscou dans le Sahel avait été largement condamnée pour son soutien à des régimes militaires et ses effets déstabilisateurs sur la gouvernance démocratique en Afrique de l'Ouest.

Par ailleurs, STAND a rappelé que le Liberia avait récemment rompu ses relations avec la Russie et condamné fermement l'invasion de l'Ukraine. Le rétablissement soudain de relations diplomatiques est perçu comme un revirement stratégique majeur qui nécessite des clarifications immédiates quant à ses répercussions possibles sur la stabilité et la souveraineté du pays.

L'organisation a appelé le gouvernement libérien, par l'intermédiaire du ministre des Affaires étrangères, à fournir des explications claires et transparentes sur les engagements pris récemment en Russie. STAND a insisté sur la nécessité de démontrer en quoi ce partenariat sert les objectifs stratégiques à long terme du Liberia en matière de sécurité et de développement économique.

« Le Liberia doit éviter de devenir un pion dans les rivalités géopolitiques des grandes puissances », a averti STAND, insistant sur la priorité à accorder aux intérêts nationaux.

Enfin, STAND a exprimé sa préoccupation face aux allégations persistantes de violations des droits humains associées à la Russie. L'organisation a exhorté le gouvernement libérien à adopter une approche prudente et responsable pour préserver la stabilité, la souveraineté et la prospérité démocratique du pays.

La communauté des personnes handicapées réclame une part du fonds de bourses Nekoteh

La Commission nationale sur le handicap (NCD) exige que 10 % du fonds de bourses Nekoteh, en partenariat avec le gouvernement libérien, soit

dollars alloué au programme de bourses Nekoteh, en partenariat avec le gouvernement libérien, soit

réservé aux personnes handicapées.

Samuel S. Dean, Sr., directeur exécutif de la Commission nationale sur le handicap (NCD), a appelé le gouvernement libérien à allouer 10 % des fonds du programme de bourses Nekoteh, d'un montant de 25 millions de dollars. Ce programme vise à soutenir les étudiants libériens dans les domaines des sciences, de la technologie, de l'ingénierie, des mathématiques (STEM) et de l'intelligence artificielle (IA) aux États-Unis et au Canada.

Lancé par le président Joseph Nyuma Boakai le 7 novembre 2024, ce programme, initialement conçu comme un prêt sans garantie, a suscité des préoccupations quant à sa viabilité financière et à la transparence de sa gestion. Plusieurs voix se sont élevées, dont celle de l'activiste libérien Martin Kollie, pour remettre en question la

légitimité de ce programme et la crédibilité des montants demandés par le groupe Nekoteh, qui gère l'initiative.

Le ministre de l'Information, Jerolinmek Mathew Piah, a annoncé que les responsables du programme arriveraient en Libérie aujourd'hui, le 15 novembre 2024, pour clarifier des questions concernant sa légalité. Il a précisé que la ministre des Affaires étrangères, Sara Beysolow Nyanti, également doyenne du Cabinet, accompagnera les responsables de Nekoteh lors d'une conférence de presse au ministère de l'Information, de la Culture, des Affaires et du Tourisme.

Le budget de la NCD a considérablement augmenté, passant de moins d'un million à un million de dollars, permettant ainsi de soutenir 78 organisations de personnes handicapées. Par ailleurs, l'organisme prévoit de soutenir plus de 300 personnes handicapées par le biais de programmes d'autonomisation, tout en couvrant les frais de scolarité de 150 étudiants, allant du secondaire à l'université.



ARTICLE

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Liberia: The Curse of Leadership: National Legislature*By Seltue Karweaye*

The enduring leadership challenge remains a significant issue across Africa, with Liberia standing out as a particularly striking example of this phenomenon. For nearly two decades, Liberia's democratic landscape has been dominated by the same political figures, primarily from the Unity Party (UP) and the Congress for Democratic Change (CDC). This long-standing political rivalry has permeated all levels of governance: legislative, executive, and judicial.

Despite this established political framework, the reality is stark: Liberia is listed among the ten poorest countries globally, as indicated in the April 2024 report by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Economic Outlook. Furthermore, Transparency International's 2023 Corruption Perception Index reveals that Liberia ranks among Africa's top 20 most corrupt nations.

The pressing questions surrounding Liberia's plight prompt an urgent debate: Are we indeed witnessing a curse of leadership in Liberia? Is ineffective leadership the most significant hurdle to our national development? Is corruption the critical factor undermining progress? As citizens, what concrete steps can we take to confront these formidable challenges? Is there a plausible endpoint to this cycle of mismanagement and corruption? Are we approaching a tipping point where change becomes necessary and inevitable? And most importantly, is there still hope for a brighter future?

In the coming articles, I will delve deeper into the current leadership landscape in Liberia, beginning with an examination of our lawmakers and extending to other key figures in government. These individuals have been entrusted with the responsibility to govern and represent our interests, following the elections that brought them to power and various appointments that filled important positions. Alarming, many of these leaders receive considerable funding from the government, yet reports suggest that they often utilize these funds for extravagant personal expenditures while also misappropriating additional resources meant for public use.

This brief overview merely scratches the surface of the systemic issues we face. I hope it inspires thoughtful reflection and encourages dialogue about the future direction of Liberia and the potential for genuine reform. As we explore these complex topics, I invite you to engage with the material and contribute your insights on how we can collectively pave the way for a more just and prosperous Liberia. In the recently approved 2024 recast budget, a substantial allocation of 57.9 million has been designated for the National Legislature. This funding represents approximately 1.03% of the total population, which stands at 5.6 million people. This raises an important question: where are the lawmakers from the Coalition for Democratic Change (CDC), the Unity Party (UP), the Independents, and other political groups? It seems that despite their differing platforms, they often act in unison, suggesting that they are identical twins.

The lawmakers currently earn more than \$120,000 in gross annual salaries and benefits. In July of last year, a budget of \$45,000 was designated for each of the 103 lawmakers, allowing them to purchase expensive new vehicles every three years. This raises the question: which roads will they be driving these luxury vehicles on? Will they continue to traverse the same worn and poorly maintained roads that the public has been using?

The Lawmaker's Budget in Post-Conflict Liberia

- FY 2006-2007: US \$ 9,456,230
- FY 2007-2008: US \$15,615,456
- FY 2008-2009: US \$17,964,000
- FY 2009-2010: US \$19,145,624
- FY 2010-2011: US \$22,846,709
- FY 2011-2012: US \$ 29,722,670
- FY 2012-2013: US \$35,166,002
- FY 2013-2014: US \$38,776,14
- FY 2014-2015: US \$41,937,423

- FY 2015-2016: US \$54,027,021
- FY 2016-2017: US \$44,113,357
- FY 2017-2018: US \$44,780,997
- FY 2018-2019: US \$42,488,843
- FY 2019-2020: US \$38,816,203
- FY 2020-2021: US \$38,816,203
- FY 2021 Special Budget: US \$39,616,438
- FY 2022: US \$65,683,920
- FY 2023: US \$67,963,832
- FY 2024 Recast Budget: US \$57,915,145

If our representatives and senators are compensated with such substantial salaries and benefits, it raises the question of whether we can truly expect them to defend our interests and represent the needs of the public effectively. This disconnect is evident in their decision to ignore the significant recurrent expenditures outlined in the national budget submitted by the president. Instead of addressing these financial challenges, they increased the overall budget. This suggests a willingness to prioritize fiscal expansion despite deficits over the responsible management of public funds, which could ultimately impact the quality of service and support we receive as constituents.

Corruption has become pervasive in Liberia, so much so that it has earned the country a notorious nickname reflecting this reality. Just two weeks ago, the current Speaker of the House of Representatives, facing a tumultuous tenure, raised serious concerns regarding the budget formulation process during a segment on Spoon Talk, a popular local talk show. During his appearance, he disclosed that members of the 54th Legislature's Joint Committee on Ways, Means, and Finance were scheduled to convene in Room 1026 at the Boulevard Palace Hotel to engage in discussions about the national budget. Koffa explained that this meeting would involve various government ministries and agencies, which are typically invited to assess the initial budget allocations proposed by the Ministry of Finance. However, Koffa did not hold back in his critique, revealing a troubling practice among some lawmakers. He noted that certain legislators planned to inflate the budget figures intentionally, with the ulterior motive of securing kickbacks for themselves—financial rewards that would come at the expense of public resources.

What is particularly noteworthy is that Koffa, who previously held the role of Deputy Speaker in the 54th Legislature, only chose to voice these concerns publicly at this critical juncture. His decision to speak out coincided with ongoing efforts to remove him from his position as the Speaker of the 55th National Legislature, raising questions about the motivations behind his revelations and the timing of his statements. This situation exemplifies the challenges facing governance in Liberia and the complex dynamics at play within its political landscape.

On the evening of November 10, 2024, an alarming act of vandalism struck Liberia's Capitol Building, creating significant concern among lawmakers and citizens alike. The Joint Chambers, which serves as the venue for the Majority Bloc's regular sessions, was discovered in complete disarray. Broken chairs littered the floor, and extensive damage was evident throughout the area, raising questions about security protocols within the Capitol.

In the wake of this incident, Capitol security forces have launched a thorough investigation to determine the motives behind the vandalism and identify those responsible. Early reports indicate that the disturbance may be linked to Speaker Fonati Koffa's supporters, who have been facing increasing scrutiny and pressure related to his leadership and political decisions.

The timing of this vandalism is particularly noteworthy, as it coincides at the time the impending visit of a high-profile delegation from the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS). This delegation was expected to examine the underlying causes of the ongoing legislative standoff in Liberia, evaluate the potential implications for the country's stability, and engage with a variety of stakeholders to foster dialogue and seek a peaceful resolution to the current political crisis. The convergence of these events underscores a heightened atmosphere of tension in the nation's capital as various factions grapple with issues of governance and

representation.

Liberia has faced numerous challenges throughout its history, and if we do not take action to confront the systemic issues at play, it may continue to struggle indefinitely. The country is grappling with a severe infrastructure deficit, which hinders economic development and everyday life for its citizens. Additionally, Liberia bears a significant debt burden of \$2.5 billion, a figure that underscores the financial difficulties we face as a nation.

In stark contrast, the combined budget for the House of Representatives and the Senate is an astonishing \$57.9 million. This allocation raises important questions about the value we receive from our elected officials. What exactly do these leaders contribute to warrant such a high level of compensation for simply sitting in sessions to cast "aye" or "nay" votes? It becomes even more troubling when we consider the broader context: in a country where millions of people are facing hunger and poverty is not just prevalent but increasing, it is crucial to scrutinize how our resources are being allocated. The disparity between the needs of the people and the financial priorities of those in power calls for urgent action.

How did we come to elect these individuals to positions of leadership in our national affairs? What process led us to choose those who persistently fight among themselves, escalate waste, and increase government spending on frivolous expenditures? It is concerning that many of these lawmakers appear to be more focused on accumulating personal wealth than on serving the public interest. Their actions raise questions about their commitment to effective governance and accountability, as they seem to prioritize their financial gain over the needs and well-being of the constituents they are supposed to represent. This situation calls for a thorough examination of our electoral system and the values that guide our leaders.

What steps should we take to address the issues we face? First and foremost, we need to demand a substantial reduction in the exorbitant salaries that our National Legislature officials receive; a proposed cut of at least 50% would be a meaningful start. The current struggle between the so-called majority and the so-called minority blocs in the House of Representatives is not focused on serving the needs and interests of the public. Instead, it reveals a deeper issue: the legislators are primarily motivated by their selfish interests. This constant tug-of-war often results in decisions that prioritize political gain over the welfare of the constituents they are meant to represent. Both sides seem more invested in defeating one another than in addressing the pressing issues that affect the lives of everyday citizens. Also, the proposed cut of at least 50% is not merely about saving money, but about aligning the compensation of our legislators with the realities faced by everyday citizens.

Citizen participation in the governance process or nation-building is key to growth and development. The educated and informed individuals must actively reach out to the average citizen. The masses play a vital role in this equation; their engagement is essential for fostering change. If we do not actively ensure their involvement, we risk returning to a state of oppression, where the interests of the few overshadow the needs of the many. Often, the 'ordinary man' remains silent and unaware of the political dynamics at play, while the 'enlightened' individuals fail to adequately engage with them or take meaningful actions that reflect their concerns. This disconnect cannot continue. When we take the initiative to educate and empower everyday people, they will find their voice and stand up for their rights when they reach their breaking point. Ultimately, the real power resides in the streets and among the grassroots. It is there, in our communities, that collective action can occur, and true change can be realized. We must mobilize efforts at the local level to ensure that every citizen feels empowered and equipped to advocate for their interests.

Let us recognize that this is just the beginning of a journey toward accountability, transparency, and renewed hope for all Liberians. A Better Liberia is Possible! I rest my pen.

Boakai not playing

-Dismissals, suspensions and resignations galore

In just ten months, at least 13 officials have been affected by dismissals, suspensions, or forced to resign.

By Othello B. Garblah

Monrovia, November 18, 2024/ President Joseph N. Boakai is not playing. In just ten months of his administration, at least 13 officials have faced his wrath through dismissals, suspensions, and forced resignations. Whether his actions are selective or not is another debate altogether. However, they are unprecedented in the country's recent history, especially in less than one year of a new administration. It all started just 7 months into President Boakai's

administration when he dismissed Mr. James Armah Massaquoi, the then Deputy Minister for Administration at the Ministry of Education, for administrative reasons and appointed Atty. Nyekeh Y. Forkpa. Months after Mr. Massaquoi's dismissal, Mr. Boakai turned his attention to the Ministry of Finance Development Planning, where then Minister Boimah Kamara had been absent from office for a protracted period due to illness. Sources say President Boakai wasted no time in asking Mr. Kamara to resign since he was not in the right frame of mind to serve at the time. Thus, he

was the first to resign. As if that was not enough, former Commerce Minister Amin Modad, acting in consultation with the Liberia Revenue Authority Commissioner General Dorbor Jallah, violated the 2024 National Budget law to satisfy Mr. Modad's taste for luxury by purchasing a USD98,000 vehicle for him. LRA Commissioner Jallah will soon justify his conniving with former Minister Modad before a Senate hearing committee, saying he followed the example of his predecessors. For weeks, Mr. Modad had been accused of purchasing a luxurious SUV for his official use at the cost of US150K. The

vehicle was initially alleged to be a gift from MedTech Scientific Liberia Limited, a Dubai-based subsidiary, to purchase a car valued at US\$150,000. The Liberia Revenue Authority (LRA) and the Ministry of Commerce and Industry (MoCI) will later provide conflicting information regarding the vehicle purchase. Days later, in the luxury car saga, Modad tendered his

dismissal of three officials from the Ministry of State for Presidential Affairs. The trio, Mr. Lamine Sharpe, Director of Budget/Finance; Atty. Harry B. Sando, Financial Comptroller, and Mr. Mohammed S. Kromah, Assistant Minister for Human Resources, were dismissed after an investigation linked them to a payroll padding scheme at the Ministry of State. Their dismissal followed an investigation by the Liberia Anti-



Starts from Back page **Nekotech bows amid public outcry**

labeled a national disgrace. Former Assistant Minister of Information, Cultural Affairs, and Tourism, Matthew Nyanplu, took to his Facebook page on Friday to condemn the scholarship deal, calling it "a national disgrace" and a "terrible mistake." His comments reflect widespread skepticism about the program's legitimacy and its potential impact on Liberia. Following a meeting with students about Nekotech's Work Study Program, a non-collateral education loan initiative, Rev. Dr. Ocansey spoke to reporters at the EJS Ministerial Complex over the weekend. She confirms that "the eight people who have paid will be fully refunded" and emphasizes that Nekotech honors its commitments. She also clarifies that the US\$236 fee would be waived for students in Liberia, reaffirming the organization's dedication to its mission and the students' best interests. She further highlights that the non-collateral education loan program is designed to support bachelor's degree holders with a GPA of 3.0 and above, aged 25 to 40. The program will enable these individuals to pursue master's degrees in fields such as Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM), Artificial Intelligence (AI) at renowned institutions in the United States and Canada. It is aligned with the Government of Liberia's ARREST Agenda, which is soon to be expanded into the ARREST Agenda for Inclusive Development. The agenda prioritizes human capacity building and seeks to address the nation's growing need for a skilled workforce in key

Government of Liberia, which has been impressed by Nekotech's successful track record in other African countries. With operations in Malawi, Ghana, Sierra Leone, Zambia, and beyond, Nekotech's impact has been recognized for its contributions to education and technology. Based on this proven success, the Liberian government has invited Nekotech to bring its expertise to Liberia, aiming to help the country become part of the broader African prosperity story. Dr. Ocansey expressed her enthusiasm for the program, stating, "We are looking at Liberia becoming the beacon of hope for Africa through this program." On November 6, 2024, President Joseph Nyuma Boakai, Sr. officially launched a groundbreaking twenty-five million dollar no-collateral student loan program in partnership with Nekotech. The announcement was made during a ceremony at the Tea House, Executive Mansion in Monrovia. The initiative aims to empower over 250 promising Liberian students by offering them access to higher education in high-demand fields such as STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics), Business, and Artificial Intelligence (AI) at renowned institutions in the United States and Canada. It is aligned with the Government of Liberia's ARREST Agenda, which is soon to be expanded into the ARREST Agenda for Inclusive Development. The agenda prioritizes human capacity building and seeks to address the nation's growing need for a skilled workforce in key

sectors. The no-collateral loan scheme represents a transformative opportunity for young Liberians who have previously faced financial barriers to pursuing advanced education abroad. By eliminating the need for collateral, the program opens doors to higher education that would otherwise remain closed for many students. "Today marks an extraordinary occasion for Liberia," President Boakai said during the launch. "Through this partnership, Nekotech is investing in Liberia's future by enabling our young men and women to realize their dreams." He continued, "This initiative will allow students to acquire the skills, knowledge, and leadership qualities that will be pivotal for our nation's growth and prosperity." The President the expressed gratitude to Nekotech and its partners for their commitment to Liberia's development. He praised the program for removing the financial obstacles that often come with collateral-based student loans, thus expanding access to high-quality education for Liberia's youth. Students applying to enroll will return equipped to contribute to Liberia's economic and social development. Addressing some the beneficiaries, the President urged them to take full advantage of the opportunity. "Seize this opportunity, study hard, put your all into it, engage deeply, and return with a commitment to give back to Liberia," he said. He reminded them that their success would symbolize the success of the entire nation. *Editing by Jonathan Browne*

resignation a day after President Boakai slammed him during a press stakeout upon his return to the country. President Boakai said during that press stakeout that he could even ride a wheelbarrow to work. In the past, Modad would have easily driven his vehicle up and down the streets of Monrovia. This was the case under previous administrations, where some public officials acted with impunity, enjoying the protection of the precedence despite public outcry over their involvement in alleged corruption, misappropriation, or acts incompatible with their offices. It would have been considered early days to act. Meanwhile, Boakai's ruthlessness continued over the weekend when he slapped Assistant Minister Matthew Nyanplu of the Ministry of Information, Culture, and Tourism with indefinite suspension without pay for his comment about the NEKOTECH scholarship scheme. Nyanplu wasted no time by responding with his immediate resignation. Nyanplu's suspension and subsequent resignation

Corruption Commission (LACC), which revealed their participation in the payroll padding scheme. A few weeks before their dismissal, three officials at the Liberian Refugee Repatriation and Resettlement Commission (LRRC), namely LRRC Executive Director Mr. Patrick Worzie and his two deputies, Mr. Richard Hoff and Mr. AJ Armah Karneh, were suspended and subsequently turned over to the Liberia Anti-Corruption Commission for investigation. These men were accused of engaging in questionable financial transactions at the Liberian returnees' agency, allegedly taking bread from returning refugees' mouths. Just around the same time, the President announced the appointment of a new Executive Director of the Liberian Drugs Enforcement Agency (LDEA) while relieving the entity's Executive Director, Col. Abraham Kromah, and his two deputies, Mr. Hassan Fadiga and Mr. Gbawou Kowou. The three men were suspended for months following allegations linking them to fights over drug money. However, the committee investigating the incident at the LDEA has yet to confirm these allegations.

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Nekotech bows amid public outcry

-Promises to refund Students' money

By Stephen G. Fellajuah (contributor)

In response to growing public concern, Nekotech's Executive Chairperson, Rev. Dr. Princess Asie Kabuki Ocansey, bows here, promising to refund students

countries, however, are still required to pay the fee. Rev. Dr. Ocansey explains that the "redline fee" covers essential services that Nekotech provides, including training students on how to craft professional documents

they need to succeed academically and professionally.

Nekotech, aware of challenges students face when pursuing education abroad, does not want students to arrive in the United States without proper preparation. To address this, the program also guides students in preparing for English proficiency tests. Instead of the more expensive IELTS, which costs US\$300, Nekotech offers training for the Duolingo English Test, which costs only US\$65. This provides a more affordable option for Liberian students to meet the language requirements for U.S. institutions, she says.

However, the program has come under serious criticism since its launch here, with many describing it as a scam and accusing the Government of Liberia of making a grave mistake by partnering with Nekotech. The backlash intensified following the announcement of a US\$25 million scholarship deal, which some critics have



Rev. Dr. Princess Asie Kabuki Ocansey

who paid US\$236. This amount, originally collected as a "redline fee" for services related to a purported scholarship application process, has now been waived for students in Liberia. Students in other

such as CVs and cover letters. "We also teach them how to write a statement of purpose and develop a five-year economic development plan," she adds. These services, according to her, are designed to equip students with tools

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