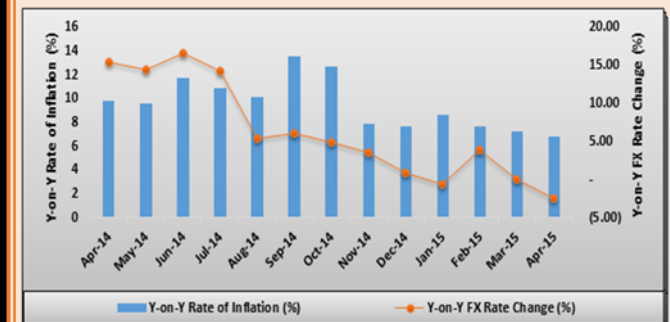




CENTRAL BANK OF LIBERIA

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Liberia Dollar Vs Regional and Major Global Currencies										
	ECOWAS Currencies Per Liberian Dollar							Liberian dollar Per Major world Currencies**		
	Mar-15									
	FCFA	CVE	GHC	GMD	GNF	NGN	SLL	USD	EURO	GBP
LRD	7.16	1.20	0.044	0.58	85.9	2.33	57.67	84.50	91.64	125.07
APR-15										
	7.06	1.19	0.05	0.59	87.7	2.33	57.52	84.50	92.96	129.85
Apr/Depr.	-1.43	-1.43	2.93	0.69	1.86	-0.02	-0.25	0.00	1.44	3.82

Sources: Central Banks of Liberia and WAMA: www.amao-wama.org/en/exchange.aspx and www.amao-wama.org/

FCFA—Franc CFA

CVE—Cape Verdean Escudo

GMD—Gambian Dalasi

GNF—Guinean Franc

NGN—Nigerian Naira

SLL—Sierra Leonean Leone

USD—US Dollar

GBP—British Pound

		Jan-15	Feb-15	Mar-15	Apr-15
11	INFLATION	<i>(In percent)</i>			
	Overall (Year-on-year) Rate of Inflation	8.6	7.7	7.3	6.8
	a. Food and Non-alcoholic Beverages Inflation	11.8	12.4	14.3	14.1
	- Domestic Food Inflation	8.2	10.0	7.4	4.8
	- Imported Food Inflation	15.4	14.8	21.1*	23.3
	b. Transport Inflation	9.9	-1.1	-10.1	-10.3
	c. Imported Fuels Inflation	12.0	-14.0	-19.8	-20.1
	Overall (Month-on-Month) Rate of Inflation	1.1	-1.3	1.9	0.1
	CORE INFLATION				
	Inflation excluding Food & Non-alcoholic Beverages	10.2	2.4	13.2*	13.7
	Inflation excluding Imported Food	8.1	5.1	2.3	0.9
	Inflation excluding Domestic Food	10.2	6.8	7.2	7.5
	Inflation excluding Food and Transport	10.3	3.1	1.4	0.5

* US\$ converted to L\$

** Other Deposits Include Official and Manager Checks

***The Minimum Capital Adequacy Ratio is 10%

****The Required Minimum Liquidity Ratio is 15%

“Revised

‡Reserves exclude ECF borrowing from the IMF

± Provisional

†Revised

‡Not Available (NA)

/1 Average Monthly prices of Dated Brent, West Texas Intermediate & Dubai Fateh

^With liquidity Effect

Monetary Policy Stance and Actions

Owing to the relative stability in the exchange rate in the past few months, intervention by the CBL for the month of April was US\$ 3.0 million, as was the case in March. However, as activities and business confidence gear up, especially due to the cessation of the Ebola Virus Disease (EVD) and the expected increase in import demand toward the forthcoming July 26 festivities, upward pressure on the exchange rate is expected during June and the beginning of July. Given these developments, the CBL is prepared to use the appropriate measures aimed at ensuring broad exchange rate stability.

Real Sector & Price Developments

Production

Outputs of key commodities were mixed in April 2015, reflective of the domestic and global market dynamics. Despite the falling price of the commodity, rubber output rose by 1,472 metric tons to 2,780 metric tons month-on-month on account of improved domestic production environment. Similarly, iron ore production rose by 23.9 percent to 0.8 million metric tons during the month compared with the level produced in the preceding month, largely on account of improved domestic production conditions in the wake of the cessation of the EVD crisis. Cement production remained broadly stable in April at 31,241 metric tons, from 31,369 metric tons in the preceding month. Domestic beverages output rose by 10.3 percent to 1.9 million litres from 1.7 million liters during the preceding month, largely on account of improved domestic production.

Consumer Prices

There was a pullback in headline inflation (year-on-year) in the review period by 0.5 percentage point, to 6.8 percent from 7.3 percent. The contraction was largely a result of the decline in imported fuel inflation by 25.2 percentage points. Sustaining a single digit rate of inflation during the rest of the year will be largely contingent upon the level of domestic food production, global market prices of food and oil and domestic exchange rate developments.

Monetary & Exchange Rate Developments

Exchange Rate

The average Liberian-US dollar exchange rate remained stable at L\$84.50/US\$1.00 during April, 2015, as was the case in March. However, year-on-year, the Liberian dollar on average appreciated by 2.4 percent against the US dollar during the month under review. On the regional and global fronts, the Liberian dollar appreciated against the Gambian Dalasi, Ghanaian Cedi and Guinean Franc by 13.64, 1.73, and 2.1 percent respectively. It remained stable against the Nigerian Naira.

Exchange Rate Cont'd

The Liberian dollar depreciated against the CFA Franc, Cape Verdean Escudo and Sierra Leonean Leone by 1.40, 0.83 and 0.263 percent respectively. On the global front, the Liberian dollar depreciated against the Euro and British Pound by 1.4 percent and 3.8 percent respectively during the month under review.

Monetary Aggregates and Credit

Overall money supply (M2) inched up by 0.8 percent to L\$55,547.7 million at end-April, 2015, from L\$55,128.1 million at end-March, 2015. The slight growth in M2 was on account of a 21.0 percent growth in Net Domestic Assets (NDA) that outweighed the 7.6 percent decline in Net Foreign Assets (NFA). Credits to all sectors of the economy declined by 0.9 percent compared to a growth of 3.8 percent in the preceding month. The Declines in loans to the Agriculture and Trade, Hotel & Restaurant sectors (2.7 percent and 5.2 percent declines respectively) in expectation of declines in activities in these sectors due to the ensuing rainy season underpinned the decline in total loan for the month.

Money Market Developments

As was the case in the preceding month, treasury bills issuance during April 2015 amounted to L\$84.50 million at a weighted average discount rate of 3.35 percent. However, in terms of yield, the April discount rate of 3.35 percent was 57 basis points lower than the 3.92 percent offered in March. Net Treasury operations resulted into a withdrawal of L\$2.0 million during the month. There were no CBL notes issued during the period under review given the stable exchange rate condition. However, a total of L\$1.0 billion in CBL notes was redeemed during the month.

Banking Sector Developments

The domestic banking sector continued on its sound path during the month with the capital adequacy ratio recorded at 20.8 percent, 10.8 percentage points above the minimum requirement of 10.0 percent. Though high operating costs continue to undermine profitability, the sector remains well capitalized and liquid. Non-performing loans (NPL) as a percentage of total loans inched upward to 20.2 percent during the month, from 18.5 percent during the preceding month (Table 1).

		Jan-15	Feb-15	Mar-15	Apr-15
6	FINANCIAL SOUNDNESS INDICATORS (FSI)	<i>(In percent)</i>			
	Capital Adequacy Ratio (CAR)***	19.3	22.3	23.8	20.8
	Non-performing Loans to Total Loans	19.1	19.2	18.5	20.2
	Non-performing Loans (% change)	2.6	-0.9	-0.06	8.1
	Returns on Assets	-0.88	-0.7	-0.65	-0.69
	Returns on Equity (ROE)	-7.22	-5.5	-5.9	-5.65
	Liquidity Ratio****	47.7	46.9	44.7	48.9
7	FISCAL OPERATIONS				
7a	REVENUE, EXPENDITURE & DEBT	<i>(Millions of US\$)</i>			
	Actual Revenue & Grants	58.26	34.5	67.1	41.41
	Projected Revenue & Grants	67.43	58.1	99.4	44.1
	Expenditure	58.88	45.7	49.1	48.2
7b	TREASURY SECURITIES	<i>(Millions of L\$)</i>			
	T- Bills Issued	-82.50	-85.0	-84.5	-84.5
	T- Bills Redeemed	169.00	140.7	35.1	82.5
	Net GoL Treasury Operation^	86.5	55.7	-49.4	-2.0
	Average Weighted Discount Rate	4.11	3.97	3.92	3.79
8	EXTERNAL TRADE (VALUE)	<i>(Millions of US\$)</i>			
8a	EXPORTS/ 1	21.0	20.6	26.9	28.8
	- O/w Iron Ore	5.8	7.5	19.0	20.1
	- O/w Rubber	9.0	5.0	1.9	3.5
8b	IMPORTS (F.O.B)/ 1	215.9	137.8	155.0	136.0
	-O/w Petroleum Products	44.2	34.9	38.3	30.1
	-O/w Commercial Rice	39.3	9.6	1.2	24.7
	-O/w Non-commercial Rice	1.7	1.3	6.2	1.2
	Trade Balance	-194.9	-117.2	-128.1	-107.2
9	EXTERNAL TRADE (VOLUME)	<i>(Metric Tons)</i>			
	- Rubber	7,139.7	3,629	1,307.5	2,780
	-Iron Ore	85,000	219,000	648,000	803,000
	-Commercial Rice	117,800.0	28,770.0	3,600.0	74,000.0
	-Non-commercial Rice	5,094	3,896	18,580	3,596
	- Petroleum Products	15,468.2	11,971.1	9,515.2	11,213.7
10	INT'L COMMODITY PRICES & LIBERIA'S TERMS OF TRADE	US\$/Unit			
	Iron Ore (US\$ /MT)	67.4	62.7	56.9	51.1
	Rubber (US\$/MT)	1,654.1	1,808.5	1,735.5	1,697.6
	Crude Oil (US\$/Barrel)/1	47.5	54.9	52.8	57.4
	Rice (US\$/MT)	409.7	409.5	400.7	392.4
	Terms of Trade (Y-on-Y) %	-27.2	-21.5	-26.1	-29.6

/1 Trade data now sourced from Customs (LRA) with larger coverage than BIVAC.

Table 1: Fact Sheet

	Jan-15	Feb-15	Mar-15	Apr-15
1 MONETARY	<i>(Millions of US\$)</i>			
CBL Net Foreign Exchange Reserves Position (Including SDRs) [†]	220.3	223.3	213.05	220.69
Liberian Dollars in Circulation	9,317.7	8,880.3	8772.5	8783.8
Money Supply (M1) in L\$ only	10,622.7	10,652.1	10,741.4	10,660.8
Broad money (M2) in L\$ only	14,295.5	14,543.6	14,700.4	14,732.9
Broad money (M2) in both L\$ and US\$*	53,417.8	58,156.2	55,128.1	55,547.7
	<i>(In percent)</i>			
Liberian Dollar share of Broad Money	26.8	25.0	26.7	26.5
Interest Rates				
- Lending rate	13.6	13.7	13.7	13.3
-Average Deposit rates				
-Savings	2.0	2.0	2.0	2.0
-Time	4.0	3.9	3.8	3.7
Commercial banks loans to private sector - US\$	302.2	299.5	313.9	310.8
Commercial banks loans to private sector - L\$	1,740.2	1,709.0	1,653.0	1,674.5
- Demand Deposits of commercial banks				
Demand deposits - US\$	310.8	308.0	305.6	314.4
Demand deposits - L\$	3,081.2	3,228.7	3,371.6	3,301.1
- Time & Savings Deposits of commercial banks				
Time & savings deposits - US\$	152.1	162.2	172.2	167.8
Time & savings deposits - L\$	3,664.2	3,877.7	3,948.7	4,063.0
- Other Deposits**				
Actual US\$ component of other deposits	0.1	45.9	0.63	0.87
Liberian \$ component of savings deposits	8.6	13.7	10.3	9.0
2 CBL'S FOREIGN EXCHANGE AUCTION	<i>(Millions of US\$)</i>			
US Dollar Amount Sold	5.0	4.5	3.0	3.0
Total Subscription	13.2	10.6	6.3	5.7
Over(+)- / Under(-) Subscription	8.2	6.1	3.3	2.6
3 CBL BILLS AUCTION	<i>(Millions of L\$)</i>			
Bill Issued	-1,165	-	-	-
Bill Redeemed		-	-	1,000
4 PERSONAL REMITTANCES	<i>(Millions of US\$)</i>			
Inflows	50.0	42.0	52.9	99.6
Outflows	24.5	17.8	18.3	66.6
Net flows	25.5	24.2	34.5	33.0
5 EXCHANGE RATE				
End of Period	84.50	84.50	84.50	84.50
Period Average	84.13	84.50	84.50	84.50

Fiscal Developments**Revenue (including Grants) & Expenditures**

Government fiscal operations in April, 2015 resulted in a deficit of US\$6.8 million from a surplus of US\$18.1 million recorded in the previous month, occasioned by a 38.3 percent month-on-month shortfall in actual revenue & grants receipts that outweighed the 1.7 percent dip in total public expenditure. The dismal performance in actual revenue & grants during the period was attributed to the 80.1 percent fall in non-tax revenue, offsetting the 4.7 percent growth in tax revenue.

In terms of performance, actual revenue & grants fell short of meeting budgetary target by 6.1 percent on account of 33.3 percent shortfall in non-tax revenue that outweighed the 2.1 percent rise in tax revenue. On the expenditure side, the slight fall in total public expenditure during the month was largely explained by the 13.5 percent and 74.5 percent declines in recurrent expenditure and 'loan, interest & other charges', respectively, that outweighed the US\$8.6 million increase in capital investment spending (Table 1).

External Sector Developments**Merchandise Trade**

On the back of the 7.1 percent rise in export earnings against 12.3 percent fall in import payments (on f.o.b basis), the trade deficit narrowed by 16.3 percent to US\$107.2 million in April 2015, compared with US\$128.1 million recorded in March. However, year-on-year, Liberia's trade deficit rose by 4.1 percent during the month under review (Table 1).

Exports

Merchandise export receipts rose by 7.1 percent to US\$28.8 million during the review month, from US\$26.9 million during the preceding month, explained by the increases in both iron ore and rubber export receipts. Month-on-month, iron ore and rubber export earnings surged by 5.8 percent and 84.2 percent respectively, largely on account of increased export volumes. However, year-on-year, merchandise export earnings plummeted by 50.9 percent during the month under review.

Imports

Merchandise import payments (f.o.b) fell by 12.3 percent to US\$136.0 million during the review month, from US\$155.0 million during the preceding month, driven largely on the back of the 23.8 percent and 24.1 percent declines in petroleum and equipment related import payments respectively, outweighing the 80.1 percent surge in food-related import payments during the month. In consideration of the forthcoming July 26 Independence festivities, import payments are expected to rise. Year- on-year, import payments fell by 20.4 percent (Table 1).

International Commodity Price Review

Largely on account of the upward trend in oil price, the general global commodity price index inched upward by 2.2 percent month-on-month in April 2015, reflecting prospects of improved demand as geo-political tensions undermine production and supply.

Iron ore

Iron ore price further weakened by 10.3 percent to US\$51.1 per metric ton during the month, compared with the preceding month, indicative of the oversupply of the commodity in the wake of weak global demand. Year-on-year, iron ore price plunged by 55.4 percent. The ongoing slowdown in the Chinese real estate and steel industry remains the key factor driving the short-to-medium term price trend of iron ore (Table 1).

Rubber

Rubber price inched downward by 2.2 percent to US\$1,697.6 per metric ton month-on-month in April 2015, largely indicative of the oversupply of the commodity against weak demand. As activity in the automobile industry weakens on the back of the projected upward oil price trend in the short-to-medium term, rubber price is projected to decline further if the high supply versus low demand situation persists. Year-on-year, rubber price fell by 22.7 percent in April 2015 (Table 1).

Petroleum (Crude Oil)¹

On the back of improved demand prospects and heightened geo-political tensions that continue to undermine production and supply, oil price rose by 8.7 percent to US\$57.4 per barrel during the month under review, compared with the preceding month. In the short-to-medium term, oil price is projected upward on account of these developments. However, oil price declined by 45.3 percent year-on-year during the month under review.

¹Crude oil price is the average of the three global oil price benchmarks: Dated Brent, West Texas Intermediate and Dubai Fateh.

Rice

High stocks and stable demand continue to drive rice price downward, declining by 2.1 percent month-on-month in April to US\$392.4 per metric ton. However, as geo-political tensions persist, coupled with a projected decline in production in key rice-producing economies on account of unfavorable weather conditions, the risk of upward price trend remains high in the short-to-medium term.

Terms of Trade

Largely on account of the 10.5 percent decline in the export price index (largely reflecting the declines in the prices of iron ore and rubber) coupled with the 2.9 percent rise in the import price index during April 2015, Liberia's terms of trade deteriorated by 3.5 percentage points to -29.6 percent from -26.1 percent in the preceding month (Table 1).

Gross Foreign Reserves

Gross foreign reserves (excluding SDR² holdings of US\$282.9 million) declined by 5.4 percent to US\$281.6 million at end-April 2015, from US\$297.6 million at end-March, largely indicative of increased drawdown on government's foreign currency deposits abroad to meet increased budgetary operations as the EVD crisis comes to an end. Gross reserves amounted to 2.0 months of merchandise import cover at end-April 2015, from 2.1 months at end-March, 2015.

²Special Drawing Rights