

SMG, Global Leaders Condemn Attempted

COUP IN BRAZIL



Luis Inacio Lula da Silva, President of Brazil

GUTA Salutes Alan, Describes Him A Genius



Alan Kyerematen

By Saani Abacha, Home Radio Network

Ghana Union of Traders Association (GUTA) has heaped kind words on the outgoing Trade and Industry Minister, Alan Kyerematen.

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The Socialist Movement of Ghana (SMG) and other global leaders and institutions have vehemently slammed last Sunday's coup attempt in Brazil led by right-wing supporters of former president Jair Bolsonaro.

Dozens of buses arrived on Saturday January 7 to the Federal District in Brasilia to carry out the coup attempt led by supporters of the former president who invaded the Supreme Federal Court, National

Congress, and the Planalto Palace, the office of the president on Sunday January 8, breaking through the blockade of the Military Police and the National

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The Govt Must Know The Reality In Bibiani-Anhwiaso-Bekwai Before Appointing New MCE – Concerned Youth Voice out



MP for Bibiani-Anhwiaso-Bekwai, Alfred Obeng-Boateng

We the good people of Bibiani-Anhwiaso-Bekwai Constituency want to state categorically that if the

ruling government wants the party to retain the seat and gets more votes for our future Presidential Candidate, then the

authorities should appoint MCE who will work with the MP to bring development to the area

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NDC Weija-Gbawe PC Hopeful Donates Medical Equipment To John Mahama



Alhaji Jalali Yunusa (centre) presenting the items to the former president John Mahama

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The INSIGHT

— EDITORIAL

THE LOOMING DEBT CRISIS

Data released by the Bank of Ghana recently indicated that Ghana's debt was now over \$40 billion, which is almost double what was bequeathed to this administration.

What is worrying about the country's rising debt level is that no stop-gap measures appears to be put in place to halt the phenomenon. Instead, increasing borrowing appears to be the order of the day which has far-reaching repercussions for the nation in terms of its debt sustainability.

Already, the unbridled government borrowing is giving many financial analysts headache since that appears to be the only leeway or succor in government raising needed capital for infrastructural projects.

Paradoxically, political watchers are worried that the present managers of the economy who in recent past complained about borrowing are themselves doing worse.

Reality of governance, has undoubtedly dawned, and it is important that a new paradigm shift is charted since the rate of borrowing is not sustainable in the long run. The attempt by some official spokespersons to score political points using economic indicators which clearly do not make sense and also address the looming debt crisis because of their obvious contradictions and deficiencies is the most worrying.

The time to domesticate the economy to grow and eat what the country needs and quicken the industrial pace to lessen imports is now more than important to the nation's survival.

NDC Weija-Gbawe PC Hopeful Donates Medical Equipment To John Mahama

Germany base philanthropist and indigene of Weija-Gbawe constituency in the Greater Accra Region, Alhaji Jalali Yunusah has donated medical equipment worth over thousands of Cedis to the former President, John Dramani Mahama at his office in Accra. According to him, the donation was in line with his contribution towards the improvement of health facilities in the country adding that it was also a complement to the former President's stride in improving the maternity and children's ward in his hometown which was to give back to his own people.

Some of the equipment donated includes beds, mattresses, wheel chairs, clutches and many others. Alhaji Jalali Yunusah, a Weija-Gbawe Constituency Parliamentary Candidate (PC) Hopeful who is an executive member of Health4yu, a Non-governmental Organization based in Germany with a branch in Ghana stated that the donation would go a long way to support the maternity and Children's ward built by the former President and the wife, Mrs. Lordina Mahama. He added that his conviction that health is wealth especially women and Children forms part of his greatest motivation to support in the health sectors in the society.

"Upon hearing the news that the former President, John Dramani Mahama, and the wife, Lordina Mahama, have handed over a 45-bed Maternity and Children's Ward to the Bole government hospital in the Savannah region, I was very much impressed at their initiative and saw how passionate they are in providing quality and good health care delivery for the people of Ghana" he noted. Alhaji Jalali Yunusah applauded the Former President and the wife for seeing through that the well-being of every child depended on the good health of their mothers, hence the need for mothers to have good health and a quality facility to attend for their health care.

Receiving the equipment which was deposited at the office of the former President at Cantonment, Accra, former President Mahama expressed his profound gratitude to Alhaji Jalali Yunusah and his entourage for the kind gesture.



It would be recalled that the former President, John Dramani Mahama, and the wife, Lordina Mahama, in July 2022, handed over a 45-bed Maternity and Children's Ward to the Bole government hospital in the Savannah region. The facility, which has been named as the Lordina Mahama Maternity and Children's ward, has babies' cot, neonatal care unit, incubators, phototherapy unit, delivery room, a kangaroo mother and child care centre and recovery ward. Others were theatre and accessories, a sterilisation room, nurses work station, doctors consultancy room and receptionist's office. The construction of the facility marked the celebration of the 30th marriage anniversary of the former President, John Dramani Mahama, and the wife, Lordina Mahama.

THE INSIGHT

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SMG, Global Leaders Condemn Attempted COUP IN BRAZIL

from front page

Security Force of the Esplanade of Ministers in Brasília. Following the failed attempt to overthrow the recently installed government of left-wing leader, Luis Inacio Lula da Silva, the SMG in a statement signed and issued yesterday by Comrade Kwesi Pratt “The Socialist Movement of Ghana vehemently condemns attempts by right wing mobs to overthrow the constitution of Brazil and to impose a fascist regime loyal to the Bolsonaro government which lost elections recently.”

“The posturing of Bolsonaro and his supporters since his conclusive defeat at the polls last month suggested that they would attempt to overturn the popular will of the Brazilian people and continue to pursue policies which damage the environment and worsen the economic and social plight of the people.”

That these anti-democratic moves have continued even after the electoral court confirmed the victory of Lula d' Silva in the Presidential election, is an indication that the reactionary forces gathered around Bolsonaro will stop at nothing to impose themselves on the Brazilian people” the statement added. The Socialist Movement of Ghana assured its commitment to stand with the people of Brazil and the Workers Party of Brazil in their bold confrontation with neo-liberalism and the anti-democratic forces rallying around Bolsonaro and further urged the Brazilian security forces to do their duty by protecting the constitution and defending the right of the people to choose their own leader. The SMG further called on all pro-democracy and progressive forces around the world to declare their solidarity with the people of Brazil and to reject the slide to neo-fascism.

Coup attempt in Brazil condemned by leaders from across the globe

The SMG statement comes at a time when the violent attacks against Brazilian public institutions by supporters of former far-right president Jair Bolsonaro have been widely condemned by political leaders and organizations from across the world. Supporters of former far-right Brazilian president Jair Bolsonaro invaded the Supreme Federal Court, the National Congress, and the Planalto Palace, which is the office of the president, on January 8.

After invading the headquarters of the three branches of government, the violent groups vandalized the buildings, looted the armory at the Planalto Palace, and caused tremendous damage to public institutions. Following the acts of violence, President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva condemned the situation, criticized the complicity of Brasília's public security forces in the attacks, and decreed federal intervention in public security of Brasília until January 31. Meanwhile, Supreme Court justice Alexandre de Moraes, suspended the governor of the Federal District of Brasília, [Ibaneis Rocha](#), for 90 days. Moraes determined that Rocha was aware of the preparations for the violent actions, and such events could only occur with the consent and effective participation of the authorities in matters of security in Brasília.

“Absolutely nothing justifies the omission and conspiracy of the Secretary of Public Security and the Governor of the Federal District with

criminals who had previously announced that they would commit violent acts against the constituted powers,” wrote Judge Moraes.

The attacks came just one week after the leader of the Workers' Party of Brazil (PT), Lula da Silva, took office. The attacks have been widely condemned by political leaders and organizations in Brazil as well as from across the globe as terrorism and a coup attempt. Argentine President Alberto Fernández explicitly rejected the attempted coup. “I want to express my rejection of what is happening in Brasília. My unconditional support and that of the Argentine people to President Lula da Silva in the face of this attempted coup d'état. As president of CELAC and MERCOSUR, I put member countries on alert so that we unite in this unacceptable anti-democratic reaction that is trying to be imposed in Brazil. Let us demonstrate with firmness and unity our total adherence to the government democratically elected by the Brazilians headed by President Lula. We are together with the Brazilian people to defend democracy and not to ever again allow the return of the coup ghosts promoted by the right,” President Fernández wrote in a [thread](#) on Twitter. Brazilian politics is forever shaped by a CIA-backed coup in 1964 against leftist president João Goulart, which ushered in decades of military dictatorship. Bolivian President Luis Arce “strongly condemned the attack on the Brazilian Congress, Palace and Supreme Court by anti-democratic groups.” “Fascists will always seek to take by force what they failed to achieve at the ballot box,” Arce [tweeted](#). “Our solidarity with

the Brazilian people and president Lula.”

US President Joe Biden also joined in the chorus of denunciations, [adding](#), “I condemn the assault on democracy and on the peaceful transfer of power in Brazil. Brazil's democratic institutions have our full support and the will of the Brazilian people must not be undermined.”

Chilean President Gabriel Boric [described](#) the invasion of the headquarters of the three branches of the State of Brazil as a “cowardly and vile attack on democracy.”

Colombian President Gustavo Petro sent his solidarity to President Lula and the people of Brazil. “Fascism decides to carry out a coup. The right has not been able to maintain the pact of non-violence. It is urgent that the OAS meet if it wants to continue to live as an institution and apply the democratic charter,” he [tweeted](#).

Cuban President Miguel Díaz-Canel also strongly condemned the attacks. “We strongly condemn the violent and anti-democratic acts that occur in Brazil, with the aim of generating chaos and disrespecting the popular will expressed with the election of President Lula. We express all our support and solidarity to Lula and his government,” he [tweeted](#). Venezuelan President Nicolás Maduro also categorically [rejected](#) “the violence generated by Bolsonaro's neo-fascist groups that have assaulted the democratic institutions of Brazil” and reiterated Venezuela's support for President Lula and the Brazilian people.

Honduran President Xiomara Castro [expressed](#) her “unconditional support for President Luiz Inácio Lula Da Silva against fascism already defeated in Brazil” and called on “the

Presidents of Latin America to move to Brazil if necessary to defend democracy.”

Mexican President Andrés Manuel López Obrador [deemed](#) “reprehensible and undemocratic, the coup attempt by the Brazilian conservatives urged on by the leadership of the oligarchic power, their spokespersons and fanatics,” adding that “Lula is not alone, he has the support of the progressive forces of his country, of Mexico, of the American continent and of the world.” Spanish Prime Minister Pedro Sanchez also strongly [condemned](#) the attacks and called for “an immediate return to democratic normality,” expressing his support to “President Lula and the institutions freely and democratically elected by the Brazilian people.”

Ecuadorian President Guillermo Lasso also [condemned](#) “the actions of disrespect and vandalism perpetrated against the democratic institutions in Brasília, since they threaten the democratic order and citizen security. I express my support and that of my government to the legally constituted regime of President Lula.”

The Secretary General of the UN, António Guterres, also criticized the attacks. “The will of the Brazilian people and the country's institutions must be respected. I am confident that it will be so. Brazil is a great democratic country,” he [tweeted](#).

The member countries of the Bolivarian Alliance for the Peoples of Our America-Peoples' Trade Treaty (ALBA-TCP) also [expressed](#) their profound rejection of the serious acts of violence perpetrated in Brazil by neo-fascist groups. The Alliance also expressed “its solidarity with the people and the Government of Brazil and warmed against attempts to break the basic

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INTERNATIONAL NEWS REPORT

Compiled By Peoples Dispatch

Communists In Sweden Slam New Espionage Law As “Detrimental To Whistle Blowers And Press Freedom”

A new espionage law, which came into effect in Sweden on January 1, has been met with widespread criticism from journalists and progressive sections within the country and abroad. The Swedish parliament, the Riksdag, passed the law on November 16, 2022, with 270 votes in favor and 37 against. The law makes amendments to the Freedom of the Press Act and the Fundamental Law on Freedom of Expression to incorporate and criminalize “foreign espionage,” “aggravated foreign espionage,” and “disclosure of secret information in the framework of international cooperation” in the Swedish penal code. The right-wing Swedish Democrats, the Center Party, the Social Democrats, the Moderate Party, and the Liberal Party voted in favor of the bill, while MPs from the Left Party and the Greens voted against. As the parliament was voting on the bill back in November, hundreds of people demonstrated at Mynttorget in Stockholm in protest.

According to reports, the new law will allow police to investigate

publishers, journalists, and whistleblowers if they expose secret or sensitive information that may damage Sweden's relationship with another state or an international organization, such as the NATO, European Union (EU), or the United Nations (UN). If such allegations are 'proved,' sentences of up to four years can be given for publicizing sensitive information.

The law has been criticized by journalists and their unions as being detrimental to freedom of the press and speech, and likely to adversely affect whistleblowers, journalists, and responsible publishers in the country. Progressive groups and communists have also alleged that the law was promulgated and passed in order to cover up secrets and scandals involved in Sweden's bid to join NATO and its participation in imperialist conflicts.

Andreas Sörensen from the Communist Party of Sweden (SKP) told *Peoples Dispatch* on January 3, “The new law, which limits the right to free speech and investigative journalism, comes

against the background of sharpening imperialist contradictions, creating a need to secure the home front. This becomes especially important as Sweden is seeking entry into NATO.”

“It is worth pointing out that it is not the current government that took the initiative for the law, but the previous government, consisting of Social Democrats and the Greens, which makes clear that there is political consensus on this question,” he claimed.

Last year, against the backdrop of the ongoing Russia-Ukraine war, Sweden, along with its neighbor Finland, discarded its traditional policy of neutrality and applied for NATO membership, courting criticism from anti-imperialist voices in the region.

In November last year, the Communist Party in Sweden had stated that “the restrictions on freedom of expression and freedom of the press do not come in a vacuum, they are closely linked to Sweden's rapprochement with NATO. It is also NATO cooperation and upcoming NATO wars in which Sweden participates that should not



Protest in Stockholm against the new law on espionage. (Photo: via proletaren.se). The new espionage law that came into effect on January 1 penalizes investigative journalism and whistle-blowing that may damage Sweden's relationship with another state or an international organization such as NATO, European Union, or United Nations

be compromised by any whistleblowers on the inside or by some curious investigative journalists and brave responsible publishers.”

“This means that it will be punishable for whistleblowers, journalists, and responsible publishers to, for example, expose war crimes in international efforts in which Sweden participates. This means that it will also be punishable to

expose lies on which international war efforts are based, such as the 'weapons of mass destruction' in Iraq, for example. Sweden is now getting laws that allow Swedish journalists and whistleblowers to meet the same fate as Julian Assange, who is languishing in prison for exposing the US war crimes in Afghanistan and Iraq,” the party had stated.

Scottish School Teachers Intensify Protest Demanding Higher Wages



National strike by teachers in Scotland on November 24, 2022. (Photo: via EIS Union). School teachers and their unions in Scotland launched the 'Pay Attention' campaign last year demanding a 10% hike in wages to meet the soaring inflation

School teachers across Scotland are set to intensify their fight for higher wages at par with inflation. Teachers of primary and special schools affiliated to the Educational Institute of Scotland (EIS) union will go on strike on January 10. Secondary teachers affiliated to EIS, NASUWT, and Scottish

Secondary Teachers' Association (SSTA) unions will follow suit on January 11. EIS has also called for rolling strikes across Scotland for 16 working days from January 16 to February 6.

Teachers and their unions in Scotland have been demanding a wage hike of 10% to help them deal with the ongoing cost of living crisis. The unions have rejected the pay offer proposed by the Scottish government and the Convention of Scottish Local Authorities (COSLA) of a 5% rise in general and a 6.85% hike in pay for the lowest-earning teachers.

Teachers across Scotland launched the 'Pay Attention' campaign last year demanding a

10% hike in wages. On November 24 last year, they organized a national strike and protest rallies in major cities including Aberdeen, Dundee, Glasgow, Edinburgh, Inverness, and Moray. Activists from the Communist Party of Britain (CPB) and the Scottish Socialist Party (SSP) participated in the rallies and expressed support and solidarity with the protesting teachers.

In the discussions held between unions, COSLA, and the Scottish government last week, the unions reiterated their demand for a 10% hike in wages but the government refused an increase of more than 5%, an offer which

had already been rejected by the unions in November. According to reports, more talks are scheduled for Monday, January 9.

Earlier in December, EIS General Secretary Andrea Bradley had said that “as 2022 comes to a close, Scotland's teachers are still waiting for a pay settlement that should have been paid to them in April. What Scotland's teachers have been offered by the Scottish Government and COSLA amounts to a record real-terms pay cut of up to 11% in a single year.”

“This is in the context of the value of teachers' pay dropping by a massive 20% since 2008. It

is little wonder that teachers voted so overwhelmingly for strike action, and remain determined to stand firm against the unprecedented pay cuts that have been offered,” she added. Meanwhile, members of the NASUWT union working in schools and sixth-form colleges are currently voting in an industrial action ballot in England, Scotland, and Wales calling for a fully funded pay award of 12% to teachers. This will be concluded by January 9 and its results will be announced later this week.

The Govt Must Know The Reality In Bibiani-Anhwiaso-Bekwai Before Appointing New MCE – Concerned Youth Voice out

from front page



MP for Bibiani-Anhwiaso Bekwai, Alfred Obeng-Boateng

but not the one who will sabotage the MP as had been experienced in the last 2 years.

For the past two years, the Municipal Assembly had not done any development in the constituency which is affecting the government and our dear party negatively.

The main cause of this unfortunate situation is that the previous MCE got his appointment through the

former MP, Hon. Kingsley Aboagye-Gyedu. There was therefore a grand scheme to sabotage the current Member of Parliament, Hon. Alfred Obeng-Boateng in order to fail. However, their action is rather making the good people of Bibiani-Anhwiaso-Bekwai Constituency feel bitter about our government and our party. This is our worry and we must therefore bring it to the notice of the government and our party leadership particularly at this crucial time where a new MCE is to be appointed. If not a grand scheme to sabotage the sitting Member of Parliament, why would the Local Government Ministry consider a nomination from the former MP, Hon. Kingsley Aboagye-Gyedu to be the MCE?

Some people claim that they are more NPP than others but behind the scenes they are rather destroying the party and the government. Some of us joined our Member of Parliament to tour the entire constituency from 23rd December 2022 to 8th January 2023 and not a single community had received any basic project for the past two years from the Municipal Assembly. The constituents lamented vehemently about the Municipal Assembly's refusal to provide them with basic necessity such as water boreholes, toilets, school furniture, school blocks renovation, reshaping of bad roads, etc. "The question is that because of the hatred and dislike for Hon. Alfred Obeng-Boateng by a few

people, the entire constituency must suffer?" Constituency Organiser asked. On 31 December 2022, the Member of Parliament during his accounting to the people revealed that he had used his own money to the tune of GhC 1.9 million towards the development of the constituency within his 2 years in office. If the Municipal Assembly had also executed similar projects the people would have been happy making our government and the party look good and attractive in the constituency. We are releasing this statement today for the government and the leadership of our party to be aware that the reality in the constituency is that there are elements in our constituency

who have teamed up with some people outside the constituency to sabotage our MP and their actions have negative impact on the government and the party indirectly. We are therefore appealing to the Chief of Staff and the President to appoint MCE who will work together with the MP to bring development to the constituency. This will enable our constituency to contribute greatly to the breaking of the 8 agenda. Long live Ghana Long live Bibiani-Anhwiaso-Bekwai Constituency Long live NPP CONCERNED YOUTH OF BIBIANI-ANHWIASO-BEKWAI CONSTITUENCY

Zebilla MP Announces Exit From Parliament After 24 Years

Member of Parliament (MP) for Zebilla, Cletus Apul Avoka has announced his exit from the legislature, stressing that come December 2024, he will not be seeking another term. He thanked his constituents for the opportunity to serve. Mr Avoka, who has contested all parliamentary elections on the ticket of the National Democratic Congress (NDC) in the Zebilla Constituency (formerly Bawku West Constituency) in the Upper East Region of Ghana, and has won six times and lost twice, made this known during an NDC Youth Wing meeting and dinner ceremony in Zebilla. "At the end of 2024, I would have done 24 years in Parliament. I want to take this opportunity to



thank my constituents – formerly Bawku West Constituency and now Zebilla Constituency. You've been so loyal to me; so selfless to me, you've supported me, you've reposed confidence in me...So my position is that come 2024, I will not contest again. I am going to leave parliamentary elections and maybe do something else," he said at the ceremony. Cletus Avoka has been a

longstanding member of the NDC and MP. He won the parliamentary elections of 1992, 1996, 2000, 2008, 2012 and 2020. In 2004, he lost the seat to John Ndebugre Akparibo and in 2016, he lost it again to Frank Fuseini Adongo. He has served parliamentary leadership and as a Minister.

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principles of democracy such as respect for the law, institutions and electoral results."

The International Peoples' Assembly also rejected the attacks. "Brazil is now witnessing the initial steps of a coup attempt against the recently inaugurated government of Lula da Silva. We condemn this attempt by far-right mobs to seize power against the democratic mandate of millions of Brazilians who voted for change," the organization [tweeted](#). The Progressive International also condemned the violence. "Bolsonaristas are leading a violent insurrection in the capital Brasilia, ransacking their way to the Congress, Supreme Court, and Presidential Palace. The Progressive International stands with Lula against these acts of terror and in defense of democracy in Brazil. Today's insurrection is months in the making. Last September, the Progressive International convened

parliamentarians across the world to warn of Bolsonaro's ambitions to lead a coup through a similar mobilization to the Three Powers Plaza. Bolsonaro may be gone to Florida, but the fight against Bolsonarismo has just begun. The Progressive International calls on progressive forces across the world to stand with Brazil's popular movements as they prepare to defend their democracy against this violent insurrection," the organization wrote in a series of [tweets](#). Similarly, Costa Rican President Rodrigo Chavez, Dominican President [Luis Abinader](#), Nicaraguan President Daniel Ortega, Panamanian President [Laurentino Cortizo](#), Paraguayan President [Mario Abdo Benítez](#), Peruvian President [Dina Boluarte](#), Uruguayan President [Luis Lacalle Pou](#), among numerous others rejected the attempted coup in Brazil and demanded respect for the will of the Brazilian people.

GUTA Salutes Alan, Describes Him A Genius



Alan Kyerematen

The Traders union eulogized the iconic imprints of the outgoing Trade and Industry Minister, describing him as a national icon, a statesman and a global asset.

With over 10 years of service at the Trade and Industry Ministry under two governments, Hon Alan Kyerematen surprisingly sent in an official resignation letter on January 5, 2023, to end his stay at the Ministry.

His unexpected resignation set the political space agog with divided opinions on why he stepped down from such an enviable position in government.

As the official mouthpiece of the Traders Union in Ghana, the leadership of GUTA issued a press statement celebrating the Industrial expert at the Ministry of Trade and Industry.

An official communique from the leadership of GUTA described the outgoing Trade and Industry Minister as an excellent leader, and a political genius.

"The Ghana Union of Traders' Associations (GUTA) is deeply saddened by the news of the sudden resignation of the Trade and Industry Minister, Hon. Alan Kyerematen.

All those who know him and happen to have come in contact with this affable gentleman will attest to the fact that he is an astute politician, a very humble public servant, versed in his area of duty, coupled with excellent human relations which have endeared him to all who have happened to meet him on matters of trade and industry, especially, those of us in the private sector.

We can confidently say that he has performed excellently and left an indelible footprint that will ever remain in our memories. So we see him as an asset not only to Ghana but also to the sub-regional and continental blocs, as well as the entire globe", parts of the Press Statement from GUTA reads. Hon. Alan Kyerematen was first appointed as a Trade Minister from 2003-2007 under HE John Agyekum Kufuor before his return to the same seat from 2017 to 2023.

His rich experience in the Trade and Industry Ministry saw him elevated to various global platforms on international

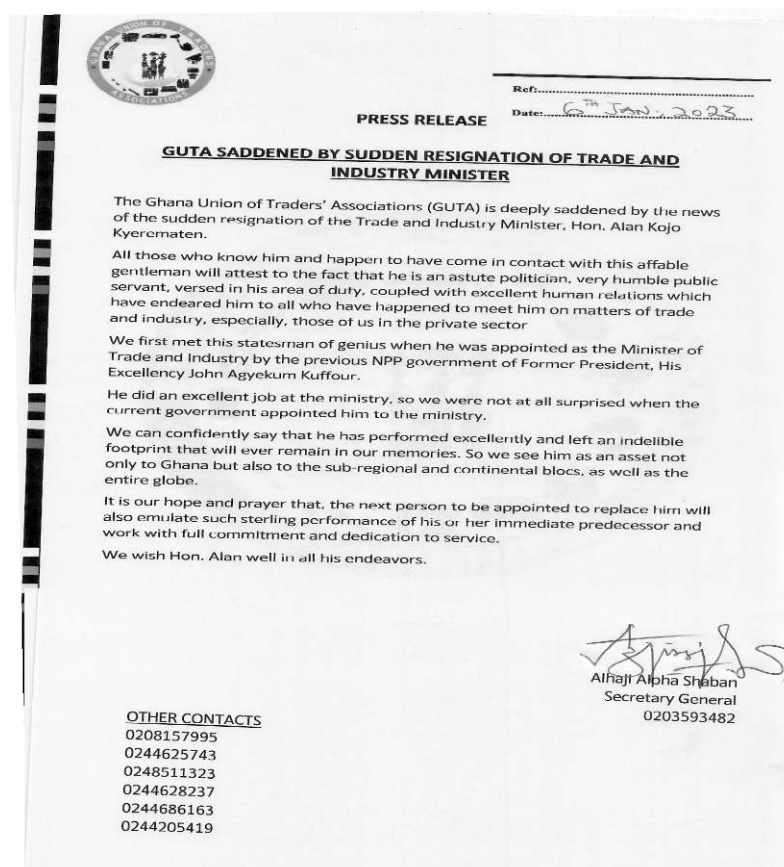
Trade and Industrial drive initiatives.

"It is our hope and prayer that, the next person to be appointed to replace him will also, emulate such sterling performance of his or her immediate predecessor and work with full commitment and dedication to service.

We wish Hon. Alan well in all his endeavours", the concluding part of the Statement read.

In Ghana, the flagship One District One Factory is one of several brain works of the former Trade and Industry Minister.

This is the full text of the statement;



Women Economic Forum, Ghana Gets New President

The Regional Managing Director (MD) for Acreaty in Africa, Elsie Appau, has been appointed the new President of the Women Economic Forum (WEF), Ghana, with the mandate to steer the administrative affairs of the forum in the country. The appointment of Ms Elsie Appau who is a Lawyer, Entrepreneur and water governance specialist is good news and a great movement for the WEF, Ghana.

This is because she has over 13 years of work experience as a policy analyst, project management expert and social development specialist with particular expertise in water governance, gender and public financial management issues and has the capacity to move the forum to another level.

Aside from being a lawyer and an HR Expert, she also has businesses in the Real Estate, fashion, and

agriculture sectors.

The appointment of Ms. Elsie Appau as the new president of the Forum was contained in the notice letter signed by the President and Host of WEF AFRICA, President and Chair, of Pilot International, Vice President, East Africa, World Economic Forum for Asia-Africa and Global Advisor of Global Chamber Hon. (Prof) Robinah K. Nanyunja and copied to this online news outlet.

The letter reads in part; "The Women Economic Forum is the largest voluntary international network connecting women entrepreneurs and leaders from all countries across the globe, based on free association.

WEF comprises of a league of luminaries of eminence and

excellence including Noble laureates, former heads of state, Ministers, Business and corporate women, entrepreneurs and community leaders all joined together in this network to create massive opportunities for women across Africa and worldwide.

The purpose of WEF is to establish a powerful women's network across the globe to support and elevate women in development, business, and leadership and connect them to market opportunities.

It is a networking platform that depends on women putting other women on board for the purpose of establishing a pool for joint and mutual collaboration and progress. Confirming her appointment in an interview via telephone in Accra, Ms Appau urged Ghanaian women, especially those in the enterprises to

join the movement of WEF to help boost their businesses. According to her, the WEF has solid and huge opportunities, structures and good foundations which could help the women to improve their economic well-being, hence the need for the women in Ghana to join the forces of WEF.

"I want to state that the future belongs to women, particularly the ones in enterprises. We have talked for a very long time about women's empowerment, and women's legal, and socio-cultural empowerment and no much focus has been placed over the years on the economic empowerment of women in Ghana "So I see this call as a major one to duty and I am looking forward to working with women entrepreneurs across the country. We cannot depend on other economies to feed ourselves.

"We are focusing merely and majorly

on women agribusiness, we are focusing on women manufacturing, we are focusing on women providing essential services because we believe that Ghana belongs to Ghanaian women.

However, Ghanaian women must play significant roles in the development and sustainability of Ghana's economy.

"I am excited and want to use this opportunity to invite women entrepreneurs in the country to join the movement of the WEF which has affiliations over the world," she stated.

Ms Elsie Appau re-emphasized that Ghana belongs to Ghanaian women in enterprises and that "we are looking forward to strategic progress."

Boakye Agyarko Cautions NPP NC Over Dates For Presidential And Parliament Primaries

A former Minister for Energy and NPP Flag-bearer hopeful Boakye Agyarko has expressed concern about the manner in which the party's leadership is going about the date for both Presidential and Parliamentary primaries for the 2024 General Elections.

According to him, the National Council which is the second highest decision-making body of the party met on Friday, 23rd December 2022, without a hitherto agenda and undertook what he described as age-old gymnastics of when to hold the various primaries to select candidates.

Boakye Agyarko noted in an opinion piece that "Right after the meeting, and even before an official communique could be issued, a private media outlet, an al-Ahram of some sort, publishes a program with specific dates and

timelines for the upcoming primaries not speculatively, but in a matter-of-fact fashion." "The Party has since issued a statement to the effect that no such decisions were taken as reported," he said. "Why such a brazen audacity to deceive? One may only surmise that it amounts to nothing more than a nefarious attempt either to impose a narrow will on a silent majority or in a usual style, "mafia" some people to their detriment and an undeserved advantage of others. "So here we are in 2023, and like the bourbons, we learnt nothing, so we forgot nothing, and are therefore, back to this unwholesome, circular argument, largely driven by inordinate and unbridled narrow ambitions.

"I hear in my mind's ears, the argument of granting ourselves some flexibility in the language

of our party's constitution. Unfortunately, the truth of the matter and our disposition has already been to misuse our discretion to the detriment of those we perceive to be our internal opponents. "It is better to be put into constitutional structures and only relax them by special resolutions as and when the matter becomes self-evident, and not vice versa. For those who have made it their game to "mafia" opponents, both at the parliamentary and presidential primaries, they ought to think hard and pin their eyes on the lessons of history and our own track record- a record that firmly resists ossified dictatorship and... "Our elders say, "se wo tietia obi dee so hwehwe wo dee a, wo renhunu", to wit, if you trample



Boakye Agyarko, Former Minister for Energy

on what belongs to others in search of what may legitimately be yours, you will never find it.

destroy others to succeed will surely meet destruction at the gate of their own

"It is also said that "those who

Political Uncertainty Continues In Libya A Year After Elections Were Postponed



It has been a year since elections were to take place in Libya under the UN peace initiative, formally known as the Libyan Political Dialogue Forum (LPDF), on December 24, 2021. It is now clear that elections will not take place this year either. The delay in the elections and the existence of two rival governments in the country has increased fears that Libya will either relapse into full-scale civil war or split into two.

Newly-appointed special representative of the UN secretary general for Libya and head of the UN Support Mission in the country (UNSMIL), Abdoulaye Bathily, during a presentation to the UN Security Council in November had noted that "there is an increasing recognition that some institutional players are actively hindering progress towards elections."

Bathily reported on December 16 that the protracted crisis in the country carries the "serious risk" of further division with "signs of partition with two parallel governments, separate security apparatuses, and a divided central bank" already visible.

Need for intra-Libyan dialogue

Though the UN-led initiative for peace in Libya has failed to unite the country and resolve the differences over the constitutional provisions of power sharing, Bathily claims that this lacuna has been identified and re-emphasizes the significance of further intra-Libyan dialogue to resolve outstanding issues.

The LPDF had appointed a three-member presidential council and an interim government headed by Prime Minister Abdel Hamied Dbeibah with a clear mandate: to hold elections on December 24, 2021. These were postponed at the last moment because of disagreements over the electoral law and Dbeibah's own candidacy. Since then, the institutional arrangements made under the LPDF have largely crumbled. Questioning the legitimacy of the Dbeibah-led interim government, the Tobruk-based House of Representative (HOR) appointed a new government led by Prime Minister Fathi Bashagha in February 2022. After Dbeibah refused to hand over power to Bashagha, clashes took place between forces loyal to each in Tripoli in July and August, during which approximately

50 people were killed. Bashagha has finally made Sirte the base of his government.

The 5+5 Joint Military Commission (JMC), despite its mandate to unite the military, has failed to do so, and its members have taken open sides across the political divide. This has led to the disruption of oil production and exports from the country.

The three-member presidential council has, however, provided some stability and has helped in maintaining the ceasefire first agreed to in October 2020, although this has failed to resolve the dispute between the two rival administrations.

Small progress made but challenges remain

The appointment of Bathily, who hails from Senegal, in October this year has broken the deadlock that emerged after the role of his predecessor Stephanie Williams, who orchestrated the peace talks in 2020, became contentious due to several countries, such as Russia, objecting to her continuation. While Bathily has made some small progress in the last year, he acknowledges that the main challenges to peace remain. One of the achievements has been the formation of a sub-committee for disarmament, demobilization and

reintegration of the armed groups in the country during a meeting of the 5+5 JMC. Bathily also pointed out that due a year of relative peace, the number of internally displaced people has gone down significantly. The total number of internally displaced people in Libya now is 134,787, as opposed to over 316,000 in October 2020.

The Libyan oil sector was shut for a long time due to the war, depriving the country of crucial revenues. Resumption of oil production last year was a major achievement of the UN-led peace initiative. However, there were disagreements over the appointment of the new head of the National Oil Corporation (NOC) by Dbeibah in July. These differences seem to have settled for now as the NOC lifted its force majeure earlier this month and invited foreign investments.

The UN has also facilitated several rounds of talks between representatives of the both the governments in Cairo, Egypt, following the first round of clashes and to resolve the issues over the electoral law and the constitution. Bathily said that the latest round of meetings between Aguila Saleh,

speaker of the Tobruk-based parliament, and Khaled al-Meshri, head of the High State Council, had been scheduled on December 4 in Zintan in the western Libya, however, it was canceled due to logistical reasons. He expressed hope that it will be held soon.

Bathily also noted the issues hampering the peace process in Libya, such as the serious disagreements over the draft constitution first proposed in 2017. He expressed concern that Tobruk-based HOR is losing faith in the dialogue and has recently decided to create a separate constitution court in Benghazi. He also noted that economic concerns remain a major challenge as various regions in the country have started expressing dissatisfaction over "unequal allocation" of oil and gas revenues. For Bathily, apart from the above mentioned differences, "individuals and entities acting and supporting acts" which harm the prospects of early elections, as well as the presence of foreign troops, remain among the biggest challenges to peace in Libya.

India's Got The BRICS Blues

By M. K. Bhadrakumar

The Brazilian news agency reported that Lula da Silva's inauguration as the new president on January 1 for a historic third term amidst a carnival-like backdrop was attended by over five dozen foreign delegations, composed of heads of government, vice-presidents, foreign ministers, special envoys and representatives of international organizations. It was the largest event with high-level international figures in Brazil since the Rio 2016 Olympic Games.

The BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China, South Africa) leaders flocked to Brasilia — the vice-presidents of China and Russia and the foreign minister of South Africa. The solitary exception was India. External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar prioritized a tour of the beautiful Mediterranean island of Cyprus and Austria. India's "under-representation" probably was due to the close equations between Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Jair Bolsonaro, who served as the 38th President of Brazil from 2019 until 2022, whom Lula defeated. For some strange reason, the Modi government invested heavily in Bolsonaro by inviting him as the chief guest at India's Republic Day in January 2020. It was a controversial decision, given Bolsonaro's obnoxious record on misogyny and homophobia, and his perversion for targeting the indigenous people. In a scandalous incident, he once told an opposition politician Maria do Rosario during a debate in Parliament, "I wouldn't rape you because you're not worthy of it." Later, he explained that he wouldn't rape her because she was "ugly". Bolsonaro's misogyny surged when he once

remarked "I have five children. Four are men, and then in a moment of weakness the fifth came out a girl." Again, his homophobic views got the better of him when he threatened that "if I see two men kissing each other on the street, I'll beat them up." Indeed, it remains a mystery what attracted the Indian ruling elite to Bolsonaro, and ex-military officer. Maybe, his "strong man" image and fascist ideology?

Be that as it may, ignoring Lula's historic return to power in Brazil is incomprehensible. It is not only that he's, arguably, the most charismatic statesman from a developing country, but he is certain to steer the BRICS to a higher destiny during his four-year term.

Lula's return comes at a juncture when the BRICS is going from introvert to extrovert and its greater global ambition raises hopes across the wide expanses of the Global South of material changes in the global economic system. The ongoing polarization between the West and the Rest over Ukraine issue accentuates the trend.

The hallmark of China's BRICS chairmanship in 2022 has been the launching of the extended BRICS+ meeting at the level of foreign ministers. China also has plans to open up the possibility of developing countries joining the core BRICS grouping. In fact, Algeria, Argentina and Iran have already applied to join BRICS, while Saudi Arabia, Turkey and Egypt have announced their interest in becoming the group's members.

Looking ahead, the vitality in the BRICS trajectory will largely depend on the success of the BRICS+ enterprise. While an inert, introvert BRICS has neither global capacity nor global mission, a stronger, more inclusive and open BRICS has the potential to become the basis for a new system of global governance. This is the crux of

the matter.

To be sure, the BRICS association needs to overcome its mounting internal contradictions. On the one hand, a fundamental transformation of the globalization process has begun (and this process is only gaining momentum) and there are calls for the basic principles and mechanisms which bring the BRICS countries together to undergo reform. On the other hand, this is also an inflection point as multipolarity gains traction and all global multilateral organizations are faced with the loss of their status as universal platforms for overseeing the global rules of the game.

India faces an acute problem of self-identification, since it notionally advocates the transformation of global mechanisms imposed by developed countries but also happens to be a votary of the so-called "rules-based order," which is a metaphor for the political ideology of the US as the dominant state and "lone superpower" in the 1990s. Indeed, the difficulties of the BRICS were also caused by internal reasons. BRICS became internally highly heterogeneous and the main reason for this is India's unwillingness to work with China as leaders of economic growth. To be sure, the aggravation of contradictions between China and India has led to a slowdown in active work in the BRICS.

Enter Brazil. The victory of Bolsonaro in 2018 would also have been a moment of risk for the BRICS, as the new elites in power in Brasilia made no secret of their desire to place their main stake on rapprochement with the US. Surely, India saw in Bolsonaro a "natural ally" within the BRICS, which largely explains the high honor Modi bestowed



Brazilian President Lula da Silva with Chinese Vice-President Wang Qishan after his swearing-in. Photo: Xinhua/Liu Bin. Being an acolyte of the US-led "rules-based order," India faces the specter of isolation as Lula takes over as Brazil's president and the center of gravity in BRICS is poised to shift to the left of center

on him on 2020 Republic Day. Bolsonaro, like Modi, felt no commitment to the idea of uniting the Global South under the banner of reshaping the world order. Both preferred pragmatic, technocratic areas as the BRICS agenda that are objectively beneficial to them (eg., technological cooperation, the fight against organized crime, digitalization, the Development Bank and so on) although this resulted in an atrophy of the *raison d'être* of the BRICS agenda.

But, as luck would have it, Joe Biden's victory in the 2020 US election led to a cooling of enthusiasm on the part of Bolsonaro and the Brazilian elites regarding the prospects for rapprochement with the US. The apple of discord was Bolsonaro's policy toward the Amazon River. Bolsonaro worried about the inclusion of environmental issues in the NATO (North Atlantic Treaty Organization) agenda and he discarded his previously restrained approach to the BRICS, recognizing its importance as a tool to counter isolation in the event of worsening relations with the US and the EU.

Suffice it to say that Lula's return is happening at a defining moment. In his first remarks after assuming power on Sunday, Lula vowed a drastic change of course to rescue his nation plagued by hunger, poverty and racism. Lula made clear his main focus would be on ending hunger and

narrowing rampant inequality. He also said he aims to improve the rights of women, and attack racism and Brazil's legacy of slavery. Lula declared that social conscience will be "the hallmark of our government."

Unsurprisingly, India feels uneasy that the center of gravity in BRICS is poised to shift to the left of center. Equally, India will find it difficult to maintain its role as a regional leader with the entry of Egypt, Turkey, Iran, Saudi Arabia and Indonesia into the portals of BRICS. Being an acolyte of the US-led "rules-based order," India faces the specter of isolation.

Beijing, whose approaches to diplomacy and international politics are known for their strategic vision for the long term, is biding its time. Lula told Chinese vice-president Wang Qishan who participated in the ceremony in Brasilia as Xi Jinping's special representative, that he looked forward to visiting Beijing "to further deepen bilateral practical cooperation in various fields, enhance friendship between peoples, and lift Brazil-China relations to a new level."

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