

ECONOMIC HARDSHIP

Public Sector Workers Demand 20% Pay Increase For 2023



Ignatius Baffour Awuah, Minister of Employment and Labour Relations

By Nicholas Tetteh

Public sector employees in the country have called for an increase of over 20 percent in their salary for the year 2023 to replace the 15 percent Cost of Living Allowance (COLA) which ends in December this year. According to the workers, any figure below 20 percent will be a greater disadvantage to their financial status

since a figure around 20 percent is insufficient to match the current hikes in price of goods and services in the country. On July 14, 2022, a consensus was reached between the government of Ghana and all Organized Labour Unions in Ghana to pay a 15 percent Cost of Living Allowance to all public sector workers after Teachers' Unions embarked on a nationwide strike to

compel the government to accept the initial bid of 20 percent. They expected an increase in the salary for the 2023 year, the employees mentioned that the leaders of Organized Labour groups should not come into congruent with the government on a figure less than 20 percent

Cont. on page 2

Akuapem Traditional Council Accuses Akufo-Addo, Jubilee House Of Instigating Mayhem In Akuapeman

page 5

Who At Customs Sold Registered Lexus Vehicle At 'Donkomi' Price To A Journalist At Secret Auction?



There is uneasy calm at the Customs Division of the Ghana Revenue Authority (GRA) following a secret auction of a porch

Cont. on page 3

Melcom Reboots As It Unveils New Logo



page 3

The INSIGHT

— EDITORIAL

CLOSE THEM DOWN!

Few months after the Ghana Standards Authority in collaboration with the Criminal Investigation Department of the Ghana Police Service closed down a gas cylinder manufacturing plants in Accra and other areas for operating illegally it has now emerged the some others are operating with bravado.

This development is indeed worrying. Indeed, there are several of these gas plants littered across every nook and cranny of the country and the worry is the danger their operations pose to residents especially in residential areas apart from operating illegally.

Over the years the country has recorded a huge number of domestic fires, which had claimed several lives and property and it is upon this basis that such illegal cylinder manufacturing companies need not be allowed to operate.

Often, these stations are closed down only to be seen a couple of days later, operating brisk business, a clear indication that something has gone amidst.

There is therefore, the need for the state regulatory agencies to ensure that standards are adhered to and especially safety issues not compromised upon.

Again, the is the need for the regulators to ensure that those gas plants and filling stations that operate in residential areas and are sited close to, or sandwiched between houses are stopped from such dangerous operations.

Those that are operating illegally need to be closed down now.

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since the price of commodities will not reduce.

Among other reasons, the workers stated that the inflation rate in Ghana is clear evidence that the union leaders should not accept any lower percentage that will be proposed by the central government if they sit to negotiate the increment.

“Assessing the state of Ghana's economy and the pace at which price of goods is going up each day, increasing public sector employee's salary to 100 percent will not match it because the value of the salary in monetary term is already low going into the new year,” one said.

Another worker mentioned that “Fifty percent is quite considerable because we had increases on goods and services which were over fifty percent. Even though the 50 percent is woefully inadequate yet we will manage”.

“I expect nothing less than 20 percent increment bearing in mind Ghana's inflation rate and the depreciating cedi against the dollar”, a worker said. Workers who commute from a distance to their place of work every day also added that the high increase in transportation charges every month is a bigger challenge for them mentioning that daily fare for a month is a burden on their salary.

The employees also added that utility tariffs keep surging every month which they said has made the salary meager against their expenditure.

However, the government has offered the employees four percent and seven percent for 2021 and 2022 respectively noting that the impact of [COVID-19 had made it impossible for the government to go beyond ten percent for each year.](#)

[At the end of this year, the government is expected to announce the increase in salary for public sector workers after deliberation with Organized Labor to take effect from January 2023.](#)

THE INSIGHT

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Who At Customs Sold Registered Lexus Vehicle At 'Donkomi' Price To A Journalist At Secret Auction?

from front page

Lexus saloon vehicle estimated to cost \$45,000 for a mere GHC30,000.00 at a reported 'Secret' auction. It is not immediately clear as to the officers who undertook the auction which according to the importer was undertaken by customs officers in July this year. What is strange is that the importer of the car who claims he ran into car registration and road worthy issues for which the car was impounded by a team of customs officers at Suhum, even though was ready to pay for a penalty and necessary duty charges which came up to Ghc52,000 was denied that opportunity. Strangely, this paper learnt that the car which was already registered and costs \$45,000 was within two months of being in the custody of customs at the Koforidua station, put up for auction without the notice of

the owner, one Samuel Opong who is a Ghanaian resident in Canada. The auction happened at a time when the aide to the importer, one Baba Imoro was shuttling between the Customs offices in Koforidua and Accra to finish with documentations to pay for the required duties as prepared by the Customs at their headquarters in Accra and for onward transmission to Koforidua for the car to be released after payment. Surprisingly, on reaching the premises of Customs in Koforidua, the car which was impounded on March 29, 2022 for duty infractions had been hurriedly put up for auction and since bought by an Accra based journalist who it emerged works with the Angel Broadcasting Company Limited. The auction happened at the blind side of the car owner who was also denied the first right of

option to purchase. Interestingly, the auction happened at the time when the owner was ready to pay the estimated duty including the penalty which had been worked out and pegged at Gh52,000. On March 29 when the Lexus car was impounded, it took the owner of the car, Mr. Samuel Sarpong and his spokesperson, Mr. Baba Imoro a space of two months to raise the duty and was in constant touch with customs officials. Pouring out his frustration to Journalists, Baba Imoro said Customs asked him to apply to pay the required duties which he did and approval given for him to go and pay until it was sold on auction. The journalist has since admitted buying the vehicle on auction insisting the right procedure was followed but attempts to get customs to respond to the allegation proved futile.



Melcom Reboots As It Unveils New Logo



Melcom, Ghana's leading retail stores has unveiled its newest logo in a rebranding move which it terms rebooting at a mega ceremony in Accra. The new corporate logo of the colours blue, red and white seeks to highlight its historic milestone of running retail shops in the country with over 54 outlets in the country. The new logo is a change from the red oval wrapping of the calligraphically written Melcom to the universal location sign used in the virtual space. The event was attended by players in the retail industry, the

management and staff of Melcom, as well as well-wishers among others. The Executive Director of the Melcom Group of Companies, Ms Sonya Sadhwani, explaining the meaning of the new logo in an interview with the media after its unveiling at Melcom Plus, North Industrial Area in Accra last Thursday explained that while the logo is part of the company's rejuvenation, reboot and relaunch of the brand, the colour blue represents trustworthiness, reliability and calmness. She further noted that the red represents boldness, strength and energy and the white represents sophistication, pure and pristine. "Red relates to being passionate, energetic and bold in what we do and white symbolises our intentions, which are pure, pristine and sophisticated.

"Our ambitions are not just to bring the world to Ghana but perhaps be a global player one day, and this is what the location pin represents, which is the universal symbol for location," she said. Ms. Sadhwani said the company was introducing new concepts, such as The Soup, Ice cream, Live Kitchen with fresh, ready-to-eat food, more international franchise outlets, modern restaurants and cocktail bars, to give its customers a world of experience. "We have launched new concepts, including Melcom Home, Melcom.com e-commerce site, Melcom Electric and Melcom Mini, which have been opened at a lot of neighbourhoods, with a lot more coming soon at Labone and Sakumono," she indicated. "We are also launching super stores at East Legon Boundary Road, Takoradi and our new flagship

project on the Spintex Road: the Melcom Mall," she added. She thanked the company's over 4,000 team members for their support, adding that the team would be implementing learning and development processes to deliver 'moments of magic to customers' every time they engaged them. She added that the inspiration behind the new beginning of the company is the inclusion of the new generation and the fact that customers can now have bigger and higher expectations with local and international brands in all Melcom Shops. The event also saw the lighting of a lamp in honour of the Founder of Melcom, the late Bhagwan Khubchandani. The Group Director of the Melcom Group of Companies, Manoj Sadhwani, said the company was introducing new

concepts, such as The Soup, Ice cream, Live Kitchen with fresh, ready-to-eat food, more international franchise outlets, modern restaurants and cocktail bars, to give its customers a world of experience. "Our new mantra is health, wellness and happiness, and to fully achieve this, Melcom will be launching its first state-of-the-art gym and spa before the end of the year," he said. He added that the company had engaged the services of global experts to deliver world-class customer-friendly stores. The Group Director of the Melcom Group of Companies, Rishi Melwani, for his part, expressed the company's commitment to consistently deliver on the brand and make efforts to transform it.



INTERNATIONAL NEWS REPORT

Compiled By Peoples Dispatch

As Public Hospitals Crumble, French Health Workers Call For Immediate Action



French health workers mobilize in front of the University Hospital Center of Nantes. Photo: CGT Santé Action Sociale. Health workers and those in associated sectors held a national day of action demanding pay hikes, more staff, improved and safe working conditions, job security, and sufficient funds and resources for hospitals

By Muhammed Shabeer

Health workers and those working in associated sectors in France last Thursday organized mobilizations and protests as part of a national day of action in different cities across the country. The protesters demanded increased salaries, more staff, improved and safe working conditions, job security, and sufficient funds and other resources for hospitals. The call for the mobilization was given by several groups in health sector, including the *Association des Médecins Urgentistes de France* (AMUF), *CGT Santé Action Sociale*, the *CFE CGC Santé-Social*,

Printemps de la psychiatrie and *Collectif Inter-Urgences*.

Mobilizations took place in the cities of Paris, Marseille, Nancy, Tours, Poitiers, Angers, Lille, and Nantes, among others. The French Communist Party (PCF) and La France Insoumise (LFI) extended support and solidarity to the protesting workers.

According to reports, the public health sector in France has been facing a serious crisis marked by an acute shortage of resources including staff, necessary infrastructure and funds. Even before the onset of the COVID-19 crisis in the country, health workers had organized [mobilizations](#) flagging these issues. The COVID-19 crisis only worsened the [situation](#). French President Emmanuel Macron's reforms and measures such as '*Ségur de la santé*' (consultation process in health sector) and '*Ma santé 2022*' or '*My health 2022*' haven't yielded much benefits for the health sector and workers. Meanwhile, the ongoing cost of living crisis, marked by skyrocketing fuel and food prices,

has also affected health workers. In July, Damien Maudet and Nathalie Oziol, who are deputies from the left-wing New Ecological and Social People's Union (NUPES) coalition, launched a campaign "*#Alloségur*, the deputies in hospitals." They were part of a commission of inquiry which collected testimonies from the health workers in public hospitals. Workers [revealed that they](#) are physically and psychologically exhausted, and paid less than what is required to keep up with inflation. The hospitals lack enough beds and many key posts remain vacant. Services have been slashed, emergency rooms are closed, and more workers are leaving the public sector to join private hospitals. In recent times, there have also been reports of delays in treatment in public hospitals which have even led to deaths. Earlier this week, the General Confederation of Labor (CGT) made a public announcement denouncing the terrible work conditions at the Nantes

University Hospital. According to reports, on September 1, at the New Civil Hospital (NHC) of Strasbourg, an 81-year-old man died after spending about 20 hours on a stretcher in the emergency room.

While participating in the health workers' protest on September 22, emergency physician and LFI regional Councilor in Ile de France Dr. Christophe Prudhomme [told](#) the media, "In the midst of the health crisis, Macron has taken away another 5,700 hospital beds. This translates into deaths. As a doctor, I support the family of the patient who died in Strasbourg after waiting 22 hours on a stretcher in the hallway." On September 15, Dr. Prudhomme alleged that nearly 2,000 nursing posts were vacant in *Assistance Publique-Hôpitaux de Paris* (AP-HP) and 20-30% of operating rooms were closed.

"What is the minister doing? He's offering us a media show called "stakeholders conference"! Enough of this. The needs of the staff are well known. We demand

concrete answers in an urgent debate in parliament to stop the collapse of our health system," said Dr. Prudhomme. Mireille Stivala, Secretary General of CGT Health and Social Action, said that "regarding recruitment, there is no real will and we need a multidisciplinary recruitment plan. When we set up hiring offices in front of hospitals, we collected resumes... It is also necessary to offer real contracts to students by paying them at least the equivalent of the Smic (legal minimum hourly wage)." The CGT estimated that the public hospitals need to recruit 100,000 staff and residential facilities for dependent elderly people (EHPAD) need 200,000 more staff. Health workers have also given a call to join a national inter-professional mobilization called by the CGT, demanding an increase in wages and purchasing power.

Uganda Prepares For Ebola Response

One person has died from Ebola since an outbreak of the disease was declared in Uganda last Tuesday September 20. As of September 22, a total of seven cases were confirmed, prompting a reaction of the World Health Organization (WHO). The United Nations agency has since deployed medical supplies and expert staff to support Ugandan epidemiologists and public health officials in containing the outbreak. The recent death has been

caused by the rarer Sudan strain of the Ebola virus, which was last seen in Uganda ten years ago. Prior to that, Uganda had experienced an outbreak of Ebola caused by the same strain in 2000, leading to the death of 226 people out of the 425 infected. Uganda also faced another outbreak of the disease in 2019 but of the more common Zaire strain of the virus which was linked to cases in nearby Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC). The DRC is also

currently dealing with an outbreak of the Zaire strain. According to Dr Matshidiso Moeti, World Health Organization Regional Director for Africa, and the local Ministry of Health, Uganda's previous expertise with tackling Ebola outbreaks gives room for hope that the response will be swift and adequate. Such a response would include quick identification of patients and contacts, isolation, and conducting ring-vaccination campaigns for high-risk

populations. However, it should be said that the vaccines currently available against Ebola are not effective against all virus strains. While vaccines have successfully handled outbreaks caused by the Zaire strain, they have proven less effective against the Sudan strain. Six candidate vaccines are currently under development which could prove more effective against the Sudan strain, and discussions with producers are ongoing at the



WHO to establish if some of those could enter clinical trials at this stage and be used for containing future outbreaks. *People's Health Dispatch* is a fortnightly bulletin published by the [Peoples Health Movement](#) and *Peoples Dispatch*.

Africans Not Yet Capable Of Managing Our Affairs – Kofi Bentil

Over sixty years after Ghana gained independence from British colonial rule, becoming the first in sub-Saharan Africa to be free, the African has not demonstrated the capability to manage his affairs. This is the observation of Vice President of IMANI Africa, [Kofi Bentil](#). In a Facebook post on September 21 – a day celebrated as Kwame Nkrumah Memorial Day, he pointed to Ghana's decision to seek a programme from the International Monetary Fund as the basis for his assertion. He, however, expressed

hope that the narrative would change in the next sixty years.

"After over 60 years, the verdict so far is that the African is not yet capable of managing his own affairs. That's why we are with IMF today. We pray this verdict will change in the next 60 years," [Kofi Bentil](#) wrote on his page. The comment by the lawyer is in sharp contrast to a declaration in Dr. Kwame Nkrumah's 1957 Independence Day speech.

An ecstatic Nkrumah said it would take hard work to prove to the colonial powers that the black

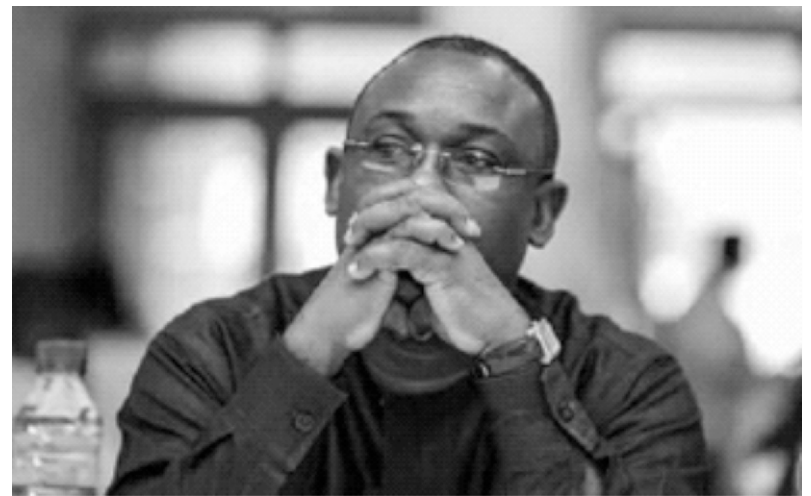
man could steer his own affairs.

"But also, as I pointed out, that also entails hard work. That new Africa is ready to fight her own battles and show that after all, the black man is capable of managing his own affairs," he said.

Background

Ghana's economy, according to the government, has been hard hit by the Covid-19 pandemic and the ongoing Russia-Ukraine war.

The situation has resulted in citizens reeling under economic pressure as they lament the increasing cost



Vice President of IMANI Africa, Kofi Bentil

of living.

Amidst the turmoil, Ghana's economy has suffered a downgrade by rating agencies such as S & P and Fitch – a situation that has become an impediment to the government's ability to

access the international capital market.

Government has consequently turned to the International Monetary Fund for a programme. It is expecting \$3 billion over a three-year period.

Producer Price Inflation For August Hits 46.0% - GSS

The year-on-year producer price inflation for all industries was 46.0 percent in August 2022, the Ghana Statistical Service has announced. The Producer Price Index (PPI) measures the average change over time in the prices received by domestic producers for the production of their goods and service. Government Statistician, Professor Kobina Annim, speaking at a press conference on September 20 said the rate represents a 4.8 percentage points increase in producer inflation relative to the rate recorded in July 2022 (41.2%). The monthly change rate in the producer price



Manufacturing sub-sector recorded the highest year-on year PPI for August 2022 2022

index was 4.0 percent between July 2022 and August 2022.

The GSS boss said the Manufacturing sub-sector recorded the highest year-on-year producer price inflation rate of 61.7 percent for August, followed by the Mining and Quarrying sub-sector which recorded a rate of 35.7 percent.

For the Utility sub-sector, it

recorded the lowest year-on-year producer inflation rate of 1.7 percent.

"The mining and quarrying sub-sector recorded the highest monthly inflation rate of 9.1 percent, followed by the manufacturing sub-sector with 3.7 percent. The utility sub-sector recorded the least inflation of 0.4 percent in August 2022," the Government Statistician said.

Akuapem Traditional Council Accuses Akufo-Addo, Jubilee House Of Instigating Mayhem In Akuapeman

The Akuapem Traditional Council has accused President Nana Akufo-Addo and the Jubilee House, the seat of government of masterminding and instigating mayhem on some natives in the Akuapem Traditional Area in a bid to champion their own selfish interests.

At a press conference held in Accra on Monday, Nana Kwao Kutuku V, the Akuapem Frankatuhene said by the country's customs, traditions and usages, it is the Queen mother who installs chiefs and it is surprising that in the case of Akuapeman some people at the presidency including President Akufo-Addo who is a son of the land are scheming to deny the queen mother her customary and legitimate right.

He noted that all attempts to ensure that there is peace in Akuapem has been subverted by the president and his cronies. Nana Kwao Kutuku V said it is a generally accepted fact that by the traditions of the matrilineal system, the nomination, selection



Nana Kwao Kutuku V

and instalment of a new chief or paramount chief is the sole prerogative and responsibility of the queen mother.

According to him, the law makes it clear that when there are challenges the matter has to go to court, but in the case of Akuapeman, the case has travelled from the regional house of chiefs in Koforidua to Kumasi, the national House of Chiefs with some powerful hands scheming to undermine the peaceful and rightful process.

He said it is surprising that a son of the land will do that shameful thing to the people of Akuapem stating that attempts to restore peace has been scuttled by the president.

Lest We Forget: Kwame Nkrumah Terms Racism 'Foul Intellectual Rubbish'

On September 24, 1964, Ghanaian President Osagyefo Dr Kwame Nkrumah said that “the foulest intellectual rubbish ever invented by man is that of racial superiority and inferiority.” He was speaking at the opening of the first meeting of the editorial board of the Encyclopedia Africana at the University of Ghana, in Legon. The meeting lasted six days. The President said the board would have to contend with the fact that “powerful forces find it in their interest to maintain the mythology of racial inferiority.”

Why Nkrumah's words resonate in these times

Only a fortnight ago, an unarmed black man was shot dead in the head by the police in the United Kingdom for refusing to pull the brakes when asked to, sparking widespread protest in London. There were calls for truth and justice in the UK following the police killing of a 24-year-old Black man, Chris Kaba who was shot in the head

by a firearms officer of the Metropolitan Police in Streatham Hill, London, on September 5. The killing sparked mass outrage and renewed protests against police violence and racism. Again, it would be recalled that some few years ago, there were protests held in the US and worldwide after George Floyd, an unarmed black man, died while being pinned down by white police officer Derek Chauvin. The protests began after a video showed Mr. Floyd, 46, being arrested in Minneapolis and a white police officer continuing to kneel on his neck even after he pleaded that he could not breathe. The officer, Derek Chauvin, has since been charged with third-degree murder and sentenced by a US court. Three other police officers were also fired. The Floyd case has reignited deep-seated anger over police killings of black Americans and racism. It

follows the high-profile cases of Michael Brown in Ferguson, Eric Garner in New York and others that have driven the Black Lives Matter movement. For many, the outrage also reflects years of frustration over socio-economic inequality and discrimination.

Diaspora African Forum demands justice for George Floyd

The Diaspora African Forum has petitioned the United States of America (USA) government to arrest and prosecute all four police officers who were caught on video manhandling George Floyd at Minneapolis, USA, resulting in his death. The Forum further called on the USA government to seek a drastic change in systemic policies that oppresses and suppresses African-Americans and violates their human rights. The petition, signed by



Dr. Kwame Nkrumah

members of the Diaspora community in Ghana, some Ghanaians and civil rights activists and presented to the USA Ambassador to Ghana, further urged the American government to put in place measures that protect the lives of African-Americans and other minorities or risk losing its global status as a model of democracy and freedom. In brief remarks before the presentation, Rabbi Kohain H. Halevi, Convener,

Universal Pan African Diaspora Coalition of Ghana, said it was time to end growing killings of African-Americans by police officers and white supremacists. He said, for far too long, the US government and laws have failed to protect them from hateful executions and other racially-motivated actions stating that “we have brought ourselves to a new level of consciousness and responsibility to end this terror.”

State of Palestine Insists Jerusalem Is An Integral Part Of Its Right To Self-Determination And Future Capital

The State of Palestine reaffirms that respecting the special status of Jerusalem is an integral part of the universally recognized rights of the Palestinian people, including the right to self-determination, in their Capital; The international community's position on Jerusalem is clear: Israel has no rightful claim or sovereignty over Jerusalem, including occupied East

Jerusalem, its Old City and its holy sites; Israel, the occupying Power, has no authority to engage in diplomatic relations or invite States to open diplomatic offices in any part of the City; Since 1947, the UN Security Council and General Assembly have conclusively and authoritatively determined the international legal status of Jerusalem, the obligations of States to uphold this status, and the

illegality of relocating embassies and diplomatic offices to Jerusalem; For its part, the ICJ reaffirmed in its advisory opinion on the Wall that Israel's presence in Jerusalem is that of an occupying Power; Israel's presence as an occupying Power is an established and unassailable legal fact that infers legal, political, and moral obligations on all States, especially Permanent Members of the Security Council;

Accordingly, opening an embassy in Jerusalem, or establishing a mission on the basis of diplomatic relations with Israel, in any part of Jerusalem, is a de facto and de jure recognition of Israel's ongoing and unlawful actions; Likewise, opening an embassy in Jerusalem amounts to complicity in Israel's illegal annexation of the City and relentless attempts

to assert sovereignty, including through war crimes of forcible displacements, demolitions, and control over holy sites; In this connection, the State of Palestine affirms that it will pursue all available legal, diplomatic, and political measures to ensure that Jerusalem and its status are protected.

Colombian President Gustavo Petro Calls For An End To The War On Drugs In Historic UN Address

On the first day of the United Nations General Assembly, Colombian President Gustavo Petro made his first address to the body. The speech sharply deviated from those of his conservative predecessors. Petro did not shy away from calling out global North countries for their role in the destruction of the environment and in the perpetuation of the War on Drugs, as a symptom of their capitalist greed. He accused “You are only interested in my country to spray poisons on our jungles, to take our men to jail and put our women in exclusion. You are not interested in the education of the child, but in killing the jungle and extracting coal and oil from its entrails. The sponge that absorbs the poison [the rainforest] is useless, they prefer to throw more poisons into the atmosphere.”

This is Petro's first trip to the United States since he was inaugurated in August this year. He was received on Sunday night September 18 by hundreds of supporters in Queens, New York who manifested their support to his administration's commitment to working for peace and ensuring the wellbeing of the Colombian people.

This is the full transcript of his speech on September 20, 2022 to the United Nations General Assembly:

I come from one of the three most beautiful countries on Earth. There is an explosion of life there. Thousands of multicolored species in the seas, in the skies, in the lands...I come from the land of yellow butterflies and magic. There in the mountains and valleys of all greens, not only do the

abundant waters flow down, but also the torrents of blood. I come from a land of bloody beauty.

My country is not only beautiful, it is also violent. How can beauty be conjugated with death, how can the biodiversity of life erupt with the dances of death and horror? Who is guilty of breaking the enchantment with terror? Who or what is responsible for drowning life in the routine decisions of wealth and interest? Who is leading us to destruction as a nation and as a people?

My country is beautiful because it has the Amazon jungle, the ChocóWar jungle, the waters, the Andes mountain ranges, and the oceans. There, in those forests, planetary oxygen is emanated and atmospheric CO2 is absorbed. One of these CO2 absorbing plants, among millions of species, is one of the most persecuted on earth. At any cost, its destruction is sought: it is an Amazonian plant, the coca plant, sacred plant of the Incas. [It is in] a paradoxical crossroads.

The jungle that tries to save us, is at the same time, destroyed. To destroy the coca plant, they spray poisons, glyphosate in mass that runs through the waters, they arrest its growers and imprison them. For destroying or possessing the coca leaf, one million Latin Americans are killed and two million Afro-Americans are imprisoned in North America. Destroy the plant that kills, they shout from the North, but the plant is but one more of the millions that perish when they unleash the fire on the jungle. Destroying the jungle, the Amazon, has become the slogan followed by States and businessmen. The cry of scientists baptizing the rainforest as one of the great climatic



Gustavo Petro addressed the UN General Assembly on September 20, 2022. Photo: UN. In his speech to the UN General Assembly, the Colombian president highlighted the necessity of ending the war on drugs and saving the environment

pillars is unimportant. For the world's power relations, the jungle and its inhabitants are to blame for the plague that plagues them. The power relations are plagued by the addiction to money, to perpetuate themselves, to oil, to cocaine and to the hardest drugs to be able to anesthetize themselves more. Nothing is more hypocritical than the discourse to save the rainforest. The jungle is burning, gentlemen, while you make war and play with it. The rainforest, the climatic pillar of the world, disappears with all its life.

The great sponge that absorbs planetary CO2 evaporates. The savior forest is seen in my country as the enemy to be defeated, as the weed to be extinguished. Coca and the peasants who grow it, because they have nothing else to grow, are demonized. You are only interested in my country to spray poisons on our jungles, to take our men to jail and put our women in exclusion. You are not interested in the education of the child, but in killing its jungle and extracting coal and oil from its entrails. The

sponge that absorbs the poison is useless, they prefer to throw more poisons into the atmosphere.

We serve them only to fill the emptiness and loneliness of their own society that leads them to live in the midst of drug bubbles. We hide from them their problems that they refuse to reform. It is better to declare war on the jungle, on its plants, on its people. While they let the forests burn, while hypocrites chase the plants with poisons to hide the disasters of their own society, they ask us for more and more coal, more and more oil, to calm the other addiction: that of consumption, of power, of money. What is more poisonous for humanity, cocaine, coal or oil? The dictates of power have ordered that cocaine is the poison and must be pursued, even if it only causes minimal deaths by overdose, and even more by the mixtures necessitated by clandestinity, but coal and oil must be protected, even if their use could extinguish all of humanity.

These are the things of world power, things of

injustice, things of irrationality, because world power has become irrational. They see in the exuberance of the jungle, in its vitality, the lustful, the sinful; the guilty origin of the sadness of their societies, imbued with the unlimited compulsion to have and to consume. How to hide the loneliness of the heart, its dryness in the midst of societies without affection, competitive to the point of imprisoning the soul in solitude, if not by blaming the plant, the man who cultivates it, the libertarian secrets of the jungle.

According to the irrational power of the world, it is not the fault of the market that cuts back on existence, it is the fault of the jungle and those who inhabit it. The bank accounts have become unlimited, the money saved by the most powerful of the earth will not even be able to be spent in the time of the centuries. The sadness of existence produced by this artificial call to competition is filled with noise and drugs. The addiction to money and

Zambia's Debt Crisis A Warning For What Looms Ahead For Global South

from page 9

to having has another face: the addiction to drugs in people who lose the competition, in the losers of the artificial race in which they have transformed humanity.

The disease of loneliness will not be cured with glyphosate [sprayed] on the forests. It is not the rainforest that is to blame.

The culprit is their society educated in endless consumption, in the stupid confusion between consumption and happiness that allows the pockets of power to fill with money.

The culprit of drug addiction is not the jungle, it is the irrationality of your world power. Try to give some reason to your power. Turn on the lights of the century again. The war on drugs has lasted 40 years, if we do not correct the course and it continues for another 40 years, the United States will see 2,800,000 young people die of overdose from fentanyl, which is not produced in our Latin America. It will see millions of Afro-Americans imprisoned in its private jails.

The Afro-prisoner will become a business of prison companies, a million more Latin Americans will die murdered, our waters and our green fields will be filled with blood, the dream of democracy will die in my America as well as in Anglo-Saxon America. Democracy will die where it was born, in the great western European Athens. By hiding the truth, they will see the jungle and democracies die. The war on drugs has failed.

The fight against the climate crisis has failed. There has been an increase in deadly consumption, from soft

drugs to harder ones, genocide has taken place in my continent and in my country, millions of people have been condemned to prison, and to hide their own social guilt they have blamed the rainforest and its plants. They have filled speeches and policies with nonsense. I demand from here, from my wounded Latin America, to put an end to the irrational war on drugs. To reduce drug consumption we do not need wars, for this we need all of us to build a better society: a more caring society, more affectionate, where the intensity of life saves from addictions and new slavery. Do you want less drugs? Think of less profit and more love. Think about a rational exercise of power.

Do not touch with your poisons the beauty of my homeland, help us without hypocrisy to save the Amazon Rainforest to save the life of humanity on the planet. You gathered the scientists, and they spoke with reason. With mathematics and climatological models they said that the end of the human species was near, that its time is no longer of millennia, not even of centuries. Science set the alarm bells ringing and we stopped listening to it. The war served as an excuse for not taking the necessary measures. When action was most needed, when speeches were no longer useful, when it was indispensable to deposit money in funds to save humanity, when it was necessary to move away from coal and oil as soon as possible, they invented war after war after war. They invaded Ukraine, but also

Iraq, Libya and Syria.

They invaded in the name of oil and gas. They discovered in the 21st century the worst of their addictions: addiction to money and oil. Wars have served them as an excuse not to act against the climate crisis. Wars have shown them how dependent they are on what will kill the human species.

If you observe that the peoples are filling up with hunger and thirst and migrating by the millions towards the north, towards where the water is; then you enclose them, build walls, deploy machine guns, shoot at them. You expel them as if they were not human beings, you reproduce five times the mentality of those who politically created the gas chambers and the concentration camps, you reproduce on a planetary scale 1933.

The great triumph of the attack on reason. Do you not see that the solution to the great exodus unleashed on your countries is to return to water filling the rivers and the fields full of nutrients? The climate disaster fills us with viruses that swarm over us, but you do business with medicines and turn vaccines into commodities. You propose that the market will save us from what the market itself has created. The Frankenstein of humanity lies in letting the market and greed act without planning, surrendering the brain and reason. Kneeling human rationality to greed.

What is the use of war if what we need is to save the human species? What is the use of NATO and empires, if what is coming is the end of intelligence?

The climate disaster will kill hundreds of millions of people and listen well, it is not produced by the planet, it is produced by capital.

The cause of the climate disaster is capital. The logic of coming together only to consume more and more, produce more and more, and for some to earn more and more produces the climate disaster. They applied the logic of extended accumulation to the energy engines of coal and oil and unleashed the hurricane: the ever deeper and deadlier chemical change of the atmosphere. Now in a parallel world, the expanded accumulation of capital is an expanded accumulation of death. From the lands of jungle and beauty. There where they decided to make an Amazon rainforest plant an enemy, extradite and imprison its growers, I invite you to stop the war, and to stop the climate disaster. Here, in this Amazon Rainforest, there is a failure of humanity. Behind the bonfires that burn it, behind its poisoning, there is an integral, civilizational failure of humanity. Behind the addiction to cocaine and drugs, behind the addiction to oil and coal, there is the real addiction of this phase of human history: the addiction to irrational power, to profit and money. This is the enormous deadly machinery that can extinguish humanity. I propose to you as president of one of the most beautiful countries on earth, and one of the

most bloodied and violated, to end the war on drugs and allow our people to live in peace. I call on all of Latin America for this purpose. I summon the voice of Latin America to unite to defeat the irrational that martyrs our bodies. I call upon you to save the Amazon Rainforest integrally with the resources that can be allocated worldwide to life.

If you do not have the capacity to finance the fund for the revitalization of the forests, if it weighs more to allocate money to weapons than to life, then reduce the foreign debt to free our own budgetary spaces and with them, carry out the task of saving humanity and life on the planet. We can do it if you don't want to. Just exchange debt for life, for nature. I propose, and I call upon Latin America to do so, to dialogue in order to end the war. Do not pressure us to align ourselves in the fields of war. It is time for PEACE.

Let the Slavic peoples talk to each other, let the peoples of the world talk to each other. War is only a trap that brings the end of time closer in the great orgy of irrationality. From Latin America, we call on Ukraine and Russia to make peace. Only in peace can we save life in this land of ours. There is no total peace without social, economic and environmental justice. We are also at war with the planet. Without peace with the planet, there will be no peace among nations. Without social justice, there is no social peace.