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# Continental News

## Kenya sentences four men for trying to smuggle ants out of the country

A court in Kenya has sentenced four men to one year in prison or to pay a fine of \$7,700 each, for trying to smuggle thousands of live queen ants out of the country. Authorities said the giant insects were destined for collectors in Europe and Asia in what is seen as an emerging trend of trafficking lesser-known wildlife species.

Two of the men are Belgian teenagers who told the court they were collecting them as a

hobby and did not think it was illegal. Lornoy David and Seppe Lodewijckx, both 19-years-old, were arrested on 5 April with 5,000 ants in their possession at a guest house in Nakuru county, which is home to various national parks. Magistrate Njeri Thuku said in her ruling on Wednesday that despite them telling the court they had been naïve and that it was a hobby, the particular species of ants they collected is valuable and they had thousands of them, not just a few. The Kenya Wildlife

Service (KWS) said the species they held included a distinctive, large and red-coloured harvester ant native to East Africa. The teenagers' lawyer, Halima Nyakinyua, described the sentencing as "fair" and said her clients would not appeal. "When the statutes prescribe a specific minimum amount, the court cannot go lower than that. So, even if we went to the court of appeal, the court is not going to revise that," she said.

The illegal export of the ants "not only undermines Kenya's sovereign rights over its biodiversity but also deprives local communities and research institutions of potential ecological and economic benefits," KWS said in a statement. In a separate but related case, a Vietnamese national and a Kenyan were given the same sentence after they were found with 400 ants.

Duh Hung Nguyen told the court that he was sent to pick up the ants, while Kenyan Dennis Ng'ang'a, said he didn't know it was illegal because ants are sold and eaten locally.



Belgian nationals Lornoy David, left, and Seppe Lodewijckx, appear in court, 7 May 2025

## Kenya: President Ruto arrives in China for four-day state visit

Kenya's president, William Ruto, arrived in Beijing on Tuesday evening for the start of a four-day state visit to China.

It is the third time since taking office that Ruto visits China. He previously attended the Third Road and Belt Forum in October 2023 and the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation in September 2024.

The visit, on invitation of Chinese president Xi Jinping, is expected to bring the two

countries closer together in sectors such as trade, transport and technology.

This comes in the wake of 10% tariffs applied by US president Donald Trump on all Kenyan exports to the US, which have accelerated Nairobi's quest to diversify its commercial partners.

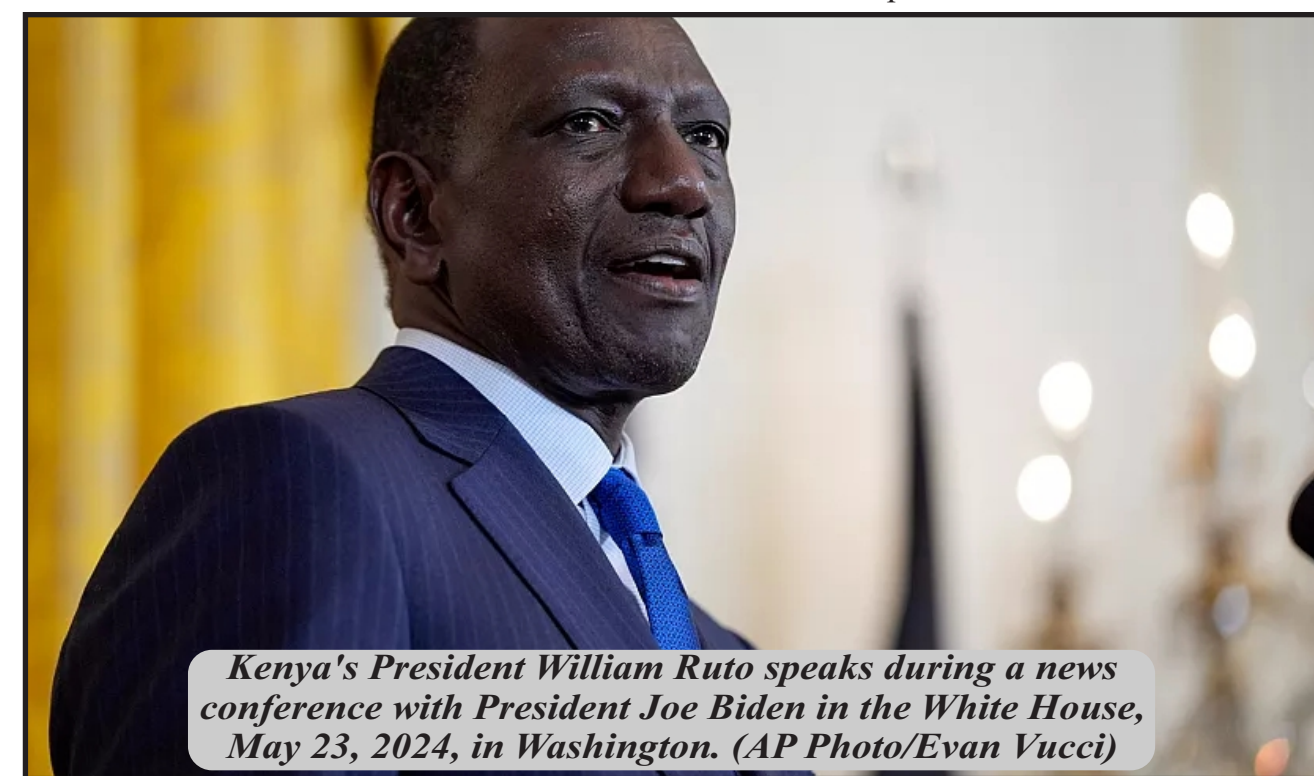
Among them, China is a key interest, currently taking the top spot in Kenya's list of most important trade partners.

Meanwhile, Beijing also has commercial interests and ties

that it could seek to deepen: Nairobi is currently its biggest source of trade in East Africa.

In light of these ties, among the key subjects up for discussion between the two countries are funding for the railway line project between Naivasha and the town of Malaba near the Ugandan border, as well as plans for a motorway from Nairobi to Mau Summit.

Kenya could also be seeking to increase its export opportunities and open up new markets for some of its products such as tea.



Kenya's President William Ruto speaks during a news conference with President Joe Biden in the White House, May 23, 2024, in Washington. (AP Photo/Evan Vucci)

## Egypt and Greece to launch 1,000 km underwater power interconnection

Greece and Egypt reaffirmed their commitment Wednesday to a proposed undersea electricity interconnection designed to transport renewable energy from North Africa to Europe. Greek Prime Minister Kyriakos Mitsotakis and Egyptian President Abdel Fattah el-Sissi renewed the pledge during talks in Athens, following the signing of cooperation agreements across multiple sectors.

The planned 3,000-megawatt

developed specifically for the project in Egypt, with private sector involvement led by Greece's Copelouzos Group.

El-Sissi highlighted the project's strategic importance. "It is not just a bi-lateral project, but also a strategic step with regional and international dimensions, given that it is considered the first direct link for clean energy coming from Egypt to Europe through Greece," he said. "We look forward to the continued support of the European Union for this ambitious project."

The EU has expressed strong interest in expanding energy



Egyptian President Abdel-Fattah el-Sissi, left, and Greece's Prime Minister Kyriakos Mitsotakis, shake hands during their meeting in Athens, on Wednesday, May 7, 2025

capacity cable will stretch nearly 1,000 kilometers (620 miles) across the eastern Mediterranean and has secured backing from the European Union, making it eligible for significant EU funding.

"This will allow both Greece and Europe to import low-cost energy – primarily wind energy, which you are able to produce very competitively – and export it to Europe," Mitsotakis said during joint statements.

The project, estimated to cost around 4 billion euros (\$4.5 billion), is expected to become operational within five years, under an ambitious timeline set by both governments.

It aims to transmit solar and wind-generated power

partnerships with non-member countries to diversify its energy sources and reduce its historic dependence on Russian energy following Russia's invasion of Ukraine in 2022.

Mitsotakis and el-Sissi also discussed regional security, migration challenges, and ways to deepen Egypt's relationship with the European Union.

"Greece is a steadfast ally of Egypt, including on matters concerning your country's relationship with the European Union," Mitsotakis said, underlining Athens' role in fostering closer EU-Egypt ties.

The talks in Athens concluded with agreements to explore additional energy cooperation, facilitate expanded seasonal employment of Egyptian workers in Greece, and enhance collaboration across financial, defense, and cultural sectors.

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# EDITORIAL

## National Bar and Supreme Court must ceasefire

A clear divide is emerging in the Liberian Judiciary, with action and counter-action between the Liberian National Bar Association and the Supreme Court of Liberia. Following the Bar's recent public criticism of the Supreme Court's ruling into the leadership crisis at the House of Representatives, the Court has retaliated by boycotting a Law Day celebration organized by the Bar.

The entire bench of the Supreme Court of Liberia was visibly absent from Friday's Law Day commemoration held by the Bar, where Her Honor, Chief Justice Sie-A-Nyene G. Yuoh, had been invited to speak. Unfortunately, neither did Her Honor, Chief Justice Yuoh nor any member of the bench show up, in what seems a complete snub of the Bar.

It was a national occasion reserved for members of the legal profession, including lawyers, judges, law school students, Justices of the Supreme Court, and the Chief Justice or a designee. But the highest echelon of the Liberian Justice System and Final Arbiter of justice distanced itself, right before the eyes of international partners.

It took former Chief Justice, Cllr. Gloria Musu Scott, to save the day by delivering the key note speech, strongly rebuking the LNBA President's public condemnation of the Supreme Court. “Whether we like it or not, we must respect the opinion of the Supreme Court,” Cllr. Scott said, and emphasized, “When the Court speaks, it is final!”

She warned against politicizing legal institutions and cautioned the Bar against stepping into political territory under the guise of legal advocacy. “You don't reject or disrespect the Court's decision,” she emphasized. “The law clearly states that no lawyer shall do anything to undermine the integrity of the Court.”

This is occurring at a time the High Court faces politic maneuvering to cast doubts on its recent opinion rendered on the controversy surrounding the Speakership of the House of Representatives, where the Executive, backed by group of lawmakers, who styled themselves “Majority Bloc”, illegally removed Speaker J. Fonati Koffa, replacing him by a ruling party lawmaker, Richard Nagbe Koon that Court does not recognize as Speaker.

It is saddening and quite unfortunate that the bodies clothed with authority to protect and interpret the law of the land would be in so deep disagreement and distance apart, as a result of clear political maneuvering.

But then we are not so surprise. This is what the Executive, purely obsessed with wielding political power, had wanted all along – to have its way in judicial matters for selfish interest, while playing lip-service to respect for the rule of law.

Rather than constitutionally enforcing the ruling of the Supreme Court by restoring the amenities of Speaker Koffa, as the legitimate Speaker of the 55<sup>th</sup> Legislature, President Joseph Boakai has made it clear that the ruling from the High Court is not enforceable, and therefore, the matter remains unresolved.

We call on both the Bar and the Supreme Court to avoid a tit for tat scenario over this situation, because this is the aim of politicians. We urge both sides to see the compelling need to uphold the sanctity of the legal profession and the Constitution of Liberia, come what may, by ceasing any further action against each other, and allow posterity to judge which side truly is in support of the rule of law, the Judiciary or the Executive.

# COMMENTARY

## Europe's Climate Goals Require a Green Power Grid

By Emily Nixon

LONDON – For Europe, this is a pivotal moment in the fight against climate change. With extreme weather events becoming more frequent as temperatures continue to rise, the need to act is undeniable. Last year was the [hottest](#) on record, and the first in which global warming exceeded (temporarily) the 1.5° Celsius threshold established by the Paris climate agreement.

In response, the European Union has set ambitious renewable-energy targets to wean itself from fossil fuels. Since electrification is needed to drive the shift from coal, oil, and gas, it is a key pillar of the energy transition. But while there has been considerable progress in scaling up renewable energy as a share of the EU's energy mix, which accounted for [nearly half](#) of all power generation in 2024, electricity demand is also rising rapidly.

Electric-vehicle (EV) adoption and the electrification of heating and cooling systems in buildings mean that more electricity is required. Moreover, [data centers](#) in Europe now consume around 3% of electricity supplies, and that figure is projected almost to double by 2030, owing to rising data processing and storage demands. In Ireland alone, data centers [consumed 21%](#) of the country's total metered electricity in 2023, surpassing urban households (18%). This surge in usage has placed immense pressure on Ireland's grid, foreshadowing similar energy challenges across Europe.

Meeting the EU's ambitious clean-energy goals requires modernizing the continent's aging electricity grid, which is ill-equipped to handle the rapid growth in demand. The bloc's power grid is the world's oldest, at [45-50 years](#), on average. Grid congestion – when an overload prevents electricity from reaching the consumer – already results in renewable energy being wasted, and thousands of gigawatts of renewable projects remain [stuck in connection queues](#). Without significant upgrades, Europe's climate ambitions will remain far out of reach.

Although the EU has implemented an [Action Plan for Grids](#), this is only a first step. The bloc currently invests [€33 billion](#) (\$37.5 billion) annually in electricity distribution networks, but experts estimate that modernizing and expanding the grid will require at least [€584 billion](#) by 2030. Europe therefore must double its annual investment to [€67 billion](#), starting this year. Additional funds are essential to ensure that renewable energy can be transmitted to where it's needed most, and to prevent the bottlenecks that are holding up electrification projects.

Fortunately, Europe can take inspiration from its peers. In December, the United Kingdom unveiled a [Clean Power Action Plan](#) that aims to achieve 100% clean power by 2030, by unlocking £40 billion (\$53 billion) in annual investment. As part of this effort, the UK's National Grid [pledged £35 billion](#) for electricity transmission, including £15 billion to increase grid capacity. Similarly, last year, the United States

launched the [Federal-State Modern Grid Deployment Initiative](#), which focuses on advanced transmission technologies to expand grid capacity.

As these initiatives demonstrate, the problem is one of policy, not technology. Europe's grid permitting and planning processes are notoriously slow. Transmission deployment can take up to ten years, even though construction itself takes just one or two. And with recent [estimates](#) indicating that Europe will need to double its current interconnection capacity over the next 10-15 years to meet its climate and energy targets, accelerating permitting has become an energy security issue.

To address it, policymakers should streamline permitting processes and adopt a coordinated approach to grid planning across the entire EU. Legislated targets are critical to providing visibility for investors and avoiding supply-chain bottlenecks.

Another key area for improvement is grid optimization and allocation. EU policymakers should give top priority to grid connection requests from the most mature projects, and offer clear guidance and timelines for system operators. Requiring financial commitments to reserve allocated grid capacity would prevent speculation and ensure timely deployment. Following the UK's example, the European Commission should replace the outdated “first come, first serve” grid allocation model with balanced allocation of capacity.

Beyond policy changes and increased financing, Europe must embrace innovation. Traditional solutions – like dynamic line ratings (usage optimization technologies) and building new transmission lines – are no longer sufficient. The future lies in “smart” grid technologies such as AI applications that can help address congestion, and in long-duration energy storage (batteries) that can overcome the intermittency of renewables.

AI could also enhance existing grid infrastructure, alleviating the need for time-consuming construction in some cases. But unlocking the technology's potential will still require substantial investment in research and development, as well as incentives for start-ups in the sector.

Without a major upgrade to its grid, Europe risks squandering its renewable-energy potential and undermining its climate goals. The time for half-measures has passed. The EU's [Clean Industrial Deal](#) and its [Affordable Energy Action Plan](#) both [highlighted](#) the need for major investments in the grid. To transform its energy infrastructure, Europe must double its financing, streamline its permitting processes, and embrace innovation.

*Emily Nixon is ESG & Finance Manager at noa, Europe's largest built world venture capital fund.*

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# OP-ED

By Josep Borrell

## Standing Up to Trump's America

MADRID – On May 2, the German Federal Office for the Protection of the Constitution determined that the Alternative for Germany (AfD) warrants classification as a far-right, extremist party. In response, US President Donald Trump's secretary of state, Marco Rubio, defended the AfD and condemned the decision as an act of “[tyranny in disguise](#).”

As with US Vice President J.D. Vance's [speech](#) at the Munich Security Conference in February and Elon Musk's vocal [support](#) for the European extreme right on numerous occasions, such attacks confirm that the United States is no longer Europe's ally, but has become its adversary. Not only has Trump signaled his willingness to abandon Ukraine to Russia; he is openly seeking to destroy Europe's social, ecological, economic, and democratic model.

Trump's goal is to build an authoritarian, illiberal world order. He wants to dismantle his own country's democratic state; establish transactional alliances with the world's major illiberal regimes; and create an impregnable North American fortress by establishing US sovereignty over Canada, Greenland, and the Panama Canal. He even refuses to [rule out the use of force](#) to get his way. He sees no problem with Ukraine falling into Russia's orbit because he welcomes a return to a world in which great powers preside over “spheres of interest.” Each of these objectives poses geopolitical, economic, and security challenges to Europe.

Some Europeans are clinging to the hope that this breakdown of transatlantic relations will be temporary, and that the 2026 midterms or the 2028 presidential election will set things right. But for Europe to base its strategy on such an idea would be very risky.

Any timidity in Europe's response to Trump's aggression will only embolden him. Like Russian President Vladimir Putin, Trump believes only in power struggles and that “might makes right.”

Moreover, Trump's capacity to tilt the US durably toward autocracy – the exact opposite of European values – is greater than many previously thought. In fact, we are witnessing a rapid “[Putinization](#)” of American politics.

The Trump administration's anti-European stance has not emerged from thin air. As it looks toward Asia, the US has long sought to disengage from Europe. This was apparent in President Barack Obama's decision not to push back firmly against Russia's invasion of Crimea in 2014, or to enforce his own “red line” when Syrian President Bashar al-Assad used poison gas on his citizens.

While US support for Ukraine during President [Joe Biden](#)'s administration acted as a brake on this trend, it fell short of what the situation required. And it was clear that the disengagement from Europe would continue after him. Well before Trump's re-election last November, I had already concluded that Biden would probably be the last truly transatlantic US president. For many Americans, NATO increasingly looks like a holdover from a bygone era.

What can Europe do? First, we must respond forcefully to Trump's trade war, and not give in to his extortion concerning our regulation of Big Tech. We are indeed dangerously dependent on the US for digital technology. That needs to change: we will have to pursue the same kind of derisking as we are doing vis-à-vis China. But America depends on Europe, too. The European Union still accounts for one-fifth of global consumption, and it becomes even more important to US companies confronting diminished access to the Chinese market.

Second, Europe must pursue steadily strategic sovereignty in defense and high technology. There is no shortage of reports detailing what needs to be done. Such investments will require significant resources, and thus new [issuances of pan-European debt](#). (Unlike the NextGenerationEU fund, debt repayment must be ensured with new EU-wide resources.)

Third, we must reach out to other likeminded countries that have been subjected to Trump's aggression: Japan, South Korea, Canada, and Australia. Mark Carney and Anthony Albanese's victories in Canada and Australia, respectively, show that the West will not simply roll over for the new illiberalism. We should create a G6 – a G7 without the US – and build a fully European defense architecture that includes countries like the United Kingdom and Norway.

Fourth, we should reach out to the Global South, both to ease the pressure from Trump and Putin and to preserve multilateralism. But doing so will require significant changes. We will need to move away from “Fortress Europe” migration policies and the permissiveness shown toward Israeli Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu's far-right government. Tolerating the intolerable in Gaza has stripped us of most of our moral authority.

Is declaring Europe's independence from America realistic? After eight decades as close allies, Europeans are understandably struggling to get used to a US president who acts like a Russian dictator. The changes that we must make will inevitably encounter resistance in some EU countries that are politically aligned with Trumpism.

This is also a challenge for the European Commission, which has in recent years consistently, and somewhat carelessly, tended to align itself with the US on everything. Fortunately, recent statements by [Friedrich Merz](#), the likely German chancellor, suggest that one of Europe's most traditionally Atlanticist countries understands the new challenge we face.

The European People's Party and its national member parties must also finally stop cozying up to far-right populists who are fully aligned with Trump and Putin. Europe's center-right parties should return to their traditional alliances with Social Democrats, liberals, and Greens to stand up together against Trump.

Achieving Europe's independence from the US will not be easy. But if we do not act now, and decisively, the future of our social and democratic model could be bleak.

***Josep Borrell is a former high representative of the European Union for foreign affairs and security policy, a former vice-president of the European Commission, a former president of the European Parliament, and a former foreign minister of Spain.***

# OPINION

by Vera Songwe,  
Witney Schneidman

## How Africa Should Negotiate with Trump

WASHINGTON, DC – In a recent interview, Fox News anchor Bret Baier askedFélix Tshisekedi, the president of the Democratic Republic of Congo, how his government would balance continued ties with the United States – including the negotiation of a critical-minerals deal – with its deepening relationship with China. The DRC president responded that China's influence is not so much “waxing” in Africa as America's influence is “waning.”

Tshisekedi is right. In 2000, the US was Africa's largest trading partner; today, China's total trade with Africa is more than four times larger than that of the US. Two US-Africa Leaders Summits have been held, in 2014 and 2022, and there is no date for a third, though Congress passed legislation late last year that would compel President Donald Trump to convene a summit this year and every two years thereafter.

Meanwhile, China is preparing to convene its tenth summit with African leaders, through the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation, in 2027. A Gallup poll published last year showed that, for the first time, China's approval rating in Africa (58%) had surpassed that of the US (56%).

Speaking to Baier, Tshisekedi pointed out that the DRC would be “very happy” to see a renewed US commercial presence there. But Trump's trade policies could have the opposite outcome. And persistent reports that the Trump administration plans to reduce the number of US embassies and consulates in Africa will only add to this decline in influence. For the last 25 years, the cornerstone of America's commercial relationship with Africa has been the African Growth and Opportunity Act, a non-reciprocal trade agreement that allows more than 6,000 African products into the US, without duties or quotas. In 2001-22, African AGOA members exported more than \$100 billion worth of non-crude goods to the US. The trade was always supposed to be one-way, but that does not mean it did not benefit US companies – such as Levi's, Gap, and Walmart – and consumers.

The AGOA was designed to help Africa transform its manufacturing base, thereby shifting the basis of its relationship with the US from aid to trade – a goal that one might expect the Trump administration, which has slashed foreign-aid programs, to support. Participation was conditioned on African governments' promotion of political pluralism, good governance, and economic liberalization. And studies have shown that trade with the US increases value-added production, labor productivity, and labor demand in Africa.

But, early last month, Trump introduced “reciprocal” tariffs on many African countries, with some of the AGOA's strongest performers facing the highest rates: Lesotho (50%), Madagascar (47%), and Mauritius (40%). Meanwhile, the 17 African countries that are ineligible for AGOA benefits, mainly due to poor governance, were effectively rewarded with far lower tariffs.

Trump suspended most of these tariffs almost immediately, opening a 90-day window to strike new trade deals. And, to some extent, he is getting what he wanted, with AGOA countries scrambling to salvage their preferential access to the US market. Lesotho, for example, granted Trump ally Elon Musk's Starlink a ten-year license to operate its satellite network in the country.

Nonetheless, Trump's tariffs are unlikely to deliver quick wins for the US. Already, African trade ministers have agreed to fast-track policies that will promote trade within the continent, as well as diversify exports in order to reduce their countries' dependence on particular foreign markets. Add to that the shuttering of the US Agency for International Development and the Millennium Challenge Corporation, the closure of Voice of America, and the lapse of the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief, and America's footprint in Africa is shrinking fast.

But there is a way for Africa to leverage the US administration's interests to the benefit of both sides. Trump's top priority in Africa is securing access to critical minerals. This makes countries like the DRC – which boasts the world's richest copper deposits and four of the world's five largest cobalt mines – as well as Gabon, Zambia, South Africa, and even Chad, strategically important. The US is already in talks over a minerals deal with the DRC and others.

The only problem is that China is far ahead of the US on this front. Chinese state-owned companies and banks control 80% of the DRC's cobalt production, and 60-90% of the world's cobalt supply is refined in China, whereas the US produces less than 1% of the world's cobalt. This imbalance drove former US President Joe Biden's administration to develop the Lobito Corridor initiative, aimed at expanding the 800-mile rail line that extends from the Angolan port of Lobito on Africa's Atlantic coast through the mineral-rich DRC to Zambia.

This initiative – for which the Trump administration has signaled its support – will upgrade African infrastructure by establishing partnerships between the US, African governments, African-led financing agencies such as the Africa Finance Corporation, and the European Union. But African countries must do more to ensure that any critical-minerals agreement provides a real boost to their economies, especially by insisting that some value-add production occurs on the continent.

To complement access to Africa's critical minerals, the US should also commit to processing them and adding value on the continent – for example, making cobalt into battery precursors before export. Since Chinese companies have shown no interest in doing this, such an exchange would position the US as a more valuable partner, thereby ensuring its long-term access to these vital resources. Given that Africa has all the minerals needed for production, spread across more than ten countries in Central and Southern Africa, the development of local processing capabilities would also be consistent with the goals of the African Continental Free Trade Area.

Africa and the US are both seeking to strengthen their manufacturing sectors, but this is not a zero-sum game. On the contrary, by agreeing to help strengthen Africa's industrial capabilities, the US could gain greater access to resources its own industry needs, reverse the decline of its commercial influence on the continent, and contribute to the revival of wider, mutually beneficial trade. This could lead to more balanced current accounts, just as Trump desires.



FEATUREARTICLE

The Consequences of Propaganda on Liberia's Political Landscape:

By: Austin S Fallah-From the Active Sleeping Pen on Sabbatical/Vacationing:

In the constantly shifting sands of Liberia's political environment, cheap propaganda, chaotic information dissemination, and rampant lies have emerged as potent weapons wielded by various political factions.

These tactics threaten national security, dignity, and the nation's overall well-being.

The ongoing pattern of misinformation will persist, weakening the bonds that hold the populace together and further entrenching divisions along political party lines.

My disquisition explores the different practices on Liberia's societal fabric, its impact on national progress, and its considerable international reputation.

Ultimately, it is a call to action for politicians and citizens alike to abandon falsehoods and embrace a narrative rooted in peace, unity, and factual information.

The Landscape of Misinformation:

Cheap propaganda in Liberia manifests itself in various forms, including social media posts, addresses by political figures, and grassroots mobilizations based on distorted truths.

The ease with which lies can spread has only been exacerbated by the proliferation of the internet and social media, creating an environment where misinformation can travel faster than the truth.

Political figures often capitalize on this environment to criminalize their opponents, distract from pertinent issues, and manipulate public sentiment for personal gain.

The result is a toxic blend of fear, distrust, and animosity among citizens barded by inconsistent messages that muddle objective analysis and informed decision-making.

The critical issue is how disinformation undermines individual agency and collective unity.

Young people, who are often eager to engage with political discourse but may lack comprehensive understanding, are especially vulnerable, as we see in most Liberian online chatrooms.

When these impressionable minds are fed a steady diet of lies, they shape their political beliefs and stifle their ability to engage meaningfully with the democratic process.

The false narratives proliferated by unscrupulous, so-called selfish, self-proclaimed political leaders lead to a poorly informed generation that is disillusioned and ultimately disengaged from constructive political dialogue.

Political Fragmentation and Societal Disunity:

The dissemination of chaotic information serves to deepen the political divides within Liberia.

Rather than being vehicles for constructive debate and policy development, some political parties and their leaders resort to competing narratives handed in hostility rather than unity. Each party utilizes its specific propaganda framework—invoking historical grievances, exploiting ethnic divisions, or demonizing opposition views, to rally its base while simultaneously alienating others

under demon-crazy rather than tenants of fair play Democracy.

This divisive strategy not only solidifies party allegiance but also hinders cross-party collaborations that are essential for a cohesive national strategy.

As citizens are polarized along party lines, the aspiration for national progress becomes increasingly challenging.

The potential for productive dialogue diminishes as individuals align more closely with party loyalty than national interests.

Political discourse devolves into a sport where the goal is to 'win' rather than to foster understanding or find common ground.

Thus, societal disunity becomes perpetuated, making it more challenging to address pressing national issues such as poverty alleviation, healthcare access, and infrastructural development. Thus, the peace and stability that many have fought so



hard to achieve are at risk. The historical context of civil conflict looms large, and the resurgence of deeply entrenched divisions could spark tensions reminiscent of those tumultuous times. Therefore, all players in the political arena must recognize the grave consequences of their actions. The temptation to undermine opponents with deceptive narratives must be resisted in favor of a more honorable approach that values truth and cooperation.

The Impact on Liberia's International Reputation:

Liberia's reputation on the international stage has historically been marred by conflict and instability. The rampant propagation of falsehoods only threatens to exacerbate this fragile image. Foreign entities, whether investors, governments, or NGOs, often look to a nation's political stability and social cohesion as determinants of potential involvement. When Liberia is portrayed as a nation rife with chaos and deception, it becomes less attractive for investment and collaboration. The potential for economic growth remains stymied, and with it, the opportunities for citizens to improve their lives through meaningful employment and social services. Moreover, misinformation erodes trust among international partners, an essential component of diplomatic relations. Countries that wish to engage with Liberia on initiatives ranging from sustainable development to educational programs must navigate a landscape clouded by suspicion and misinformation.

As the international community becomes increasingly skeptical of Liberia's ability to manage its affairs, it may become less willing to extend the assistance and investment necessary for sustainable growth.

Exacerbating this situation is the potential for bilateral relations to become strained as misinformation spreads across borders.

When foreign governments and organizations rely on skewed narratives to formulate their policies regarding Liberia, the consequences could be dire, leading to sanctions, reduced aid, or diminished collaboration in essential areas such as health and education.

The Path Forward: Truth, Unity, and Peace:

A radical shift in political culture is necessary in light of the destructive effects of propaganda and misinformation. Politicians, particularly those considered "intelligent" or influential, neemustampion a paradigm rooted in truth and transparency. The importance of ethical leadership cannot be overemphasized.

Leaders set the tone for political discourse and public engagement. Combating falsehoods with factual information and fostering inclusive discussions can engender an environment conducive to unity and collaboration. Moreover, youth/young people, the unwitting audience of political rhetoric, should be educated and empowered to engage critically with the information presented. This calls for a concerted effort from educational institutions, civic organizations, and families to foster an environment that prizes critical thinking and informed participation. Liberians can cultivate a political climate that breeds constructive engagement rather than mindless allegiance. By providing the youth/young people with the tools to discern fact from fiction.

Ultimately, the resolution is twofold: a collective effort to promote truth-telling and a commitment to nurturing a culture of peace and unity over division and animosity. Political actors must acknowledge that their short-term gains from misleading rhetoric undermine national progress and potentially jeopardize the future. The message must pivot from division and hostility to an ambitious vision for a united Liberia, where diverse political opinions can coexist, dialogue is encouraged, and differing viewpoints contribute to a comprehensive understanding of the nation's challenges and opportunities. The spread of chaotic information, cheap propaganda, and lies poses a grave threat to the integrity of Liberia's political landscape, national security, and international reputation. Political leaders and citizens alike must recognize the fragility of unity and the importance of fostering a discourse enriched with truth, understanding, and cooperation. The call to action is a warning: stop the cycle of disinformation and embrace a path prioritizing peace, growth, and a shared vision for a prosperous Liberia. Without this transformative shift, the ramifications of misinformation will persist, leaving the country adrift in a sea of distrust, division, and stagnation. This would ultimately jeopardize the hard-won strides made toward a stable and thriving democracy, made possible by the blood and sweat of fellow Liberians, our African Brothers and Sisters, and the International Community who fought and died for this democracy.



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REQUEST FOR EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST

A CONSULTING FIRM TO TRAIN AND EQUIP WOMEN WHO ARE INVOLVED IN CROSS-BORDER TRADE IN THE THREE VALUE CHAINS IN THE TWO PROJECT COMMUNITIES AS A WAY OF STRENGTHENING CAPACITY FOR INCREASED BUSINESS PERFORMANCE AND SUBSEQUENTLY, IMPROVED LIVELIHOODS

COUNTRIES: Sierra Leone and Liberia

Sector: Gender Equality  
Mode of Financing: Grant  
Project ID: P-Z1-ID0-009  
Grant No: 5900155016801  
Issued Date: 7 May 2025

The Mano River Union Secretariat has received a grant from the African Development Fund to implement the project to Build Inclusive Business Ecosystems for Stabilization and Transformation (BI-BEST) in the Mano River Union (MRU) and intends to apply part of the agreed amount for this grant to payments under the contract for the recruitment of a consultant to train and equip women who are involved in cross-border trade in the three value chains in the two project communities as a way of strengthening capacity for increased business performance and subsequently, improved livelihoods.

The particular services required from the Consulting Firms under the assignment include, but not limited:

- Develop skills of WCBTs through training and mentorship/peer-to-peer support;
- Train WCBTs on cooperative development to strength their networks and associations;
- Improve access to finance through market facilitation with Banks and Village Savings and Loan Associations (VSLAs).

The assignment will be undertaken twelve (12) months.

The Mano River Union Secretariat is therefore inviting public and private entities, civil society organizations (CSOs), Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs), International Organizations, associations, foundations or any structure with a legal mandate to operate in both Sierra Leone and Liberia, and with required expertise in developing and providing entrepreneurship development support to women entrepreneurs and cross border traders using a sectoral approach to express their interest. The Mano River Union Secretariat requires that interested Consulting Firms shall provide information on their qualifications and experience (cover letter, supporting documents referencing similar services and showing demonstrated experience in similar assignments, etc.) to undertake this Assignment.

Eligibility criteria, establishment of the short-list and the selection procedure shall be in accordance with the African Development Bank’s “Procurement Policy and Methodology for Bank Group funded Operations” (BPM), dated 2015, which is available on the Bank’s website at <http://www.afdb.org>. MRU is under no obligation to shortlist any consultant who expresses interest.

Interested Consulting Firms may query or obtain further information from the Procurement Specialist email address: [kensah@mru.int](mailto:kensah@mru.int) during the Office’s working hours between 09:00 to 17:00 hours GMT.

Expressions of interest must be delivered to the email address [procurement@mru.int](mailto:procurement@mru.int) by June 6<sup>th</sup>, 2025 at 2:30pm Sierra Leone time and mention “CAPACITY BUILDING OF THE WOMEN CROSS-BORDER”

Attention:

Mano River Union Secretariat  
32 S Spur Loop, Wilberforce, Freetown  
Republic of Sierra Leone  
Tel: +23276964965  
E-mail : [procurement@mru.int](mailto:procurement@mru.int)

LNP and Cuttington University forge partnership

- Break Ground for on campus police depot

By Edwin N. Khakie

Suakoko, Bong County — In move to strengthen security and deepen community engagement, the Liberia National Police (LNP) and Cuttington University have signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) and officially launched construction of a new police depot on the university's main campus in Suakoko, Bong County. The groundbreaking ceremony marked a milestone in collaborative efforts to enhance law enforcement presence while fostering a safer, more conducive environment for academic pursuits. Senior LNP officials, Cuttington University administrators, local government leaders, traditional chiefs, and community members gathered in a show of support for the initiative.

addresses critical challenges within the LNP, including an aging workforce and regional disparities in policing. Under the initiative, students will pursue degrees in criminal justice, conflict management, and related fields while undergoing structured police training. Graduates will enter the force as intellectually sharp, ethically grounded, and operationally ready officers. "This partnership will also decentralize police training, tap into local talent, and support female enrollment—a cornerstone of our gender mainstreaming agenda," Reeves added. Expansion plans are already underway for similar programs in Lofa, Nimba, Grand



Police Inspector General Gregory Coleman hailed the partnership as a transformative step in the LNP's evolution. "Today marks a new chapter—defined by vision, renewal, and strategic partnership," Coleman said. "The LNP-Cuttington University Capacity Development Program is more than recruitment; it is a bold step toward building a professional, educated, and youth-driven police force." Coleman emphasized that the initiative aligns with President Joseph Boakai's ARREST Agenda and the Liberia National Police Service Charter, demonstrating how collaboration between public institutions and academia can address manpower challenges and drive national progress. He also revealed plans to replicate the program across other universities and regions in Liberia. Deputy Inspector General for Training and Manpower Development, Sardatu L.M. Reeves, echoed these sentiments. "Today's ceremony is not just about signing an MoU or turning earth; it represents a national turning point where we align education with service, intellect with discipline, and youth with purpose," she remarked. Reeves highlighted how the partnership

Bassa, Maryland, and beyond. Bong County Senator Prince K. Moya, District #5 Representative Eugene J.M. Kollie, and the Director General of the Civil Service Agency were among dignitaries who expressed their support at the event. Cuttington University President, Dr. Romelle A. Horton, welcomed the collaboration, calling it a shared commitment to community safety. "This partnership is a testament to our joint vision for a safer, more secure learning environment. We believe this police depot will serve both the university and the broader Suakoko community," Dr. Horton stated. The new police depot will function as a local command post, offering crime prevention, rapid response, and community policing services. It will also open avenues for collaboration between police and students in areas such as criminal justice research and public safety initiatives. Construction is set to commence in the coming months. This partnership highlights the expanding role of Liberia's academic institutions in bolstering national security and promoting community development.



## MORE HEADLINE NEWS

## MORE HEADLINE NEWS

# Bong attorney vows to uphold law

**-Amid pressure over mining arrests.**

By Edwin N. Khakie

Gbarnga, Bong County — resisted. Flomo also hinted that he may soon expose those trying to exert undue influence over the case.

On May 5, 2025, Superintendent Loleyah Hawa Norris and Attorney Flomo led a joint team to address growing concerns over unauthorized mining operations in Gbakonai, Electoral District #3.

Following a press conference, the officials visited the mining site, where they observed significant environmental damage, including polluted water sources and farmlands converted into mining pits.

Local residents, speaking on condition of anonymity, expressed fear and frustration,

Following the recent arrest of a Burkinabé national and several others linked to illegal mining, Flomo revealed that he has received numerous calls from prominent citizens demanding the suspects' release.

"Some have even claimed that the arrested individuals are 'their interest,'" Flomo disclosed, condemning the interference as an attack on the rule of law and a threat to public confidence in the justice system.

He reaffirmed his commitment to enforcing the law without fear or favor, warning that any attempts to politicize or obstruct legal proceedings will be firmly

citing threats to their livelihoods and safety due to the mining activities.

Superintendent Norris and Attorney Flomo assured the community that decisive action would follow, including the prosecution of those involved and efforts to restore the damaged environment. They also warned other illegal operators in Bong County to halt their activities or face similar crackdowns.

The visit marks a significant step in Bong County's fight against illegal mining, setting a precedent for stricter enforcement and stronger collaboration among local authorities, law enforcement, and the community.



# New financial institution opens for business

Former President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf, on Wednesday, May 7, cut the ribbon to the Modern Savings & Loans Microfinance Deposit-Taking Institution, officially declaring it open and ready for business in Liberia.

The Microfinance Institution, envisaged since 2014 by Counsellor George B. Kailondo, aims to empower Liberian businesses, marketers as well as ordinary Liberians by helping them to access funding intended to stimulate economic growth and accelerate trade.

President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf lauded the great initiative and

insight of Mr. Kailondo in giving back to Liberians and Liberia through the establishment of the Modern Savings & Loans Microfinance Deposit-Taking Institution.

The former Liberian Leader spoke of the need for a strong private sector as the engine for economic growth and the creation of job opportunities.

Mrs. Sirleaf reflected on the rapid development in the West African Subregion because its citizens are doing the needful in investment in their respective countries.

She described the Modern Savings & Loans Microfinance Deposit-Taking Institution as an excellent way of giving back, and

called on all Liberians to support the initiative aimed at empowering smaller businesses to develop and grow

The Modern Savings & Loans Microfinance Deposit - Taking Institution vowed to drastically reduce interest rates and also break away from the century-old traditional credit system that overburdened businesses and made it difficult to succeed.

Interest rates by Banking and financial institutions are estimated at over 18 percent, which the Modern Savings & Loans Microfinance Deposit-Taking Institution promised to reduce below ten percent to afford Its customers to develop and grow their businesses.

The dedication and opening ceremony of the Modern Savings & Loans Microfinance Deposit-Taking Institution was attended by the Central Bank of Liberia and top senior government officials, including Members of the National Legislature and business Community, who remarks lauding the initiative and pledging their support.

The Institution is headed by Madam Chantell Kailondo, who serves as the Chief Executive Officer.



Ellen Johnson Sirleaf

# NTA Breaks Ground for New Administrative Building This May

By: Kruah Thompson

Monrovia, Liberia: The Minister of Information, Cultural Affairs and Tourism Jerolimek Mathew Piah has revealed that Liberia National Transit Authority (NTA) will officially break ground for the construction of its new administrative building on May 31, 2025,

It can be recalled that on May 5, 2022, the building housing the National Transit Authority was gutted by fire. Though an investigation by the National Fire

Speaking Tuesday May 6, 2025, at the Ministry of Information Culture Affair and Tourism Minister confirmed that the contract for the building's construction has been finalized and signed, with the Ministries of Justice and Finance also attesting to the agreement.

He told our reporter that the new administrative building is expected to restore structure and efficiency to the NTA's operations and improve service delivery for commuters across



Jerolimek Mathew Piah

Service later confirmed that the blaze was caused by an arson attack, but since the incident, the NTA has faced significant operational challenges due to the lack of a permanent administrative space.

Responding to calls from the agency, the government initiated a process to secure bids for the reconstruction. However, the process was initially halted by the Public Procurement and Concessions Commission (PPCC) due to procedural concerns.

Despite the delay, President Joseph Boakai intervened and instructed that the process resume. Following the renewed engagement, a reconstruction bid was successfully launched, leading to the selection of a contractor for the project.

the country.

In another development, Minister Piah revealed that the NTA, in keeping with its national plan to revamp public transportation across the country, has signed a contract through the Ministry of Finance and Development Planning and a private vendor for the procurement of 55 new buses and five cargo trucks.

According to him, the terms of the contract have been approved by the Debt Management Committee, and a resolution endorsing the procurement is expected to be completed this week. "Once finalized, the procurement process will officially commence."

Meanwhile he says, the new buses and trucks are expected to arrive in Liberia within 60 days.

## Starts from page 11 Arcelor Mittal Vs. HPX

in annual economic value that would policy unless it intends to chase away come from increased operations capital, jobs, and credibility.

Abandoning new training and This is not just about one company or capacity-building programs for one deal. It is about the kind of Liberian youth country Liberia wants to be.

Crippling the confidence of current Will Liberia reward those who build and future investors who are watching and believe in its future, or will it bend how Liberia treats those who invest in to the will of opportunists who offer its growth nothing but pressure and promises?

The idea that Liberia should hire a President Joseph Boakai has the separate, independent rail opportunity to break the cycle of operator—funded by its own limited missed opportunities that plagued his public resources—while sidelining a predecessor. He can choose company offering the service free of leadership rooted in logic, fairness, charge is not only illogical, it is and long-term national interest. Or he fiscally irresponsible. can allow Liberia to be used as a mere

No serious investor would accept transit corridor for the benefit of building a billion-dollar asset, only to foreign extractors.

be told later that another party with no The country has already paid a steep investment history should be given price for hesitation in 2021. It must control. And no responsible not pay again.

government should endorse such a



# Français

## Transformation du Liberia : La Première Raffinerie d'Huile de Palme Nationale

Dans les terres fertiles du Liberia, où les graines de palmier sont semées avec dévouement et cultivées jusqu'à maturité, un jalon transformateur est prêt à redéfinir le paysage économique de la nation. Pendant de nombreuses décennies, l'industrie de l'huile de palme du Liberia a été

perdant ainsi la valeur économique associée à l'industrialisation. Cette histoire est maintenant en train de changer de manière significative.

La société Mano Manufacturing Company mène cette révolution de paradigme, en annonçant fièrement l'établissement de la première raffinerie d'huile de palme du Liberia. Ce projet représente non

industrielle et un symbole de création de valeur sur le sol libérien.

### Une Vision de Transformation

La nouvelle raffinerie transformera l'huile de palme brute, cultivée par des agriculteurs libériens et produite localement, en huile de palme raffinée, blanchie et désodorisée (RBD), ainsi qu'en ses dérivés, oléine et stéarine. Ces produits de haute qualité répondront à des normes internationales strictes, permettant au Liberia de compétitionner sur les marchés mondiaux tout en répondant aux besoins domestiques.

Cependant, ce développement va bien au-delà d'une simple réalisation industrielle. Il s'agit d'un investissement stratégique dans l'avenir du Liberia, fondé sur les principes d'autonomisation économique, de développement du capital humain, d'amélioration communautaire et de protection de l'environnement. Les effets de ce projet se feront sentir à travers le pays, touchant la vie

▶ CONT'D ON PAGE 9



caractérisée par un potentiel non réalisé. Le pays a exporté de l'huile de palme brute sous sa forme brute, renonçant ainsi à l'opportunité de la transformer localement et

seulement une avancée pour l'entreprise, mais aussi un saut en avant pour le pays lui-même. Prévüe pour être mise en service en novembre 2025, la raffinerie promet d'être un phare d'autosuffisance

## Le Libéria signe un accord historique de modernisation portuaire avec Tanger Med du Maroc

Le gouvernement libérien a franchi une étape majeure en concluant un accord stratégique de modernisation portuaire avec *Tanger Med Engineering*, la filiale technique de la célèbre autorité portuaire marocaine Tanger Med, reconnue à l'échelle mondiale. Cet accord, qualifié de tournant historique, ouvre la voie à la mise en œuvre intégrale d'un Plan Directeur ambitieux pour la modernisation du Port autonome de Monrovia et du Port de Buchanan. Piloté par la *National Port Authority (NPA)* sous la direction de M. Sekou Hussein Dukuly, ce projet s'inscrit dans la vision du Président Joseph Nyuma Boakai à travers son programme ARREST pour un développement inclusif, notamment dans les domaines du renouveau des infrastructures, de l'intégration régionale et de la croissance économique durable.

Fruit de plusieurs mois de collaboration technique intensive entre les parties, l'accord trace les grandes lignes d'une transformation en profondeur des infrastructures

portuaires libériennes. Parmi les axes majeurs du projet figurent :

- la modernisation des terminaux à conteneurs, des quais de chargement et des entrepôts,
  - l'implantation de plateformes logistiques intelligentes et de systèmes de sécurité de pointe,
  - l'adoption de solutions énergétiques vertes,
  - des travaux de dragage et d'extension pour accueillir des navires de plus grande capacité et dynamiser le volume des échanges.
- « Cet accord dépasse le cadre d'un simple projet d'infrastructure. Il s'agit d'une avancée nationale décisive », a déclaré M. Sekou H.

Dukuly, Directeur général de la NPA. « En investissant dans des installations portuaires de classe mondiale, nous jetons les bases d'une création d'emplois durable, de l'attraction des investissements et d'une croissance inclusive. C'est la concrétisation du programme ARREST, qui vise la relance, la réforme et l'autonomie économique. »

La mise à niveau des ports devrait améliorer de manière significative la performance logistique du Libéria, réduire les délais de dédouanement, accroître la capacité opérationnelle et numériser les services portuaires et douaniers — renforçant ainsi l'efficacité, la transparence et la fiabilité du commerce maritime.



## Éditorial

### Les objectifs climatiques de l'Europe nécessitent un réseau électrique vert

ONDRES – L'Europe arrive à un moment charnière dans la lutte contre le changement climatique. Les phénomènes météorologiques extrêmes devenant de plus en plus fréquents à mesure que les températures continuent d'augmenter, la nécessité d'agir est indéniable. L'année dernière a été la [plus chaude](#) jamais enregistrée, et la première où le réchauffement climatique a dépassé (temporairement) le seuil de 1,5° Celsius établi par l'accord de Paris sur le climat. En réponse, l'Union européenne a fixé des objectifs ambitieux en matière d'énergies renouvelables, afin de se sevrer des combustibles fossiles. Comme l'électrification est nécessaire pour remplacer le charbon, le pétrole et le gaz, elle constitue un pilier essentiel de la transition énergétique. Si des progrès considérables ont été accomplis dans l'augmentation de la part des énergies renouvelables dans le bouquet énergétique de l'UE, qui représentera [près de la moitié](#) de la production totale d'électricité en 2024, la demande d'électricité augmente également rapidement. L'adoption des véhicules électriques et l'électrification des systèmes de chauffage et de refroidissement dans les bâtiments entraînent une augmentation de la demande d'électricité. En outre, les [centres de données](#) en Europe consomment actuellement environ 3 % de l'approvisionnement en électricité, mais ce chiffre devrait presque doubler d'ici à 2030, en raison de l'augmentation de la demande en matière de traitement et de stockage des données. Rien qu'en Irlande, les centres de données [consommeront 21 %](#) de l'électricité totale mesurée dans le pays en 2023, dépassant ainsi les ménages urbains (18 %). Cette augmentation de la consommation a exercé une pression énorme sur le réseau irlandais, laissant présager des défis énergétiques similaires dans toute l'Europe.

Pour atteindre les objectifs ambitieux de l'UE en matière d'énergie propre, il faut moderniser le réseau électrique vieillissant du continent, qui est mal équipé pour faire face à la croissance rapide de la demande. Le réseau électrique de l'Union européenne est le plus ancien du monde, avec une moyenne de [45 à 50 ans](#). La congestion du réseau – lorsqu'une surcharge empêche l'électricité d'atteindre le consommateur – entraîne déjà un gaspillage de l'énergie renouvelable, et des milliers de gigawatts de projets renouvelables restent [bloqués dans des files d'attente de connexion](#). En l'absence d'améliorations significatives, les ambitions de l'Europe en matière de climat resteront hors de portée.

Bien que l'UE ait mis en œuvre un [plan d'action pour les réseaux électriques](#), il ne s'agit que d'une première étape. L'Union investit actuellement [33 milliards d'euros](#) par an dans les réseaux de distribution d'électricité, mais les experts estiment que la modernisation et l'extension du réseau nécessiteront au moins [584 milliards d'euros](#) d'ici à 2030. L'Europe doit donc doubler son investissement annuel pour le porter à [67 milliards d'euros](#) dès cette année. Des fonds supplémentaires sont indispensables pour garantir que l'énergie renouvelable puisse être acheminée là où elle est le plus nécessaire et pour éviter les goulets d'étranglement qui freinent les projets d'électrification.

Heureusement, l'Europe peut s'inspirer d'autres pays. En décembre, le Royaume-Uni a dévoilé un [plan d'action pour une énergie propre](#) qui vise à atteindre 100 % d'énergie propre d'ici à 2030, en débloquent 40 milliards de livres sterling (53 milliards de dollars) d'investissements annuels. Dans le cadre de cet effort, la société britannique National Grid [s'est engagée](#) à consacrer [35 milliards de livres](#) au transport de l'électricité, dont 15 milliards pour augmenter la capacité du réseau. De même, l'année dernière, les États-Unis ont lancé l'[initiative fédérale-étatique de déploiement d'un réseau moderne](#), qui se concentre sur les technologies de transmission avancées afin d'accroître la capacité du réseau.

Comme le montrent ces initiatives, le problème est d'ordre politique et non technologique. En Europe, les processus d'autorisation et de planification des réseaux sont extrêmement lents. Le déploiement du réseau de transport peut prendre jusqu'à dix ans, même si la construction elle-même ne prend qu'un an ou deux. Et comme des [estimations](#) récentes indiquent que l'Europe devra doubler sa capacité d'interconnexion actuelle au cours des 10 à 15 prochaines années pour atteindre ses objectifs en matière de climat et d'énergie, l'accélération du processus d'autorisation est devenue une question de sécurité énergétique. Pour y remédier, les décideurs politiques devraient rationaliser les processus d'autorisation et adopter une approche coordonnée de la planification du réseau dans l'ensemble de l'UE. Il est essentiel de fixer des objectifs législatifs afin de donner de la visibilité aux investisseurs et d'éviter les goulets d'étranglement dans la chaîne d'approvisionnement.

Un autre domaine clé à améliorer est l'optimisation et l'allocation du réseau. Les décideurs politiques de l'UE devraient donner la priorité aux demandes de connexion au réseau émanant des projets les plus mûrs, et proposer des orientations et des délais clairs aux gestionnaires de réseau. Le fait d'exiger des engagements financiers pour réserver la capacité de réseau allouée permettrait d'éviter la spéculation et de garantir un déploiement en temps voulu. Suivant l'exemple du Royaume-Uni, la Commission européenne devrait remplacer le modèle obsolète d'attribution du réseau "premier arrivé, premier servi" par une attribution équilibrée de la capacité.

Au-delà des changements politiques et de l'augmentation du financement, l'Europe doit adopter l'innovation. Les solutions traditionnelles, comme l'évaluation dynamique des lignes (technologies d'optimisation de l'utilisation) et la construction de nouvelles lignes de transport, ne suffisent plus. L'avenir réside dans les technologies de réseaux "intelligents", comme les applications d'intelligence artificielle, qui peuvent aider à résoudre les problèmes de congestion, et dans le stockage d'énergie de longue durée (batteries) qui peut pallier l'intermittence des énergies renouvelables. L'IA pourrait également améliorer l'infrastructure de réseau existante, ce qui permettrait dans certains cas d'éviter des travaux de construction fastidieux. Mais pour libérer le potentiel de cette technologie, il faudra investir massivement dans la recherche et le développement, et offrir des incitations aux jeunes pousses du secteur.

Sans une modernisation majeure de son réseau, l'Europe risque de gaspiller son potentiel en matière d'énergies renouvelables et de compromettre ses objectifs climatiques. Le temps des demi-mesures est révolu. Le [pacte industriel propre](#) de l'UE et son [plan d'action pour une énergie abordable](#) ont tous deux [mis en évidence](#) la nécessité d'investir massivement dans le réseau. Pour transformer son infrastructure énergétique, l'Europe doit doubler son financement, rationaliser ses processus d'autorisation et adopter l'innovation.



# Français

## Starts from page 8 Transformation du Liberia : La Première

des individus, des familles et des communautés.

### Autonomisation Économique et Rétenue de Valeur

La raffinerie inaugurale d'huile de palme du Liberia représentera un véritable catalyseur pour l'économie nationale. En traitant l'huile de palme localement, le pays retiendra davantage de valeur sur son territoire, réduisant sa dépendance aux importations d'huiles comestibles et créant de nouvelles opportunités de croissance économique. Des centaines d'emplois directs et indirects seront créés, couvrant des rôles dans la fabrication, la logistique, la vente, et bien plus encore.

En outre, la raffinerie est conçue pour intégrer les petits producteurs de palmiers à une chaîne de valeur traçable et transparente. Les producteurs locaux bénéficieront de marchés stables et de prix équitables, assurant une répartition équitable des récompenses économiques de cette entreprise. Cette intégration des petits producteurs dans l'économie formelle aura des avantages à long terme, leur permettant d'investir dans leurs exploitations, d'améliorer les rendements et de sécuriser de meilleures conditions de vie pour leurs familles.

### Investissement dans le Capital Humain

La Mano Manufacturing Company ne se contente pas de construire des infrastructures, elle investit dans les individus. Consciente que l'avenir industriel durable dépend d'une main-d'œuvre qualifiée, l'entreprise fait d'importants investissements dans le développement du capital humain. Des programmes de formation et des parcours de carrière seront mis en place pour équiper les jeunes Libériens des compétences nécessaires pour réussir dans la fabrication, l'assurance qualité, la logistique et les métiers techniques.

### Transformation Communautaire

L'impact de la raffinerie s'étendra bien au-delà de ses murs, touchant des communautés qui ont

longtemps été en marge du développement économique. Les familles des régions telles que Bomi et Grand Cape Mount bénéficieront de nouvelles sources de revenus et d'opportunités. Pour la première fois, les Libériens pourront acheter et consommer de l'huile de cuisson raffinée sur leur propre sol, produite par leurs propres compatriotes. Cela dépasse la simple commodité ; c'est un puissant symbole de fierté nationale et d'autosuffisance.

### Leadership en Matière de Durabilité

À une époque où les préoccupations environnementales sont primordiales, la Mano Manufacturing Company s'engage à garantir que ce grand pas industriel ne se fasse pas au détriment du patrimoine naturel du Liberia. La raffinerie est construite en respectant les meilleures pratiques internationales, y compris les normes fixées par la Table Ronde pour l'Huile de Palme Durable (RSPO). Cela comprend une stricte conformité avec une politique de Non Déforestation, Non Tourbière, Non Exploitation (NDPE).

### Un Avenir Plein de Promesses

La mise en service de la première raffinerie d'huile de palme du Liberia ne sera pas seulement un jalon industriel ; ce sera un triomphe national. Cela marque le début d'une nouvelle ère où le Liberia prend le contrôle de ses ressources, de son économie et de son avenir. C'est une histoire de transformation — de l'huile de palme brute en produits raffinés, du potentiel brut en valeur réalisée, et d'une nation devenue fière productrice sur la scène mondiale.

À l'approche de novembre 2025, l'anticipation monte. Cette raffinerie ne concerne pas seulement l'huile de palme ; elle concerne le voyage du Liberia vers l'autosuffisance, l'autonomisation et la durabilité. C'est un témoignage de ce qui peut être accompli lorsque la vision rencontre l'action, et quand une nation ose rêver d'un avenir plus brillant.

## Le Ministre de l'Information du Libéria accuse l'opposition de vouloir attiser un conflit frontalier avec le Burkina Faso

Le Ministre libérien de l'Information, des Affaires culturelles et du Tourisme, Jerolinmek Mathew Piah, a accusé certains membres de l'opposition d'œuvrer à l'instabilité régionale en tentant de provoquer des tensions entre le Libéria et le Burkina Faso. Lors d'un point de presse tenu le mardi 6 mai 2025 au siège du ministère à Monrovia, le ministre Piah a dénoncé ce qu'il qualifie de "politique dangereuse" menée par l'opposition, qu'il accuse de



Jerolinmek Mathew Piah

propager des fausses informations dans le but "frustration et de désespoir" d'alimenter un climat d'hostilité face aux institutions démocratiques. Selon M. Piah, certains opposants prient littéralement pour l'échec du pays, motivés par des ambitions politiques personnelles. « Ils estiment que si le gouvernement réussit, leur retour au pouvoir deviendra impossible. Par conséquent, ils s'emploient activement à ternir l'image de la République », a-t-il affirmé. Le ministre a aussi évoqué des efforts supposés visant à saboter la candidature du Libéria pour un siège non permanent au Conseil de sécurité des Nations Unies, en déformant la position du pays sur les questions panafricaines.

En réponse à ces accusations, M. Piah a mis en avant les relations diplomatiques solides entre le Libéria et le Burkina Faso, soulignant plusieurs visites de haut niveau effectuées par le ministre libérien des Affaires étrangères à Ouagadougou. Ces rencontres ont débouché sur la signature

## Deux ressortissants burkinabè inculpés à Bong County pour exploitation illégale de l'or

Deux ressortissants burkinabè ont été officiellement inculpés et déférés devant le neuvième circuit judiciaire de Gbarnga, à Bong County, à la suite d'une enquête préliminaire sur des activités minières illégales dans la région de Gbarkoneh, district de Zota. Les prévenus font face à plusieurs chefs d'accusation, notamment fraude, complot criminel et vol de biens, en violation des articles 15.80, 20.4 et 15.51 du Code pénal révisé du Libéria. « Après enquête, nous avons établi leur responsabilité dans des infractions qui constituent une violation manifeste de nos lois », a déclaré le commandant James Kartoe, chef du service des crimes au sein de la police de Bong County. Selon le procès-verbal de la police, l'un des suspects, Ouedrago Harouna, a reconnu lors de son interrogatoire être entré dans le comté de Bong en décembre 2024, en compagnie de douze autres individus, dans le but d'exploiter illégalement de l'or. Il a expliqué qu'à leur arrivée dans le village de Bleh, le chef du village – identifié uniquement sous le nom de Bleh – leur aurait donné son autorisation après des négociations. Harouna a également révélé qu'un individu dénommé Paul, supposé être un agent minier, leur aurait exigé et perçu une somme de 1 000



dollars américains pour leur permettre d'exploiter la mine de janvier à juin 2025. Le commandant Kartoe a réaffirmé l'engagement de la Police nationale libérienne à poursuivre l'enquête afin d'identifier et de traduire en justice toutes les personnes impliquées dans ce réseau minier clandestin. Le lundi 6 mai 2025, les autorités locales de Bong County ont démantelé ce qu'elles ont qualifié de camp minier illégal et dangereux situé à Gbankoneh. Cette opération a conduit à l'arrestation de plusieurs ressortissants étrangers, soupçonnés d'être originaires du Burkina Faso. La découverte a été faite lors d'une mission d'inspection conduite par la superintendante de Bong County, Loleyah Hawa Norris, accompagnée du procureur du comté Jonathan Flomo, de membres de la Police nationale libérienne et d'autres responsables locaux. S'exprimant lors d'un point de presse à Gbarnga, la superintendante Norris a décrit le site d'exploitation comme précaire et extrêmement instable, tout en faisant part de ses inquiétudes concernant l'utilisation présumée de produits chimiques non identifiés dans le processus minier, ce qui pourrait constituer un risque sanitaire pour les communautés avoisinantes.

d'un memorandum d'entente sur la coopération sécuritaire, a-t-il précisé. Le Libéria est un pion de puissances étrangères ou qu'il renie ses engagements africains. On ne peut pas tromper les peuples africains déployés par le Libéria pour sur la vraie position du Libéria », appuier le peuple burkinabè, a-t-il affirmé. Cette déclaration survient dans un contexte de montée des tensions diplomatiques, à l'approche de nouveaux enjeux diplomatiques, alors que le Libéria continue de consolider sa place dans la diplomatie régionale et la coopération panafricaine. comme un pays opposé aux idéaux



LIBERIANS

DEBATE

Topic: **Finding a resolution to the House crisis** By Naneka A. Hoffman

As the leadership impasse lingers despite ruling by the Supreme Court of Liberia, Liberians suggest ways to finding a common ground, as you may read below.



George Willie

"I think the way the problem can be solved in the House is by Unity Party people dropping their ego. To be honest, they supported President Joseph Boakai to come to power democratically. Joseph Boakai won the election and he took office, but they continue to support all the wrongs. When you listen to radio, you will hear

"The problem is we have heard from the Supreme Court. The legal aspect has been done and it's left with the guys from Capitol Hill to decide whether they will follow the legal process or do otherwise. But few instances in 2007, we witnessed the issue of former Speak Edwin M. Snowe, and after Speaker Snowe went to the court, he won all the legal battles, but at the end of the day, he has to resign because he understood that the problem at Capitol Building is not legality; it has always been political, same as Speaker Alex Tyler. But on Koffa issue, Speaker J. Fonati Koffa is a legal person; he understands the law, but failed to understand that Capitol Building legal area is restrictive; so, I hold him in highest



Leon B. Saydee

"If you follow the genesis of the entire process the 55th Legislature, you soon get to know that all of the activities are based on politics, not rule of law. For the fact that Speaker J. Fonati Koffa was able to point out few provisions in the Constitution that clearly speaks the fact, I Leon Saydee also spoke of

them supporting the negative steps of the government. You and I know that it is not good for Mr. Boakai himself. Six months now, there is crisis in the House of Representatives for the Speakership that cannot be resolved. A problem that yourself caused, and you satisfied with it. The Supreme Court has come out with ruling, but the Unity Party people don't want to agree that J. Fonati Koffa is the Speaker. They still want to pretend like they have extra law in the Constitution. The best way this can be solved is for the government to accept the fact that the Supreme Court has ruled and they are the final saying. Until they can do that, it cannot be resolved by any other means."



Biko Biko

esteem for the way he governs himself in the law of the country and I hold Richard Nagbe Koon in highest esteem, as well. The truth is the fight on Capitol Hill cannot be resolved legally. I believe that the problem in the House isn't legal, it is political, and so I think it can only be solved politically."

constitutional provisions that clearly says where the right lies, but what we are seeing is deep and pure politics. So, how can we resolve this problem between J. Fonati Koffa and Richard Nagbe Koon? It is political because the House is built around politics - that is the ground of politics. So, this identical issue can only be solved through politics and I think Richard Nagbe Koon is taken the trend of politics backed by the executive. Like the President said, we will not hold this country hostage. We will work with the quorum, but I think it needs to be resolved through politics."



John B. Mulbah

"The problem in the House of Representatives can be solved by law, because the place is a place of law. They are the ones that make the law; they should follow the law; they make the law; they should be the ones to

"The problem in the House can be solved first by law and this law can be exercised by the executive branch of government. When the Supreme Court came down with the ruling that they still recognize J. Fonati Koffa as the constitutional Speaker of the House of Representatives, it is banning on the executive to go with that decision; not for the President of Liberia to pick and say I will work with quorum. The Supreme Court didn't talk about quorum or who you should work with. It is the duty of the President to instruct the Ministry of Justice that everything Richard Nagbe Koon is enjoying as speaker, be taken away from him and given back to J. Fonati Koffa, as the legal Speaker; then you are adhering to the rule of law, and then you want for the country to be



Abraham B.C. Jones

"I think the problem in the House can only be solved by law. Since the Supreme Court has ruled in favor of J. Fonati Koffa, I think the guys should abide by the Supreme Court's ruling and forget about this whole politics

live by the law. You cannot make the law and violate the law. When the common man violates the law, how will it be? The Supreme Court court granted Speaker J. Fonati Koffa the right. Now, his colleagues are saying they cannot sit under his gavel, because they have lost trust in him. What we expect him to do when the Supreme Court granted him the right, immediately he supposed to resign. That could have been the best thing for Koffa to do to save his face for tomorrow. As long Koffa does not resign, the problem will not be solved. It will continue because that place is a place of politics."



Victor D. Weah

stable. But because the President decided to choose side, which has to do with Richard Nagbe Koon, he brought about quorum, that is a clever way of interpreting the Supreme Court decision by disrespecting the Court. But they are doing what they feel like doing, and this is why the executive through the President is making this issue long. The President is the head of the country; if he wants things to remain like this, it's left with him; he got six years."

business, because those guys were voted by the Constitution and the law, so why they don't want to go by the law? We agreed that the House is a political ground, but we shouldn't mind that and violent the constitution or ignore the law, because they were voted based on the Constitution and law, so President Boakai should see reason and re-instate Koffa as Speaker and forget about this politics business. It is not helping us, the Liberian people and the country; it is just making things difficult for us, the common people."



# Ellen stresses private sector investment

Former President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf says the private sector is an engine for growth and job creation that should be explored.

By Stephen G. Fellajuah

Monrovia, Liberia, May 8, 2025- Former President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf emphasizes critical role of the private sector as engine of economic growth and job creation in Liberia.

Speaking at the official opening of Modern Savings & Loans Microfinance Deposit-Taking Institution on Wednesday, May 7, 2025, in Congo



Town, Madam Sirleaf said private sector development is essential for national transformation and prosperity. “The major part of growth in the society is the private sector. It's the hallmark of the transformation of our society,” she underscores, highlighting the significant progress seen in parts of West Africa, where nationals are investing meaningfully in their own economies. The newly inaugurated microfinance institution, envisioned in 2014 by Counselor George B. Kailondo, is designed to support Liberian businesses, local marketers, and everyday citizens by improving access to affordable credit. Its mission is to help stimulate economic activity, promote trade, and empower small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs). Madam Sirleaf praises the initiative as a model of giving back to society and calls on all Liberians to support such ventures

aimed at strengthening grassroots economies. “This is an excellent way of giving back,” the form President notes, and adds, “Empowering smaller businesses is the foundation for sustainable national development.” The institution is headed by Madam Chantell Kailondo, Chief Executive Officer (CEO). Under her leadership, the Modern Savings & Loans Microfinance Deposit-Taking Institution pledges to significantly lower interest rates, reducing them from the national average of over 18 percent to below 10 percent, to make credit more accessible

and less burdensome for Liberian entrepreneurs. According to Madam Kailondo, the institution also seeks to disrupt century-old, restrictive credit system that has historically hindered small business success in Liberia. By offering more favorable lending conditions, the microfinance entity aims to boost business growth and improve livelihoods. The launch ceremony drew participation from the Central Bank of Liberia, senior government officials, members of the National Legislature, and prominent figures from the business community. Attendees laud the initiative and express support for the institution's goals. The Modern Savings & Loans Microfinance Deposit-Taking Institution is now officially open and ready to serve the Liberian public, providing financial solutions that align with national development efforts. **Editing by Jonathan Browne**

Starts from Back page

# Gov't launches Town Hall meeting

responded to these questions and concerns raised during the event, which they believe will help shape future government spending. Officially launching the initiative, Foreign Minister Sara Beysolow Nyanti commended those who have supported the ministry over the years, noting that the initiative aims to listen to the people "who the government is here to serve." She stated that Liberians across the country have different views on the intentions of governance, and other basic needs, but there is often a lack of dialogue. She called this process inclusive governance, which allows reflection on various functions of government including tourism, road connectivity, and responsibilities at all levels. She emphasized that this includes the involvement of all citizens to help improve the country's development. "So this 'Come Let's Talk' is not about saying government is doing everything perfectly, no! It's about all of us coming together to discuss the good, knowing that every country has its own challenges," she added. She further said that the initiative will help promote unity and peace across the country, particularly focusing on fixing Liberia. And at the same time expressing hope that development discussions, which often come with challenges, would be inclusive of everyone's efforts. Giving the keynote address on behalf of the Vice President, she launched the initiative encouraging the gathering not to allow anyone to divide them but to put the country's interests first. "If we come together, there will be a better country, and through all our efforts, we will build Liberia." Presenting the opening address, Information Minister Jerolinmek Piah revealed that the Town Hall Program is a form of communication meant to bring the government closer to the people and help them better understand government policies and processes. He stated that the Government Town Hall is also intended to broaden the mindset and modernize their means of communication. "In Liberia's governance history, the town hall has been used since the late 1950s by

President William R. Tolbert, who primarily interpreted government actions to traditional leaders and county administrators," he noted. However, he said that today, people are eager to sit with their leaders to get answers to issues within their communities. Based on this, the Ministry of Information, Cultural Affairs, and Tourism decided to diversify its public information dissemination by introducing the Government Town Hall. He said the program is a public engagement and outreach forum designed to foster constructive dialogue between the government and citizens on critical issues. "It allows policymakers and government officials to interact face-to-face with citizens," "As a government, we will continue through MICAT to promote public participation as a means of ensuring open governance and enforcing government policies," he added. Meanwhile he closed by calling on the Government of Liberia, international partners, and NGOs to help with support from the program. For his part, Bernard Benson, a lifelong entertainer turned politician, commonly know as Dj blue commended the government further noting that bringing citizens together is the right move to boost government credibility, as it provides the opportunity to listen and understand the realities they face. Also, in a remark, Nona Deprez EU Ambassador to Liberia encouraged the gathering to engage in dialogue and hold their government accountable. Also, Yin Chengwu, Chinese Ambassador to Liberia, shared his experience during the launch of the AAID, noting the progress made in promoting the rule of law. Emphasizing China's democratic practices in decision-making, he expressed support for the initiative. The Sudanese Ambassador to Liberia described this as the beginning of genuine dialogue between the government and its people. He pledged Sudan's support for the initiative. Meanwhile, a video documentary was played highlighting the government's projects and policies over the past year under the Boakai administration.

# Arcelor Mittal Vs. HPX

Liberia finds itself at another turning point. The choices made in the coming weeks could determine whether the country moves forward with sustainable development or falls victim to external pressure that prioritizes foreign profit over national interest.

The amended Mineral Development Agreement (MDA) signed in 2021 between the Government of Liberia and ArcelorMittal Liberia (AML) is at the center of this dilemma. The agreement, originally valued at \$800 million and now expanded to \$1.2 billion, outlines a bold commitment by AML to invest in a modern iron ore concentrator, increase production capacity, generate over 2,000 new direct jobs, and inject life into local supply chains and vocational training across mining communities. This is not speculative. Over the past two decades, AML has invested over \$1.7 billion in Liberia. The company currently employs more than 7,000 Liberians and remains the largest taxpayer and private sector employer in the country. Its investments have not only boosted national revenue but also brought tangible improvements to infrastructure, education, health, and community development in host counties.

Yet despite this track record, the expansion agreement remains stalled. Why? Because High Power Exploration (HPX) and its subsidiary, Ivanhoe Liberia, are lobbying relentlessly to have AML stripped of its status as operator of the Yekepa to Buchanan railway—Liberia's only functional mineral transport corridor. Their demand comes with no offer of investment, no proposal to improve the line, and no history of contributing to Liberia's economy. HPX has never operated a mine in Liberia. It pays no taxes here. It has built nothing, employed no Liberians, and offers no social development initiatives. Its only interest is to use Liberia's railway and port to export Guinean ore—a venture that would generate modest transit fees at best, while bypassing the core pillars of economic growth: employment, training, and infrastructure development. It is important to underscore that the existing MDA already guarantees third-party access to the rail. HPX is free to use the line under the

terms of the agreement. What it is not entitled to do is dictate who manages the infrastructure built and maintained by another investor. The push to remove AML as operator has no legal or economic foundation. It is a political campaign rooted in misinformation and designed to undermine an agreement that balances foreign investment with national

sovereignty. Liberia cannot afford to be misled again. Rejecting the AML expansion for the second time would mean: Losing over 2,000 direct jobs and tens of thousands of indirect livelihood opportunities Sacrificing \$200 million

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***By: Kruah Thompson***

town hall meeting. This forum seeks to decentralize government communication and bring governance closer to the people. The launch event, held on Wednesday, May 7, 2025, at the Ellen Johnson Sirleaf Ministerial Complex in Congotown, was themed “Smart Spending, Shared

During the event, a panel discussion was held under the topic “Transforming Budget and Policies for Equitable Progress.” Under this theme, Finance Minister Augustine Ngafuan and LRA Boss Dorbor Jallah highlighted key issues such as the AAID, breakdown of the current budget allocation, revenue mobilization, fair taxation, grassroots and small business support.

The two panellists

The initiative aims to promote inclusiveness, accountability, transparency, access to information, and participatory governance across Liberia by bringing citizens together under what is described as a

It brought together government officials including H.E. Sara Beysolow Nyanti, Minister of Foreign Affairs; Senator Abraham Darius Dillon, Chairman of the Senate Committee on Information, Broadcasting, Cultural Affairs and Tourism; Minister of Finance

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**PUBLISHED BY THE SEARCHLIGHT COMMUNICATIONS INC.,**  
UN Drive, P. O. Box 1266  
Opposite the National Investment Commission  
Monrovia - Liberia.

**Tel:** 0886484201 / 0777007529  
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A collage of various New Dawn publications. It includes a calendar with a grid of dates, a brochure with a yellow and blue design, and several newspapers with headlines like 'New Dawn', 'SS\$2.5m for Mount by-elections', and 'Sports'. The publications are arranged in a layered, overlapping fashion against a background of colorful, abstract brushstrokes.