

## **AMK – a brief bio**

Senator Amara M. Konneh has over 20 years of experience in international development and finance. He has built national and regional capacities and enhanced economic opportunities across Africa, the Middle East, and Asia.

### **An icon of national finance**

Konneh served as Liberia's Minister of Finance and Development Planning from February 2012 to April 2016. During this period, he coordinated the Liberia Development Alliance, which included state and non-state actors. He pioneered reforms such as the creation of the Ministry of Finance and Development Planning. More importantly, he mobilized \$240 million in international aid for the Ebola disaster response.

Konneh also served on President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf's Economic Management Team, which stabilized Liberia's economy after a long civil war and Ebola outbreak. The team is credited with:

- Maintaining macroeconomic stability and lowering inflation,
- Stabilizing the foreign exchange rate,
- Paying civil servants on time,
- Robustly financing the fight against Ebola, leading to WHO declaring Liberia Ebola-free in record time

From 2008 to 2011, he coordinated the successful implementation of the Lift Liberia Poverty Reduction Strategy, the-then government's three-year post-conflict recovery plan. His uncompromising stance on addressing a projected \$80 million budget deficit was sanctioned for prison by the Liberian Senate, a decision overturned by the Liberian Supreme Court. His years of service (2008-2016) were audited by the General Auditing Commission (GAC).

### **A global finance expert**

Konneh has led continental, regional, and sub-regional organizations. He chaired the IMF's Africa Group I Constituency. Previously, he served as Chairman of the Mano River Union (MRU) and the African Peer Review Mechanism.

In May 2016, Konneh joined the World Bank Group as head of the Global Hub for Fragility, Conflict, Violence, and Forced Displacement (FCV), serving more than 35 countries. In this role, he:

- Oversaw the World Bank's strategic priorities in countries affected by fragility, conflict, violence, and forced displacement (refugees),
- Provided operational and analytical support to the Bank's regional and country teams on fragility, conflict, violence, and refugee issues in Nairobi, and
- Developed and maintained relationships with the Kenyan government and donors.

As Senior Advisor to the Bank's Vice President of the Africa Region, Konneh managed strategic partnerships with the African Union and eight Regional Economic Commissions (RECs). He assisted in advancing regional economic integration among countries, coordinated the deployment of \$2B resources to RECs, and led effective partnership dialogues.

### **From humble beginnings**

Konneh was born in poverty in Bassa Camp near Weasua, Gbarpolu County, Liberia, on December 7, 1971. He started school at age 10. His father and three siblings were killed in Liberia's protracted civil war. Konneh was 18 at the time. While a refugee in Guinea, he started a refugee school. He was appointed Refugee Education Coordinator in Beyla Prefecture, Guinea, because of his commitment and dedication. Before immigrating to the U.S., he built, staffed, and supervised 18 refugee schools.

From 1998 to 2006, Konneh worked for the Vanguard Group of Investment Companies in Valley Forge, Pennsylvania. His significant contributions to human welfare earned him the 2016 Alumni Public Service Award from Harvard University's Kennedy School of Government. Konneh was named Africa's Finance Minister of the Year in 2014 by The Banker magazine. He holds an MBA from MIT and an MPA from Harvard's John F. Kennedy School of Government. Konneh also holds a master's degree from Pennsylvania State University and a bachelor's from Drexel University.

Mr. Amara M. Konneh is Gbarpolu County Senator in the Upper House of Liberia's bicameral legislative branch.