



March 22, 2022

### **TRIBUTE TO COMRADE AMOS CLAUDIUS SAWYER**

The Socialist Movement of Ghana mourns the passing of His Excellency President Amos Claudius Sawyer on 16 February 2022. We send our deepest condolences to our comrades in the Movement for Justice in Africa (MOJA) and to all Liberians struggling for socio-economic justice.

Comrade Sawyerr was a giant of the African revolutionary movement. He worked tirelessly and selflessly for the realization of the ends of democracy and socio-economic justice in Africa generally, and for peace, progress, and security for ordinary people in Liberia. He fought imperialism not just on a Liberian nationalist platform, but on a Pan-African and internationalist platform. He was a regular visitor to Ghana, for example, and maintained contacts with our progressive community. He was significant in the emergence of Liberia as a centre for Nkrumaist activism in Africa. He mentored many of the student leaders who went on to play significant roles in the Pan-African and International youth and student movements.

Comrade Sawyerr was a founding member of the Movement for Justice in Africa (MOJA). In the late 1970s and 1980s, as a young progressive lecturer he was a much sought-after public speaker. He used the MOJA student platform to build a revolutionary Pan-African identity amongst Liberia's youth, above Liberia's traditional settler/indigene ethnic and class divide. He ran for mayor of Monrovia as an independent rather than on the True Whig platform – signaling that a new day had dawned, and a new dynamic had arrived in Liberian politics.

Comrade Sawyerr became an important Liberian statesman. He worked tirelessly over many years to infuse democratic content into local and international efforts to end Liberia's long crisis and rebuild its governance. For example, after the 1980 coup, Cde Sawyerr chaired the



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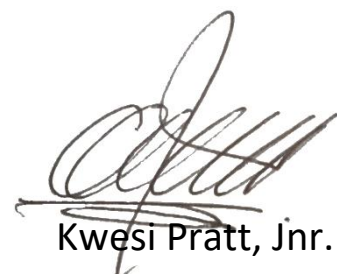
National Constitutional Commission that drafted a new constitution for Liberia (which Constitution remains in force to this day). He refused however to allow President Samuel Doe to capitalize on his popularity and reputation by running as his vice president in the 1985 elections. Cde Sawyerr rather formed his own Liberia Peoples Party in 1983. Doe's PRC banned the LPP and threatened Cde Sawyerr and his family, fire-bombed his home in Monrovia, forcing him into exile.

Following Samuel Doe's capture and death in 1990 and the stalemate between war lords Taylor and Johnson, Liberian political parties and interest groups meeting in August 1990 in Banjul agreed that Comrade Sawyer was the obvious choice to head the Interim Government of National Unity (IGNU) and lead Liberia back to peace. Unfortunately, the level of distrust amongst the different rebel factions and political parties was so high that IGNU made little progress and was replaced by the Transitional Government. Comrade Sawyerr then went on to head the the Liberia "Governance Commission" till 2018 helping to shape the country's national institutions and processes along accountable democratic lines.

He retired from public life last year due to poor health and passed away in Baltimore, USA.

His ideas, insights, commitment, and deeds will continue to inspire future generations to victory against oppression and exploitation.

Red Salute!



Kwesi Pratt, Jnr.  
General Secretary.

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