



CENTRAL BANK OF LIBERIA **MARKET BUYING AND SELLING RATES**

LIBERIAN DOLLARS PER US DOLLAR

| DATE | BUYING | SELLING |
|---------------------------|----------------------|----------------------|
| MONDAY, DECEMBER 09, 2024 | L\$178.5861/US\$1.00 | L\$180.2245/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, CBI

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MONDAY, DECEMBER 09, 2024

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africanews Sergei Bobylev/TASS Host Photo Agency

Burkina Faso's Ibrahim Traore, left, with Russian President

Vladimir Putin at the Russia Africa summit - Copyright ©



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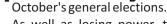
becomes record fifth African nation to see opposition victory this year Burkina Faso leader names new premier

DECEMBER 09

hana's Vice-President Mahamudu Bawumia has conceded defeat in Saturday's elections, congratulating opposition leader and former President John Mahama on his victory. Early results suggest this could be one of the heaviest defeats in decades for the New Patriotic

governments has now also brought opposition victories in Botswana, Mauritius, Senegal and the selfdeclared republic of Somaliland.

Even beyond these results, almost every election held in the region this year under reasonably democratic conditions, has seen the governing party lose a significant number of



As well as losing power, the BDP went from holding 38 seats in the 69-strong parliament to almost being wiped out.

After winning only four seats, the BDP is now one of the smallest parties in parliament and faces an uphill battle to remain politically relevant.

There was also a landslide defeat for the governing party in Mauritius in November, where the Alliance Lepep coalition, headed by Pravind Jagnauth of the Militant Socialist Movement, won only 27% of the vote and was reduced to just two seats in parliament.

With its rival Alliance du Changement sweeping 60 of the 66 seats available, Mauritius has experienced one of the most complete political transformations imaginable.

Senegal and the self-declared republic of Somaliland also saw opposition victories.

In the case of Senegal, the political turnaround was just as striking as in Botswana, albeit in a different way. Just weeks ahead of the election, the main opposition leaders Bassirou Diomaye Faye and Ousmane Sonko were languishing in jail as the government of President Macky Sall abused its power in a desperate bid to avert defeat.

After growing domestic and international pressure led to Faye and Sonko being released, Faye went on to win the presidency in the first round of voting, with the government's candidate winning only 36% of the vote. -BBC

the government without providing Faso's the government any reason, Burkina Faso's ruling military junta on Saturday appointed a new prime minister. Rimtalba Jean Emmanuel

Ouedraogo, communications minister and spokesperson for the previous government, has been named as the country's new premier.

Military leader, Ibrahim Traore, made the announcement in a presidential decree read on state television on Saturday.

A journalist by trade and a close ally of Traore, Ouedraogo was formerly editor-in-chief and then director of the country's state television.

No reason was given for the dismissal of former Prime Minister Apollinaire

day after dissolving democratically elected governments over security issues.

However, since the latest coup, military leaders have struggled to end Burkina Faso's security challenges, the very reason it claims had prompted it to take power.

Growing attacks by extremists linked to al-Qaeda and the Islamic State group have devastated the country.

Thousands have been killed in recent years and more than two million people have been displaced, half of them children. Analysts believe around half of Burkina Faso's territory remains outside of government control.

The country's transitional government has been running under a constitution approved by a national assembly that included army officers, civil society groups, and traditional and religious leaders.

Under pressure from the regional bloc, ECOWAS, the



Party (NPP), which had been in power since 2016.

Voters were angered by a combination of the rising cost of living, a series of high-profile scandals and a major debt crisis that prevented the government from delivering on key promises.

As a result, the NPP may have dropped below 45% of the presidential vote for the first time since 1996.

Ghana's vote brings to an end a remarkable 12 months in African politics, which have seen five transfers of power - more than ever before. This "annus horribilis" for seats.

The trend is likely to continue into 2025 and will cause trouble for leaders such as Malawian President Lazarus Chakwera, whose country goes to the polls in September.

One of the most striking aspects of the elections that have taken place in 2024 is that many have resulted in landslide defeats for governments that have previously appeared to have a strong grip on power - including in countries that have never before experienced a change at the top.

The Botswana Democratic Party (BDP) that had ruled the country since independence in 1966 was crushed in

Ivory Coast: 26 killed in n

deadly crash involving two minibuses in Ivory Coast killed at least 26 people and left 28 others injured on Friday. The collision took place in Brokoua, a village in the country's west-central region, according to the Ministry of Transport.

Authorities confirmed that ten of the victims perished in a fire that erupted after the crash. Local media shared harrowing footage showing both vehicles engulfed in flames.

The Ministry of Transport has launched an investigation into the cause of the crash. The incident is the latest in a series of deadly accidents that have plagued Ivory Coast's roads in recent years.

"The Minister of Transport urges all road users to be more vigilant," the ministry said in a statement.

According to officials

accidents in Ivory Coast are common due to poor road conditions and reckless driving, with over 1,000 people killed annually in crashes.

This crash follows another tragic accident last month in which 21 people were killed and at least 10 injured. Earlier this year, a tanker truck collided with a bus in offenders. - Africanews northern Ivory Coast, killing 13 people and injuring 44.

In response to the growing number of road fatalities, authorities introduced a point-based driver's license system in 2023. Drivers start with 12 points, which are deducted for traffic violations. Speed cameras have also been installed along major roads to monitor and fine





Joachim Kyelem de junta had set a goal to conduct power in September 2022.

military rule of Lieutenant presidential term. Colonel Paul-Henri Sandaogo Damiba about eight months after it had staged a coup to remove Kaboré.

The country is one of several West African nations where the military has recently taken over, capitalising on popular discontent with previous Africanews

Tambela, who was an election in July 2024 to return appointed interim premier the country to democratic rule. soon after Traore seized However, in May it extended its transition term for five more The junta ousted the years, the duration of one

Alongside Niger and Mali, which have also experienced coups, Burkina Faso has severed ties with long-standing Western and democratically elected regional partners, including President Roch Marc ECOWAS, which they all quit early this year.

The three countries have banded together to form the Alliance of Sahel States and are battling jihadi violence that first erupted in northern Mali in 2012. -

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EDITORIAL

Giving coins to children is dangerous

Children in homes across Liberia are not safe enough. Not least with newly minted 5 and 10 Liberian Dollar coins in their reach. This is because most kids take these coins as toys and usually placed them in their mouths, and eventually swallow them with health implications.

Children are exposed to coins both in homes, school campuses and outside where the metals are given as change when they go buy bread, juice, candy, biscuit and other snacks during recess.

The situation is scaring, leaving a health practitioner in Monrovia to alarm recently, alerting the public especially, parents. A concerned X-ray technician, Jackson Coleman, revealed that he has handled 28 cases, and 12 of them were children requiring surgery after swallowing coins.

The alarming discovery is sparking growing concern among medical professionals and parents alike, as the ingestion of coins might lead to serious health risks, including choking, internal injury, or damage to the digestive system and other organs of the body.

As a parent, imagine yourself one day returning home from work or from business activity and being confronted with situation involving your little kid swallowing pieces of coins that could lead to unforeseen consequences. Surely this is not! an experience you want to have.

The 5 and 10 Liberian dollar coins are part of a new family of currency issued by the Central Bank of Liberia, as part of a currency reform. The coins are made of nickel-plated steel and feature a latent image security feature.

Parents are being advised to be extra vigilant and ensure that these coins, which have become more common in daily transactions, are kept out of reach of children. This means they should not be kept or placed loosely in homes that children can easily access.

The Central Bank of Liberia is yet to comment on the situation, but we think there is a need for public education on radio, in communities and schools about keeping coins from reach of children to minimize risks.

All hands should be brought on deck to advert a potential health problem for our children. Remember, 'a stitch in time saves nine.'

The coins are necessary to make daily transactions easier especially in market places and when riding taxi or commercial tricycles. But keeping them away from children especially minors, is safer.



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By Togba-Nah Tipoteh

Pass Not Impasse

here is still plenty talk going around these days about what is happening in the House of Lawmakers. Therefore, it is still important to talk about the plenty talk and to present the solution to the problem in the talk. Some of the talk is giving some people heart attacks and they die because of heart failures or what is also called cardiac arrests. Most of this talk is coming from the National Legislature of Liberia where people are sent to make laws to stop plenty talking but they are busy promoting actions that do not follow the Constitution of Liberia. In fact, these lawmakers who have become lawbreakers could be arrested and taken to court because their actions violate the Law when someone gets sick or dies as the result of their plenty talking.

This plenty talking is about removing the Speaker of the House of Representatives and Presiding Officer of the National Legislature from office. To do this, the Law says that the would be removers should have the Speaker to submit himself to what is called Due Process and present the case for the removal. If they were to win their case, then the Speaker would be removed. They should pass Laws that the people want instead of creating an impasse, as seen in the impasse created about the removal of the Speaker and Presiding Officer. But they are running after money and not running after Justice. They should be compelled by the Law to sit and say what they want to do. But they do not want to follow the Law because they are running after money rather than Justice.

To run after Justice is what they are being paid by taxpayers to do. But they are autocratic rather than democratic, as seen in their violation of the Constitution of Liberia. Their bad and illegal practices are being followed by the taxpayers through the awareness raising that is taking place by the people who love Liberia. This awareness raising is working well, as seen in the non-election of nearly all of the Legislators who wanted to be reelected on October 10, 2023. Many of these Legislators have still not learned correctly their lessons. They will be outvoted in the ensuing elections.

They will be outvoted because the awareness raising is working well, as also seen in the exposure of the corrupt practices of the National Elections Commission (NEC) of Liberia. Notice that NEC did not cheat as mush during the last election because of this awareness raising. This explains the world record voting by 76.86 per cent of the Liberian people of voting age, Of the youth group, which comprises sixty per cent of the voting population, forty per cent of them voted. The voting group of youth, most of whom are called zogoes, are from the age of 18 to the age of 35.

Zogoes or no zogoes, the awareness raising is transforming the unfair prevailing electoral system into the fair enduring electoral system. It is only through this transformation that persons with good records can get elected to bring in the system of Justice, the indispensable ingredient for Peace and Progress in Liberia and in any other country. It is through this awareness raising that the people of Liberia will pass this test that is giving us this impasse in the House of the Lawmakers.

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MONDAY

by Guillermo Ortiz

EXICO CITY - After winning the US presidential election last month, it did not take Donald Trump very long to announce that he will impose import tariffs of 25% on all goods from Mexico and Canada, as well as adding ten percentage points to all existing tariffs on goods from China. While the stated objective is to force these countries to block the flow of illegal migration and/or fentanyl from their territory into the United States, the policy neatly folds Trump's favorite topics - immigration, crime, and tariffs -into one package.

The response was predictable. Mexico warns that tariffs would be severely disruptive and inflationary. While it has offered cooperation to allay US concerns, it is also prepared to retaliate if Trump follows through. And some in Canada have suggested a separate agreement, arguing that Mexico is becoming a platform for Chinese exports to the US.

Mexico has been widely seen as vulnerable to Trump's policy agenda. So far, though, the market seems to be assigning a low probability to the imposition of tariffs, perhaps betting that the US will not risk an extraordinarily disruptive unraveling of the United States-Mexico-Canada Agreement (USMCA, the follow-on to the North American Free Trade Agreement). The exchange rate has depreciated by only around 1.7% since Trump's announcement, and the spread on Mexican bonds has barely widened.

The reaction to Trump's previous tariff threats in 2019 was far more dramatic. On that occasion, he threatened to impose staggered tariffs beginning at 5% and going up to 25% to force Mexico's then-president, Andrés Manuel López Obrador (widely known as AMLO), to stem the flow of migrants coming from Central and South America. AMLO responded by deploying the national guard to Mexico's southern border, before eventually establishing a working relationship - and even some affinity - with Trump.

But AMLO is gone, and President Claudia Sheinbaum's new administration has been in office for less than three months. Her first 100 days coincided with one of the worst outbreaks of violence by organized-crime groups in recent memory. Following the arrest of a prominent cartel leader, a turf war among rivals has claimed thousands of lives - including the mayor of a state capital and a priest.

Sheinbaum inherited this situation from AMLO, whose security policies were disastrous. Despite overseeing the increased militarization of the country, his administration avoided direct confrontation with the cartels. That strategy has clearly failed (drawing harsh, albeit belated, criticism from the US government), and now Sheinbaum's administration has stepped up the pressure with a more coherent policy based on increased intelligence sharing and cooperation with local authorities.

This is an area of common interest for the US and Mexico. Sheinbaum and Trump have an opportunity to restore their countries' intelligence sharing and lawenforcement cooperation, which fell into abeyance under AMLO. They could start by introducing stronger controls to impede weapons sales to drug cartels by US dealers, which supply an estimated 70% of the cartels' armories.

While US weapons manufacturers have successfully lobbied against restrictions on such sales, depriving the cartels of arms would be hugely beneficial to both Mexico and the US, not least by drastically curtailing fentanyl production and exports northward. Moreover, as in 2019, Mexico could reinforce border controls to stem the flow of migrants, whose numbers have already declined substantially this year. Any renegotiation of the USMCA would probably focus on the same issues as the NAFTA revision during Trump's first term: auto industry "regional value content," wages in Mexico, and various measures to discourage relocation of manufacturing from the US. This is to be expected. Yet there is another demand that Mexicans should welcome, because it could strengthen the rule of law within our own

Mexico's constitution was recently modified to enshrine AMLO's judicial reforms, which introduced elections for Supreme Court justices and federal judges. The US and Canada have both voiced concerns about this change, warning that it could pave the way for autocratic one-party rule. And another AMLO-era constitutional initiative, aimed at eliminating autonomous regulatory entities, may be in violation of both the letter and the spirit of the USMCA.

Of course, Trump may not care about the erosion of democracy in Mexico. But his nominee to serve as Secretary of State, Marco Rubio, was an open and frequent critic of AMLO, whom he accused of capitulating to drug cartels and supporting authoritarian regimes in Cuba, Venezuela, and Nicaragua. Moreover, these are authoritarian regimes that even Trump dislikes.

Thus, a USMCA renegotiation could be a useful instrument to restore some of Mexico's damaged institutions and prevent AMLO's party, Morena, from ramming through other pending reforms. Better yet, US pressure could accentuate the divisions within Morena, weakening support for the former president and giving Sheinbaum more room to maneuver. The erosion of Mexico's democracy probably cannot be stopped by a quasi-legal framework "imported" through ratification of a revised trade agreement. But bringing the split within Morena to a head certainly wouldn't hurt.

The quicker that AMLO's shadow recedes, the sooner we will know which Sheinbaum will govern Mexico. So far, she has mostly followed AMLO's playbook, but she has also sought to build bridges with the private sector to attract investment in clean energy and logistics. She wants to seize the opportunities offered by the US emphasis on nearshoring its supply chains, but such efforts have stalled as a result of Mexico's institutional deterioration.

by Peter Singer

How Trump's Return Could Benefit Mexico||Choice in Dying Comes to the UK

ELBOURNE - Last month, members of the UK House of Commons were allowed to vote according to their conscience on a private member's ■bill to permit some patients to receive medical assistance in dying. In 2015, a similar proposal failed, gaining only 118 votes, with 330 against. This time, however, the bill, moved by Labour MP Kim Leadbeater, was supported by 330 members and opposed by only 275.

The bill allows patients who are 18 or over and have received a medical diagnosis of a terminal illness with no more than six months to live to request medical assistance in dying. The request must be approved by two doctors and a judge. A doctor may then prescribe a lethal drug that patients may take. The legislation must still go through parliamentary committees and the House of Lords, and may be amended, but some form of assisted dying will likely become lawful in England and Wales.

John Stuart Mill, a member of the House of Commons in the 1860s, would have been pleased. Medical aid in dying comes squarely under the principle he defended in On Liberty: "the only purpose for which power can be rightfully exercised over any member of a civilized community, against his will, is to prevent harm to others."

Doctors in the Netherlands have been able to practice voluntary euthanasia openly since the 1980s, and Austria, Belgium, Canada, Colombia, Ecuador, Germany, Luxembourg, New Zealand, Spain, and Switzerland now permit medical assistance in dying, while a law permitting it in Portugal is not yet in

In the United States, Oregon legalized medical assistance in dying in 1997. It has, to date, been followed by nine states, including California, as well as by Washington, DC. All six Australian states now allow medically assisted

In the 1970s, when I first advocated legalizing voluntary euthanasia, the most troubling opposition came from those who argued that legalization would be a slippery slope. We would start, they predicted, by honoring the considered requests of terminally ill people, but once we had weakened the prohibition on taking innocent human life, we would proceed to kill people who are an economic burden or members of racial or ethnic minorities considered inferior to the majority.

Predictably, in the United Kingdom, the Archbishop of Canterbury, Justin Welby, attempted to use this argument. But today, in contrast to the 1970s, there is plenty of evidence against it. Leadbeater responded to the archbishop by pointing to the experience of Oregon, which now has 27 years of legal medically assisted dying without a slippery slope in sight.

In the UK, opponents of legalization referred to the danger that, once doctors could legally provide assistance in dying, terminally ill patients would feel pressured to request it. Liz Carr, an actor and disability-rights campaigner, said that some people might think: "My family is having to look after me, I'm incontinent, I don't want to use all the money I have saved over the years on care, it would be better for those who love me not to see me like this, I will do the honorable thing."

Carr is right: some people might think that. But why is that an objection to legalizing assistance in dying? Doesn't a person who has been told that she has fewer than six months to live have the right to decide whether she prefers her savings to be spent on her care or to be available to her family after she dies? If, perhaps after using some of her savings for her own care, she judges that this is not money well spent, isn't she in the best position to

Another argument I have heard many times over the past 40 years is that instead of legalizing assisted dying, governments should spend more on palliative care so that terminally ill patients can die a natural death without suffering. In the recent UK debate, that argument came from an unusual source: Wes Streeting, Secretary of State for Health and Social Care in the Labour government. Streeting voted against the bill after saying that he did not believe the palliative care system is good enough to support assisted

If Streeting wants to reduce the number of people who will use the new legislation, it is within the power of his government to ensure that the UK has the best palliative care that the current state of science and available funding can provide. Until that happens, though, why would he wish to prevent terminally ill patients from obtaining assistance in dying when they are dying in pain and discomfort because of the inadequacy of the healthcare system his department administers?

In any case, statistics from Oregon show that only a minority of those using the state's Death with Dignity Act do so because of inadequate pain control. Loss of autonomy and the inability to engage in activities that make life enjoyable are the most commonly cited reasons, and palliative care cannot change those aspects of illness. Fortunately, terminally ill residents of England and Wales (Scotland's parliament is considering a similar bill) will most likely soon be able to make their own decisions on when their life is no longer worth living.

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eath is inevitable, they say. It will surely happen to everyone, -meaning it cannot be avoided. Death visits when it is least expected. Death comes in many instances as a shock, leaving mixed feelings and many unanswered guestions when it takes away our loved ones.

Often, people say a person was aware of his or her death before passing on to the afterlife. Still, those are mere speculations because if the person had known, they would have put their houses in order, as King Hezekiah did in 2 Kings 20:1 and Isaiah 38:1-10.

A former Liberian playwright, Wilton G. S. Sankawulo, once wrote that nobody knows when he will die. That statement holds despite many empirical data and predictions about life expectancies in countries around the globe, with Liberia's life expectancy at 65.25 (UN report).

This was obvious on early Thursday morning, November 28, 2024, when Liberians woke up to the shocking death news of warlord turned politician and preacher Prince Y. Johnson.

The late Johnson had returned from his native Nimba County a day before his death, where he dedicated a hall at his university in honor of former Togolese President Gnassingbe Eyadema, a late African dictator he had held in high esteem.

Sen. Johnson may have had big plans and dreams for the future, including the university or even planning his retirement with his grand children in mind. But death had its own plan for Sen. Johnson.

The shocking death news of Sen. Johnson the day after his return from Nimba shows that death remains an unexpected guest to the living.

No one is promised tomorrow.

There is a common saying that no one is promised tomorrow, so live as if today is your last. Why the importance of this statement is overlooked in many conversations that saying holds.

Living one's life as if there were no tomorrow could be interpreted in many ways. However, one interpretation that stands tall among the rest is living a life leaving a memory for your loved ones and people you interact with every day. For some, these memories are fond, while for others, they are nothing but bad memories.

In the case of the late Sen. Prince Johnson, he comes across as a hero and a villain at the same time, depending on which side one belongs.

For his kinsmen, he was a hero—a man who revenged the blood of Nimbaians against former junta leader Samuel K. Doe.

In their memory, the events of the 1985 Nimba raid by soldiers loyal to slain President Doe after the failed coup in 1985 and the 1990 Lutheran Massacre pictured him as their liberator. Some would also argue that a fraction of Americo-Liberians also saw him as a hero for killing former President Doe.

But for others, he remained a villain. They have no heroic memory of him except for the pain and agony he put them through when he slaughtered their loved ones in cool blood during the country's decades of civil war for alleged crimes they did not commit.

For those who live in pain and agony, seeing him suffer unto death through, say, conviction by the War and Economic Crimes Court would have been viewed as sweet revenge.

But as it is now, Sen. Johnson will no longer face a War and Economic Crimes Court, and neither will those wishing that he rots in jail like former President Taylor, who is serving a 50-year jail term in a UK prison, ever see that come to

No, Sen. Johnson is gone. He died a peaceful death, contrary to what many of his victims would have wished.

The Lesson Learned.

Life is a gift from God, the Almighty. He has promised no one how long he or she will spend here on Earth before transitioning to the unknown. Live it as if there was no tomorrow. Live at peace with every man. Love your neighbor as yourself because he dwells near you for security. Owe no man anything. And above all, love God and honor him, for this is your greatest service.

To be given life is the greatest gift every person and living creature received, or will receive, from God, the Almighty. Life is years of opportunity to develop a relationship with God and others and serve the Lord and other people.

"It's a life where we walk out the plans and purposes for which God created us: loving God, loving others, and making disciples of Jesus. Yes, we must die to ourselves and our desires, but in so doing, we realize how much they only led to our unhappiness and dissatisfaction," one writer wrote.

The Liberian Government Should Sustainable **Manage its Debt Going Forward**

round 2010, the Global Community waived about 4b USD debt for the Republic of Liberia. That was a promise fulfilled in lieu of the Government's commitment to meeting the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries benchmark. The IMF and World Bank launched the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) Initiative in 1996 to ensure that no poor country faces an unmanageable debt burden. In 2005, to accelerate progress toward the '<u>United Nations Sustainable Development Goals</u>, the HIPC Initiative was supplemented by the Multilateral Debt Relief Initiative. By the end of 2023, the Liberian Government had again recorded a total debt of about 2.6b USD. This constitutes both foreign and domestic debt for the Government and People of Liberia. The President Boakai's Government which came to power in January 2024 recently completed its National Development Plan, the ARREST Agenda for Inclusive Development (AAID). We are informed that the five-year AAID is costed at about 8.4b USD and will officially be launched in January 2025. This means that the Government needs to cut down on wasteful spending, drastically crack down on corruption and invest in diversified economic growth corridors to grow the economy so that the resources are availed to fund the AAID.

All these need to happen as the global community encounters and addresses global extreme poverty and pandemics like Mpox, etc. Global poverty has reduced because of the growth achievements made by India and the People's Republic of China (PRC). However, extreme poverty persists in Africa where this researcher hails from. In Africa, poverty is a widespread phenomenon, with about a third of the continent's population living in extreme poverty. The World Bank predicts that Sub-Saharan Africa will be home to the majority of the world's poor by 2030. Liberia is Africa's first independent Republic and therefore needs to lead by example. The COVID-19 pandemic deepened poverty across all countries and regions. However, the global economy is predicted to grow. Africa now faces yet another pandemic, the Mpox that seems to be under control. Official Development Assistance (ODA) is significantly helping Least Developed Countries (LDCs) to cope with growing development demands from citizens.

ODA impacts extreme poverty in numerous ways, although empirical evidence is required to claim causality. However, the fundamental question is not whether ODA works, but rather how can it be made more effective and efficient? Without peace and stability, fragile states, including the Republic of Liberia, cannot grow their economies to embark on sustainable development. Stability cannot be guaranteed amidst widespread poverty. Pandemics add even more worries to poverty situations when they occur. The extreme poor really suffer the most during pandemics. Therefore, pandemics, instability, fragility, and poverty seem to be positively correlated and they are symbiotic. Hence, they need to be addressed urgently and expeditiously as a global public good. Thankfully, global attention concertedly focused on an end to COVID-19 and the most recent Mpox pandemic so that states can return to a linear development trajectory.

Why I contend that advanced economies need to forgive poor countries' debts because some of the debts have made no quantum impact on national, regional, or global development, I urge the Government of Liberia and other developing countries to sustainably mange the countries' debt. In some instances, political elites benefit from donors' monies more than the poor people themselves. Hence, developed States that provide ODA need to be smart in effectively providing aid. They need to increase their hare of ODA to assist LDCs and Middle-Income Countries (MICs) to achieve strategic propoor and inclusive growth to help alleviate extreme poverty and engage in wealth creation.

AS I SEE IT, the provision of development assistance does not mean that developing states like Liberia must singularly rely on Official Development Assistance. They need to become innovative to grow their own economies and remain accountable and or transparent in handling development assistance. In some instances, donors need to deploy their citizens or nationals and companies in poor states to implement infrastructural development projects and to address economic growth challenges in receiving states so that the assistance does not easily get corrupted. China and Japan have done this before in Liberia where China bult the Ministerial complex directly, and Japan constructed the Japanese Freeway directly using their companies. ODA receiving countries Liberia need to supervise the projects and program implementation processes by those foreign individuals and companies to mutually prevent corruption. In line with the Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 16, institutions are deep determinants of growth. Therefore, to alleviate poverty, developing states including Liberia need to build inclusive and effective institutions that will protect the rule of law, property rights, ensure macroeconomic stability, as well as provide public goods and services, and invest in health, education, food security, peace, electricity and engage in infrastructural development to achieve sustainable growth. Both donors and recipients need to target development assistance towards economic growth corridors to help enhance and ignite economic growth. This might better serve the needs of the most excluded and vulnerable. The Government of Liberia should therefore sustainably manage the country's debt portfolio.

About the Author: Prof. Tom Kaydor, Jr. serves as an Assistant Professor at the IBB Graduate School of International Studies. He holds a PhD from the Department of Government and European Studies, the New University, Slovenia where he specialized in International Development and Diplomacy (with Security Aspects). His dissertation topic was 'Reconceptualizing Africa's Regional Integration for Peace and Sustainable Development.' He earned a Master of Public Policy (MPP) specialized in Development Policy or Development Economics with Distinction from the Crawford School of Economics and Government (now the Crawford School of Public Policy), Australian National University, Canberra, Australia. He also obtained a Master of Arts (MA) in International Relations (Highest Distinction) and Bachelor of Arts (BA) Magna Cum Laude in Political Science from the University of Liberia where his Minor was History with Masscom as is his Elective. Tom 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 also an Adjunct Professor of International 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).







Forestry Development Authority (FDA) Whein Town, Bernard Farm, Montserrado County Liberia

REQUEST FOR EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST (CONSULTING SERVICES)

Republic of Liberia

Assignment Title: Individual Consultancy for the Position of Construction Supervisor Completion of One Share Facility Centre and Construction of Two additional Share Facility Canters

Name of Project: Scaling up the participation of SMFEs in the Secondary Wood Processing Industry_

Phase II : Forestry

Sector : Forestry

Project ID No : P-LR-AAD-002
Grant No : 5900155018403
Issue Date : December 2, 2024

End Date : December 30, 2024

1. The Government of Liberia through the Forestry Development Authority has received financing from the African Development Bank toward the cost of the Scaling up the participation of SMFEs in the Secondary Wood Processing Industry Phase II, and intends to apply part of the agreed amount for this *grant* to payments under the contract for **Construction Supervisor**.

- 2. The services included under this project are [The individual consultant will be expected to undertake physical site assessments to support design of the three demonstration and storage facilities, support the review of designs, in coordination with the project teams and recommend approaches, Designs and responses to the resolution of comments, Daily monitoring of construction activities in accordance to the specifications and designs, cost, and schedule to ensure progress, Carry out site inspections and assessments as required, prepare periodic reports for submission to Project Coordinator (PC) and Project teams and Act proactively to identify key areas of concerns that relates to quality, health, safety and environmental issues at site and where necessary. The duration of the contract is Maximum Nine (9) months
- 3. The Forestry Development Authority now invites eligible Individual Consultants to indicate their interest in providing these services. Interested consultants must provide information indicating that they are qualified to perform the services (brochures, description of similar assignments, experience in similar conditions, availability of appropriate skills among staff, etc.).
- 4. Qualification and Experience: i. Bachelor's Degree in Civil Engineering, Technical Diploma in Civil or Construction Engineering, Electrical or related field required. Applicants with a relevant Vocational Certificate with additional 2 years of relevant working experience may also be considered. ii. Working knowledge of MS Office applications iii. Demonstrated planning and organizational skills and ability to coordinate the works, work on tight deadlines, and handle multiple concurrent activities iv. Ability to translate engineering drawings into physical implementation v. Organized, attention to detail, able to prioritize construction activities vi. Proven experience in the construction industry, with a strong record of accomplishment of managing construction sites and teams vii. Strong leadership and team management skills, with the ability to motivate and direct workers viii. Excellent organizational and time-management skills ix. Knowledge of construction processes, materials, and legal regulations x. Ability to read and interpret construction plans and specifications
- 5. Eligibility criteria, establishment of the short-list and the selection procedure shall be in accordance with the African Development Bank's "Procurement Policy Framework for Bank's Group Funded Operations" dated October 2015, which is available on the Bank's website at http://www.afdb.org.
- 6. Interested consultants may obtain further information at the address below during office hours [9:00 AM 4:00 PM Liberian Time], Mondays through Fridays (except public holidays): emmanuellewis965@gmail.com with copy to: wynnbeyant12@gmail.com.
- 7. Expressions of interest must be delivered to the address below by December 30, 2024 at 1:00 PM and mention "Construction Supervisor".

Attn: Project Coordinator
Project Implementation Unit
Forestry Development Authority
Whein Town, Bernard Farm
Montserrado County
Liberia]

E-mail: emmanuellewis965@gmail.com 0775-841-431/0886-570-320

Link for Clarification: Email: wynnbryant12@gmail.com 0776-063-643/0886-551-249 **DECEMBER 09**

MORE HEADLINE NEWS

UN Women Country stressed empowerment -For inclusive development and growth

UN Women Liberia cautions here that unless harness the potentials of half of its population, the country will

BAR KRUBHI Thombsonia, December 9, 2024 - UN Women Liberia Country Representative, Comfort Lamptey, has emphasized that Liberia cannot achieve full development if it fails to harness the potentials of half

She further underscored that

of its population.

not experience rapid developments. as panelists for the occasion, UN Resident Coordinator Christine N. Umutoni and UN Women Country Representative Comfort Lamptey led discussions on how men can play an active role in combating gender based violence across Liberia.

Madame Lamptey proposed a need for men to take active

brought together men from various UN entities in Liberia to dialogue, develop actionable plans, and provide recommendations to combat gender-based violence in the

It was held under the national theme "From Talk to Action! Let's Join Hands to End Violence Against Women and Girls to Achieve Beijing+30" with the global theme, "Recommendations, Accountability, Resourcing



development lies in the empowerment and inclusion of all citizens, regardless of

Speaking recently during UN Men Conference held in the Kofi Annan Conference Room of the One UN Building in Monrovia, Amb. Lamptey said educating girls, providing equal opportunities for women in the workplace, and eradicating abuse against women and children are essential to Liberia's progress.

"Failure to harness this potential will not only undermine Liberia's development, but also impose a significant economic cost on the society, including men," she promote at work." cautioned.

the path to national steps toward empowering women, both in their personal lives and professional environments.

> "Stop beating on them," she said. "Give your wife the opportunity to express herself. You have to see yourself as a role model. Undermining women's rights does not make you a better man."

> She urged participants to practice what they advocate for in their workplaces and at home, highlighting the importance of consistency in their plans to addressing gender-based violence.

> "Let us all commit to this and continue to be role models," she said. "It's easy to say, 'I'm a HeForShe,' but what you do at home must align with what you

Meanwhile, the conference Jonathan Browne

Towards Beijing+30: Unite to End Violence Against Women and Girls."

It also featured presentations on various topics including: The Importance of Positive Masculinity, Mainstreaming Masculinity and Femininity: A Viable Option for Achieving Gender Equality and Empowering Women in Liberia, Men and Mental Health: Tackling Stigma, Balancing Careers and Family Life, Briefing on the HeForShe Commitment and Action Plan, among others.

The forum ended with a renewed commitment from participants to take actionable steps toward reducing genderbased violence and ensuring gender equity in all facets of Liberian society. Editing by

Boakai promises to open agriculture bank

-To ensure funding to farmers

President Boakai vows here to establish an agriculture bank to support farmers and boost agricultural activities.

By: Ramsey N Singbeh Jr in Margibi

argibi, Liberia, December 9, 2024 -President Joseph Nyuma Boakai promises to create an agriculture bank in Liberia to ensure funding to farmers in the country.

President Boakai notes that commercial banks are not good for agriculture loans, thereby reiterating that he will ensure that an agriculture bank is established to respond to farmers' interest.

"We will also endeavor to create an agriculture bank to ensure funding to farmers. Maybe many people do not understand that commercial banks are not good for agriculture loans, and so we want to make sure the agriculture bank will relate to farmers' interest," he says.

The President urges all stakeholders to play their parts in ensuring the actualization of his administration's shared agriculture vision.

Mr. Boakai was speaking over the weekend when he officially declared opened the first national agriculture fair under his administration at the main campus of the Booker Washington Institute or BWI in Kakata, Margibi County.

The program, which lasted for three days from Thursday, December 5, to Saturday, December 7, 2024, saw Liberian farmers, cooperatives both in and out of Liberia, past and current officials of government, FAO, United States Embassy officials and other development partners in attendance.

It was held under theme: Sustainable Development."

along with some foreign

agriculture related products were put on display in a ceremony graced by institutions and the BWI administration headed by Dr. Nancy Freeman.

While explaining his vision for agriculture, the President notes that the country's efforts resonate with the global agenda of banning hunger and poverty by 2030, as outlined in the Sustainable Development Goals

President Boakai notes that Liberia is strongly committed to the goals and reducing hunger and malnutrition by supporting sustainable food system, promoting gender equity and empowering women in farming in fostering partnership to mobilize resources in agriculture.

The President is confident that Liberians are capable of feeding themselves; the days, he added that people categorized themselves as farmers' wives and husbands are over, "You yourself should be a farmer."

He notes that Liberia has fertile soil, abundant resources and industrial people, encouraging Liberians to now put themselves together and handle the assets, feed themselves and build an agriculture-driven economy.

President Boakai continue that taking into account the demography of the country, his government is prioritizing youth participation into agriculture.

The Government of Liberia, the President reveals is aimed at creating opportunity for young people to lead in agriculture in collaboration with development partners.

He assures young people in farming that government will continue to support them with training, funding, resources "Promoting Agriculture for including appropriate Food Security, Nutrition and technology to make them succeed in this noble mission.

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F'rançals La présence de George Weah aux funérailles de Prince Johnson suscite des tensions

l'ancien président un geste controversé funérailles du sénateur défunt Prince Y. Johnson suscite des inquiétudes croissantes. Un groupe de citoyens du comté de Nimba, connu sous le nom de *Rescue* Intellectual Brigade, menace

a participation de Une polémique déclenchée par

George Weah aux La controverse trouve son origine dans une visite de condoléances de George Weah à la résidence de feu le sénateur Johnson, à Paynesville. Lors de cette visite, l'ancien président aurait ostensiblement refusé de serrer la main du viceprésident Jeremiah Koung et du

George Weah d'avoir tenu des propos offensants, en déclarant publiquement qu'il s'était rendu sur place uniquement pour présenter ses condoléances à la veuve du sénateur Johnson, et non aux habitants du comté de Nimba.



Face à ces menaces, plusieurs responsables politiques et groupes impliqués appellent à la retenue. Shadrach Shars, vice-président chargé de l'administration au sein du Mouvement pour la Démocratie et la Reconstruction (MDR), parti politique du défunt sénateur, a nié toute intention d'empêcher George Weah d'assister aux obsèques.

« Notre priorité est de rendre un hommage digne à notre sénateur et aux trois personnes récemment décédées dans un accident. À aucun moment, nous n'avons envisagé de restreindre l'accès de quiconque, y compris celui de l'ancien président George Weah », a-t-il affirmé.

De son côté, le bureau du viceprésident Koung a également pris ses distances avec les propos tenus par le groupe

Rescue Intellectual Brigade. Solomon Ware, directeur de la presse auprès du viceprésident, a déclaré que le vice-président Koung n'est pas impliqué dans ces menaces et qu'il n'a aucun contrôle sur les

CONT'D ON PAGE 09



d'entreprendre des actions traditionnelles non précisées pour empêcher sa présence, qu'ils jugent irrespectueuse envers leur « père spirituel ».Les funérailles de Prince Y. Johnson, prévues le 18 janvier 2025 à Ganta City, seront précédées de cérémonies commémoratives dans les villes de Karnplay, Saclepea et Sanniquellie, marquant son rôle significatif dans l'histoire du comté.

représentant Samuel Kogar, ce qui a été perçu par les habitants de Nimba comme un affront à leurs dirigeants.

Bilton B. Leaslah, président de la Rescue Intellectual Brigade, a déclaré à The New Dawn : « Après plusieurs provocations, dont ce refus de poignée de main, nous avons décidé que l'ancien président Weah n'est pas le bienvenu aux funérailles. Le mieux pour lui serait de rester à l'écart. »M. Leaslah accuse également

Les travailleurs de la santé rejettent une augmentation salariale de 50 USD

la santé du Liberia ∎ont rejeté 50 USD proposée par le gouvernement, dénoncant une mesure qu'ils qualifient de provocante et contraire à la Politique de Classification des Salaires et des Grades dans le Secteur de la Santé. Face à ce qu'ils considèrent comme un manque de respect des engagements pris, ils annoncent une grève nationale à compter du 10 décembre 2024 si leurs revendications ne sont pas prises en compte.

Une proposition controversée

Le ministre des Finances et de la Planification du Développement, Augustine K. Ngafuan, a récemment présenté le projet de budget national 2025, qui prévoit une augmentation

es professionnels de mensuelle de 50 USD pour les de la Santé du Liberia, une infirmiers, sages-femmes et coalition regroupant assistants médicaux, et entre plusieurs organisations l'augmentation salariale de 25 et 40 USD pour d'autres majeures, telles que catégories de travailleurs de la l'Association des Infirmiers, santé selon leur grade.

> Cette proposition a été vivement critiquée par l'Assemblée des Professionnels

l'Association des Sages-Femmes, et l'Association des Pharmaciens.

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Éditorial

La chute et l'essor de la <u>démocratie américaine</u>

Par Daron Acemoglu

OSTON - Il n'aurait pas dû être si surprenant que les électeurs américains soient largement insensibles aux avertissements des démocrates selon lesquels Donald Trump représente une grave menace pour les institutions américaines. Dans un sondage Gallup de janvier 2024, seuls 28 % des Américains (un niveau historiquement bas) se sont déclarés satisfaits du « fonctionnement de la démocratie américaine ».

La démocratie américaine promet depuis longtemps quatre choses : une prospérité partagée, une voix pour les citoyens, une gouvernance fondée sur l'expertise et des services publics efficaces. Mais, comme celle des autres pays riches et même des pays à revenu intermédiaire, elle n'a pas répondu à ces aspirations.

Il n'en a pas toujours été ainsi. Pendant les trois décennies qui ont suivi la Seconde Guerre mondiale, la démocratie a produit des résultats, en particulier une prospérité partagée. Les salaires réels (corrigés de l'inflation) ont augmenté rapidement pour tous les groupes démographiques et les inégalités ont diminué. Mais cette tendance s'est interrompue à la fin des années 1970 et au début des années 1980. Depuis lors, les inégalités sont montées en flèche et les salaires des travailleurs sans diplôme universitaire ont à peine augmenté. Environ la moitié de la main-d'œuvre américaine a vu les revenus de l'autre moitié s'envoler.

Si les dix dernières années ont été un peu meilleures (l'augmentation des inégalités, qui dure depuis près de 40 ans, semble <u>s'être arrêtée vers 2015</u>), la poussée d'inflation induite par la pandémie a fait payer un lourd tribut aux familles de travailleurs, en particulier dans les villes. C'est pourquoi tant d'Américains ont cité les conditions économiques comme leur principale préoccupation, avant la démocratie.

La conviction que la démocratie permettrait à tous les citoyens de s'exprimer était tout aussi importante. Si quelque chose n'allait pas, vous pouviez le faire savoir à vos représentants élus. Si ce principe n'a jamais été pleinement respecté - de nombreuses minorités sont restées privées de leur droit de vote pendant une grande partie de l'histoire des États-Unis -, la privation du droit de vote est devenue un problème encore plus généralisé au cours des quatre dernières décennies. Comme le <u>dit</u> la sociologue Arlie Russell Hochschild, de nombreux Américains, en particulier ceux qui n'ont pas de diplôme universitaire et qui vivent dans le Midwest et le Sud, en sont venus à se sentir « étrangers sur leur propre terre ». Pire encore, les démocrates ont cessé d'être le parti des travailleurs pour devenir une coalition d'entrepreneurs de la tech, de banquiers, de professions libérales et de diplômés de l'enseignement supérieur, qui partagent très peu de priorités avec la classe ouvrière. Oui, les médias de droite ont également alimenté le mécontentement de la classe ouvrière. Mais ils ont pu le faire parce que les médias grand public et les élites intellectuelles ont ignoré les griefs économiques et culturels d'une grande partie du public. Cette tendance s'est accélérée au cours des quatre dernières années, pendant que les segments hautement éduqués de la population et l'écosystème médiatique mettaient constamment l'accent sur les questions identitaires, ce qui a encore aliéné de nombreux électeurs.

S'il s'agissait simplement de technocrates et d'élites intellectuelles qui fixent l'ordre du jour, on pourrait se dire qu'au moins les experts sont à l'œuvre. Mais la promesse d'une gouvernance fondée sur <u>l'expertise</u> sonne creux au moins depuis la crise financière de 2008. Ce sont les experts qui ont conçu le système financier, soi-disant pour le bien commun, qui ont fait fortune à Wall Street, parce qu'ils savaient comment gérer les risques. Or, non seulement leur beau discours s'est avéré faux, mais les politiciens et les régulateurs se sont empressés de sauver les coupables, tout en ne faisant presque rien pour les millions d'Américains qui ont perdu leur maison et leurs moyens de subsistance.

Daron Acemoglu, lauréat du prix Nobel d'économie en 2024 et professeur d'économie au MIT, est coauteur (avec Simon Johnson) de <u>Power and Progress</u> : <u>Our Thousand-Year Struggle</u> Over Technology and Prosperity (PublicAffairs, 2023).

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Français

Starts from page 8 La présence de George Weah aux funérailles

actions de ce groupe.

Une situation délicate

le vice-président Koung. Il est l'événement. comme un petit frère pour moi. Mais c'était à lui de venir me Reste à savoir si George Weah comportement.

approchent, la controverse paix.

souligne des tensions plus profondes entre l'ancien président et une partie des Malgré les explications de dirigeants de Nimba. Alors que George Weah, qui affirme n'avoir certains insistent sur le respect aucune animosité envers le vice- des traditions locales, d'autres président Koung, les tensions appellent à l'apaisement pour persistent. « Je n'ai rien contre préserver la solennité de

saluer, pas l'inverse », a-t-il défiera ces menaces pour rendre déclaré pour justifier son hommage au sénateur Prince Johnson ou s'il choisira de Avec les funérailles qui s'abstenir afin de maintenir la

Starts from page 8 Les travailleurs de la santé rejettent

conférence de presse, Il a également révélé que la validée et signée par le restée lettre morte. gouvernement.

« L'ajout d'une somme uniforme de 50 USD est non seulement une provocation, mais aussi une trahison des disparités salariales dans le secteur de la santé. Cette décision accentue les différentes catégories de objectif commun de fournir des soins de qualité à la population », a déclaré M. Fayiah.

persistantes

Selon M. Fayiah, la Politique de Reclassification des Salaires avait été concue pour corriger les écarts de rémunération et instaurer une équité entre les professionnels de la santé. Bien que prévue pour entrer en vigueur dans le budget reportée.

concert avec un consultant pourrait avoir des mandaté par le gouvernement répercussions importantes sur pour élaborer cette politique, les services de santé à travers qui a été validée et adoptée. le pays. Malheureusement, le

Le président de l'Assemblée, gouvernement semble l'avoir Theophilus Tamba Fayiah, a abandonnée au profit d'une exprimé l'indignation de ses solution de rechange membres lors d'une inappropriée », a-t-il ajouté.

affirmant que cette politique prévoyait la augmentation uniforme allait signature d'un protocole à l'encontre de la Politique de d'accord pour garantir son Reclassification des Salaires, application, une demande

Une menace de grève nationale

En réaction, les professionnels de la santé envisagent des efforts visant à corriger les mesures drastiques. « Si aucune action concrète n'est entreprise dans les délais impartis, nous lancerons une inégalités au sein des grève nationale. Tous les services seront suspendus professionnels, malgré notre jusqu'à ce que le gouvernement s'engage à répondre à nos exigences », a averti M. Fayiah.

Il a insisté sur l'importance de Des disparités salariales cette mobilisation : « Nous restons fermement engagés à améliorer le système de santé et à défendre le bien-être des travailleurs de la santé. Nous espérons que le gouvernement partage cet engagement et agira pour éviter une crise sanitaire nationale. »

Ce bras de fer entre le 2024, sa mise en œuvre a été gouvernement et les professionnels de la santé met en lumière des tensions « Nous avons travaillé de profondes, dont l'issue

Le Code de Conduite perd de sa portée



e rôle de l'Ombudsman du Liberia, chargé de faire respecter le Code de Conduite, est remis ■en question après que la Cour Suprême a interdit ses tentatives de contraindre des responsables à renoncer à leurs fonctions partisanes avant d'occuper des postes publics.

Une décision qui suscite le débat

Lors d'un passage dans l'émission Spoon Talk, Mo Ali, directeur général de la Liberia Water and Sewer Corporation (LWSC) et haut responsable de l'Unity Party (UP), a confirmé que la Cour Suprême avait statué en faveur de plusieurs partis politiques, dont l'UP, l'All Liberian Coalition Party (ALCOP) et le Mouvement pour la Démocratie et la Reconstruction (MDR). Ces partis contestaient l'autorité de l'Ombudsman à exiger la démission de fonctionnaires occupés à des postes au sein de leurs formations, en l'absence de plainte formelle et étayée.

Selon Mo Ali, la Cour Suprême a conclu que l'Ombudsman ne pouvait forcer une démission que si une plainte officielle était déposée, instruite, et si des preuves démontraient que l'intéressé avait abusé de ses fonctions ou utilisé des ressources publiques à des fins politiques.

La défense des droits constitutionnels

M. Ali a précisé que les partis politiques concernés avaient porté l'affaire devant la Cour, arguant que les actions de l'Ombudsman enfreignaient leurs droits constitutionnels. « La Cour Suprême a clairement statué que l'Ombudsman n'a pas le pouvoir d'exiger des démissions sans plainte légitime », a-t-il affirmé.

Il a ajouté que la Cour avait jugé les actions de

l'Ombudsman infondées, en l'absence de preuves de violations.

Une clarification nécessaire

Interrogé sur la connaissance des dispositions légales par le président Joseph Nyuma Boakai, M. Ali a assuré que le chef de l'Etat, comme d'autres responsables, était bien informé des exigences du Code de Conduite. Cependant, il a souligné que seule la Cour Suprême était compétente pour interpréter la loi en cas de différends.

« Les responsables concernés ne sont pas impliqués activement dans des activités politiques », a-t-il déclaré. « Tant qu'aucune plainte formelle n'est déposée, l'Ombudsman n'a pas de base légale pour intervenir. »

Un appel à la transparence

Ce développement intervient alors que de nombreux citoyens demandent une gouvernance plus transparente et éthique. L'article V, section 5.2, du Code de Conduite du Liberia insiste sur l'importance de la conformité et de la probité des responsables publics.

Toutefois, cette décision de la Cour Suprême soulève des inquiétudes quant à la capacité de l'Ombudsman à faire respecter le Code de Conduite, mettant en lumière les tensions persistantes entre les institutions et les partis politiques sur la question de l'éthique publique.

ARTICLE ARTICLE

A Disturbing Reality

By Seltue Karweaye

MONDAY

egardless of the developments that may occur during the remainder of his term, President Joseph Boakai's decision to sign Executive Order 131 is a significant moment in Liberian history. This order establishes the Office of War and Economic Crimes Court, a crucial institution aimed at persecuting those who bear the greatest responsibility for crimes against humanity, war crimes, and rampant corruption that has plagued the Liberian political class for decades, transcending party lines and affiliations.

The announcement was met with widespread support

from many Liberians, who view it as a long-overdue step toward accountability and justice. For many, this initiative represents hope for a future where the injustices of the past are recognized and redressed. The establishment of this court could serve as a signal that Liberia is ready to confront its history of war crimes and corruption, providing a pathway for victims to seek redress and for the nation to heal. However, there are significant concerns among some citizens and observers regarding the potential implications of this move. Critics fear that reopening discussions about past atrocities may reignite old tensions and divisions that were carefully managed and mitigated to secure peace after years of conflict. The memory of the civil wars, which left deep scars on the collective psyche of the nation, remains fresh for many, and the fear of revisiting such painful memories can evoke anxiety and resentment. Furthermore, the prolonged lack of prosecution of war criminals-spanning over two decades-can largely be attributed to a persistent absence of political will among

Furthermore, the prolonged lack of prosecution of war criminals—spanning over two decades—can largely be attributed to a persistent absence of political will among leaders. This indifference has often been influenced by individuals who once played active roles during the wars, many of whom continue to hold significant political power today. Their presence in government complicates the pursuit of justice, as it raises questions about the sincerity of leadership in promoting genuine accountability and reform. As Liberia stands at this crossroads, the hope is that the establishment of the Office of War and Economic Crimes Court will mark a turning point, not only in the quest for justice but also in fostering a culture of transparency and governance that prioritizes the rule of law over the interests of a privileged few.

Before issuing Executive Order 131, President Boakai took a decisive step by establishing the Office of Asset Recovery through Executive Order 121. This office was specifically created to identify, recover, and safeguard stolen state assets, while also holding accountable current and former officials implicated in corrupt practices. This crackdown on corruption began shortly after his inauguration in January, which initially sparked a sense of hope and optimism among the Liberian populace that Boakai had a concrete and effective plan to restore the country's integrity and financial stability. However, as the months have progressed, that initial excitement has given way to disappointment and disillusionment. The Boakai administration, once viewed as a beacon of potential change, now appears increasingly stagnant and ineffective. There are growing concerns that it has begun to mirror some of the troubling habits of previous governments. Specifically, the administration seems to lack a clear strategic direction, and there is an alarming deficiency in transparency and accountability. While President Boakai and high-ranking officials frequently emphasize the severity of Liberia's economic challenges and repeatedly call for the public to adopt measures of financial restraint, there is a striking lack of commitment from them to participate in this austerity. The disconnect between their rhetoric and actions has deepened the public's skepticism and frustration regarding the administration's sincerity in tackling the issues at hand. Overall, the administration's response has left many Liberians questioning its dedication to genuine reform and positive change in their country.

The controversy surrounding the revised 2024 budget, which totals an astounding \$738.8 million, has sparked significant debate and unrest among ordinary Liberians. This budget was passed unusually quickly by the National Legislature, which is typically known for its slow deliberative process. The speed of its approval seems to highlight a troubling double standard when it comes to governmental priorities in the country. One of the primary points of contention is the substantial allocation of funds for presidential activities, along with the

audacious decision to provide sport utility vehicles (SUVs) for legislators. Each vehicle costs over \$45,000, and with 103 lawmakers in total, these expenses strain the public purse. This stands in stark contrast to the economic reality for many citizens, particularly civil servants, who earn a minimum monthly wage of less than \$150. The disparity between the spending on lawmakers and the financial struggles of average Liberians has fueled public outrage. Compounding public frustration is the allocation of \$13.2

million for Legislative support projects at a time when there have been mounting calls for accountability and transparency in government spending. Recently, the NEKOTEH Scholarship program once praised as a \$25 million initiative, has come under fire due to serious allegations of financial mismanagement. This program was designed to assist Liberian students in pursuing higher education in STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics) fields and Artificial Intelligence (AI) in the United States and Canada. However, the dissolution of this program has raised critical questions about the lack of transparency in government reporting.

Moreover, allegations of misconduct have emerged regarding Abdullai Kamara, the Acting Chair of the Liberia Telecommunications Authority (LTA). A report from the General Auditing Commission (GAC) revealed significant procurement law violations during Kamara's time as CEO of TAMMA Corporation. The report disclosed that over L\$262 million and US\$450,000 are unaccounted for, suggesting serious financial irregularities. Despite these alarming findings and their implications, Kamara remains in his position, raising questions about accountability in leadership.

Similarly, Dorr Cooper, the Ministry of Commerce and Industry Inspector General, has also attracted controversy. He was exposed for attempting to fraudulently graduate from the University of Liberia. While the university acted to address this misconduct, Cooper continues to serve in his role without facing any legal consequences, further eroding public trust in the integrity of government officials under President Boakai-led administration.

The combination of these issues—extravagant spending on government officials, an indifferent approach to serious allegations of financial misconduct, and the lack of accountability for individuals in positions of power—creates a climate of frustration and disillusionment among the populace. As citizens grapple with these discrepancies, the call for reform and responsible governance grows louder.

The growing frustration with the current administration stems from three interconnected sources of discontent. First, there is significant outrage among the general public, who are increasingly angered by the stark contrast between the rescue mission principles the administration publicly professes and the extravagant lifestyle it appears to indulge in. Citizens feel that the administration's practices do not align with the economic realities faced by the ordinary Liberian, leading to deepening resentment.

Second, members of the political opposition have heightened their scrutiny of the administration, finding new reasons to question its integrity and commitment to good governance. These opposition figures argue that there are inconsistencies in the administration's policies and actions, raising doubts about the motivations behind certain decisions.

Finally, there are long-time supporters of Boakai, who, based on his extensive experience in public service, including over four decades in government roles and his record as Vice President, harbor faith in his ability to lead effectively. However, they express concerns that he has not surrounded himself with a sufficiently capable or diverse team. Critics in this category argue that Boakai's habit of relying on individuals from his Unity Party (UP) or those with whom he has personal connections—both locally and abroad—has resulted in appointments that do not necessarily prioritize the best talent available.

The criticism directed at Boakai is not without merit. Outside of a select few well-respected figures such as Minister of Justice Cllr. N. Oswald Tweh, Foreign Minister Sara Beysolow Nyanti, and Executive Director and Chief Executive Officer of the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Dr. Emmanuel King Urey Yarkpawolo, the majority of individuals in Boakai's relatively large administration seem to lack the exceptional expertise expected in government leadership. Many of these selections appear to have been motivated by political considerations rather than a commitment to excellence in governance. This situation is

particularly disappointing given Liberia's rich pool of human

resources and the many talented Liberians excelling across

various fields around the world.

ranks among the least inspiring administrations since Liberia transitioned to democratic governance in 2006, following years of conflict. Furthermore, Boakai faces criticisms of being somewhat insular or provincial, akin to his immediate predecessor, George Weah. The predominance of officials from northwestern Liberia in key ministries, departments, and agencies has led to perceptions that the administration may not be fully representative of the nation as a whole. Weah's administration was characterized by a greater number of officials from the southeastern region, further highlighting the regional imbalance in leadership representation within the past and current governments. Although political and regional expediency can sometimes be justified, many people find the apparent lack of a clear direction from the current administration to be deeply troubling. One of the key distinctions that sets Boakai apart

from his predecessors since post-conflict civilian rule began

in Liberia in 2006 is that he has expressed a desire for the

presidency from the outset. Given this ambition, it is

surprising that he seems unprepared for the significant

The composition of Boakai's cabinet raises concerns about its

effectiveness and vision, with many observers arguing that it

challenges that come with the role. Despite being in office for nearly eleven months, much of which has been spent traveling abroad for various conferences and meetings aimed at attracting foreign investment to Liberia, there has been little tangible evidence of strategic planning or effective governance. His choices for ministerial positions have been met with mixed reactions, often oscillating between being uninspired and, at times, completely baffling those within the political sphere. This inconsistency raises questions about his leadership style and decision-making process.

Furthermore, Boakai has yet to lay out a clear and compelling vision for the country, which has fostered a growing sense of skepticism among the public. Many citizens, including those who initially supported his candidacy, are beginning to wonder whether his focus is more on positioning himself for a 2029 presidential run than on addressing the pressing issues currently facing Liberia. This perception is concerning, especially given the pressing socio-economic challenges, such as rampant inflation, crippling public debt, and widespread insecurity, that require immediate attention and effective policy responses. While it is true that Boakai has had to navigate a difficult landscape fraught with inherited challenges, this context should not serve as an excuse for the administration's apparent lack of a coherent plan. The public's expectations for coherent governance are legitimate, especially when everyday Liberians grapple with significant socio-economic hardships. Therefore, the administration's seeming disregard for the urgent needs of the populace, coupled with an obstinate approach to addressing these issues, only exacerbates public frustration and undermines confidence in the government's leadership.

To be fair, the issue at hand extends well beyond Boakai himself. Across the African continent, there is a pervasive sense of frustration and disillusionment among the populace, who feel that those in power continue to lead extravagant lifestyles while everyday citizens struggle to meet their basic needs. This disparity raises significant concerns, as many citizens perceive democracy merely as a facade that allows leaders to systematically exploit national resources for their benefit, often without any sense of social responsibility or accountability.

This sentiment has been notably echoed in recent events across West and Central African nations, where military forces have intervened to overthrow elected governments. Such actions have only intensified fears that democratic values are being undermined in favor of self-serving interests. Given this context, it would be a monumental tragedy if, during Boakai's leadership, a similar combination of elite excess and indifference to the plight of the people were to jeopardize Liberia's stability. Boakai must recognize that he cannot afford to let growing public dissatisfaction morph into a sense of resignation or apathy toward democracy.

Unfortunately, as time passes, the ranks of those who believe in his capacity to rescue, restore hope, and guide the nation toward a brighter future are thinning. If Boakai wishes to reclaim the trust of the populace and foster a renewed commitment to democratic ideals, he must act decisively and conscientiously. These are critical times, and the pressure to respond to the needs of the people is mounting. I rest my pen.

Starts from Back page on deepens

Gyapay Yuoh, said that having carefully examined the contentions of the parties, listened to the arguments on both sides, and considered the laws relevant thereto, the Court's interpretation of Article 33 of the Constitution (1986), is that whether a simple majority is sitting or a lower number, in both cases a Presiding Officer, defined in Article 49 of the Constitution is the Speaker, and in his/her absence, the Deputy Speaker.

She further explained that in the event where the Speaker is presiding over a minority, the Constitution is devoid of the mechanism for how the minority is to compel attendance of absent members.

Also, Chief Justice Yuoh added that the Legislature has promulgated no enabling statute or standing rules setting forth the process for compelling absentee members to attend sessions as envisioned under Article 33 of the Constitution.

She disclosed that under these circumstances, the Supreme Court cannot do for the Legislature what is within its purview to do, as to do so will be a violation of the constitutional mandate on the separation of powers.

"WHEREFORE AND IN VIEW OF THE FOREGOING, any sittings or actions by members of the Legislature not in conformity with the intent of Articles 33 and 49 of the Constitution are ultra vires. Hence, Members of the House of Representatives are to conduct themselves accordingly. The Clerk of this Court is ordered to inform the parties. AND IT IS HEREBY SO ORDERED" she mandated. *Editing by Jonathan Browne*

cts new -As LRA hails continental body's support to Liberia

Annual Meetings of the African Tax administrations are well-equipped to meet Administration Forum (ATAF) in Kigali, both current and future challenges," Rwanda, have elected and inducted the Kieswetter stated. forum's new leadership, known as the ATAF continental body for the next two years.

According to a press release, South Africa Namibia was elected as Vice Chair of the Council. The Council also includes Heads of Tax Administrations from Rwanda, Morocco, Uganda, Burundi, Burkina Faso, Nigeria, Mauritius, and Botswana.

Liberia Revenue Authority (LRA)

onrovia, Liberia, December 9, 2024 necessary to achieve the continent's Commissioner Generals of sustainable development goals. Together, Revenue Authorities attending the we will ensure that African tax

The outgoing Chair, Dr. Philippe Tchodie, Council. This leadership will guide the Commissioner General of the Office Togolais des Recettes (OTR), expressed his gratitude to ATAF members for their emerged as the new Chair of ATAF, while steadfast support during his tenure. He wished the new Council success, saying, "It has been an honor to serve this organization. I am confident that the new leadership will build on our collective achievements to further ATAF's mission and strengthen tax systems across Africa."

Commissioner General, James Dorbor The newly elected Council will prioritize Jallah, who cast his vote in the ATAF strengthening ATAF's role in enhancing leadership election for the first time, since regional collaboration and empowering he took over LRA in March this year, African nations to mobilize resources expressed Liberia's pride in being part of effectively, supporting both economic

Koffa stamps authority after S/Court ruling -Amidst claims of victories

The House leadership has issued a stem warning to spending entities not to appear before members of the majority bloc, days following the Supreme Court's decision in the House impasse.

By Othello B. Garblah

mbattled House Speaker Cllr. J. Fonati Koffa appears to be stamping his authority at the House of Representatives following last Friday's Supreme Court verdict that nullified the election of Rep. Richard N. Koon as Speaker by the majority

In an official statement issued over the weekend, Speaker Koffa warned all spending entities not to honor a request from members of the majority bloc to appear for a budget hearing this week, as that group had announced.

In the statement signed by embattled Speaker Koffa, the leadership of the House of Representatives noted that any invitation for any hearing not scheduled by Rep. Dixon Seboe, Chairman of Ways Means and

Finance would be ultra vires, and no decision taken therefrom will be cognizable at law.

Speaker Koffa had filed a writ before the Superior Court seeking its intervention into the constitutionality of some actions taken by the "majority bloc," holding sessions, suspending members, restructuring committees, taking possession of the budget, and electing a speaker.

The embattled speaker, in the statement, encouraged absentee members (members of the majority bloc who have been holding separate sessions) "to seek clarification of the Supreme Court's ruling from competent legal authorities if they are unclear about its decision" instead of engaging in actions that undermine the rule of law."

What does the Supreme Court ruling say?

The Supreme Court, in its landmark ruling on Friday, December 6, said, "any sittings or actions by members of the Legislature not in conformity with the intent of Articles 33 and 49 of the Constitution are ultra vires and void. "Ultra vires," meaning it was beyond their power and authority to do so. Hence, members of the House of Representatives are to conduct themselves accordingly."

Article 33 of the Liberian Constitution requires a quorum to hold sessions, while Article 49 refers to the presiding officers, including the election and removal from office of the Speaker, Deputy Speaker, and other officers.

Article 33 states: "Simple majority of each House shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business, but a lower number may adjourn from day to day and compel the attendance of absent members..."

Article 49 states: "The House of Representatives shall elect once every six years a Speaker who shall be the presiding officer of that body, a Deputy Speaker, and such other officers as shall ensure the proper functioning of the House. The speaker, the deputy speaker, and other officers so elected may be removed from office for cause by a resolution of two-thirds of the members of the House.



this vital continental initiative.

Speaking to the African Tax Media Network, he noted that Liberia has greatly benefited from ATAF's capacity-building programs, by the Rwanda Revenue Authority (RRA), which have strengthened the LRA's ability were held at the Kigali Convention Centre to effectively collect revenue for the from December 2 to 6, 2024. continent," he said.

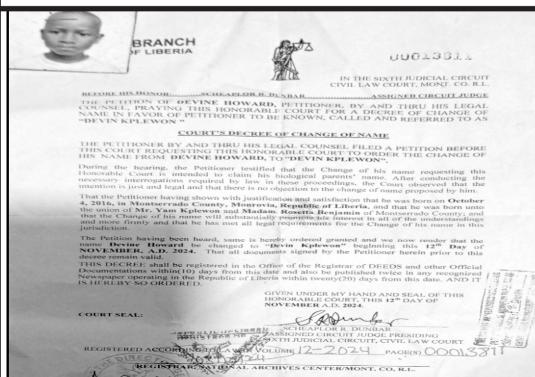
In his inaugural remarks, Mr. Edward Kieswetter, the Commissioner for South The gathering is one of ATAF's most African Revenue Services (SARS) and newly significant events, with participants elected ATAF Chair, pledged the Council's discussing key tax-related issues and commitment to driving progress through exploring innovative strategies to improve collaboration and innovation. "We are revenue collection continent-wide. Press dedicated to fostering transparency and Release delivering the strategic leadership

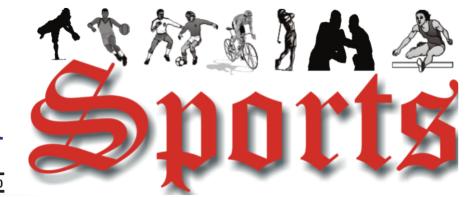
growth and essential public services across the continent.

The ATAF Second Annual Meetings, hosted

people of Liberia. "It was a thorough Over 500 participants from across the democratic exercise, and in the end, we continent gathered to engage under the elected the leadership for the next two theme, "Preparing for the Future: Revenue years. The LRA remains fully committed to Administration in a Dynamic Global supporting ATAF's leadership and the Landscape." This theme underscores the impactful work it carries out to boost critical role of domestic revenue domestic resource mobilization on our mobilization (DRM) in driving economic independence and sustainable development across Africa.







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S/Court's opinion deepens lawmakers' fight

-As embattled Speaker Koffa considers transition

Embattled Speaker J. Fonati Koffa says here that he is expressing victory not of a considering a transition following Supreme Court's opinion bloc, but, of a democracy on legal proceedings of the House of Representatives.

By Lincoln G. Peters

onrovia, Liberia, full Bench of the Supreme Court of Liberia in its ruling over the weekend intensified the leadership

in determining the December 9, 2024 The unconstitutionality of several actions taken by certain members of the House of Representatives who called themselves majority bloc urged



involving embattled House Speaker Cllr. J. Fonati Koffa and members of the majority bloc seeking to remove him. The Supreme Court on Saturday, December 7, 2024

struggle on Capitol Hill the body to proceed accordingly in the administration of its affairs. However, following the ruling

from the Supreme Court, embattled Speaker Koffa wrote on his official Facebook page,

embedded in the rule of law.

"We celebrate victory, not of a bloc, but of a democracy embedded in the rule of law. In the next few days, I will be reaching across the aisle to encourage my colleagues to return to work, do the Liberian people business, restructure the House, and contemplate my transition.

To God be the Glory." He wrote.

Meanwhile, when the case was called for hearing, Cllr. James E. Pierre and Arthur Tamba Johnson appeared for the petitioners.

On the other hand, Cllr. G. Varney Sherman, Sr., and Garrison D. Yealue, Jr., appeared for the respondents, while Augustine C. Fayiah, Solicitor General of Liberia, Jerry D. K. Garlawolu, Assistant Minister for Litigation, and Joel E. Theoway, Assistant Minister for Economic Affairs appeared for the Ministry of Justice.

The Supreme Court in its ruling read by Her Honor, Chief Justice Sie-A-Nyene

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