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# INTERLIB

Journal of the Liberal International British Group



**Venezuela Peru Syria/Turkey Goma  
Green development in Africa**

# EVENTS

25<sup>th</sup> February LDEG online debate on the elections in Germany.

21<sup>st</sup>-23<sup>rd</sup> March 2025 Liberal Democrats Spring Conference, Harrogate.

4th-6th April Democrataid Rhyddfrydol Cymru/ Welsh Liberal Democrats Spring Conference, Holiday Inn, Castle Street, Cardiff, CF10 1XD

4th-5th April Scottish Liberal Democrats Spring Conference, Eden Court, Bishops Road, Inverness, IV3 5SA

29<sup>th</sup> November-1<sup>st</sup> December 64<sup>th</sup> Congress of Liberal International. See page 2024-01 or LI website.

20-23 September 2025 Liberal Democrats Autumn Conference, Bournemouth

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**Photographs** – Stewart Rayment.

**Cover Photograph** – Free Venezuela Graffiti, Yorgos @u.said.it Old Street, London



Yorgos is a London-based painter and street artist who grew up alternatively in Germany and Greece. His large-scale murals, characterised by abstracted, intertwined bodies, can be seen throughout London. He frequently exhibits at Shoreditch Modern,

Influenced by his multicultural upbringing, his work depicts human complexity and is inspired by dark materialism, gender inequality, fear and uncertainty in our world in crisis.



# Joint LIBG-LDEG Forum



## Germany's Federal Election Tuesday 25<sup>th</sup> February from 7.30 to 9.00 pm

The zoom link : <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/88453716873>

**Guest speakers are FDP MP Thomas Hacker, former MEP and founder of Women In Parliaments Silvana Koch-Mehrin and LDEG chair (and resident of Germany) Rob Harrison. Chair: Sir Graham Watson.**

**Thomas Hacker:** Has been a member of the German Bundestag since the 2017, representing Bayreuth. He is a member of the Committee on European Affairs and the Committee on Cultural Affairs & Media and is the Freie Demokratische Partei (FDP) parliamentary group's spokesman on media policy. In the negotiations to form the so-called Traffic Light Coalition was part of the FDP delegation in the working group on cultural affairs and media policy.

**Silvana Koch-Mehrin:** Was an FDP MEP from 2004-2014. She was vice-chair of ALDE during this period. In 2013, Koch-Mehrin founded the Women in Parliaments a Global Forum (WIP), a worldwide network of female politicians.

**Robert Harrison:** Is Chair of LDEG and a former Chair of Liberal Democrats in Europe. He was a European Parliamentary candidate on the FDP list in 2014 and 2019.



# Europe's moment?

## Sir Graham Watson

Mario Draghi has a genius for understatement. As I listened to him presenting his report on Europe's economic competitiveness to an audience in the European Parliament's plenary chamber on 18 February I appreciated once more what makes this seemingly self-effacing but very sharp economist-turned-central-banker-turned politician so important. For years his calm but insistent warnings have been listened to attentively but with little sense of urgency. The new trade war is changing all that.

Stoltenberg performed a similar role at NATO. Threats long perceived and presented persistently but politely were met with dissemblance and delay bordering on disinterest. A new war situation is changing that too. An organisation dismissed by Emmanuel Macron as 'brain dead' may be about to undergo a frontal lobotomy under Donald Trump's scalpel.

Could the daily cold showers - from the seemingly unquenchable hydrant of US initiatives since President Trump took office - be the making of Europe in these fields? Or will the continent catch a cold and collapse? To carry on in complacency about economic and military competitiveness seems increasingly unviable.

Europe's apparent disunity in responding to America's sudden outlawry is nothing new. The Germans and the Italians have reasons for their hesitation in plugging the hole left in Ukraine's defence by the USA's abrupt change of tack. Other than a commitment to a two-state solution shared more or less by all Member States, agreement in Brussels on the Israel-Palestine conflict has never been specific and political will to act never acute due to differences of approach. Yet the cost of disunity has suddenly shot up.

Sheltering under Uncle Sam's military umbrella has long been an easy get-out for western European continentals from allocating to defence budgets a realistic sum of money. But the existential nature of the Atlantic Alliance has not hitherto been called into question.

Two large countries across the Atlantic have also been shaken. In Canada, the Liberal Party's chances of being returned to office, in an election they were widely slated to lose, have been given a sudden boost by Trump's expansionist belligerence. As for Greenland, it has hitherto attracted little attention, particularly since it quit the EU in 1985. Indeed, the melting of its ice cap has caused more concern than access to the riches beneath it.

Politics is not primarily about coaxing and cajoling the populace. It is about making hard choices. The financial crises of the past two decades and the Covid-19 pandemic brought EU countries closer together and saw the pooling of sovereignty in new areas to confront new challenges. The choices now facing the European Union are perhaps even greater. Can the EU again rise to the occasion? In the worst of circumstances, amid a rise in nationalist sentiment, we may be about to find out.

Here in the UK the choices may be harder still. Starmer's fundamental problem is that he lost the general election, even if the electoral system snatched him victory from the jaws of defeat. Opinion, even among Labour voters, is deeply divided between those who believe the Atlantic Ocean to be narrower than the English Channel and those who bemoan Brexit. Trump's challenge will likely have an impact here too.

Could it be that Liberals in the EU and the UK may yet have some reason to be grateful for Donald Trump?

*Sir Graham Watson,*  
**Convenor LIBG**



# Ukraine's fight for a just peace

## A Chatham House event with Oleksandra Matviichuk

### Report by Dr Carol Weaver

I attended an event at Chatham House on 17 February with a remarkable Ukrainian human rights lawyer speaking on Ukraine's fight for a just peace. She is multiple award winner Oleksandra Matviichuk, the head of the Centre for Civil Liberties, which in 2022 became the first Ukrainian organisation to receive the Nobel Peace Prize.

What stays with me are the following points:

1. *The Children*: not just those suffering in the unoccupied areas, often with bombs dropping and no heating – but those who are rounded up and sent to Russia to be brainwashed into becoming Russian citizens and often trained to be mindless soldiers for Russia.

2. *Being Strong*: a story of how one child in the occupied areas did not sing the Russian anthem in class one day and was told to learn the words. The next day the child was asked to come to the front of the class and sing the anthem. He courageously stood there and loudly sang the Ukrainian anthem. A lesson to us all.

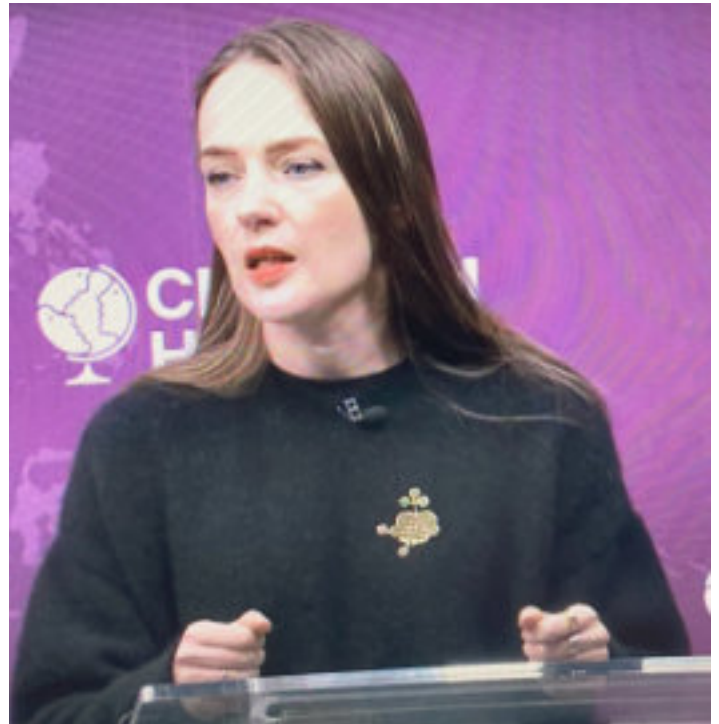
3. *Democracy*: How real democratic leaders care about people and values, whereas dictators see humans as objects to be controlled.

4. *Strong Leaders*: Donald Trump cares more about pragmatism than values but how can it be pragmatic to be seen as weaker than Putin?

5. *Empire Building*: Above all, the countries of Europe need to band together against the biggest threat to Europe – Putin. America cannot be depended upon anymore. Ukraine is currently fighting for Europe but if there is Putin's type of "peace" he will then move on to the next country. An empire has a centre but no borders and will keep on growing for as long as it can.

6. *A Just Peace*: a lasting peace with reparations and security for Ukraine is what is needed – not a temporary ceasefire or an occupied peace.

7. *UK peacekeepers*: would be most welcome.



See: <https://www.chathamhouse.org/events/all/research-event/ukraines-fight-just-peace>

## Liberal Democrat Friends of Ukraine



The Harrogate Liberal Democrat Federal Spring Conference is fast approaching! Liberal Democrat Friends of Ukraine will have a stand, be producing a new banner, be printing leaflets - and will put on a social and a fringe event. We will have a Conference WhatsApp group for those attending, so you can keep in touch.

**Donations sought:** Currently, we have no membership charge. Meanwhile, we do incur some quite significant expenses, particularly at Conference. If you are able to make a donation, however small, we would be extremely grateful. If you would like to donate please contact us at [LDFriendsofUkraine@outlook.com](mailto:LDFriendsofUkraine@outlook.com)

# Enough of Maduro's Authoritarian Playbook in Venezuela.

**Karl-Heinz Paque and Diana Luna**

What happened on Sunday, July 28th, will go down in history. Despite massive obstacles and challenges, Venezuela's united opposition achieved an overwhelming victory. Presidential candidate Edmundo González won the election with 67 percent of the vote, while Nicolás Maduro received only 30 percent (with 83.5% of the votes counted so far). The opposition mobilised over a million volunteers to record and monitor the election results, and they were more prepared than ever before. The election results were promptly published on the platform [resultadosconvzla.com](https://resultadosconvzla.com). Unfortunately, many important democratic voices from the international community were not allowed to observe the election. González reaped the fruits of years of hard work by liberal opposition leader María Corina Machado, who won the opposition primaries in October 2023 but was barred from holding political office through a political manoeuvre by the Maduro regime<sup>1</sup>. Machado and the democratic opposition supported Edmundo González as their unity candidate.

## **Rigged Election, Repression, and Bloody Consequences in Venezuela**

Aware of his defeat, Nicolás Maduro ordered the electoral authority under his control to declare his victory without releasing any election results. The Carter Center confirmed that the presidential elections did not meet international standards for electoral integrity and cannot be considered democratic<sup>2</sup>. Following this announcement, Maduro escalated repression, following the playbook of authoritarian regimes. His threat of a "bloodbath" in the event of an electoral loss was quickly realised. So far, 23 deaths have been reported, along with hundreds of injuries and disappearances<sup>3</sup>. According to Venezuelan authorities, about 2,000 people are in custody. Despite the increasing repression, the streets of Caracas, Mérida, Barinas, and Táchira remain loud and more determined than ever, demanding: Freedom, Libertad!

Many Venezuelans believe that this fateful election is their homeland's last hope. With nothing left to lose, about four million more Venezuelans are prepared to leave their homes and families in search of better living conditions elsewhere—almost 8 million have already left their country. Many of them will head to the United States, while others will seek refuge in neighbouring regions if there is no change in Venezuela. It is a shame and a tragedy that a wealthy country like Venezuela is losing its human capital on such a scale, leaving those who remain behind in one of Latin America's worst humanitarian crises. However, enough is enough!

## **The International Community Must Hear the Calls to End the Dictatorship**

The Venezuelan people have decided that the González-Machado duo should lead Venezuela's future. For this reason, they appeal to the military to stand on the right side of history: "You have a chance, and that time is now," Machado emphasized. In few cases in modern Latin American history has it been so clear which side is the right one, as in this case. Early signs already point in this direction, but decisive recognition of the newly elected president by the international community could accelerate this process. After a week in which the Maduro-loyal electoral authority ignored all calls to make the election records accessible and fully count the votes, it is high time for the European Union to recognise the overwhelming victory of Edmundo González as Venezuela's elected president. Only then can a peaceful and democratic transition be supported.

U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken emphasised that "given the overwhelming evidence, it is clear to the United States and, most importantly, to the Venezuelan people that Edmundo González Urrutia won the most votes in Venezuela's July 28 presidential election." It is now "time for Venezuelan parties to begin discussions on a respectful, peaceful transition in accordance with Venezuelan electoral law and the wishes of the Venezuelan people<sup>4</sup>."

The Maduro regime's new attempts to buy time through arbitrary manoeuvres while simultaneously launching criminal investigations against González and Machado are disgraceful. However, enough is enough. Now, the international community must hear the calls to end the dictatorship. The fight for the return to democracy "will be fought to the end." This is not only Machado's slogan #HastaElFinal (Until the End), but also the conviction of the overwhelming majority of Venezuelans, both at home and abroad. The international community should use all diplomatic means until the end to take action against this authoritarian regime, which, as Maduro recently threatened, intends to send dissidents to re-education

camps. Enough is enough!

**Karl-Heinz Paque, LI-Deputy President and Diana Luna, Latin America Advisor for FNF**

This article was originally published in Spanish at: [https://www.clarin.com/opinion/venezuela-llamado-accion-comunidad-internacional\\_0\\_K9VfjTSwze.htm](https://www.clarin.com/opinion/venezuela-llamado-accion-comunidad-internacional_0_K9VfjTSwze.htm)

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.freiheit.org/de/zentralamerika/venezuelas-point-no-return>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.cartercenter.org/news/pr/2024/venezuela-073024.html>

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.infobae.com/venezuela/2024/08/06/ascendio-a-23-el-numero-de-muertos-en-las-protestas-contra-el-fraude-electoral-de-nicolas-maduro-en-venezuela/>

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.state.gov/assessing-the-results-of-venezuelas-presidential-election/>

### ***On the occasion of the inauguration of the new President of Venezuela, on 10 January 2025, Liberal International issued the following statement:***

The international liberal family recognises Edmundo González as the legitimate President of Venezuela and rejects Nicolás Maduro as President, reflecting the undeniable democratic aspirations of the Venezuelan people and their fight for democracy, freedom, and justice.

The 28 July 2024 election was tainted by widespread fraud and repression orchestrated by the Maduro regime, as documented by international observers and opposition leaders. Yet, despite these attempts to silence democracy, the people's choice is clear.

We stand in solidarity with the Venezuelan democratic opposition, including our sister party Vente Venezuela and its leader, María Corina Machado, who was seized yesterday by regime officials as she sought to protest Maduro's inauguration<sup>5</sup>. We condemn the ongoing human rights violations as well as the lack of full, transparent and detailed voting results.

Our commitment to democracy over autocracy remains unwavering. It is high time for the international community to accept the democratic will of the Venezuelan people, recognising Edmundo González Urrutia as the legitimate and democratically elected President of Venezuela, and to consider further sanctions against the Maduro regime. Only then a peaceful transition to restore freedom and democracy in Venezuela can begin.

¡Venezuela libre!

<sup>5</sup> "[Venezuela's Opposition Leader Is Forcibly Detained and Then Released](#)". *The New York Times*, Julie Turkewitz, (9 January 2025). The report also said that María Corina Machado was forced to make videos whilst in captivity.

Speculating on how the Trump presidency might react on Venezuela, it might be noted that María Corina Machado's nomination for the 2025 Nobel Peace Prize was supported by prominent US Republicans Marco Rubio, now US Secretary of State and Rick Scott.



# Resilience amid turmoil, political challenges facing liberals in Peru

During his mission to Latin America, LI Vice President Henrik Bach Mortensen, engaged with liberal leaders, political initiatives and civil society organisations in Peru to discuss the country's political and economic landscape.

Peru has faced a series of political crises in recent years, with multiple former presidents under investigation for corruption, highlighting deep-seated governance challenges. The Director of the liberal civil society organisation Instituto Pro Libertad (IPL), Yesenia Alvarez, has analysed the latest democracy indices, revealing a troubling trend: Latin America and the Caribbean is experiencing one of the most significant democratic regressions globally, marking what would be the eighth consecutive year of decline, according to the Economist Intelligence Unit (EIU).

Beyond institutional instability, public dissatisfaction with democracy further underscores the region's political discontent. According to Latinobarómetro, Peru and Bolivia, rank the lowest, with only 10% of their populations expressing satisfaction with their democracies. This widespread frustration reflects growing distrust in political institutions and leadership, posing a critical challenge for the country's democratic future.

Nevertheless, at the same time, the economic situation remains comparatively stable or even produces surprisingly positive figures.

## **Peru has been fortunate to have one of the world's top central bankers**

VP Mortensen met with Diego Macera, a member of the Board of Directors of the Central Reserve Bank of Peru to discuss Peru's macroeconomic resilience amid political turbulence. Macera highlighted how a mix of structural reforms and prudent monetary policy has allowed the country to maintain stability despite frequent changes in government. Key factors include the 1993 constitutional reform, which granted independence to the Central Bank and shielded it from political interference, as well as the prohibition on lending to the Treasury. Additionally, the Central Bank has placed a strong emphasis on acquiring and developing human capital. Macera also noted that Peru has been fortunate to have Julio Velarde at the helm, recognised as one of the world's top central bankers.

## **Maintaining single-digit inflation for over 27 years**

In the same meeting Marco Ortiz, Economics Professor from Universidad de Pacifico, sees 'substantial currency reserves, amounting to more than 30 per cent of the GDP', as one reason for the comparatively stable economic situation in politically uncertain times. This enables the central bank to intervene in the foreign exchange markets and limit excessive exchange rate fluctuations resulting from capital outflows. For example, during the last presidential elections in 2021, Peru experienced the greatest capital outflow in over 50 years, when around 17 billion US dollars were withdrawn from the country due to political unrest. This corresponded to around seven per cent of the GDP. The central bank intervened on a massive scale, selling up to 11 billion US dollars on the spot market and over seven billion US dollars on the derivatives markets. This policy helped to reduce exchange rate volatility, as the central bank did not commit to a fixed exchange rate level.

These combined elements have enabled Peru to hold the regional record for inflation control, maintaining single-digit inflation for over 27 years—a testament to the country's sound monetary policy.

## **Peru's journey toward OECD membership**

As Niome Hüneke-Brown, the Project Director of the Friedrich Naumann Foundation for Freedom in Lima has highlighted, Peru became an OECD accession candidate in 2022, having been among the first countries to engage with the organisation through a country program focused on five key areas: economic growth, governance, anti-corruption, human capital, and environmental sustainability.

With the next presidential elections set to take place in a year, Peru's political landscape is also undergoing a structural transformation. The upcoming congressional elections will restore a bicameral legislature, reintroducing a 60-seat Senate alongside a 130-seat Chamber of Deputies. As these changes unfold, Liberal International continues to closely monitor developments in the Andean region, particularly in Peru.

For Peru to advance on its path toward OECD membership, ensuring both economic and political stability will be crucial.



# Syria, the Turkish Connection

## A.Kurt

Turkish involvement in the overthrow of Assad is clear up to a certain degree. HTS (Hayat Tahrir al-Sham) had been getting help from Erdoğan but it is not clear how deep the relationship between HTS and Turkey is. There are other smaller groups which are definitely much closer and much coordinated by Turkey but HTS somewhat more independent; at least it looks like it.

Erdoğan now is calling what happened in Syria a "revolution". State TV and government supporting media (ninety percent, maybe more) continuously talking about "victory" and "revolution". In the meantime, the same media keeps saying that Syrian refugees will go back to Syria, from Turkey. This is a very touchy subject in Turkish politics at the moment.

There were reports saying that Turkish government was given information about a possible uprising six months before the events happened. I don't think these are credible reports a month ago or before the overthrow of Assad, Erdoğan was still talking about possible negotiations with Syria.

There has been some developments (unexpected ones) in domestic politics in Turkey which the government ally MHP (Milliyetçi Hareket Partisi, the Nationalist Movement Party) declared that it was supporting a new peace deal with Kurds, even supporting the idea of letting Abdullah Öcalan, the gaoled Kurdish leader, go free and come to the Grand National Assembly (Parliament) and make a speech saying they will bury the arms and start talking about peace terms. Nobody was expecting this but curiously it happened; although there is nothing concrete yet even mentioning this is totally surprising because it came from the most nationalistic political party of Turkish politics.

It looks like Turkey has one aim, that is to destroy the YPG (Kurdish governed Rojava, the Autonomous Administration of North and East Syria). Erdoğan is using the Syrian National Army (a smaller group of fighters which is under the complete control Turkey whose members are Jihadist and Turkmens who live in Syria), there also other smaller groups again somewhat under control of Turkey.

As the map in the Middle East changes everyone sees that Iran is next but question and anxiety in here what is going to happen in Turkey? The country has a very large Kurdish minority, a smaller Alawite minority, seculars and other very small opposition sides. These demographic conditions are making Turkey a fragile state in the eyes of many, plus completely non-democratic government and governing system, very dire economic conditions makes Turkey even more fragile. I suppose this fragility scares the government and nationalistic circles, so they are going to try to control the events by destroying the YPG (Yekîneyên Parastina Gel – Syrian People's Protection Units).

This could be determined by what Trump decides to do. If he decides to withdraw the small number of American troops from northern Syria, Turkey would definitely start a military campaign against the YPG. At the moment the YPG controls some oil fields and very fertile ground of Syria (in the sense of agriculture and water sources).

One more observation of mine: the events taking place in Syria have excited Turkish Islamists and some even are saying "why not Turkey too?" This is also a very destabilising factor for Erdoğan.

Greetings from Istanbul

**A. Kurt**

I suggest you read *Syria's share in new Bahçeli-Erdoğan paradigm*, by Fehim Tastekin on the Kurdish dimension.duvarenglish.com (Turkish news site's English edition; gazeteduvar.com.tr) Wednesday January 01 2025

# M23 occupation of Goma threatens the stability Great Lakes region.

Liberal International Vice President, minister Sidi Tiémoko Touré, has condemned the occupation of Goma by the Rwandan-backed M23 militia and ongoing violence in eastern Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). This occupation constitutes a blatant violation of DRC's sovereignty and territorial integrity, undermining the foundations of international law and regional stability.

Appalled at the displacement of millions of Congolese citizens and the catastrophic humanitarian crisis unfolding in the region, Vice President Touré said: "The principles of sovereignty and territorial integrity are non-negotiable," said Sidi Tiémoko Touré. "Allowing the M23, with the backing of the Rwandan government, to occupy Congolese territory sets a dangerous precedent that threatens the stability of the entire Great Lakes region. The consequences will be global. If unchecked, this aggression will embolden other actors to pursue their own expansionist ambitions through force", the LI vice president added.

"Estimates put the number of internally displaced in the region of 8 million people with and an estimated 400,000 civilian casualties. The international community must hold non-state actors and their state-sponsors, including Rwanda, accountable for its support of the M23. We call for an immediate cessation of hostilities and targeted measures against Rwandan officials and entities complicit in the M23's actions alongside intensified diplomatic pressure on the Rwandan government. The provision of urgent humanitarian assistance to those affected by the conflict must also be prioritised."

It would be good if the African Union and regional leaders played a more constructive role but it's naive to hope they would engage.

*Sidi Tiémoko Touré is a Vice President of Liberal International from the Rassemblement des Républicains (RDR). He is currently Côte d'Ivoire Minister of Animal and Fisheries Resources.*



# How to power robust green industrialisation in Africa

**ImadUddin Ahmed & Phyllis Wakiaga**

African nations have a unique opportunity to show leadership in redefining green markets on the continent and beyond.

Last year at COP28, Kenyan President William Ruto and COP28 President Sultan al Jaber called for developing countries to design comprehensive green growth strategies, building on their comparative advantages.

Now is the time to put in place the enabling environments that will guide industry into green pathways and attract green investments.

Related



- [How Kenya can tap power of its rare earth elements](https://www.businessdailyafrica.com/bd/opinion-analysis/columnists/how-kenya-can-tap-power-of-its-rare-earth-elements-4804886)

<https://www.businessdailyafrica.com/bd/opinion-analysis/columnists/how-kenya-can-tap-power-of-its-rare-earth-elements-4804886>



- The energy transition must not evolve into new neocolonialism

[Chttps://www.businessdailyafrica.com/bd/opinion-analysis/columnists/energy-transition-must-not-evolve-into-new-neocolonialism-4804090](https://www.businessdailyafrica.com/bd/opinion-analysis/columnists/energy-transition-must-not-evolve-into-new-neocolonialism-4804090)

Why now? While African countries have contributed to fewer than four percent of global greenhouse gases, this will rise as Africa industrialises which, in addition to contributing to the climate emergency, could attract penalties in the form of export tariffs.

Moreover, heightened anxiety over global supply chain disruptions due to geopolitical tensions, has led to a strategic demand for processed minerals and components essential to decarbonisation efforts directly from Africa—a demand driven by more than just price considerations.

To develop robust green industrial policies, African leaders need to focus on three key questions.

How can existing sectors be greened?

Africa can develop a low-carbon manufacturing sector using its abundant renewable options, including solar and geothermal, as well as hydropower, where appropriate.

Read: [Blended finance is Africa's gateway to clean energy shift](https://www.businessdailyafrica.com/bd/opinion-analysis/columnists/blended-finance-is-africa-s-gateway-to-clean-energy-shift-4789700#google_vignette)

[https://www.businessdailyafrica.com/bd/opinion-analysis/columnists/blended-finance-is-africa-s-gateway-to-clean-energy-shift-4789700#google\\_vignette](https://www.businessdailyafrica.com/bd/opinion-analysis/columnists/blended-finance-is-africa-s-gateway-to-clean-energy-shift-4789700#google_vignette)

For example, Kenya's e-mobility sector can claim low-emissions associated with the electricity it consumes, given that over 90 percent of energy from Kenya's grid is through renewable power generation. Kenya now has its first company designing and manufacturing (and not just assembling) electric vehicles.

In which green growth sectors does my country have an advantage?



The African continent has a legacy of innovating solutions to their challenges and sharing them widely. In the context of the climate crisis, this strength is more relevant than ever. Africa holds 60 percent of the world's best solar resources—a foundation for leveraging solar and renewable energy to decarbonise industries and drive sustainable development.

In Mozambique, authorities are proactively exploring how to leverage the country's renewable energy resources to decarbonise aluminium and steel production.

With an eye on the EU's Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanism (CBAM)—which could foreseeably expand to cover the energy used in producing these metals, they are positioning Mozambique for a low-carbon future in these sectors.

While solar itself is intermittent, it can be traded to create value across the continent. The Southern African Power Pool sets a template for the entire continent to trade power at scale. If realised across regions, the savings potential would be immense.

For West Africa alone, our analysis shows that the region could save \$30 billion annually, and 23 million tonnes of fuel oil. Once regional power pools are operational, connecting them to create a pan-African power pool would open new possibilities. Solar power generated in the west could meet peak demand in the dark evening in the east.

In a forward-looking move, the governments of Morocco and Mauritania are positioning themselves as energy exporters, by leveraging their geographic position and partnering with the private sector to produce green hydrogen for European markets—demonstrating Africa's capacity to address local and global energy needs sustainably.

Africa also holds a majority of the world's critical minerals necessary for decarbonising energy and transport sectors.

In Angola, the DRC, Malawi, Mozambique and Zambia, governments are moving up the value chain from raw resource extraction to mineral processing and manufacturing.

Initiatives such as the shared logistics Lobito and Nacala corridors, and one-stop border posts between the countries will allow for the more efficient exchange of intermediate goods into one another's adjacent value-chains, and quicker access to end-markets.

How can governments create an enabling environment for green industrialisation?

Public investment in research and development and for nascent green businesses, from conceptualisation to commercialisation will jump-start innovation.

Regulation and standards will clarify for investors what constitutes 'green' in the regional context:

Ghana, Kenya, Rwanda and South Africa have all done this by publishing 'green taxonomies', largely in harmony with one another.

Policy instruments to consider could include market incentives such as subsidies and tax exemptions (as the US provides under its Inflation Reduction Act), import substitution and export bans on raw materials to promote domestic value chains (as Singapore has with nickel); and carbon pricing through taxes, emissions trading schemes and import tariffs on carbon-intense imports from regions that levy a lower price of carbon, to ensure competitiveness and reduce emissions leakage (as the EU has).

At COP29 member governments of the Africa Green Industrialisation Initiative will share their visions for their countries' green industrialisation with partners. This moment could be decisive.

The entire green market landscape could change – and quickly – if African governments push this initiative now. This call to action is more than a response to climate change, it's a unique opportunity for African nations to leverage their abundant natural resources, dynamic youth, and knack for innovation.

By establishing the right frameworks, African leaders can steer industries toward green pathways and attract green investments that will shape a resilient future.

**ImadUddin Ahmed & Phyllis Wakiaga**

*This article first appeared in Business Daily Africa Sunday, November 10, 2024 - 4 min read*

<https://www.businessdailyafrica.com/bd/opinion-analysis/columnists/how-to-power-robust-green-industrialisation-in-africa-4818852>



# International Abstracts

## Journal of Liberal History Issue 125: Winter 2024-25

There is only international article in this issue, a report of the group's meeting Lloyd George, Herbert Samuel and Palestine: background and legacy, with Dr. Peter Shambrook, author of *Policy of Deceit: Britain and Palestine 1914-1939*. Nicholas Alderton's report is brief and damning on the machinations of those Liberals; however, there is a recording of the meeting at <https://liberalhistory.org.uk/events/lloyd-george-herbert-samuel-and-palestine-background-and-legacy/> Otherwise the 2010-15 Coalition is covered in *Liberalism in Power: Watching the Titanic*, the Gladstone Library's digitisation project, *The Rainbow Circle*, the group of progressives associated with the New Liberalism on the cusp of the 20th century and an extensive review of Robert Harris's *Precipice* on the affair between Asquith and Venetia Stanley. Another 'Churchill' is needed at the Home Office (D. Marlor *Churchill the Liberal Reformer...* after the damage done by the Conservatives from Theresa May onwards).

## Liberator 426

*Blue State Post Election Blues* looks at how America came to elect a felon and how authoritarian will Trump be able to get? Martha Elliott considers what went wrong. *Commentary* points to the vacuum in Brexiteers' hopes of America as a trade partner to replace the EU. Rebecca Tinsley says Arab rulers may criticise Israel but their real concerns are doing business and staying in power in *The Silence of the Arabs*. It will be interesting to see how long they can remain quiet. In *Georgian Dream turns sour on Europe*, Alex Scrivener asks does a disputed election with a surprising loss for pro-EU forces spell the end for democracy in Georgia?

## Liberator 427

Keith House and Tonia Craig travelled to one of the world's least visited countries as tourists in December to see Taliban control in practice and report in *Afghanistan: a complicated country*. There are two articles on Ukraine, Kiron read writes on public opinion *From the Frontline*, and John Smithson says that normality reigns in Kyiv but mass emigration poses dangers for the country's future in *Keep Calm and Carry On*. Alistair Jones looks at the General Election outcome in Leicester, where Gaza became a campaign issue (rightly so, Labour got the kicking they deserved). Rebecca Tinsley looks at the career of the late Jimmy Carter.

## Syria, Kurds & Turkey

Syria's share in new Bahçeli-Erdoğan paradigm, by Fehim Tastekin on the Kurdish dimension.duwarenglish.com (Turkish news site's English edition; gazeteduvar.com.tr) Wednesday January 01 2025

## Trump

Anthony Scaramucci (former White House Communications Director)— on Donald Trump

*The most interesting thing I learned from working for Donald Trump was... he has exceptional political instincts. Pay attention to the little people... Pay attention to everybody... because whether you like it or not, we're all connected.* There's a message for ALL of you.

Financial Times HTSI 2<sup>nd</sup> November 2024

The Bishop Who Pleaded With Trump: 'Was Anyone Going to Say Anything?' - The New York Times 22.01.2025

<https://www.nytimes.com/2025/01/22/us/trump-bishop-plea.html>

**The Trump Backers Who Have Buyer's Remorse**, by Yair Rosenberg. The Atlantic February 20, 2025, 11:06 AM ET

*"With every new policy and offhand remark, Trump belies the imaginary versions of himself that inspired many of his supporters.*

<https://www.theatlantic.com/international/archive/2025/02/trump-strickland-remorse-policy/681746/>

# Reviews

Serpents, Goats, and Turkeys, a century of Liberal-Labour relations, by David Laws.  
Biteback 2024 £25.00 isbn 9781785908842

When David Laws spoke at the launch of his new book at the Brighton Conference in September, he began by describing some of what happened when he endeavoured to launch the Orange Book at the Autumn Conference in 2004. He said that he was told that the reason it appeared initially to have been selling well was only because “Chris Rennard had loaded most of them into the boot of his car and driven them away.”

Twenty years later, I read this book with rather more enjoyment, but also much frustration. It focuses on the history of relationships between the Labour Party and the Liberal Party/Liberal Democrats and failures to make progress any progress on electoral reform for Westminster throughout the 120 years covered by the book.

It is well researched, well written and lessons are clearly to be learned by the party’ failure to derive any electoral benefits from co-operation either with Labour or the Conservatives. I think that the author tended to agree with me when we spoke after the launch that the outcome of the coalition with the Conservatives between 2010 – 2015 could have been very different, and more favourable to our party, if the book had been published before 2010.

The first chapter covers the electoral pact for 1906 in which Herbert Gladstone, the Liberal Chief Whip, arranged for Liberal candidates to stand down in around thirty constituencies to enable the recently formed ‘Labour Representation Committee’ to win them. In the preface to a history of the Liberal Party published in 1970 (and once given to me as a school prize), Jeremy Thorpe described this as “an act of uncalled-for electoral generosity unforgiveable in a Chief Whip”. This did, however, help Herbert Gladstone, the youngest son of William Ewart, to spend half of the money raised for the campaign in just a fifth of the seats showing that targeting long pre-dates the recent general election campaign.

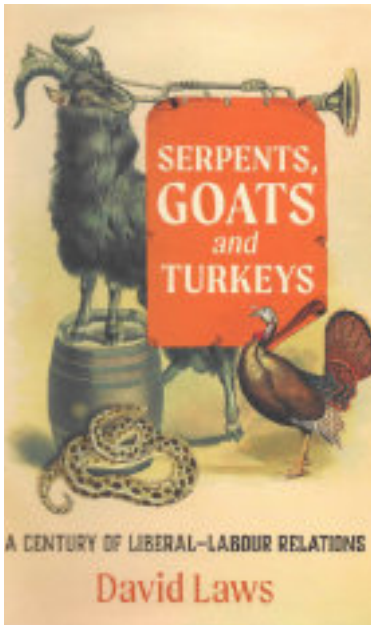
David Lloyd-George is clearly and rightly portrayed as the major villain in the subsequent near total destruction of the Liberal Party which followed his ousting of Asquith as Prime Minister in 1916. This was described by the victim of it as ‘a well organised conspiracy.’ The ‘coupon’ election of 1918 split the party irrecoverably, with Asquith losing his seat, and it resulted in Lloyd George serving as Prime Minister of a Conservative dominated coalition until 2022. Laws describes the man known as ‘the goat’ as ‘the most destructive Leader the Liberals ever had.’ He doesn’t say Liberals or Liberal Democrats as this position might have been challenged subsequently.

Much of the book is based on analysing the different periods when the party might have been more aligned with the Conservatives or with Labour. I think his point, and possibly a plea by him in mitigation for Nick Clegg’s coalition with Cameron, is that there were many times of greater Liberal alignment with right wing forces than with Labour. This was in clear contrast to the pre-1914 period. This is fair comment on the twenty-five-year period 1931 – 1956 including when Churchill invited Clement Davies, the Liberal Leader, to join his new Cabinet in 1951. Davies saved the party by declining the offer. The Liberal Party was even aligned with the Institute of Economic Affairs in 1955.

Jo Grimond is credited with leading the party into a much stronger anti-Conservative position after becoming Leader in 1956. His dynamic leadership promoted devolution, internationalism, and membership of what was then the European Economic Community (EEC). The first Liberal by-election successes for almost thirty years followed including Torrington (1958) and Orpington (1962).

Hopes for ‘re-alignment of the left’ were expressed by Grimond but Harold Wilson, pre-dating the same tactic by Tony Blair, is shown as a master of suggesting what Liberals might want to hear about electoral reform, whilst doing nothing that might weaken his own party’s position. The occasional floating by Grimond of the prospects of coalition was never to the advantage of the Liberal Party. Meanwhile the party established its position along ‘centre-left lines’ and which then prevailed during the leadership of all six party leaders who followed Jo Grimond until Nick Clegg.

Measures of electoral reform were generally a huge consideration in contemplating arrangements with other parties. But Liberal and Liberal Democrat Leaders are generally considered to have been strung along. A particularly poignant passage for me was the description of my own robust conversations with Paddy Ashdown when Blair after 1997 offered to deliver AV (Alternative Vote), but not any of the ‘plus’ that was



recommended by the Commission chaired by Roy Jenkins. I urged him to accept it on the ‘bird in the hand’ principle. He wouldn’t ‘because Roy wouldn’t accept it’, something which they both later regretted. Had I persuaded Ashdown then, I might have been deemed a traitor by some in the party for whom nothing less than STV was acceptable, even when we had no bargaining power. But subsequent elections would have been fought on AV, there would have been many more Lib Dem MPs, and alternative coalitions (Labour or Conservative) would have been available to the party by 2010 without the risks of destruction as a result of them. With real balance of power after an AV election, a referendum on PR might have been secured. In any event the party would have been spared the traumas of 2015, 2017, and 2019.

The hugely damaging electoral consequences to the party of the Lib Lab Pact of 1977-1978 should have served as a warning for what could come in 2010 – 2015 unless lessons were learned. In each case, the party should have been entitled to some credit for helping to achieve economic stability, but it was credited with few achievements of much significance to voters. We took much of the blame for people’s unhappiness as public perception was all

about us propping up another party, which at least half of our own supporters believed that they had rejected at the previous general election. The book has come at least 15 years too late.

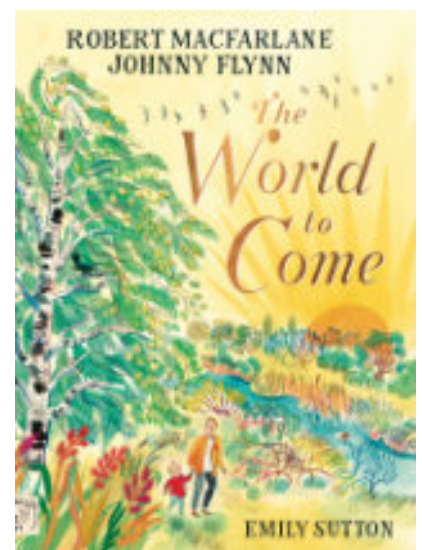
**Chris Rennard**

*Chris Rennard is a Liberal Democrat Peer and was Director of Campaigns & Elections with Paddy Ashdown and Chief Executive with Charles Kennedy.*

**The World to Come, by Robert Macfarlane & Johnny Flynn, illustrated by Emily Sutton. Magic Cat Publishing 2024 £12.99 isbn 9781915569462**

This is a well-observed book, optimistic. I particularly like the much under-estimated pylons in the natural environment, underling our co-existence, and the birch trees as the story passes through the year. Also, the father – son relationship in the book, refreshing; one wouldn’t necessarily call the publishing zeitgeist misandrous, but in attempting to balance millennia of patriarchy the baby might be thrown out with the bath water.

Macfarlane is primarily a nature writer, Flynn an actor-musician, perhaps accounting for the lyricism of the narrative. The book comes out of their earlier musical collaboration, *Lost in the Cedar Wood* (Transgressive 2021). Macfarlane co-edited the 2018 *A People’s Manifesto For Wildlife*, along with Chris Packham and Pat Barkham; he was heavily involved in



the defence of Sheffield’s street trees, so must be deeply disturbed by the current government. Emily Sutton’s work remains familiar and consistent (*Clara Button* and nature books with Nicola Davies). I imagine some of the trees to have been taken en plein air; narrow boats recur but no elephants this time. I think it’s a lady playing the guitar rather than Flynn (though he did play Bowie in *Stardust*, 2020).

The World to Come was the only children’s book to make the shortlist for the Foyles Book of the Year 2024, but Sally Rooney’s *Intermezzo* won, I daresay deservedly, but it is children we need to get reading (ages 3-8 in this case). Support your local independent bookseller; don’t buy online.

**Stewart Rayment**

**Time Runs Like A River, by Emma Carlisle. Big Picture Press 2024 £12.99 isbn 9781800785946**

Continuing the themes of time and nature and a river, Emma Carlisle’s book is perhaps for the next age range up – 6 to 10 perhaps? The children’s explorations are their own and there are plenty of guidelines to explore further. I confess that I have never seen a kingfisher, except in so far as I’ve seen a dark blur and





was told it was a kingfisher... I live in hope, but some suspension of reality fits with a children's book. Equally observed as *The World to Come* but a quieter pallet. Together they can form a progression in revealing the concepts of time and nature.

Carlisle works with the Royal Botanical Gardens at Kew, for whom she also asks *What do you see when you look at a Tree?* And answers also in their children's guide (I wonder if it mentions that when Queen Victoria gifted Kew Gardens to the nation she set the admission charge at 1d (0.6p) – I went there on the last day that you could get in for that price, must have been 1973.

Stewart Rayment

**Israeli and Palestinians from the cycle of violence to the conversation of mankind, by Jonathan Glover. Polity 2024 isbn 9781509559787**

Jonathan Glover is Professor Emeritus of Ethics at King's College London; a Humanist, his works are not necessarily overtly political. Can he avoid that trap in this book?

The opening sentence is thus controversial. 'The incursion [of October 7<sup>th</sup>] itself surprised even Israeli Intelligence.' In scale maybe, but Israeli Intelligence had been warned of the attack three days before by their Egyptian counterparts. HAMAS as it is today as much the product of the efforts of Israeli Intelligence to subvert the influence of Al Fatah and the PLO as other events. When I raised the question of Islamic Fundamentalism in Gaza with UN officials in 1986, they discounted it as marginal, primarily in the Egyptian university, HAMAS as we know, had links with the Muslim Brotherhood. Divide and conquer, ever an imperialist technique, invariably has consequences unforeseen.

In stating this, I am missing the point that Glover is making, yet in his prologue, probably the main part of the book written (in search of a deeper understanding of the long-running Israel-Palestine conflict] after October 7<sup>th</sup>, 2023, he cites fault-lines. The first of these is the ability to commit to poorly founded beliefs. The second, for a group with a common identity to express hostility to those who have wronged them. Each side is culpable in this.

At root, Fear is the motivating force. I make myself extremely unpopular in the wide trauma of Gaza today in explaining the fears of both Israelis and Palestinians in the displacements and murders around the creation of Israel in 1948. Victims were Jewish communities across the Middle East and North Africa as well as Palestinians. I did not waste time writing to my then MP on these issues but was almost tempted to advise her of the impact of the collective trauma beyond those most immediately in the frame. Reportage of events in Gaza have been followed to the point of neurosis by many, otherwise detached.

The advent of Trump on all of this is unnerving; although he can be congratulated on forcing the current ceasefire on Netanyahu, his actions since show a clear lack of understanding of the issues (international law not least). If there were one book his advisors might read in guiding him, this might be it. It would also be a good starting point for zealots supporting either side. Confront the traumas of each side, recognise and learn from them. People like John Alderdice have been working to this end for years, trying to bring the two communities together, despite those in power determined to drive them apart. This is not a real estate opportunity.

**Stewart Rayment**

