

WAPO Calls For Unity To End Poverty, Inequality And Violence Inflicted On Africa By Forces Of Colonialism And Imperialism ...At First Ever West African People Conference



West African Peoples Organisation (WAPO), a new sub-regional Pan Africanist grouping has called on

all progressive movements and the broader anti-imperialist formations to unite and confront the forces of colonialism and neo-

colonialism whose exploitative activities have resulted in poverty, underdevelopment, conflict and ignorance in West

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OCCUPYGHANA BLASTS GOVT

Over IMF Imposed Painful Investment 'Haircuts'

Pressure group OccupyGhana, has descended heavily on the Akufo-Addo led New Patriotic Party (NPP) government over its

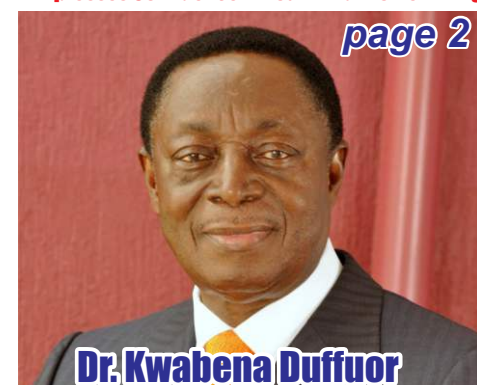
decision to implement the International Monetary Fund's (IMF) imposed restructure portfolio on investments otherwise referred to as investment portfolio 'haircuts'.

According to OccupyGhana the debt restructuring programme announced by the Finance Minister, Ken Ofori-Atta on restructuring portfolio

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The Late Justice Akuffo-Henaku

**Elizabeth Esi
Denyoh elected
Chairperson of
IDF for Africa Region**



Mrs Elizabeth Esi Denyoh

The INSIGHT

— EDITORIAL

THIS IS WORRYING!

Recent happenings in the state of Palestine regarding the annexation of lands and the committal of atrocities by Israeli forces to say the least is highly repugnant.

Never a day passes without one form of violence or assault being perpetuated by Israel against the people of Palestine.

These acts including seizure of Palestinian lands have been carried out with the highest level of impunity, apparently due to the support provided by America.

Across the West Bank and other occupied territories, there have been protests over plans by Israel to annex more of such lands.

Clearly, this show of impunity and disregard for international law is highly condemnable and unacceptable.

There is no denying the fact that the Israeli authorities' constant destruction of Palestinian homes in Occupied West Bank for new Jewish settlement has been done with the full support of the United States, in spite of persistent international condemnation of such lawless and dastardly acts. Apart from the West Bank's Area C, Gaza has also been turned into a huge killing field as Israel has over the years committed acts of genocide with impunity.

Nobody has been spared the atrocities of the Zionist state which has killed women and children, the old and the young, abled and bodied persons and people with disability.

We firmly believe that Israel is emboldened to carry out these atrocities because of the support it receives from the US and its surrogates around the world.

Undoubtedly, what the world expect to see is the easing of tension and an end to the brutalities in Palestine.

Dr Duffuor Salutes NDC Newly Elected National Executives

...Expresses Confidence In Youth And Women Wings

Dr. Kwabena Duffuor, a presidential candidate hopeful of the opposition National Democratic Congress (NDC) has said that he is ever ready to work with the newly elected national women and youth wings of the party for victory in the 2024 general elections.

Speaking in an interview with some senior journalists yesterday to give his congratulatory messages to the newly elected and re-elected executives, the former Governor of the Bank of Ghana (BoG) commended the NDC delegates, the winners and all candidates for making the youth and women national election peaceful and competitive.

The just-ended women and youth elections of the NDC was held at the Examination Hall of Cape Coast University on Saturday December 10 2022.

Dr. Duffuor, the soft-spoken business mogul assured the newly elected national women and youth executives of his commitment and readiness to work closely with them to champion the course of the NDC, not only in the national elections but to bring the party back to power.

Dr Duffuor, a former Minister of Finance and Economic Planning urged the new national women and youth executives to work with those who were not elected to promote harmony and togetherness in the party.

"Congratulations to all winners in the women and youth national executives election of the NDC, I appreciate your support for these years, with unity of purpose victory 2024 is possible," he said.

He called on those who lost in the elections to support the winning candidates to ensure that the party will go into the 2024 election in one piece, united in strength to deliver victory for the party.

"The NDC had its national women and youth election on this Saturday, and when you look at how the event turned out, I congratulate the party leadership and organizers for putting together a peaceful and competitive election," he said.

The potential NDC flagbearer also thanked the Ghana Police Service for deploying a large number of the police officers to control and protect the lives and properties during the election.

According to him, the newly elected National youth and women executives inspire hope for victory for the NDC in the 2024 general elections, and that he is prepared to work with them when elected as the flagbearer of the NDC for election 2024.

"If God permits and the delegates elect me as

the flagbearer of the NDC, I promise you that I can work well with the newly elected national executives," Dr. Duffuor reemphasized.

Reaffirming his position to contest the flagbearership race, Dr Duffuor vowed to bring back the party to political power, when given the chance to lead it.

He is of the strong conviction that he is not only politically experienced but a unifier, with the ability to galvanise all ranks and file of the party to victory, come 2024.

He is also of the view that the current economic challenges are not enough grounds to wrestle power from the ruling New Patriotic Party (NPP), but rather unity with a common purpose.

To this, he urged those seeking for various positions in the party to do so with decorum, devoid of insults and attacks on opponents, since the party would have to spend more on damage control than it would positively project the party. He disclosed that the processes leading to the internal elections are critical for the party to win the 2024 election, hence the need for cohesiveness and unity to help the party to recapture power.

He said Ghanaians were suffering and yearning for the NDC to save them from the bad economic policies of the New Patriotic Party (NPP) government, as he assures Ghanaians of an NDC government of good governance policies, pro-poor policies to alleviate their difficulties and stabilise the economy for businesses to thrive

THE INSIGHT

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WAPO Calls For Unity To End Poverty, Inequality And Violence Inflicted On Africa By Forces Of Colonialism And Imperialism

...At First Ever West African People Conference

from front page

Africa and Africa in general.

In a resolution after its deliberations at the end of a three-day conference on ways to deal with colonialism and neocolonialism and the subtle and insidious bigger threat of imperialism, held at Winneba in the Central Region over the weekend, WAPO said that the sub-region's geographic and thematic challenges are but the creation of imperialism. The conference resolved to end poverty, inequality, corruption, discrimination, ignorance, backwardness and violence inflicted on West Africa and Africa as a whole by colonialist and imperialist forces and had representatives drawn from organized labour, the women's movements, cultural organisations, youth movements, Pan Africanist

formations and progressive movements including political parties in West Africa. Some of the organizations at the conference were the Socialist party of Zambia, the Communist party of Benin, and the Central workers Union of Benin. Others are the National workers Union of Guinea Bissau, the General workers Confederation of Cote d' Ivoire, Agricultural Workers Union of Cote d Ivoire, the Revolutionary Communist Party of Cote d' Ivoir and the Organized Labour of Liberia. Also present were the Socialist Movement of Ghana (SMG), the Workers Party of Tunisia, South Africa Today Secretariat of South Africa. There were also members from the diplomatic community notable amongst them were the Ambassadors from the Russian Federation, the State of Palestine, the Sahrawi Arad Democratic Republic among many others, some of who gave out solidarity messages.

In his address at the opening

ceremony, Comrade Kyeretwie Opoku, Convener of the Socialist Movement of Ghana said there is the need to end the continuing damaging ramifications of colonialism and neocolonialism which for centuries now have resulted in the underdevelopment of the continent.

The West African Peoples Organisation (WAPO) was formed following intense deliberations at the end of the three-day event on ways to deal with colonialism and neocolonialism. WAPO aims to also promote and project pan-African, anti-imperialist, anti-colonialist, anti-neo-colonialist, anti-racist, and peaceful development of West Africa as provided in its new Manden Charter with its secretariat in Ghana.

Meanwhile, Professor Fraincs Nkrumah, son of Osagyefo Dr. Kwame Nkrumah has in a solidarity message urged the organization to strive to end the challenges of the continent.

He noted that it is in the coming



together of the peoples of West Africa to reignite the struggle, lies the seed for a broader cooperation and ultimate union of the peoples of Africa.

"My father, Osagyefo Kwame Nkrumah, began this struggle even before he returned to the then Gold Coast in 1947, and advocated and fought for it throughout the road to independence, his tenure in office till his overthrow in 1966, and even through the years of his exile and ultimate death in 1972—and still the struggle continues".

"This conference is not only timely but of critical importance at this watershed moment in Africa's history when many parts of our continent are mired in fomented wars, climate change disasters, poverty and joblessness, with seemingly no control of either our resources or our destiny. A conference such as this is without doubt part of the solution to this state of affairs. Together we stand; divided we fall", Prof. Nkrumah stated.

DISCLAIMER:FAMILY HEALTH MEDICAL SCHOOL FEES SCHEDULE 2023

This is a disclaimer to the publication on Family Health Medical School Fees Schedule for 2023/2024 Academic Year, which appeared in Opera News (Online News Portal) of Wednesday, 7th December, 2022. The Management of Family Health Medical School wishes to advise the general public to discard any School Fees Schedule

for 2023/2024

Academic Year, and bank account details, as stated, in that publication.

Enquiries on Family Health Medical School Fees Schedule must be directed to:

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Mahama Appeals For Financial Support Towards NDC's National Delegates Conference



John Dramani Mahama

Former President John Dramani Mahama has appealed to Ghanaians to donate funds towards the organisation of the 10th National Delegates Conference of the National Democratic Congress (NDC). The conference, slated for Saturday, December 17, in Accra, is to elect national officers to steer the Party's affairs for the next four years.

In a statement copied to the Ghana News Agency on Monday, Mr Mahama said about 9,000 constituency, regional and national executives, being accredited

delegates, would have to be transported to Accra and accommodated for the conference.

"The Party needs your support to fund this congress," he said.

"I am inviting 500,000 willing Ghanaians, NDC supporters, sympathisers, and friends to donate a minimum of 10 Ghana cedis each to help us fund the congress. You don't have to be a member of the NDC to donate."

The donation should be made via MoMo number 059 860 4199 or pay into the NDC Congress Account at the GCB Bank, into Account Number: 13-9113-00-00-837.

"If you want to arrange other forms of support, please send me an email-," former President Mahama said.

Source -- GNA



INTERNATIONAL NEWS REPORT

Compiled By Peoples Dispatch

Anti-Imperialist Youth Intensify Campaign To Free Kononovich Brothers

The World Federation of Democratic Youth (WFDY) and its federating progressive youth groups across the world have intensified their campaign for the immediate release of Aleksander Kononovich and his brother Mikhail Kononovich, communist youths imprisoned by Ukrainian authorities. Both the Kononovich brothers belong to the leadership of the Leninist Communist Youth Union of Ukraine (LKSMU), a member organization of the WFDY.

The WFDY leadership also demanded an end to all deadly, imperialist wars raging across the world.

December 11 marked 280 days since the arrest and imprisonment of the Kononovich brothers by the Security Services of Ukraine (SBU). Since November 11, WFDY and its federating youth groups worldwide have organized a week-long campaign and held protest demonstrations in front of Ukrainian embassies in various countries demanding the release of the Kononovich brothers.

After the beginning of Russian military action in Ukraine in February, the SBU [arrested](#) the Kononovich brothers from the capital Kiev on March 6 and put them in jail. The SBU accused them of being propagandists holding pro-Russian and pro-Belarusian views with the goal of destabilizing the internal situation in Ukraine and creating the “necessary information picture” for Russian and Belarusian channels.

Even before the war began, the post-Euromaidan regime in Ukraine had started decommunization attempts and the persecution of communists.

The Communist Party of Ukraine (KPU) led by Petro Symonenko was banned from contesting elections. Its publication *Rabochaya Gazeta* was also [banned](#), and its members, as well as the senior leadership, faced police repression and assaults from far-right groups. Braving all these difficulties, members of the KPU and LKSMU continued to organize protests against [decommunization](#), pro-corporate land [reforms](#), government [support](#) to neo-Nazi groups, rise in electricity and water prices, and NATO expansionism. They also organized campaigns urging for the peaceful resolution of the Russia-Ukraine conflict. The Eighth Administrative Court of Appeal in Lviv, Ukraine, ruled on July 5 to uphold the [ban](#) on KPU and ordered the state to seize the properties of the party.

According to reports, in their trial in the Solomensky District Court of Kiev which began on July 1, the Kononovich brothers stated that “our case is completely fabricated from start to finish. What are we charged with? Pro-Belarusian views are being charged. We are being tried for our views. What kind of democracy can we talk about?”

WFDY president Aritz Rodríguez Galán told *Peoples Dispatch* that, “the arrest of the Kononovich brothers based on false accusations on posts on social media was a new step of the political persecution against the communists and anti-imperialists in Ukraine. For the anti-imperialist youth, this is, for the World Federation of Democratic Youth, solidarity with Mikhail and Aleksander Kononovich has been a priority

since they were kidnapped. That is why we have explored all possible ways to prevent them from being assassinated, stop the torture, put an end to the violation of their rights and obtain their release.”

According to Aritz, WFDY has taken several actions for the release of the Kononovichs, including diplomatic actions so that Ukrainian institutions felt international pressure, “although it is true that they have not been the central nucleus of the struggle.”

Secondly, legal support to be able to avoid the continuous violations of their right to defense has been important to monitor their legal situation, the reasons for the arrest, and how to proceed to defend their rights. Thirdly, individual pressure has also been key to pressuring Ukrainian institutions, like sending letters and mass petitions to Ukrainian embassies demanding information about the status of Mikhail and Aleksander and their immediate release, as well as actions on social networks to amplify solidarity.

Lastly, popular mobilization has manifested itself in different ways including mobilizations in front of the Ukrainian embassies in different countries. The slogan of ‘free Kononovichs’ was one of the main axes in the demonstration against the NATO summit in Madrid. Banners demanding their release were displayed in football matches in which the national team of Ukraine played. Activists launched an International Solidarity Week to mark 250 days since their kidnapping. Dozens of youth organizations from across the world joined the call for their



Hampden Park football stadium in Glasgow. (YCL-Glasgow)



Komsomol leaders Aleksander Kononovich and Mikhail Kononovich appear for trial. (Photo: via Facebook). Following the onset of the war, the Ukrainian government had arrested and imprisoned two communist youth leaders, Aleksander Kononovich and his brother Mikhail Kononovich, accusing them of having pro-Russian and pro-Belarusian political views

release and continue to organize various social media campaigns. “In the words of the Kononovich brothers themselves, these actions have been crucial to avoiding assassination at the hands of the Ukrainian reactionaries and to delaying and making clear the political character of the trial for their communist and anti-imperialist militancy. This is a great example of the potential of the internationalist struggle. This must be an example to reinforce our anti-imperialist struggle,” said WFDY president Aritz. Regarding the persecution of

communists in Ukraine, Mikhail Kononovich had *told* Peoples Dispatch in an interview in February 2021, “I emphasize that in the communist ideology, the idea cannot be banned by any laws, so it is impossible to ban common sense and science. It is simply impossible to ban the Communist Party of Ukraine (KPU), because we are a party with more than a hundred years of history, a party that has an experience of underground struggles. We communists have fought and will continue to fight for the benefit of our people!”

Pan Africanism Secretariat Celebrates The Life And Legacy Of Comrade Justice Akuffo Henaku

On 28 November 2022, the Socialist Movement of Ghana (SMG) and all Pan-African working-class organisations lost a genuine struggle stalwart, Justice Akuffo Henaku.

As the Director of the International Relations Department of the Socialist Movement of Ghana, Justice was committed not only to building a vibrant socialist movement in Ghana but dedicated to the construction of a continental and international working-class movement, in the struggles against capitalism and imperialism. Justice was not only at the centre of pushing for the third Pan Africanism Today Conference to take place in Winneba, Ghana, in 2018 and to

take the shape that it did, but he was also the head of the Organising Committee for the conference from SMG.

As a Standing Committee member of SMG, he was a driving engine for the growth of the organisation – from a forum to a movement. He spearheaded the formation and integration of relationships with working-class organisations throughout West Africa.

As a historian, Justice worked to shed light on the historical conjunctures that created the contemporary inequalities lived by the majority of people in Africa, as well as the historical resistance to these inequalities that informs our struggles today. In his words, “Imperialism must be fought and can only

be fought if our people are made aware of [imperialism's] inimical interests which are against the interests of the people”.

As an elder, Justice stood as a compassionate and kind mentor to young cadres from across the continent. As an activist, he never hesitated from calling out the injustices and corruptions of those who uphold the systems that oppress and exploit the majority, always acting in the interests of the poor, marginalised and exploited. His passing is painful and his presence will be sorely missed. We can only honour his contributions by continuing to forge ahead with a clear commitment to hard work and internationalism as we collectively construct the just



The Late Justice Akuffo-Henaku

and equitable world he dedicated his life to building. Today and always, we celebrate his life and the legacy he leaves us to carry

forward!
In solidarity,
Pan Africanism Today
Secretariat

ECOWAS Needs Strong Standing Army To Deal With Peace And Security - Mahama Ayariga



Mahama Ayariga

The First Rapporteur of the ECOWAS Parliament Committee on Political Affairs, Peace, Security and African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM), Mr. Mahama Ayariga has emphasized on the need for a strong standing army for the sub-regional bloc.

Speaking on the sidelines of the ongoing Second Ordinary Session of the ECOWAS Parliament in Abuja – Nigeria, the Ghanaian Legislator said some countries have demonstrated that they are incapable of internally dealing with the issues of peace and security, hence, the need for the sub-region to intervene in those countries.

Mr. Ayariga further pointed out that an army that is adequately resourced, will be capable of playing an effective role in this regard. Asked whether his call is not late in coming, he said “I agree with you,

but note that better late than never, and it's a question of resources”.

He believes there are new emerging areas ECOWAS can tap into, in terms of taxing to support the sub-region.

“For instance, we have telecommunications across the sub-region. The telecom industry is playing a major role in the sub-regional countries, taxing and keeping the profits to themselves” he said.

Mr. Mahama Ayariga, suggested that countries within the sub-region can agree that if there are calls across the sub-region, a percentage of tariffs on those calls should go to ECOWAS.

“For example, when I call Ghana now, there should be some tax that goes to ECOWAS”.

He added that all should be very much concerned about what happens in the sub-region.

“Whatever happens in one part of the sub-region affects everybody, what affects my constituency in Ghana can even affect neighboring countries like Burkina Faso”, he explained.

Mr. Ayariga therefore said he will not relent in supporting ECOWAS and various governments to provide peace and security in the West Africa sub-region.

“If the Government of Nigeria is in

difficulties, I do expect the entire governments of West Africa to be there to help; same with Burkina Faso and I think every citizen of the sub-region should be willing to make some contribution to achieve this”.

The Ghanaian Law maker also said Authority of Heads of States and Governments, should seriously consider giving away power to some sub-regional institutions so that, they can effectively operate.

“In the area of security if they really give some national powers to a sub-regional police force or military force, I believe that it will be very effective. Sometimes, countries have their internal weaknesses; there are police force that they cannot quite control internally but sub-regional force may be able to rise above the task”.

Mr. Ayariga ended by commenting on the individual behaviors that undermine peace and security in the sub-region.

“If people know that if they misconduct themselves in their respective countries, they can be visited by a more powerful sub-regional enforcement agency, they will think twice before they misbehave” he said.

Source -- gbcghanaonline.com

Elizabeth Esi Denyoh elected Chairperson of IDF for Africa Region

The President of the Ghana Diabetes Association, Mrs Elizabeth Esi Denyoh has been elected Chairperson of the International Diabetes Federation (IDF) for the Africa Region. Mrs Denyoh was elected at the end of the 2022 World Congress of the IDF held in Lisbon Portugal where she contested with three other candidates from Senegal, Mauritania and Uganda. Mrs Denyoh takes over from Professor Jacques Abodo of La Cote d'Ivoire being the first none Medical doctor as the Chairperson of the IDF for the Africa Region from 2022-2026. Speaking in an interview, Mrs Denyoh described her election as Africa's representative on the global organisation as a “win for all Africa” adding that I promised to unite the continent together towards the fight against diabetes that was a major cause of death in females in South Africa. She assured y work with the African Union (AU) for governments to give waivers on taxes for diabetes consumables across the continent. Mrs Denyoh disclosed that she would work with Food and Drug Authorities (FDA) and Ministries of Health in Africa to ensure that unwholesome diabetes drugs were eradicated from the system so that “we have high quality standard medicines for diabetes on the African market. According to the IDF Chairperson for Africa, she would engage giant pharmaceutical manufacturers including Pfizer and Glaxosmithkline to produce diabetes treatment drugs particularly Insulin on the continent. As part of her vision for her four-year tenure, Mrs Denyoh said I will endeavour to ensure that the continent was remove from over dependence on donor funding for diabetes



Mrs Elizabeth Esi Denyoh

treatment to a system where “we can device mechanisms to become self-reliant in providing our own resources to treat our own citizens.” Mrs Denyoh pledged to dialogue with all stakeholders to enhance diabetes treatment and bring hope to diabetes patients.

“I wish to use my election as senior nurse to this great position as victory and urge all Ghanaian nurses that there are more opportunities out there for nurses outside the hospital walls,” she concluded.

The International Diabetes Federation is an umbrella organisation of over 230 national diabetes associations in 170 countries and territories representing the interests of the growing number of people with diabetes and those at risk. The Federation has been leading the global diabetes community since 1950.

TUC, NAGRAT, GMA, Others That Have Rejected Government Debt Restructuring

A number of professional institutions have kicked against government's domestic debt exchange programme which is set to impact institutional bondholders.

The main argument is that government should under no circumstance touch pensions, most of which are in institutional bonds.

Minister of Finance Ken Ofori-Atta announced on December 5 that all bonds have been put into four categories as part of a restructuring programme that has been necessitated by recent economic headwinds.

Whiles individual bondholders and investors in Treasury Bills were exempt from the exchange, the Minister outlined the main modalities as follows: "Under the Programme, domestic bondholders will be asked to exchange their instruments for new ones. Existing domestic bonds as of 1st December, 2022 will be exchanged for a set of four new bonds maturing in 2027, 2029, 2032 and 2037. "The annual coupon on all of these new bonds will be set at 0% in 2023, 5% in 2024 and 10% from 2025 until maturity. Coupon payments will be semi-annual."

Since the announcement, the following bodies have kicked against the

programme.

National Association of Graduate Teachers (NAGRAT)

Speaking to the press in Accra on Monday (December 5) the President of NAGRAT, Angel Carbonu, said that if the government proceeds with its plan, his union and other labour unions in the country will lay down their tools.

"We enter into a contractual agreement that I am buying bonds at 'X' per cent. So, I have informed the beneficiaries that I have bought bonds on your behalf at this rate. All of a sudden, government who is the party on the other side of the agreement comes to say, for me, this is what I can pay, take or leave it. "This will not be accepted, my union NAGRAT, the teacher unions do not accept this. We are members of the forum made up of the public sector unions and we want to assure our members that we will resist this move by the government," he said.

The Ghana Registered Nurses and Midwives Association (GRNMA)

The GRNMA through a

press statement registered their dismay and disappointment at the proposed Debt Exchange programme.

The Association explained the basis for its rejection stating that "Pension funds are a collection of contributions of individuals. By design they are meant to protect the vulnerable during retirement.

"Thus any treatment of "individuals" as stated by the Minister of Finance must be indeed extended to all individuals as with pension funds including our GRNMA Fund, a Provident Fund for over 101,000 contributors who are nurses and midwives within the nursing and midwifery fraternity; "Pension funds, particularly Tier 3 schemes, were encouraged to hold their investments for a minimum of 10 years. Since its inception in 2012, most schemes have just met the 10 years or will be 10 years next year.

"Debt exchange for pension funds will mean that workers will not have access to Tier 3 funds after waiting for 5 – 15 years. This is simply unacceptable! To the National Pension Regulatory Authority's (NPRA) regulations, all Pension Schemes have



Minister of Finance Ken Ofori-Atta announced the debt operation on December 5

most of their assets in GOG securities," the statement read in part.

Ghana Medical Association (GMA)

The GMA in a statement on December 6 said the debt restructuring programme will have a negative impact on its members' pensions funds and healthcare delivery in the country.

"The GMA is also concerned about the negative effect of the debt exchange programme on Private Health facilities, private health insurance and mutual schemes that have invested heavily with Government of Ghana bonds.

"This we believe will impact negatively on patient care, medication supply and claims management," the statement said.

Trades Union Congress (TUC)

"We have taken special note of the statement by the Minister for Finance

that the Debt Exchange Programme is voluntary. The TUC will scrupulously analyse the propriety or otherwise of the participation of pension funds of its members in the programme.

"We are assuring workers, that the TUC and its Affiliate unions will do everything in our power to ensure that our members are fully protected and that not even a pesewa of pension funds is lost in the Debt Restructuring Programme," the TUC said in a statement issued on December 5, hours after the Minister's announcement.

Ghana Chamber of Commerce

"On 30th October, 2022, The President of Ghana Nana Addo Dankwa Akuffo Addo addressed the nation and assured all Ghanaians that "there would be no haircuts on pension funds". A few weeks after this announcement, we are all witnessing, rather surprisingly, a major U-turn from that position."

"We have carefully analyzed the announcement by the Minister of Finance on the Debt Exchange Program and are of the opinion that it is injurious to the interest of contributors to pension schemes," the Chamber said in a December 6, 2022 statement.

Is Russia Really The Reason Why Mali Continues To Push France Away?

Asks Vijay Prashad

On November 21, Mali's interim Prime Minister, Colonel Abdoulaye Maïga posted a [statement](#) on social media to say that Mali has [decided](#) "to ban, with immediate effect, all activities carried out by NGOs operating in Mali with funding or material or technical support from France." A few days before this statement, the French government cut official development assistance (ODA) to Mali because it believed that its government is "allied to Wagner's Russian mercenaries." Colonel Maïga [responded](#) by saying that these are "fanciful allegations" and a "subterfuge intended to deceive and manipulate national and international public opinion." Tensions between France and Mali have increased over the course of 2022. The former colonial power [returned](#) to Mali with a military intervention in 2013 to combat the rise of Islamist insurgency in the northern half of Mali; in May 2022, the military government of



A new burst of anti-colonial feeling has swept through France's former colonies, where the debates are now centered around breaking with its stranglehold on their economies and ending the military intervention by its troops

Mali [ejected](#) the French troops. That decision in May came after [several months](#) of accusations between Paris and Bamako that mirrored the rise of anti-French [sentiment](#) across the Sahel region of Africa.

A new burst of anti-colonial feeling has swept through France's former colonies, where the debates are now centered around breaking with France's stranglehold on their economies and ending the military intervention by French troops. Since 2019, the countries that are part of the

[West African Economic and Monetary Union](#) and the [Economic and Monetary Community of Central Africa](#) have been slowly withdrawing from French control over their economies (for example, in 2020, the French officially [announced](#) that for West Africa, it would end the requirement for countries to deposit half their foreign exchange reserves with the French Treasury through the old colonial instrument of the CFA franc). According to a [story](#) that circulated in West Africa and the

Sahel – given credence by an email sent by an "unofficial adviser" to former US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton – one of the reasons why France's then-president Nicolas Sarkozy wanted to overthrow Libya's Muammar Gaddafi in 2011 was because the Libyan leader had proposed a new African currency instead of the CFA franc. France denies that the reason for this tension with Mali is due to the new anti-colonial mood. The French government says that it is entirely due to Mali's [intimacy](#) with Russia. Mali's military has increasingly been establishing closer ties with the Russian government and military. Mali's Defense Minister Colonel Sadio Camara and Air Force Chief of Staff General Alou Boï Diarra are [considered](#) to be "the architects" of a deal made between the Malian military and the Wagner group in 2021 to [bring](#) in several hundred mercenaries into Mali as part of the campaign against jihadist groups.

Wagner soldiers are in Mali, but

they are not the cause of the rift between Paris and Bamako. The anti-colonial temper predates the entry of Wagner, which France is using as an excuse to cover up its humiliation. *This article was produced by [Globetrotter](#). Vijay Prashad is an Indian historian, editor, and journalist. He is a writing fellow and chief correspondent at [Globetrotter](#). He is an editor of [LeftWord Books](#) and the director of [Tricontinental: Institute for Social Research](#). He is a senior non-resident fellow at [Chongyang Institute for Financial Studies](#), Renmin University of China. He has written more than 20 books, including [The Darker Nations](#) and [The Poorer Nations](#). His latest books are [Struggle Makes Us Human: Learning from Movements for Socialism](#) and (with Noam Chomsky) [The Withdrawal: Iraq, Libya, Afghanistan, and the Fragility of U.S. Power](#).*

GFZA Holds Third Annual Investment Week

By Florence Anim

The Ghana Free Zones Authority has held its Third Annual Investment Week under the theme "GFZA: Championing Export-led Industrial Growth in the Context of the African Continental Free Trade Area Agreement and World Trade,". The Minister for Trade and Industry Alan John Kwadwo Kyerematen speaking at the event said it is high time the country diversify its economy away from cocoa and gold into other critical sectors, including agro industry, petrol chemical and pharmaceuticals. The others as he identified were industrial chemical production, automobile, garment and textiles, electronic and electrical appliances, manufacturing of machine and equipment, bauxite and aluminum, and iron and steel. According to him, these thematic areas will help the country not to over expose itself to the

international financial market and a reason it must look beyond traditional exports: "Yes, cocoa has served us well but it is time for us to move on

He said these sectors had become so relevant in this contemporary time because the country has been battered by the combined effects of the covid-19 and the Ukraine-Russia war, hence needs an avenue of escape.

The minister took time to explain how each sector listed would a positive impact of the Ghanaian economy.

He indicated that when automobile industry was first introduced, a lot of people were skeptical about, but he is now proud to say that their efforts had been vindicated and within a matter of two years they have a lot to show.

"We have been able to acquire five of the six global companies to establish vehicle assembly plant in

Ghana, but we are not just interested assembling vehicles, we want to produce the component of those vehicles locally and internalized in our country. So we are also aggressively working on company manufacturing policy."

On the pharmaceutical industry, he indicated that currently the country imports almost 70% of it requirements in terms of medication, which shows the opportunities available in the pharmaceutical industry.

He added that since there are existing companies in Ghana as well as a market in ECOWAS, and all that is needed is to support them increase their production line, "you could understand that this will be a major source of income and also reduce our import burden."

He said Ghana is one of the few African countries blessed with industrial salt resources, yet it is only able to mine 150,000 tons of its 3

million tons a year.

Mr. Kyerematen hoped the citizens harness opportunities in these sectors to take advantage of the Africa Continental Free Trade Area, the United States' market under the African Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA), the European Union and the United Kingdom.

"Let us think carefully as a country about how to put private investment in our development agenda, if we do so we will prosper," he urged.

The Special guest of honour who also happens to be the Presidential Advisor on media and strategic communications, Oboshie Sai Cofie said the current economic challenges required the need to move more rapidly towards transformation of the economy by renewing the focus on increased export promotion, which has contributed to the agenda for promoting and diversifying exports.

She stated that: "We are implementing a National Export Development Strategy (NEDS) which is designed to propel the country, in the shortest possible time, to break the cycle of being a raw material producing and exporting economy with only limited levels of manufactured goods and services.

"It is expected that this strategy, with the support of government and the private sector like yourselves, will begin to transform the structure of the Ghanaian economy from a raw commodity exporter to a manufacturing industrial export-driven economy."

The Chief Executive Officer of GFZA, Mike Oquaye Junior, said the week celebration would be held annually to inform the Ghanaian populace what the Authority is all about. He said currently there are 217 active free zone enterprises in the country, earning over US\$27 billion and employing 33,000 with 31,000 being locals.

OCCUPYGHANA BLASTS GOVT Over IMF Imposed Painful Investment 'Haircuts'

from front page

investments is not only painful to Ghanaian investors but unacceptable.

A statement issued over the weekend by OccupyGhana which is affiliated to the ruling government said, "OccupyGhana has noted, with considerable concern, the Finance Minister's announcements on restructuring portfolio investments. While IMF support depends on the proposed 'haircuts,' they are extremely painful to the many Ghanaians who have participated in these investments. Simply, under this Government's watch, Ghana has become broke under circumstances that were avoidable and are inexcusable and unpardonable". The group noted that per their estimation, the country would not have ended up in the current crisis had the government not embarked on excessive borrowing. "...the nation would not be in this situation but for the Government's failed, risky economic strategy that borrowed heavily from the international market to fund expenditure, pay maturing debt, support the cedi and possibly control the effect of the depreciation on inflation. This risky strategy effectively relied on good fortune and extremely astute economic management, both of which failed. Thus, although the Government would seek to blame the pandemic and the Russia-Ukraine war for this disaster, it cannot evade or avoid the fact that our debt was unsustainable even before these external factors kicked in and compounded an already precarious situation", the statement said. OccupyGhana, while slamming the finance minister's debt operation however recommended some measures the government could adopt to address the present economic crisis.

This is the full text of the statement including the 10-point recommendations as presented by OccupyGhana;

Our ref: OG/2022/054

OCCUPYGHANA PRESS STATEMENT

Accra, 7 December 2022

GHANA'S CURRENT ECONOMIC SITUATION – OUR FURTHER THOUGHTS AND PROPOSALS

OccupyGhana has noted, with considerable concern, the Finance Minister's announcements on restructuring portfolio investments. While IMF support depends on the proposed 'haircuts,' they are extremely painful to the many

Ghanaians who have participated in these investments. Simply, under this Government's watch, Ghana has become broke under circumstances that were avoidable and are inexcusable and unpardonable. As we stated in our Press Release dated 28 October 2022 (Our ref: OG/2022/050) and titled GHANA'S CURRENT ECONOMIC SITUATION – OUR THOUGHTS AND PROPOSALS, the nation would not be in this situation but for the Government's failed, risky economic strategy that borrowed heavily from the international market to fund expenditure, pay maturing debt, support the cedi and possibly control the effect of the depreciation on inflation. This risky strategy effectively relied on good fortune and extremely astute economic management, both of which failed. Thus, although the Government would seek to blame the pandemic and the Russia-Ukraine war for this disaster, it cannot evade or avoid the fact that our debt was unsustainable even before these external factors kicked in and compounded an already precarious situation.

TWO BROAD COMMENTS

We have two broad comments on the announcements that request Ghanaians to forego legitimately earned funds to help the Government out of the disaster it has created.

First, we consider the Finance Minister's announcements as nothing more than an offer from the Government to institutional portfolio investors to accept new terms that vary the terms under which the latter acquired the Government's securities. We think that the Government has no power under the law and the Constitution to unilaterally impose fresh terms on portfolio investors; negotiation and the mutual consent of all parties will be required.

Second, notwithstanding the claims that individual investors are insulated from the proposed 'haircuts,' the millions of Ghanaians whose funds (pension or otherwise) have been invested by institutional fund managers in Government securities, will be the ultimate losers in this new offer. That is because those fund managers will simply pass the cuts on to their clients and

customers.

There is simply no way to understate the terrible consequences that this state of affairs has caused and will cause to Ghanaians. That is why we believe that any offer to the citizens, who are already hit with the multiple effects of inflation and cedi depreciation, to essentially bail the Government out of its self-afflicted disaster, must come with an acceptance of failures and a firm commitment to do better.

TEN RECOMMENDATIONS

We therefore recommend 10 things that the government may act upon. First, reduce number of Government appointees by at least fifty percent. This may be achieved by consolidating several ministries and slashing the number of political appointees (ministerial and otherwise), such as all deputies and the like, and entrusting public servant-technocrats with the responsibility of supporting substantive heads. This will send a powerful message in these tough and painful times that the Government is serious about its commitment to do better while requesting sacrifices from the general public.

Second, let the President pay income taxes too. We should remove the tax exemption granted to the President under article 68(5) of the Constitution. While the actual savings from this might not be much, it is hugely significant and relevantly symbolic. The President must lead by example. When he pays his taxes, then he can demand that the rest of us pay taxes too.

Third, it is time to rationalise the so-called 'article 71 benefits.' Ghana needs to end the three-decade-old grand conspiracy among the political class that milks Ghana under the false argument that article 71 authorises so-called 'ex-gratia payments.' We must eradicate the multiple claims of ex-gratia; the multiple claims over different administrative/government terms do not make sense and are difficult to sustain. We must also immediately end the false scheme by which successive governments deliberately delay the setting up of the emoluments committee till the end of their terms, so that salaries and emoluments are agreed upon and calculated literally at the 'midnight' of the outgoing government, considered and adopted in secrecy to precious little debate, and then

applied retrospectively. Ghanaians only get to find out the huge pay-outs to the executive and legislators after-the-fact. We demand that the committees are established at the start of each government so that we know what and how much the political actors are entitled to when they assume office. The current government must establish the committees NOW.

Fourth, revise all tax exemptions, especially those granted to incomes and gains from portfolio investments. The Government must as a matter of urgency, amend section 7(1)(p) to (v) of the Income Tax Act, 2015 (Act 896) to remove all or some of the exemptions on incomes and gains from portfolio investments. These are not normal times, and we propose imposing a specific, time-bound withholding income tax regime on such earnings. Ghana may consider re-granting the exemptions when we have recovered.

Fifth, intensify and institutionalise GRA's invigilation activities. In addition, the legal sanctions for under-reporting and tax evasion must be drastically applied.

Sixth, explain the source of funding of the proposed Financial Stability Fund (FSF). Extreme transparency of the proposed programme and its implementation is required. If the Government is broke and requires an IMF bailout, where will the monies for the FSF come from? Seventh, pursue the Auditor-General's Disallowances and Surcharges. The Government must show some seriousness in pursuing those the Auditor-General has found to have caused loss to Ghana.

To the best of our knowledge, the Government is doing nothing to enforce the Auditor-General's disallowances and surcharges. The President issued a terribly belated instruction to heads of institutions to provide to him the names of all persons identified to have caused losses to the state in the Auditor-General's Reports. The President's deadline has come and gone with no communication or indication on whether the names were indeed supplied to the President, and what the President is going to do with them.

Eighth, end Galamsey. The Government has to address the Galamsey menace as a matter of urgency, as our natural resources are plundered and ecosystem destroyed. The much-publicised Kumasi meetings do not appear to have borne fruit. We have written to the President at least 9 times in the past six weeks, in addition to several other previous statements on this, challenging the Government to properly regulate artisanal mining in a way that benefits the nation. They have all been ignored. Our current efforts will come to nothing if this canker is allowed to overcome any future economic recovery.

Ninth, slash all non-critical government expenditure. Implement a ruthless focus on prioritising government projects and expenditure, and ensure a strict relationship to GDP growth going forward. And, the Government must provide monthly reports on the how much money all announced cost-saving measures have delivered. We specifically recommend the suspension of all fees and allowances paid to persons appointed by the Government to serve on various boards. We also recommend suspending all expenditure on the proposed National Cathedral. Whatever arguments there might have been to support spending now non-existent money on the proposed National Cathedral, have been eroded by the dire straits that the nation faces. Our current situation makes the continued commitment in the budget to spend GHS80M on the cathedral, look like a vanity project. We lose nothing by suspending expenditure on that project until the economy recovers.

Tenth, rationalise the President's Flagship programmes. This includes the Free SHS scheme. Every Ghanaian who can pay fees should pay. Limit the scheme to only those who can prove that they are not capable of paying fees.

In conclusion, a Government that is pleading with Ghanaians to bail it out of a self-afflicted disaster, must 'bear fruits worthy of repentance.'

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