

Cartel Behind TOR Shutdown: NPP Bigwig Alleges



Former President John Dramani Mahama

MAHAMAMA

He Says Govt's Debt Operation Will Worsen Plight Of Local Private Sector

Former President John Mahama Dramani Mahama has said the new debt operation otherwise known as debt restructuring programme by the government will worsen the plight of

local private sector. He noted that the government's unilateral offer to pay zero interest in 2023 on existing domestic bonds and a suppressed interest of between 5 and 10 percent if the maturity dates

are extended will further worsen the situation of the private sector. Speaking at the 13th Graduation Ceremony of the Accra Business School over the weekend, Mr

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State-owned Tema Oil Refinery has been out of service for years now

Augustine Kyei Adjudged Best Overall Farmer For 2022 Farmers' Day At Wassa East Municipal Assembly



Augustine Kyei

By Joseph Nana Yaw Cobbina

The gallant, selfless and dedicated farmers who have worked tirelessly for motherland Ghana see the farmers' day celebration as a great day set aside to honour the heroic farmers of the country. At a joyous event to mark the Wassa East Municipal Assembly farmers' day celebration at Fameye village, a suburb of western region at the Wassa Amenfi East municipality, the farmers

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Real Challenge At COP27 Is Private Greed Versus Devastation Of All

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The INSIGHT

— EDITORIAL

THE NEED FOR RESEARCH

The observation recently by a top researcher to the effect that Africa is not developing due to the failure of its governments and leaders to use researchers who will conduct research into developmental issues of interest cannot be far from the truth.

The claim that African governments have also failed to provide adequate resources and funding for researchers to enhance their work such that they can perform their duties to serve as a guide in the formulation of policies to promote socio-economic development is also very instructive.

It is regrettable that our leaders have still not seen the need to rely on research to undertake the developmental goals of the continent when elsewhere research has become a reliable tool for solving many problems that confront us as a society.

In Ghana for instance, some intensive research work conducted into both new and old fields of endeavours and their valuable findings have been shelved or abandoned for no apparent reasons.

Some of these research works or projects took the pain, sweat and time of individuals in some state or private institutions including some amount of money to arrive at conclusions and findings that seek to address challenges facing our country and society.

The situation is very disturbing in that some of the challenges confronting us as a country could have been easily addressed if policy makers especially political actors had taken research seriously.

Research findings or outcomes the world over, are critical in formulating policies for national planning as the advanced countries had chalked many developmental successes through research, scientific and technological innovations and as a country cannot afford to lose out by shelving some of our invaluable research findings.

It is now time to make use of our research findings for national planning and development and if this requires going back to previous research findings and dusting them to suit areas of challenge the better for us all.

Augustine Kyei Adjudged Best Overall Farmer For 2022 Farmers' Day At Wassa East Municipal Assembly

from front page

were over joyous.

Speaking at the annual ceremony, the Wassa Amenfi East Municipal Assembly MCE, Hon. Frederick Korankye, was very glad to celebrate a historic farmers day because when the whole world was going through a lot of crisis it was farmers who saved humanity and also assisted to ensure the realisation of UN's dream to irradicate hunger from the world by 2030 which it hoped can be achieved by this gallant farmers with their hardwork and dedication for service to the nation.

He was optimistic that under the planting for food and jobs flagship program which was initiated by H.E.Nana Addo Dankwa Akufo-Addo who has the youth and farmers at heart, the Assembly has thus, supplied 11,000 coconut seedlings to 110 farmers to sustain farming when the Cocoa season is over and also, the Assembly has supplied 4,000 palm seedlings for 16 farmers to also support farming. According to him, the ministry of Agriculture brought 25 bags of rice of which 1 bag contains 40 kilos to be distributed among 21 farmers to promote rice farming as well and 10 bags of maize containing 45 kilos were distributed to 39 farmers and it has also been fruitful.

For his part, the Member of Parliament for Wassa Amenfi East, Hon. Nicholas Amankwaah a.k.a (Home Boy) mentioned that, it's his wish to collaborate with businessmen in Wassa to help in the development of the constituency.

He reiterated the point that, there is the high cost of food inflation in the cities but due to the hard work of the farmers at Wassa they don't experience such difficulties.

Again, he promised to construct the roads in the community in other to help farmers to transport foods from their farms to the city.

In his remarks, Mr. Augustine Kyei who won the overall best farmer of the year at Wassa Amenfi East Municipal



Augustine Kyei

Assembly, said he was grateful to the Almighty God and the organisers of the program for the honour done him in his selection as the best farmer.

He also said that farming is a lucrative job and urged the youth to engage in the Agricultural business which he said would help them.

Meanwhile Mr. Samuel Ofose Kwaakye who also won the best AI award of the year, he said his parents were farmers so he was born a farmer right from childhood because that was his dream.

He advised the youth to go into agriculture in other to irradicate unemployment in the country.

THE INSIGHT

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MAHAMAMA

He Says Govt's Debt Operation Will Worsen Plight Of Local Private Sector

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Mahama lamented that “a worst-case scenario is the contemplated compulsory extension of maturities on Government bonds and the haircut investors will have to take if they decide to cash out because they can't wait that long. “People have lost value on their investments and could potentially lose even more.”

Finance Minister Ken Ofori-Atta over the weekend announced that under the expected IMF Programme to be implemented, “domestic bondholders will be asked to exchange their instruments for new ones”, Also, “existing domestic bonds, as of 1 December 2022, will be exchanged for 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”, he announced Sunday evening (4 December 2022).

Coupon payments will be semi-annual, he said.

The government is currently negotiating a programme with the International Monetary Fund for a \$3-billion credit facility programme, thus, necessitating the debt restructuring exercise.

This is Mr. Ofori-Atta's full address:

Good Evening Ghanaians,
In the Budget Statement

presented to Parliament on November 24th, I announced that government will undertake a debt operation programme. The broad contours of the Debt Sustainability Analysis has been concluded and I am here this evening to provide some details on Ghana's Domestic Debt Exchange which will be launched tomorrow.

External debt restructuring parameters will be presented in due course.

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.

Our commitment to Ghanaians and the investor community, in line with negotiations with the IMF, is to restore macroeconomic stability in the shortest possible time and enable investors to realize the benefits of this Debt Exchange. The Government of Ghana has been working hard to minimise the impact of the domestic debt exchange on investors holding government bonds, particularly

small investors, individuals, and other vulnerable groups.

In line with this:

Treasury Bills are completely exempted and all holders will be paid the full value of their investments on maturity. There will be NO haircut on the principal of bonds. Individual holders of bonds will not be affected.

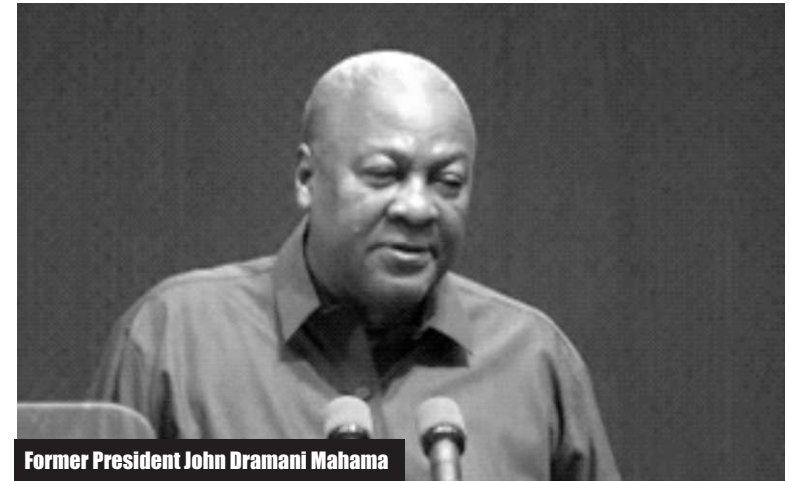
The government recognises that our financial institutions hold a substantial proportion of these bonds.

As such, the potential impact of this exchange on the financial sector has been assessed by their respective regulators. Working together, these regulators have put in place appropriate measures and safeguards to minimise the potential impact on the financial sector and to ensure that financial stability is preserved.

Specifically:

The Bank of Ghana, the Securities & Exchange Commission, the National Insurance Commission, and the National Pensions Regulatory Authority will ensure that the impact of the debt operation on your financial institution is minimized, using all regulatory tools available to them.

A Financial Stability Fund (FSF) is being established by



Former President John Dramani Mahama

Government with the help of development partners to provide liquidity support to banks, pension funds, insurance companies, fund managers, and collective investment schemes to ensure that they are able to meet their obligations to their clients as they fall due. These are difficult times and we count on the support of all Ghanaians and the investor community to make the exercise successful.

We are confident that these measures will contribute to restoring macroeconomic stability. With your understanding and support and that of the entire investor community, we shall overcome our current difficulties, and with the help of God, put our economy back on the path of renewed and robust growth.

As 1st Samuel 30:19 says, nothing was missing, small or great.

I say to you, nothing will be lost, nothing will be missing, and nothing will be broken.

We will, together, recover all. Thank you and God bless our homeland Ghana.

Meanwhile, an IMF staff team, led by Stéphane Roudet, mission chief for Ghana, has been visiting Accra from, Thursday, 1 to 13 December 2022 to continue discussions with the authorities on the country's post-COVID programme for economic growth and associated policies and reforms that could be supported by a new IMF lending arrangement.

The IMF staff will also further engage with other stakeholders during the visit.

Ahead of the visit, Mr Roudet said: “We have had productive discussions with the Ghanaian authorities over the last few months and look forward to our engagement in Accra”.

Our objective for this visit is to make further progress toward reaching an agreement on policies and reforms that could be supported by an IMF lending arrangement”.

“The IMF remains fully committed to help Ghana restore macroeconomic stability, bring relief to Ghanaians in this time of crisis, and lay the foundation for more inclusive growth.”

In Ghana's 2023 budget, Finance Minister [Ken Ofori-Atta](#) said the government and the IMF have agreed on programme objectives, a preliminary fiscal adjustment path, debt strategy and financing required for an extended credit facility programme to be in line with the government's Post-COVID-19 programme for Economic Growth (PC-PEG).

The PC-PEG is the government's blueprint to restore macroeconomic stability, promote debt sustainability, sustain economic recovery and support structural reforms. Updating the house on the negotiations so far, Mr Ofori-Atta said: “Mr. Speaker, since the government announced its engagement with the International Monetary Fund for a supported programme on 1 July 2022, we have made “substantial progress”.

The Fund, he said, has assured the government of its “strong commitment and support in these difficult times”.

Cartel Behind TOR Shutdown:

– NPP Bigwig Alleges



State-owned Tema Oil Refinery has been out of service for years now

Former New Patriotic Party Member of Parliament for Obuasi East, Edward Ennin, has described as painful the government's failure to get the Tema Oil Refinery working.

According to the former chairman of parliament's committee on mines and energy, his investigation has established that it will cost around \$5 million to fix the state-owned refinery, which has been out of

service for some years.

“I recently went to the Tema Oil Refinery to conduct my own investigations on why the refinery, which was working daily in my days as chairman of parliament's mines and energy committee, is no longer working. I was told some components of their machines need to be replaced, and when I inquired about the cost, I was told it is in the region of \$5 million,” the former MP said.

“I asked again if the machines could refine our local crude if \$5 million was invested to fix them, and the answer was a resounding yes. The person I spoke to is in a higher position,” he told Okay FM morning show host Kwame Nkrumah Tikese during an interview.

Describing the situation as painful, the former MP disclosed that the situation at TOR is a result of some

people with power deliberately stopping the refinery from working in pursuit of their personal interests.

“It is very painful if it is true that all it will take is \$5 million being invested into Tema Oil Refinery to add value to our crude oil and our leaders are not showing concern.

“It came up during my investigation; I asked why nothing is being done, and I was told it is because some of the leaders are lifting oil, so they don't want the refinery to succeed. It is the same situation with our bauxite industry. They own trucks for hauling in the Obuasi area, so the day any government attempts to get the railway system in the area working, it will fail. They are people in both the NPP and NDC who have an interest in it. But I pray a government will come that will end all that,” he stated while appealing to the government to get TOR running.



INTERNATIONAL NEWS REPORT

Compiled By Peoples Dispatch

Anthony Albanese Reveals Australia Is Lobbying For An End To US Pursuit Of Assange

Amid growing calls for Julian Assange's release, the Australian government has finally stated that it is diplomatically lobbying the US government in favor of the Wikileaks founder.

Addressing the Australian House of Representatives on Wednesday, November 30, Prime Minister Anthony Albanese said that his government "will continue to act in a diplomatic way" and also sought to assure that he has personally raised the case of Assange, who is an Australian citizen, with "representatives of the United States government."

The statement was made by Albanese in the House on Wednesday, in response to a question raised by independent crossbencher Monique Ryan from Melbourne.

Ryan stated that journalists publishing sensitive information in public-interest are essential to democracy and pointed out that Assange is languishing in Belmarsh prison after being "charged by a foreign government with acts of journalism."

Insisting that only political intervention can secure Assange's freedom, Ryan asked "Will the government intervene to bring Mr. Assange home?"

Assange is currently facing extradition to the US to stand trial before a federal grand jury on a total of 18 charges, 17 of which are under the notorious Espionage Act, carrying a total maximum prison sentence of 175 years.

He is being held under judicial remand at the high-security Belmarsh prison in the United Kingdom, as he awaits an appeal against the British Home Office's decision to facilitate his extradition to the United States.

Acknowledging that Assange's case is "an issue of great interest to many Australians and of interest to people across this chamber," Albanese mentioned his position as the leader of the opposition in the Parliament.

"I some time ago made my point that enough is enough," Albanese said in his answer to the crossbencher MP. "It is time for this matter to be brought to a conclusion." He was also quick to clarify he does not "express any personal sympathy for the actions of Mr. Assange," as a disclaimer to where he stands politically. Nevertheless, Albanese later highlighted Assange's Australian citizenship and added that his position on the prosecution against

Assange "is clear and has been made clear to the US administration—that it is time that this matter be brought to a close."

"I will continue to advocate, as I did recently in meetings that I have held," he added. Drawing parallels with whistleblower Chelsea Manning, who has been pardoned despite her conviction, Albanese further asked "what is the point of continuing this legal action, which could be caught up now for many years into the future?"

The statement is a significant revelation coming from Albanese, who has remained tight-lipped about his diplomatic efforts in the Assange case. Even in his response, the prime minister did not clarify which US official he had spoken to on the matter or how significant his government's intervention has been so far.

Last month, Albanese reportedly met with US president Joe Biden, on the sidelines of the G-20 Summit in Bali, Indonesia. It is not clear whether Assange's case was part of the brief discussion he had with Biden.

Shortly after taking office, Albanese defended his silence by stating that "not all foreign affairs is best done with the loudhailer" in response to questions about his intention to intervene. Progressive groups and anti-war advocates have been



A sticker outside Anthony Albanese's electoral office in Marrickville. Photo: Stephen Langford/GreenLeft. Australian Prime Minister Anthony Albanese clarified that his government is working in a "diplomatic way" and has advocated for an end to US prosecution against Assange

repeatedly calling on Albanese to take a clear stand, while he has instead insisted that he is engaged in "quiet diplomacy."

The news of the government's intervention was welcomed by Assange's family and supporters in Australia, but with a note of caution. "Drop the charges. Return Julian home. We now get to see Australia's standing in Washington, valued ally or not," said John Shipton, Assange's father, in a statement released on Thursday.

"Action from the United States will determine if our Prime Minister has any influence in our relationship with the United States," said Stephen

Kenny, a solicitor for the Assange Campaign in Australia. "For Julian's sake, I sincerely hope he does." In the past, several supporters of Assange have strongly criticized the Australian government's silence on his persecution, especially as Assange is an Australian citizen. "The US wants to get even and for so long the UK and Australia have been happy to go along for the ride because they've put bilateral relationships with Washington ahead of the rights of a decent man," said Andrew Wilkie, an independent MP who co-founded a [parliamentary group](#) for Assange's release.

23 Irregular Armed Groups In Colombia Join President Gustavo Petro's 'Total Peace' Policy

Colombian human rights organization, the Institute of Development and Peace Studies (INDEPAZ), last Tuesday reported that at least 23 irregular armed groups operating in the country had expressed their intention to join President Gustavo Petro's 'Total Peace' policy in the past four months. In its report on the Presence of Armed Groups in Colombia 2021-2022, INDEPAZ highlighted that the armed groups had showed their willingness to engage in dialogue in response to the call made by President Petro to "accept legal benefits in exchange for peace and definitive non-repetition of violence."

Following his inauguration in early August, Petro, the first left-wing president of Colombia, vowed to achieve absolute peace and protect the population affected by violence across the country. In this regard, he announced the resumption of peace talks with the leftist guerilla group the National Liberation Army (ELN); pledged to fully implement the peace agreements signed with now demobilized Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC) guerilla group in 2016; and promoted peace negotiations with all illegal paramilitary and drug-trafficking groups willing to submit to justice.

As a result of the constant efforts of the Petro government to reach armed groups in all parts of the country to convince them to commit to peace, in September, ["ten groups agreed to join the Total Peace initiative and declared a unilateral ceasefire."](#)

Among the groups that had decided to negotiate peace and lay down arms include the dissident groups of the demobilized FARC: the Estado Mayor Central, the Segunda Marquetalia, the South-eastern bloc and the Western Coordinating Command; the guerilla groups: the ELN and the Movimiento Revolucionario del Pueblo; and drug cartels such as Clan del Golfo, Los

Pachencas, Los Pachelly, Los Caparros, Los Shotas, Los Espartanos, Los Costeños, Los Rastrojos, and La Oficina de Envigado, among others. The report came a week after [the resumption of the dialogue process between the Colombian Government and the ELN.](#) On November 21, following their first meeting in Caracas, Venezuela, the delegations of the Petro government and the ELN expressed their willingness to advance in the process to build peace based on democracy with justice. This new peace process, led by the Petro government, could end nearly 60 years of internal armed conflict in Colombia as well as the violence

against social leaders, who are often threatened and killed in the country. According to the INDEPAZ, between January 1 and November 29, 2022, [171](#) environmentalists, land defenders, water defenders, human rights defenders, Afro-descendent, Indigenous, peasant and social leaders had been killed by illegal armed groups. Additionally, during this period, [36](#) ex-combatants of the FARC, who were in the reincorporation process, had also been murdered. In addition to these assassinations, around [300](#) people had been slaughtered in [91](#) massacres.

'Scrap E-Levy, You Cannot Tax Your Way Out Of Poverty' - Economist To Govt

Professor Godfred Bokpin, a Financial Economist at the University of Ghana (UG) has asked the government to scrap the controversial Electronic Transfer Levy ([E-Levy](#)), describing it as "conceptually wrong".

The ruling administration introduced [E-Levy](#) in May 2022 imposing a levy of 1.5% on electronic transfers.

The levy was "to enhance domestic tax mobilization and expand the tax base and provide an opportunity for everyone to contribute towards national development".

The initial rate proposed by the government was 1.75% but it was revised downward to 1.5% after

strong opposition.

The levy has however not generated the expected results as some who are still against it find ways of dodging its payment.

Revision in budget

Subsequently, the government in its 2023 budget statement disclosed the rate has been revised again from 1.5% to 1%.

This, according to the government, will allow more Ghanaians to use the service. "Review the [E-Levy](#) Act and more specifically, reduce the headline rate from 1.5% to

1% of the transaction value as well as removal of the daily threshold," Finance Minister, [Ken Ofori-Atta](#) said.

Meanwhile, the GH¢100 threshold has been removed.

Taxation is not a hammer

Prof Bokpin speaking to this in an interview on Peace FM's morning show 'Kokrokoo' said when a policy is "conceptually wrong" it will be opposed no matter how it is revised.

"Government should delete it ([E-Levy](#)). When something is conceptually wrong and it doesn't meet certain basic principles of taxation, people have issues with it; even if it's



Professor Godfred Alufar Bokpin, Economist

0.1% . . . CSOs, Private sector said all that they could say about e-levy but sometimes it is as though somebody wants to do it to demonstrate where power lies," he intimated.

He further stated that when your policy announcement aligns with the expectation

of the market, they pick on it and confidence is generated.

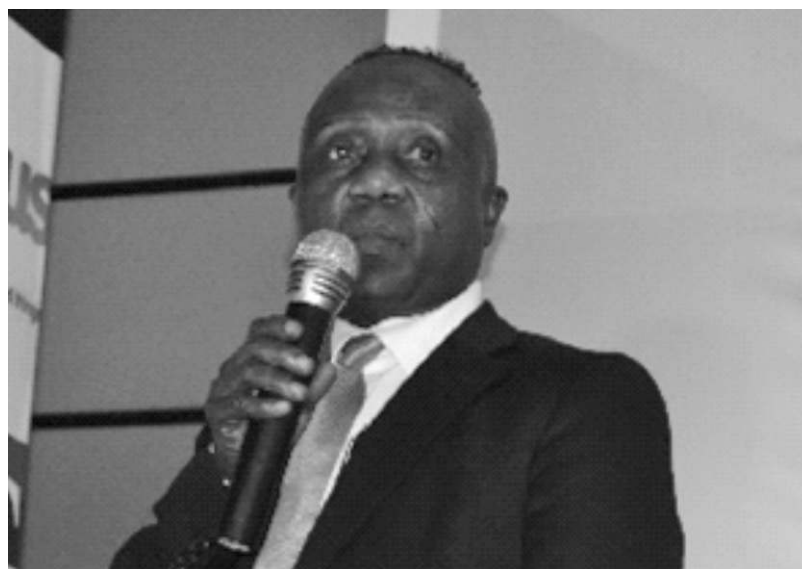
"Taxation is not a hammer where you treat everybody else in the market as a nail . . . you cannot tax your way out of poverty; it's never done anywhere . . ." he added.

IMF Fingerprints All Over 2023 Budget, Debt Exchange Programme – John Kwakye

Director of Research at the Institute of Economic Affairs (IEA), Dr John Kwakye, has said that government's announcement of a debt exchange programme was influenced by the International Monetary Fund (IMF).

He further asserted that the 2023 budget statement presented by the Finance Minister, Ken Ofori-Atta was also geared towards securing a financial bailout from the IMF.

Dr Kwakye in a tweet said, "IMF's fingerprints are all over the 2023 Budget and the debt exchange presented by the Minister." The finance minister, at a press conference in Accra on Monday, December 5, 2022, said under the debt exchange programme all domestic bondholders will exchange their instruments



IEA Director of Research, Dr John Kwakye

for new ones. Existing domestic bonds as of December 1, 2022, will be exchanged for a set of four new bonds maturing in 2027, 2029, and 2037. The annual coupons on all of these bonds will be set at 0% in 2023, 5% in 2024 and 10% from 2025 until maturity. Meanwhile, Ghana is targeting an amount of \$3 billion over a three-year

period from the IMF once an agreement on a programme is reached.

The new amount requested as a loan is double the government's initial target of \$1.5 billion.

The IMF programme is aimed at restoring macroeconomic stability and safeguarding debt sustainability among many others.

All Set For 2022 NDC Delegates Conference & Congress

The National Democratic Congress (NDC) has officially announced the final date for its Woman and Youth Conference as well as the National Delegates Congress.

The theme for the occasion is, "Running for Victory 2024, Ghana's hope". The Woman and Youth Conference is scheduled for 10th December, 2022 at Cape Coast in the Central Region.

The 10th National Delegates Congress on the other hand, would take place at the Accra Sports Stadium on the 17th December, 2022 in Accra. About 1,086 Youth and 830 Women delegates are expected to vote at the Cape Coast Conference whilst, 8,964 delegates are supposed to arrive on the 16th December 2022 for the Delegate Congress scheduled on the 17th

December, 2022.

It has been made known that, only media houses with accreditation cards would be allowed to cover the events.

Regular press briefing have also been assured to take place including a centralized TV to telecast the event.

Meanwhile, the election Committee has made it clear that, delegates list are out for contestants to go through because, no injunction would be entertained if one fails to report issues for ratification before the Delegate Conference and the Congress is over. The elections committee have assured to make everything possible to ensure that, both the Delegate Conference and the Congress become a success.

Real Challenge At COP27 Is Private Greed Versus Devastation Of All

By Prabir Purkayastha

The [COP27](#) meeting has ended at Sharm el-Sheikh. Although the Ukraine War and mid-term elections in the United States shifted our immediate focus away from the battle against global warming, it remains a central concern of our epoch. [Reports indicate](#) we are not only failing to meet climate change goals but falling short of the targets by a large margin. Worse, [methane greenhouse gas emissions](#) have grown far faster than we knew, and pose as much of a climate change threat as carbon dioxide. Methane lasts for a shorter time in the atmosphere, but seen over a 100-year period, it is a more potent greenhouse gas than carbon dioxide. The result is we are almost certain to fail in our target to limit global temperature rise to 1.5 degrees centigrade. If we do not act soon, even a 2-degree target would be hard to achieve. At this rate, we are looking at a 2.5 to 3-degree temperature rise and the devastation of our civilization. The impact will be [much worse](#) in the equatorial and tropical regions, where most of the world's poor live. This column addresses two issues. One, the shift from coal to natural gas as a transition fuel, and the other is the challenge of storing electricity, without which we cannot shift to renewable energy. The advanced countries—the United States and in the European Union—bet big on natural gas, or methane, as the transition fuel from coal. In the COP-26 meet at Glasgow, they made coal the key issue, moving the focus away from their greenhouse emissions to those of China and India as big coal users. The assumption behind using natural gas as a transition fuel is that its greenhouse impact is only half that of coal. Methane emissions also last in the atmosphere for a shorter time—about 12 years—before converting into carbon dioxide and water. The flip side is that it is a far more potent greenhouse gas. Its effects are *30 times higher over 100 years than an equivalent amount of carbon dioxide*. So, even far smaller amounts of methane have a far more significant global warming impact than carbon dioxide.

The bad news on the methane front is also that methane leakages from natural gas infrastructure are much higher, possibly up to *six times—according to a [Stanford University Study](#)*—than the advanced countries have been telling us. The *high methane leakage from natural gas extraction* not only cancels any benefits of switching to natural gas as an intermediary fuel but *even worsens* global warming. Two sets of data on methane are now available. One measures [the actual leakage of methane from natural gas infrastructure](#) with satellites and planes using infrared cameras. The technology to measure methane leaks from natural gas infrastructure is easy and cheap. After all, we can detect methane in exoplanets far from the solar system. Surely, saving this planet from heat death is a much higher priority? The other data is the World Meteorological Organization (WMO)'s measurements of atmospheric methane. The Environment Protection Agency (EPA) in the United States estimates that 1.4% of all natural gas produced in that country leaks into the atmosphere. But a [recent \[Stanford University\]\(#\) study](#) using cameras and small planes that flew over natural gas infrastructure found the figure is *likely six times higher or about 9%*! Even if methane leaks are only 2.5% of natural gas production, they will offset all the benefits of switching from coal to natural gas. “Clean” natural gas might be 3-4 times worse than even dirty coal. At least in the hands of capital! The EPA does not take any physical measurements. All it uses to estimate methane emissions is a formula based on numerous subjective factors, and the number of wells, the length of the pipelines, etc. Let us not forget that many in the United States do not believe in global warming. They would like to take a crowbar to even a weakened EPA, dismantling all measures to reduce global

warming.

The other set of figures that reveals the impact of methane leaks is the WMO reporting the [biggest jump](#) in “methane concentrations in 2021 since systematic measurements began nearly 40 years ago”. While the WMO remains discreetly silent on why this jump occurred, the relation between switching to natural gas and consequent rise of methane emissions is hard to miss.

The tragedy of methane leaks is they are easy to spot with today's technology and not very expensive to fix. But capital has no incentive to take even baby steps that impact their *current* bottom line. The *larger good—even bigger profits—but over a longer time frame* does not interest capital. It has to be forced on capital by regulatory or direct state action.

The cynicism of the rich countries—the United States and the European Union—on global warming is visible in their conduct during the Ukraine war. The [European Union has restarted some coal plants](#), increasing the share of coal in the energy mix. It has cynically argued that developing oil and gas infrastructure in Africa is alright, as long as it is [solely to supply to Europe, not for use in Africa](#). African nations must use only clean, renewable energy! And, of course, such energy infrastructure must be in the hands of European companies! The key to a transition to renewable energy—the only long-term solution to global warming—is to find a way to store energy. Renewables, unlike fossil fuels, cannot be used at will as the wind, sun, even water, provide a continuous flow of energy. We can store water in reservoirs, but we cannot store the wind or sun, unless we convert them into chemical energy stored in batteries. Or into hydrogen and stored in tanks, or natural storage in geological formations, underground or in salt caverns.

There is a lot of hype about batteries and electric cars.

What is missing is the



Activists protest at COP27. Photo: [IndustriAll](#). In the hands of capital, 'clean' natural gas is worse than 'dirty' coal. But rich nations have devised an elaborate system to conceal facts and shift blame to poorer nations

disclosure that batteries, using current technology, have a much lower energy density than oil or coal. The [energy from oil or natural gas is 20-40 times the most efficient battery](#) today.

That is not such a major issue for an electric vehicle. It simply dictates how often we must charge its battery and how long charging will take. It will require developing charging infrastructure with a quick turnaround time. However, the much bigger problem is how to store energy at the grid level. Grid-level storage means supplying the power grid with electricity from stored energy. Grid-level batteries are being suggested to achieve this goal. What its proponents neglect to inform us is they may supply power for short-term fluctuations—night and day, windy and non-windy days—but cannot meet the demand from long-term or seasonal fluctuations. This is why the question of the energy density of storage—how much energy a kilo of a lithium battery can hold compared with a kilo of oil, natural gas or coal—is so crucial. For the technology we currently have, the answer is [20-40 times less!](#) It means we need to build mammoth infrastructure to store energy to meet seasonal fluctuations. The cost of such storage will be prohibitive and simply [exhaust all our lithium](#) (or any other battery material) supplies. I will not address the energy cost—electric or fossil—of public or mass transport versus private and why we should switch to the former. I will raise

the larger question of how to [store renewable energy](#) so we can run electricity infrastructure when wind or sun is not there.

Maybe new technology will solve this problem? Remember our dreams of nuclear energy that is not only clean but cheap enough [that it will not need to be metered?](#) Do we bet our civilizations future on such a possibility? If not, we have to consider existing solutions. They exist, but they are alternatives to batteries to address the grid-level problem arising from the intermittent nature of renewable energy. The alternatives are to repurpose *existing* hydro-projects to work as grid-level storage and [developing hydrogen storage](#) for fuel cells. It will need no extra dams or reservoirs (to answer the fears of the opponents of hydroelectricity projects). And, of course, it means more public transport instead of private transport.

All these *existing* solutions require changes on a societal scale that capital opposes. After all, they require public investment for social benefits and not private profits. Capital privileges short-term private profits over long-term social benefits. Remember how oil companies had the earliest research to show the impact of global warming due to carbon dioxide emissions? They not only hid these results for decades but launched a campaign denying that global warming is linked to greenhouse gases. And did they not fund climate change deniers? The contradiction at the heart of global warming is private greed over social needs, and who funds the transition away from coal, the poor or the rich? This is what COP27 is all about, not simply how to stop global warming.

Africa Does Not Want To Be A Breeding Ground For The New Cold War: The Forty-Fourth Newsletter Of 2022

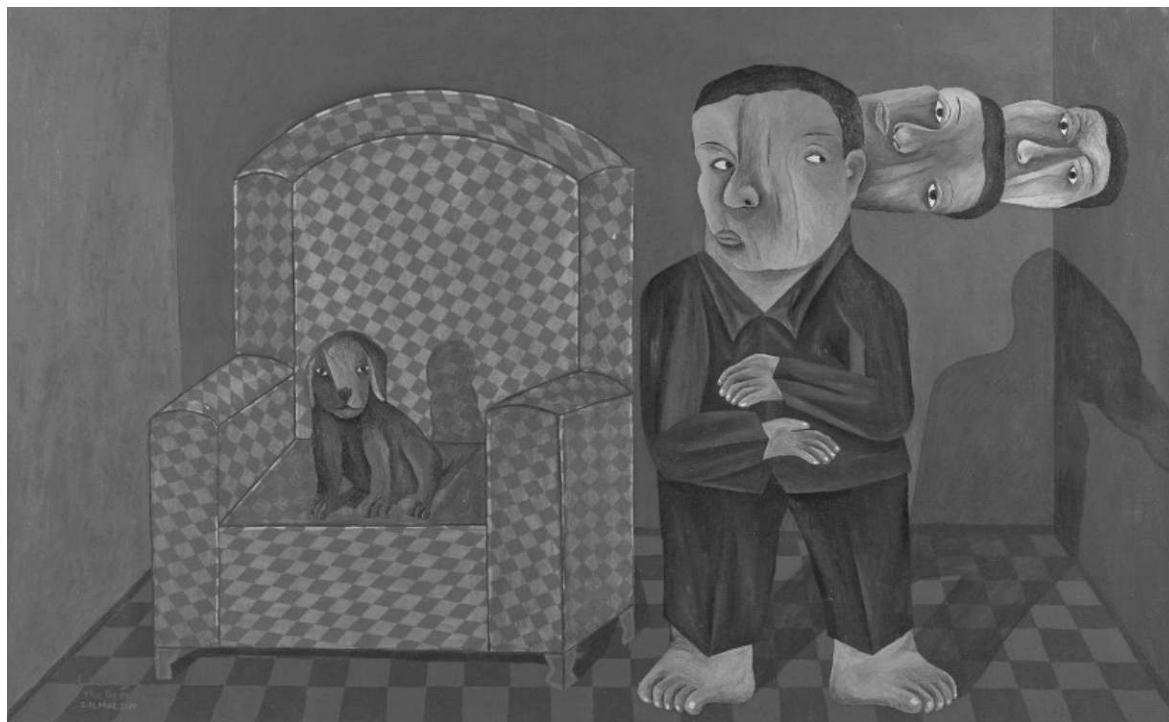
Chaïbia Talal (Morocco),
Mon Village, Chtouka, 1990.

Dear friends, Greetings
from the desk of
[Tricontinental: Institute
for Social Research](#).

On 17 October, the head of US Africa Command (AFRICOM), US Marine Corps General Michael Langley [visited](#) Morocco. Langley met with senior Moroccan military leaders, including Inspector General of the Moroccan Armed Forces Belkhir El Farouk. Since 2004, AFRICOM has held its 'largest and premier annual exercise', [African Lion](#), partly on Moroccan soil. This past June, ten countries [participated](#) in the African Lion 2022, with observers from Israel (for the first time) and the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO).

Langley's visit is part of a broader US push onto the African continent, which we documented in our [dossier](#) no. 42 (July 2021), *Defending Our Sovereignty: US Military Bases in Africa and the Future of African Unity*, a joint publication with The Socialist Movement of Ghana's Research Group. In that text, we wrote that the two important principles of Pan-Africanism are political unity and territorial sovereignty and argued that '[t]he enduring presence of foreign military bases not only symbolises the lack of unity and sovereignty; it also equally enforces the fragmentation and subordination of the continent's peoples and governments'. In August, US Ambassador to the UN Linda Thomas-Greenfield travelled to Ghana, Uganda, and Cape Verde. 'We're not asking Africans to make any choices between the United States and Russia', she [said](#) ahead of her visit, but, she added, 'for me, that choice would be simple'. That choice is nonetheless being impelled by the US Congress as it deliberates the Countering Malign Russian Activities in Africa Act, a [bill](#) that would sanction African states if they do business with Russia (and could possibly extend to China in the future).

To understand this unfolding situation, our friends at [No Cold War](#) have prepared their briefing no. 5, *NATO Claims Africa as Its 'Southern Neighbourhood'*, which looks at how NATO has begun to [develop](#) a proprietary view of Africa and how the US government considers Africa to be a frontline in its [Global Monroe Doctrine](#). That briefing can be



read in full below and downloaded [here](#):
In August 2022, the United States published a new foreign policy [strategy](#) aimed at Africa. The 17-page document featured 10 mentions of China and Russia combined, including a pledge to 'counter harmful activities by the [People's Republic of China], Russia, and other foreign actors' on the continent, but did not once mention the term 'sovereignty'. Although US Secretary of State Antony Blinken has [stated](#) that Washington 'will not dictate Africa's choices', African governments have [reported](#) facing 'patronising bullying' from NATO member states to take their side in the [war in Ukraine](#). As global tensions rise, the US and its allies have signalled that they view the continent as a battleground to wage their New Cold War against China and Russia.

Richard Mudariki (Zimbabwe),
The Passover, 2011.

A New Monroe Doctrine?
At its annual summit in June, NATO [named](#) Africa along with the Middle East 'NATO's southern neighbourhood'. On top of this, NATO's Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg ominously [referred](#) to 'Russia and China's increasing influence in our southern neighbourhood' as a 'challenge'. The following month, the outgoing commander of AFRICOM,

General Stephen J Townsend, [referred](#) to Africa as 'NATO's southern flank'. These comments are disturbingly reminiscent of the neocolonial attitude espoused by the Monroe Doctrine of 1823, in which the US claimed Latin America as its 'backyard'. This paternalistic view of Africa appears to be widely held in Washington. In April, the US House of Representatives overwhelmingly [passed](#) the Countering Malign Russian Influence Activities in Africa Act by a vote of 415-9. The bill, which aims to punish African governments for not aligning with US foreign policy on Russia, has been widely [condemned](#) across the continent for disrespecting the sovereignty of African nations, with South African Foreign Minister Naledi Pandor [calling](#) it 'absolutely disgraceful'. The efforts by the US and Western countries to draw Africa into their geopolitical conflicts raise serious concerns: namely, will the US and NATO weaponise their vast military presence on the continent to achieve their aims?

AFRICOM: Protecting US and NATO's Hegemony
In 2007, the United States [established](#) its Africa Command (AFRICOM) 'in response to our expanding partnerships and interests in Africa'. In just 15 years, AFRICOM has [established](#) at least 29 military bases on the continent as part of an extensive [network](#) which includes more

than 60 outposts and access points in at least 34 countries – over 60 percent of the nations on the continent.

Despite Washington's rhetoric of promoting democracy and human rights in Africa, in reality, AFRICOM aims to secure US hegemony over the continent. AFRICOM's [stated objectives](#) include 'protecting US interests' and 'maintaining superiority over competitors' in Africa. In fact, the creation of AFRICOM was motivated by the [concerns](#) of 'those alarmed by China's expanding presence and influence in the region'. From the outset, NATO was involved in the endeavour, with the original [proposal](#) put forward by then Supreme Allied Commander of NATO James L Jones, Jr. On an annual basis, AFRICOM [conducts](#) training exercises focused on enhancing the 'interoperability' between African militaries and 'US and NATO special operations forces'. The destructive nature of the US and NATO's military presence in Africa was exemplified in 2011 when – ignoring the African Union's [opposition](#) – the US and NATO launched their catastrophic military intervention in Libya to remove the government of Muammar Gaddafi. This regime change war destroyed the country, which had previously scored the [highest](#) among African nations on the UN Human Development Index. Over a decade later, the principal achievements of the intervention in Libya have been the return of [slave markets](#) to the country, the

entry of thousands of [foreign fighters](#), and unending violence. In the future, will the US and NATO invoke the 'malign influence' of China and Russia as a justification for military interventions and regime change in Africa?

Zemba Luzamba (DRC),
Parlementaires debout
(*'Parliamentarians Standing'*),
2019.

Africa Rejects a New Cold War
At this year's UN General Assembly, the African Union firmly rejected the coercive efforts of the US and Western countries to use the continent as a pawn in their geopolitical agenda. 'Africa has suffered enough of the burden of history', [stated](#) Chairman of the African Union and President of Senegal Macky Sall; 'it does not want to be the breeding ground of a new Cold War, but rather a pole of stability and opportunity open to all its partners, on a mutually beneficial basis'. Indeed, the drive for war offers nothing to the peoples of Africa in their pursuit of peace, climate change adaptation, and development. At the inauguration of the European Diplomatic Academy on 13 October, the European Union's chief diplomat, Josep Borrell, [said](#), 'Europe is a Africa Does Not Want To Be A Breeding Ground For The New Cold War: The Forty-Fourth Newsletter Of 2022

Chaïbia Talal (Morocco), Mon
Village, Chtouka, 1990.

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US Woman Files Lawsuit Against L'Oréal, Claiming Chemical Hair Straightening Products Are Linked To Her Cancer ---CNN

Cosmetics Company L'Oréal, along with multiple other parties, is being sued over claims that its chemical hair straightening products put women at an increased risk of uterine cancer.

Civil rights attorney Ben Crump, counsel Diandra "Fu" Debrosse Zimmermann and others filed a lawsuit Friday in Illinois on behalf of 32-year-old Missouri resident Jenny Mitchell, claiming that Mitchell's uterine cancer "was directly and proximately caused by her regular and prolonged exposure to phthalates and other endocrine disrupting chemicals found in Defendants' hair care products."

CNN has contacted L'Oréal, Namaste Laboratories LLC, Dabur International Ltd. and Godrej Consumer Products, parent company of the Just For Me brand, for comment.

Debrosse Zimmermann told CNN on Monday that the lawsuit marks a "watershed moment" for women of color who have used chemical hair-straightening products, such as relaxers.

At a news conference Monday, Mitchell said that she recalls getting hair relaxers around third grade, when she was about 8 years old.

Mitchell was diagnosed with uterine cancer on August 10, 2018, according to the lawsuit, and underwent a full hysterectomy at Boone Hospital Center in Missouri on September 24, 2018.

"At that time, at the age of 28, my dreams of becoming a mother were gone," she said. In the lawsuit, she claims to have no family history of cancer or uterine cancer

"As most young African-American girls, chemical relaxers, chemical straighteners were introduced to us at a young age," Mitchell said. "Society has made it a norm to look a certain way, in order to feel a certain way. And I am the first voice of many voices to come that will stand, stand up to these companies, and say, 'No more.'"

Mitchell continued using



Jenny Mitchell, left, was diagnosed with uterine cancer in 2018.

chemical hair-straightening products from around 2000 until March 2022, and she is seeking compensation in excess of \$75,000, according to the lawsuit.

Two other individual cases have been filed – in California and New York – against cosmetic companies, including L'Oreal, claiming a connection between chemical hair-straightening products and cancer diagnoses, Debrosse Zimmermann said.

"We imagine that we will continue representing additional women in filing cases, as will other firms, and more and more women will come forward," she said..

Mitchell's lawsuit was filed just days after the publication of a study in the [Journal of the National Cancer Institute](#), which estimates that among women who frequently use

hair-straightening chemical products, the risk of developing uterine cancer by age 70 is around 4%. In women who did not use hair-straightening chemical products in the previous 12 months, the study estimates the risk of developing uterine cancer by age 70 to be 1.6%. Black women tend to use these chemical hair-straightening products more frequently than White women, the researchers noted.

The study data showed that the association between hair straightening products and uterine cancer cases was most pronounced for Black women, who made up only 7.4% of the study participants, but 59.9% of those who reported ever using straighteners. Several factors probably play a role in the frequent

use of hair straightening products: Eurocentric standards of beauty and social pressures placed on Black and Latina women in workplace settings related to microaggressions and the threat of discrimination, along with desired versatility in changing hairstyles and self-expression.

"Black women have long been the victims of dangerous products specifically marketed to them," Crump [said in a news release](#). "Black hair has been and always will be beautiful, but Black women have been told they have to use these products to meet society's standards. We will likely discover that Ms. Mitchell's tragic case is one of countless cases in which companies aggressively misled black women to increase their profits."



When it comes to their hair, Black women face a difficult choice