

MR. SPEAKER,  
MR. VICE PRESIDENT,  
MY LORD THE CHIEF JUSTICE,  
MINISTERS OF GOVERNMENT,  
HONOURABLE MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT,  
EXCELLENCIES, MEMBERS OF THE DIPLOMATIC CORPS,  
HIS WORSHIP THE MAYOR OF FREETOWN,  
DISTINGUISHED GUESTS,  
LADIES AND GENTLEMEN:

Mr. Speaker, Honourable Members, Thank you! Thank You! Thank you very much! Thank you Sierra Leone! You gave me the greatest honour a country can bestow upon a citizen, to serve as your President for two terms. There were many other Sierra Leoneans who could have carried this mantle, but by God's grace, you chose me twice above all others, and I humbly accepted the charge to move forward with the hopes of all Sierra Leoneans.

2. For ten years, I have served our beloved nation to the best of my ability and today, I have come to say good bye to this Honourable House. Yes, I promised that at the end of my tenure I will honourably step aside, and this is why today, I have come to fulfil another constitutional requirement towards that final departure.

3. I have had the support of people in government, and outside government. For ten years, this Parliament has also been my SUPREME FRIEND; performing its traditional roles in representation, in oversight and in legislation. Your steadfast support, your constructive criticisms, and even the not so constructive ones, gave me the impetus to continue to tackle the great development challenges that besieged our nation; and for this, I am grateful.

4. I am grateful to our security forces for their tireless efforts in keeping us all safe and secured and who, through their discipline and professionalism as international peacekeepers, have helped in no small measure, in rebranding

our great country. Together, we have earned the accolade of a model of democracy, of peace building and of peace consolidation owing in large part, to their gallantry.

5. Mr. Speaker, Honourable Members, I am grateful to our health workers, teachers and lecturers, pupils and university students, to our judiciary and to the rest of our civil and public servants, market women, who, throughout my tenure, have remained committed to the peace and development of our nation. With your dedicated service, we have been able to bend the arch of history, to restore the dignity of our beloved nation.

6. And to the ordinary citizens who have toiled throughout these years to complement the efforts of my Government in nation building; our national success would not have been so remarkable without your resolve. You are the true heroes of our transformation and to you, I am grateful.

7. Mr. Speaker, Honourable Members, I am also here to give a final account of my ten year stewardship of this country. It has been ten years of cooperation, of compromises, of negotiations, of disagreements, and of service. It was not always easy; sometimes the disagreements were so strong that some of our friends staged walkouts. But there were times also, when they even voted along with us. And throughout this great period, we have remained one peaceful nation; ultimately moving on, for the common interest of our people.

8. As you are all aware, the party that nominated me for this great honour and responsibility, the party that first believed in my capacity to deliver victory and move this nation forward, the All People's Congress, is a movement founded on expanding access for the common man and woman. It is our conviction that the state should not be a monopoly of the few that is why my programmes, through the last ten years, have been guided by a commitment to integrating the needs of the ordinary citizen. That was what guided our introduction of the Free Health Care Initiative; our payments for all public examination fees in primary and secondary schools; our increase in electricity generation and distribution; our establishment of legal aid; our inclusion of youths and women into the highest decision making bodies of the state; and our transfer of resources to agriculture.

9. Mr. Speaker, Honourable Members, today, I am here to report that our construction of roads everywhere has been to get the ordinary man and woman move faster and safer all over the nation.

10. Yes, there have been challenges, many challenges. But our raft of policies enabled us to weather the worst of those storms, and we registered higher GDP, investments and job growths never seen before in this country. Just when we were taking off with this spectacular growth, a dreaded disease, unknown to us, unknown to our brothers and sisters in the Mano River Union, attacked us. But we fought back in the midst of collapsing commodity prices all over the world. And with support from our friends, we defeated the virus, and inaugurated a recovery programme that has put us back on track.

### **A Bigger Economy**

11. Since 2007, my Government directed the path of economic growth by embracing infrastructural development including reviving the energy sector; improving the business climate to attract foreign investment.

12. In 2007, the monetary value of Sierra Leone's economic and business activities was five trillion Leones or about 1.7 billion dollars. By 2013, my government had increased it to 22 trillion Leones or 5.1 billion dollars. Ebola decreased economic output, but our resilience ensured that by 2017, the economic activities of the country are estimated at 30 trillion Leones or 4.1 billion dollars. Thus the percentage increase in Leones since 2007 is 500% and in dollars 141%. The contribution per person to economic and business activities in 2007 was Le 720,000 or \$240 in 2007. By 2013, just before Ebola, we have ensured that it increased to 4 million Leones or \$840, and in 2017, it is 4.4 million Leones or \$600. The increase here from 2007 to 2017 is 511% in Leones and 150% in dollars. In 2007, the monetary value of Sierra Leone exports was 870 million Leones or \$170 million. Today, it is six trillion Leones or \$790 million, a percentage increase of 590% in Leones and 172% in dollars.

13. In 2007, revenue generated within Sierra Leone was 502 billion Leones or \$170 million; by 2013, my Government had increased it to three trillion or \$700 million dollars. Though we were hit by low economic output during Ebola, we were still able to keep it far above what was in 2007. Today, it is four trillion Leones or \$550 million; this is an increase of 700% in Leones terms since 2007 and 224% increase in dollar terms. And my Government's direct development expenditure on roads, energy, health, education, ICT and other

areas has been way above what it was in 2007. In 2007, it was 180 billion Leones or 60 million dollars; by 2013, we had increased it to 1.3 trillion Leones or 280 million dollars. Today, it is two trillion Leones or 274 million dollars. This is a tenfold increase in Leones since 2007 and 357% increase in dollars.

14. We have also ensured tremendous growth in Foreign Direct Investment, from 288 billion Leones or 96.6 million dollars in 2007 to 1.2 billion dollars in 2011; 650 million dollars in 2012, two trillion Leones or 362 million dollars in 2013 and five trillion Leones or 570 million dollars in 2017. This represents over 16 times increase in Leones from what obtained in 2007, and over four folds in dollar terms.

15. My Government has also increased our overall international reserves from 597 billion Leones or 200 million dollars in 2007 to 2.5 trillion or 514 million dollars in 2013. Today, our international reserves are four trillion Leones or 500 million dollars. This is over five and the half times in Leones to what we met in 2007 and 150% more in dollar terms.

16. Mr. Speaker, Honourable Members, Sierra Leone's economy has shown remarkable growth and resilience over the past decade. From major external shocks including the global financial crisis of 2008-09; the food and fuel price crises during the same period, the collapse of international commodity prices, including our major export, iron ore, and the outbreak of the Ebola epidemic; we bounced back, growing by 6.3 percent in 2016. This is because my Government implemented transformative economic policies including the successful implementation of programmes by the IMF, the World Bank and other international organizations, which secured more support to my administration than was the case in the last year of the previous administration.

17. And as you can see, from health, to education, electricity, water, roads, agriculture and ICT, my Government has been able to invest in our people more than at any time in our country's history. We still have challenges, but human development index and most other indices are far above what we met in 2007. At a time when rice was 60,000 Leones in 2007, the minimum wage was 20,000, far below what was required to buy a bag of rice. Today, when the bag of rice is a little over 200,000 Leones the minimum wage is 500,000 Leones, more than twice the price of a bag of rice. The global hunger index was far worse in Sierra Leone at 44.5 around the time we took over

power. By 2013 my Government had reduced it to 22.8. Whilst Ebola had negative consequences for our fight against hunger, the index today at 38.5 is better than what the index was at the commencement of our governance. We still face challenges, but today, unlike the situation when we took over governance, we are no longer last in Human Development Index, we have moved up several points from the 2007 rankings. We still have challenges, but our commitments and actions for progress, like in the motto of the APC: Action, Progress, and Commitment - we have ensured that we landed the fibre optic cable and rolled it out to over 65% of the country bringing connectivity to our homes, offices, schools and universities; and ensuring that our media and civil society are freer and more viable with a wider reach than ten years ago. We promised, and we delivered!

## **MINING**

18. Mr. Speaker, Honourable Members, since 2007, my Government has led a major transformation in the governance of the minerals sector. We passed the world-class Mines and Minerals Act 2009, to tighten the rules for administrators and mineral rights holders. We have included a more clearly defined and stricter application process; established a new licensing regime to better enable investment and minerals sector development; we are re-balancing fiscal benefits; and we are promoting transparency by addressing reporting, disclosure, and dissemination of information related to revenues and payments.

19. For the first time in 70 years of mining in Sierra Leone, there is now a comprehensive set of rules and requirements for workers' safety, environmental and community protection.

20. And we have established the National Minerals Agency (NMA) for the implementation of the Mines and Minerals Act and related regulations. We have also established and *operationalized a world class Mining Cadastre Office throughout the country to process, record and monitor applications, licences and revenue*. And in a significant step towards full transparency, Sierra Leone launched *the GoSL Online Repository to share licensing and revenue information online*. Revenues from all fees and taxes are transparently calculated, collected and reported.

21. Through the NMA, we have been able to improve geological knowledge and data management and streamlined the licensing processes and procedures to ensure a predictable and efficient licensing system.

22. We have also ensured that mining contributes to development of local communities. Three companies have already signed agreements with their respective communities. This will ensure that some of the proceeds from mining companies are channelled back to communities to promote sustainable development. We promised, and we delivered!

### **Access to Social Services - Health and Sanitation**

23. Through the most daring public policy in our country's history, we have increased our people's access to health services. Between April 2010 and March 2011, the Free Health Care Initiative led to nearly 2 Million additional under-five consultations; over 39,000 more women delivered their babies in a health facility and 12,000 maternity complications were managed in health facilities with a 60% drop in the fatality rate in these cases. Between April 2010 and April 2011, at the Princess Christian Maternity Hospital (PCMH), the number of admissions increased from 800 to 12,000 and this trend is continuing.

24. The APC Government has also introduced free treatment of malaria for all age groups in all public health facilities.

25. We have had over 100% increase in the availability, accessibility and affordability of safe and effective drugs within the first five years of the Free Health Care Initiative.

26. And we have constructed a new Central Medical Stores warehouse and thirteen District Medical Stores. A total of 1,190 health facilities became functional in 2012, compared to 843 in 2006; and we have built Maternity wards in Kabala, Kono, Bo and Kenema Government Hospitals respectively to facilitate and supervise facility delivery by skilled personnel.

27. Five Basic Emergency Obstetric Care (BEMOC) centres each in all the 13 districts were established across the country and one regional referral hospital was constructed in Bombali. At the same time the district hospitals in Moyamba, Kabala and Kono were rehabilitated. Eleven district hospitals have either been completed or nearing completion; and we have established a school for the training of mid-wives.

28. Since 2010, we intensified routine and supplementary immunization, defaulter tracing of TB, and HIV/AIDs patients.

29. Mr. Speaker, Honourable Members, although the EVD outbreak reversed our gains in service utilization, we are bouncing back, becoming more resilient and able to restore public confidence and services to the health sector. Over 2500 EVD survivors have benefitted from the Free Health Care Initiative.

30. To further reduce maternal mortality, we implemented the National Strategy for the Reduction of Teenage Pregnancy. We have also introduced the maternal death surveillance and response (MDSR) strategy to enable the sector to generate data on maternal deaths, and to take remedial action. This means we are building our capacity to report on national health events.

31. We have launched an extensive programme of health facility rehabilitation and construction. The nine tertiary hospitals are being upgraded as national medical centres of excellence and over 57 other health facilities are either being constructed or rehabilitated. A total of 500 bed capacity hospitals are being built across Freetown in Lumley, Kingharman Road, Rokupa and Waterloo.

32. We have also embarked on the Community Health Workers' (CHW) approach to improve access to the underserved communities. Over 15,000 CHWs are being trained and deployed to provide essential health services.

33. And we have brought in a Multi-Disciplinary Clinical/Foreign Medical Team of 43 medical doctors, 4 radiographers and laboratory scientists to temporarily plug the human resource gap in the sector.

34. My Government has also established the school of clinical sciences to train our health workers to become Physician Assistants able to complement our doctors through task shifting. And a Postgraduate medical training has been introduced to provide in-country specialist training to our locally-trained medical doctors in various fields. Teaching hospitals have therefore been established to facilitate that postgraduate training.

35. Sierra Leone's first ever National Emergency Medical Services Project, which seeks to provide ambulance services to every chiefdom is on course to commence. We promised, and we delivered!

## **Access to Education**

36. Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the APC Government has made substantial investment in education. We increased budget allocation to the education sector from 3.7% in 2007 to over 15% in 2017.

37. We provided teaching and learning materials for all non-private schools and students during the immediate post-Ebola period at a cost of Le26 billion to the Government. In the immediate post-Ebola period, we paid school fees for all non-private school students at a cost of Le67 billion to the Government.

38. These efforts have paid off with annual increases in enrolment and number of students completing all levels of schooling from 130,000 in 2005 to about 200,000 in 2016. In Pre School, from about 9,000 females in 2005, to over 42,000 in 2016; and from about 10,000 males in 2005, to over 38,000 in 2016.

39. Primary School enrolment increased from about 650,000 males in 2005 to over 700,000 in 2016; and from just over 500,000 females in 2005, to over 700,000 in 2016.

40. Junior school enrolment more than doubled from a little over 93,000 males in 2005, to over 161,000 in 2016; and from about 61,000 females in 2014, the numbers tripled in 2016.

41. In senior school, enrolment almost quadrupled from a little over 26,000 males in 2005, to over 91,000 in 2016; and from just about 12,000 females enrolment, it increased by almost seven times to over 79,000 in 2016.

42. To cater for this phenomenal increase, the APC Government had to plug the wastages we inherited through an extensive teacher payroll cleaning exercise from which we have been able to save a total of Le432 billion (US\$57.6 million) from the elimination of 'ghost teachers' from the payroll in the period 2008 to 2017.

43. Further action has been taken to update the payroll database with employees' NASSIT numbers. This is part of efforts to ensure the existence of all Government employees. A Payroll Strategy has been prepared to guide future work on ensuring the sustainability of the Government wage Bill.

44. From the revenues saved and from external support, we have been able to increase the number of approved schools; in particular an increase of 382 in the 12 months period of July 2016 to July 2017.

45. In 2017 alone, we have been able to pay fees for all school level public examinations totalling Le16.7 billion from primary through senior secondary school.

46. With external support, we have also taken action to construct an additional 225 classrooms in 2017, constructed an additional 165 wells and 362 WASH facilities in schools in the period July 2016 to July 2017.

47. We have revitalised, extended and improved the school feeding programme to cover over 800,000 primary school pupils.

48. And to ensure quality, we have developed the Teaching Syllabus for Basic Education, strengthened School Inspection through the recruitment of School Support Officers, developed Lesson Plans for Mathematics and English Language, and established a Situation Room for education to track progress and feedback.

49. By the construction of the first ever Ministry of Education TV and radio broadcasting building, we have also taken action to engage our children at home through the nationwide Ministry Education radio broadcasts.

50. Over and above these efforts, and to provide alternative university opportunities, the APC Government has initiated the first ever Public-Private-Partnership (PPP) in higher education through the commencement of operation of Limkokwing University, bringing to five, the number of universities in Sierra Leone.

We promised, and we delivered!

### **Access to clean and safe drinking water**

51. Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, in the last ten years, my Government has been preoccupied with the task of improving the dismal national coverage of clean and safe drinking water.

52. We have therefore implemented several initiatives in the sector. The Three Towns Water Project in Bo, Kenema and Makeni, which is now operational, targets a total population coverage of over half a million people.

In Magburaka, Mile 91, Lungi, Kailahun, Lunsar, Kambia, Pujehun Koinadugu, Kono, Port Loko, about another half a million Sierra Leoneans are being provided with pipe borne water for the first time in more than three decades. And our projects in Bonthe and Moyamba targeting another 33,000 of our compatriots are being constructed.

53. In our Rural Water Supply and Sanitation Project, about 630,000 are being reached through the construction of 85 Boreholes with Solar Powered Pumps and Hand Pumps in Bonthe, Kono, Kambia, Koinadugu and Pujehun Districts. These are in addition to 40 Boreholes with Hand Pumps in the same districts, bringing our rural water coverage from a mere 26% in 2007 to over 50%.

54. In other Urban Projects, the construction of the Waterloo Gravity Schemes targeting a population of 5,000 people is on - going as is the rehabilitation of the Blama Bandawor and Six Other Villages Water Supply Project targeting about 15,000 people. And we are rehabilitating / re constructing the Taima & Njala, Mano Dasse Water Supply Systems with a target population of 35,000 people. And these are in addition to the rehabilitation / re construction of the Bonthe & Mattru Jong, Luawa, Blama, Semabu and Segbwema Water Supply Systems with a target population of about 47,000 people. Overall, we have increased nationwide access to clean and safe drinking water from 48% in 2007 to over 63% 2016.

We promised, and we delivered!

### **Access to Energy**

55. Mr. Speaker, Honourable Members, when we came into governance in 2007, total national power generation was less than 10 megawatts and Freetown, our nation's capital was the darkest city on earth.

56. But within the first three months in office, the APC Government switched on the lights. And by commissioning the 50MW Bumbuna Hydro Power Project, we increased the supply of electricity from less than 10 MW at the start of 2007 to 50 MW in 2009. Today, the installed capacity is 182MW. We have therefore introduced prepaid meters to guarantee access and sustainability.

57. With support from the Chinese, the APC Government has completed the Mini-hydro projects at Bankasoka, Charlotte and Makali. We have also completed Yele, and the construction is ongoing for another in Moyamba.

58. The APC Government further embarked on the installation of new thermal plants in Lungi and Koidu/New Sembehun, in Port Loko/Lunsar, in Moyamba, in Kailahun, Bonthe, Pujehun, Kabala and Kambia/Rokupr. And we have commissioned a Bare Foot Solar Engineers Training Centre at Konta Line Village.

59. We are also doing a complete overhaul of the Bo/Kenema Power Station to expand power generation and distribution. This includes the upgrade of the Dodo Dam to ensure a 12 MW all year round supply of electricity with a target to serve the populations of Bo, Kenema and nearby villages.

60. At the same time, we have commissioned a Hybrid system of Solar and hydro power to provide uninterrupted electricity to the River No. 2 community in the Western Rural Area.

61. And under the APC Government's Rural Electrification Project, we completed the Installation of the first phase of 50,000 solar street lights across the country.

62. Mr. Speaker, Honourable Members, through our transformative Rural Renewable Energy Project, we have embarked on increasing the electrification rate of households in the rural areas in order to boost the growth of businesses, health, schools and agricultural activities. In the short-term under this project, the APC Government has provided solar systems for 54 Chiefdom Health Centres (CHCs) and we are on course to expanding into 50 mini grids in those communities.

63. Owing to all these efforts, overall access by end of 2015 exceeded 200,000 households. By 2017, overall access has exceeded 270, 000 households.

64. Through the Japan International Cooperation Agency, (JICA) project, we are constructing 11/33 KV transmission network from Wilberforce to Sussex through Goderich, and the primary substation at Godreich.

65. And with DFID support, we are upgrading the Freetown distribution network stretching from Blackhall Road to Wellington. We are also constructing and installing substations at Wilberforce, Kingtom, Portee and Wellington.

66. My Government also secured support from the Abu Dhabi Fund for Development (ADFD) for the development of a 6 MW Solar Power Park to be installed at Newton.

67. And with support from the Islamic Development Bank (IDB)-we are strengthening and extending the medium and low voltage distribution networks in the Western Area. This project will provide relief against acute shortage of power distribution in the Western Area.

68. Mr. Speaker, Honourable Members, in two years, our energy access will further increase with the Cote d'Ivoire, Liberia, Sierra Leone and Guinea (CLSG) electricity networks interconnection project which involves the construction of a 1,357-long double high voltage (225kv) line to connect the national networks of the four countries. It will transverse seven districts (Pujehun, Kenema, Kono, Tonkolili, Bombali, Koinadugu and Kambia Districts). Twenty eight communities including schools and health centres will be provided with electricity supply.

We promised, and we delivered!

### **Roads Infrastructure – Providing Access to Health Facilities, Markets, and Schools and to Major Towns and Cities.**

69. Mr. Speaker Honourable Members, in 2007, our country's infrastructure was in a morbid state. To overcome this state of affairs, the APC Government launched the biggest road construction programme in the country's history. Today, we have completed new highways between Masiaka and Bo, Bo and Kenema, Makeni and Matotoka, Freetown and Conakry, Kenema and Pendembu, and between Port Loko and Lungi.

70. We widened the Wilkinson Road to four lanes and we are building the roads between Lumley and Tokeh and in all provincial and district headquarter towns. Road construction is also still underway in Freetown including the construction of the Pademba Road- Blackhall Road Hillside Bypass, the Grafton-Regent Road, and the widening of Spur Road and Hill Cut Road to four lanes, the Hill Station-Regent, to the widening of the Wellington to Masiaka highway.

71. Between 2012 to date, we rehabilitated the Bo-Bandajuma road; the Bandajuma-MRU road and 3 bridges. Work is in progress on the Moyamba Junction-Moyamba-Senge, plus the reconstruction of three bridges. The APC Government has completed the Makeni-Matotoka and Matotoka-Yiye phase I, the rehabilitation and widening of the Makeni – Kabala highway; while the phase II Yiye-Sefadu and the Pendembu-Kailahun highways are in progress.

72. And all these are apart from the over 1,000 km of road construction funded from our own revenue which include the rehabilitation/reconstruction of the Taiama-Njala University Road; the Pamlap-Kamakwe-Madina Oula, and various other streets in Freetown.

73. We also designed a feeder road policy and have constructed thousands of kilometres of feeder roads all over the country. We rehabilitated the airport that was on the brink of being blacklisted in 2007 by international aviation authorities on account of its poor state. We constructed jetties in various locations in the Pujehun, Moyamba, Bonthe, Port Loko, and Kambia districts as well as a stadium in Bo and shopping plazas in Bo, Kenema and Makeni.

We promised and we delivered.

74. But Mr. Speaker, Honourable Members, while we were doing all these heavy lifting to bring change in our beloved country, others were either inattentive or too far away to see our vision of a better Sierra Leone. And now that our country has gained visibility and some respectability, they have arrived from their comfort zones with the false promise of change and a new direction. But in the final analysis, I trust in the wisdom of the people of this great nation to distinguish between the workers from the talkers.

### **AGRICULTURE – Providing Access to Livelihoods**

75. Mr. Speaker, In 2007, budgetary allocation to the sector was at a paltry 1.6% and there were hardly any big private sector investments in agriculture. My Government has changed this state of affairs for the better. We designed and implemented the Smallholder Commercialization Programme (SCP). We have supported over 1,900 Farmer Based Organisations (FBO) and established 400 Agricultural Business Centres. We made huge Direct Cash Transfers to FBOs, to the tune of 20 to 25 million Leones per group. This has empowered and capacitated farmer groups nationwide. This support complements the Ministry's seed rice and fertilizer supply to our farmers to boost production and productivity. Between 2016 and 2017, about five billion Leones has been provided unconditionally to our farmers.

76. We inaugurated the biggest tractorization programme ever in this country, and distributed hundreds of power tillers, rice threshers, de-stoners and rice mills. We attracted many large-scale private sector investments, creating thousands of jobs; improved basic facilities and services for host communities; and increased rural monetization through lease payments to landowners.

77. In 2007, the quantity of rice produced in metric tons in Sierra Leone was a little over six hundred thousand; we have increased it today to over a million metric tonnes, representing an increase of 82%. The quantity of cassava produced in 2007 was 1.9 million; by 2016, my Government increased it to 3.1 billion metric tonnes. The quantity of fish caught in Sierra Leone in 2007 was 134,000 metric tons; by 2017, it has been increased to over 720,000 metric tonnes, an increase of 439%.

78. I must acknowledge that we still face challenges, but we have decreased food import by over 50% and farmers' incomes have increased, especially for cocoa farmers. Our actions have also led to a concomitant increase in agro-processed or value added products in the market: rice, gari, honey, lemon grass tea and oil, moringa tea, chocolate and fruit juices. And despite the EVD challenges, we have reduced the hunger period in Sierra Leone from an inherited three months to less than one month. We promised, and we delivered!

### **Access to Justice**

79. Mr. Speaker, Honourable Members, we have increased access to justice. The superior courts now have the full complement of judges and we have placed magistrates in every district in the country, the first time ever. We have placed the local courts under the judiciary and strengthened their administration thereby ensuring that more people have access to our justice system. All judges are now Sierra Leoneans and female Supreme Court Judges now outnumber their male colleagues. We improved conditions of service; in particular, the salaries of Judges and State Councils and appointed younger persons to the judiciary. We established the Judicial and Legal Training Institute (JLTI) in 2013 with the mandate to provide legal education for all levels of judicial officers, law officers and private practitioners. We constructed more courtrooms, including the courts at the East end of Freetown, the first time ever in over one hundred years. We established Industrial Courts, the first ever Commercial Court and the Electoral Offences Court to ensure speedier adjudication in those specialized areas.

80. We have transformed the Prisons Services into the Correctional Services, and decongested those facilities.

81. Through the Legal Aid Board, we have established 15 Community Advisory Bureaux (CAB), to address justice needs through Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) and legal education through outreach.

82. The impact of these good governance initiatives have been phenomenal. In the first half of 2017 alone, over 40,000 people benefitted from Legal Aid. Today, through the Legal Aid Board, the 'po man sef geh lawyer', and the undue delays and high cost of justice have dramatically reduced.

83. Mr. Speaker, Honourable Members, my Government passed the Anti-Corruption Act of 2008, giving full prosecutorial powers to the Commission, strengthening its powers, expanding the coverage of crimes aimed at curbing corruption. And we have ensured high profile convictions.

84. We have reviewed and reformed many laws aimed at enhancing rights and improving and expanding access to services and justice for women and children, including laws relating to fairer devolution of estates. We have enacted the Local Government Act, de-amalgamating Chiefdoms and deepening self-determination. Two new districts, Falaba and Karene, have been created; and to enhance parliamentary representation, the seats of this Honourable House have been increased from 112 to 132. Through our focused and dedicated decentralization programme, we have been able to reach more of our people in their communities and to get them to participate in the governance of the state than ever before. We promised, and we delivered!

## **Transport**

85. We have turned around the transport sector in the country. When we took over in 2007, the Sierra Leone Ports Authority was a liability to government. We moved to change this, and improved the effectiveness of ports administration.

86. Between 2010 to date, my Government has attracted substantial private sector investors. We secured a concessionary agreement with Bollore Group/Freetown Terminal Limited to handle operations at the container terminal. The initial investment outlay was one hundred and ten million dollars

to cover equipment, infrastructure and systems upgrade. My Government and Bollore have also agreed on a further investment of one hundred and twenty million dollars to expand the port and build a new berth of 270 Meters Length and 13 Meters depth to accommodate larger vessels, thereby positioning the port of Freetown as a major transshipment hub.

87. In 2015, my Government also engaged investors to the Bulk and break - bulk terminals. This arrangement brought in the British Company Nectar UK Group Ltd. In 2016, my Government also brought in Holland Shipyard to handle the Ships Repair Facility and Marine Slipway with an investment envelope of 2.2 million US dollars for equipment, systems upgrade and civil works. My Government also concluded negotiations with the Dangote Group of Companies from Nigeria to set up a cement packaging operation at the Port with an initial investment outlay of 5.2 million dollars.

88. We reconstructed the jetty at Government Wharf and built jetties at Gbondapi, Mattru Jong and Gbangbatoke; expanding access for transportation of people and local goods across the rivers in southern Sierra Leone. We have improved safety at sea, procuring fast crafts, search and rescue boats, conducting regular sea patrols and providing over 6,000 life jackets nationwide to sea farers. Today, we hardly hear of people drowning on the high seas.

89. We have transformed the dilapidated Freetown International Airport at Lungi. In 2007, we had only two reputable international airlines flying into the country; now we have nine airlines flying in the country. We promised, and we delivered!

## **Tourism**

90. Mr. Speaker, Honourable Members, our collective efforts in keeping the peace and my Government's commitment to infrastructural development have had a remarkable impact on the tourism sector. We have also taken action to strengthen our Subvented Agencies like the Monuments and Relics Commission, the National Tourist Board, the Sierra Leone National Dance Troupe, and the National Railway Museum. We have further ensured a favourable and conducive business environment by reviewing and upgrading obsolete laws including the Monuments and Relics Act of 1967, and the Tourism Development Act of 1991. We have developed a new National Cultural Policy, the ECO Tourism Policy, and the Tourism Master Plan.

91. In addition, three new Cultural Heritage sites were declared in 2016 bringing the number to 21. All of these are either been restored or on the verge of restoration. My Government has provided Le800,000,000 (Eight Hundred Million Leones) and with additional support of \$500,000 from the United States of America, the restoration of Bunce Island has commenced.

92. My Government has constructed an ultra - modern cultural centre at Mabala Village (off Six Mile), to house the National Dance Troupe and serve as a non-formal Institute of Arts and Culture. In addition, the construction of the first ever National Arts Gallery is about to kick off. We now have a design, and the funds from Action Aid Sierra Leone and from my Government to start the process. We have also laid the plans for three additional Museums to be constructed in Bo, Kenema and Makeni.

93. We have taken all of these actions because we believe that by harnessing our leisure, cultural and eco-tourism potentials, we have the greatest chance to enhance the industry and generate enough revenue that will help sustain our economic growth.

94. With support from the World Bank, we are developing ten natural and cultural sites which will boost our pristine and exotic coastal areas for tourism purposes.

95. And we are not doing this haphazardly; a National Eco-tourism Master Plan has been drafted and we are involving our communities through consultative meetings. Today, places like the Aberdeen/Lumley Beach area and Tokeh Beach are being dramatically transformed with an increased development in hotels, guest houses and resorts.

96. These efforts have not gone unnoticed. International arrivals and receipts have increased; making Sierra Leone the fastest growing tourist destination in the world. This has impacted employment ensuring an increase of 80 % in the sector, in 2016. We promised and we delivered!

## **Youth**

97. Mr. Speaker, my Government has been a government for the youth. Almost all our programmes have been youth focused, from free healthcare, to paying public examination fees for secondary school students, to fee subsidies for every student in public universities and colleges, and creation of thousands

of jobs in road-construction, large scale mining and agriculture. We still have challenges, but taking into consideration the number of young people I have appointed into leadership positions, I will also say, ours has been a government by the youth at the Ministries of Sports, Water Resources, Social Welfare, Gender and Children's Affairs, and at the Ministry of Youth Affairs. Ours has been a government by the youth through many ambassadorial postings; it is a government by young people at the National Commission for Privatization, SALWACO, SLEIPA and the ACC.

98. We are implementing the Youth Entrepreneurship and Employment Project supported by the African Development Bank targeting 3,000 youth entrepreneurs and 20 Tertiary and Vocational institutions to upgrade training and business support.

99. We formulated and fully implemented the Youth Employment Scheme Project (2009-2011) that benefitted over 20,000 youths. We developed and fully implemented the World Bank and UNDP sponsored Youth Employment Support Project that benefitted over 48,000 youths countrywide. Through innovative projects like the Graduate Internship Programme, the Business Development Services, the university based Career Advisory and Placement Services Centres, the ICT Youth Resource Centres; we have empowered our youth more than ever before.

100. This faith we have in our youth, this is the commitment our party has made to ensure that our youth become the leaders of today rather than leaders of tomorrow; and this is a legacy we are determined to sustain.

## **Gender**

101. My Government mainstreamed Gender into our National Development Programme, the Agenda for Prosperity, and designed a stand-alone pillar therein to address issues specifically related to women. This is because we believe that women are the mainstay of our communities, the first teachers of our children, and the best members of our families. One of the biggest programmes my government implemented – the Free Healthcare initiative is almost entirely targeted at women. We improved access of girls to schools and women to universities. We have passed laws, from the 2017 amendment of country's Citizenship Act, Devolution of Estates Act to other gender laws that protect and promote women. We have appointed women to leadership positions, including the largest number of women to sit together in cabinet for the first

time. Between 2007-2017, my Government appointed the first female Chief Justice in Sierra Leone; the first female Commissioner General of the National Revenue Authority; the first female Executive Chair of the Environmental Protection Agency; the first female Brigadier General; the first female Auditor General of the Audit Service of Sierra Leone; the first female Director General of Sierra Leone Roads Safety Authority; the Director of Legal Aid Board, the Director of Public Sector Reform Unit, and many other women in various leadership positions in the Ministries, Department and Agencies.

We promised and we delivered!

### **The APC Government for the Poor - Social Protection**

102. Mr. Speaker, Honourable Members, our social protection commitments run through in all our major actions and programmes. The APC Government implemented social insurance interventions for the extremely vulnerable of our compatriots to assist them build social and economic resilience.

103. Under the unconditional cash transfer to Disaster Affected Persons, we provided support to over 29,000 households. And almost 1,800 survivors of the August 14 Mudslide and Flooding Disaster in Freetown are being provided with the same support.

104. This is in addition to over 28,000 beneficiaries of Unconditional Cash Transfers from 2014 to 2017 in Western Area Rural, Moyamba, Kono, Bombali, Tonkolili, Port Loko, Kenema, Bo and Kailahun.

105. From 2014 to 2016, the APC Government implemented the Labour Intensive Public Works to support the spot improvement of feeder roads and food production. This initiative provided Temporary Employment to over 21,000 able youth in the rural areas, 47% of whom were females. The project implemented 214 agricultural and spot improvement of feeder road sub projects for able youth in poor households, thereby improving their socio-economic status.

106. In 2016, in partnership with the World Food Programme, NACSA distributed food packages to 23,388 households during the lean season in six districts including Kambia, Pujehun, Port Loko, Bo, Kenema and Kailahun.

107. Mr. Speaker, Honourable Members, the war ended in 2002, but its ramifications on the welfare of our people and the development of our nation persist. To restore the dignity of war-affected persons including war wounded, amputees, and victims of sexual violence, between 2012 and 2015, our Government, in collaboration with UN Women, provided reparation benefits to 4,648 of our compatriots. Various categories of war-affected persons have benefited from skills training and fistula operations. We have also one-off rehabilitation grants to over 1,000 amputees. This is over and above medical assistance to almost 3,000 severely war wounded. We promised, and we delivered!

108. Certainly, it would not have been possible for the APC to produce most of the development results in the last 10 years if it had not prioritised the strengthening and monitoring of Public Financial Management a ministry that our Party's Standard Bearer, Dr. Samura Kamara, had reformed before moving to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation. We inherited a difficult relationship with the IMF in 2007, but with our prudence and perseverance, we restored IMF confidence in Sierra Leone and in its public sector management. On the basis of the APC Government's firm commitment to the implementation of sound economic policies, the Executive Board of the IMF approved various three year framework agreement programmes under the Extended Credit Facility (ECF), running from 2010 to June 2020.

109. Immediately after assuming the reins of government, the APC Government reviewed the Government Budgeting and Accountability Act 2005; Financial Management Regulations 2007; Public Procurement Act 2004; and Procurement Regulations 2006. We did that to strengthen the legal framework for budgeting, accounting, recording and procurement. And, in line with its policy of promoting transparency and accountability in the management of public resources, the APC Government enacted the Public Financial Management Act 2016, replacing the Government Budgeting and Accountability Act 2005. We also enacted the Public Procurement Act 2016 to replace the Public Procurement Act 2004 consistent with international best practice in public procurement.

110. We have made the Integrated Financial Management Information System (IFMIS) in the Accountant General's Department more functional towards ensuring transparent and effective recording, reporting and accounting of all Government financial transactions. The IFMIS has enabled the Accountant

General's Department to prepare and submit yearly financial statements on the Government of Sierra Leone to the Auditor General in accordance with the legal provisions. This was not the case when we took over governance.

111. We have deployed The Local Councils Financial Accounting and Reporting System in all 19 Local Councils. The Councils also now provide yearly financial statements to the Auditor General on a timely basis in accordance with the legal provisions. We started work on the introduction of a Treasury Single Account System in 2013, to ensure that we have in real time a consolidated view of government cash resources to aid government budgeting and financial planning. A comprehensive inventory of Government bank accounts at the commercial banks was completed and now maintained. We have established more internal audit units, bringing to date the number of MDAs with such units to 43 alongside the 19 local councils, to ensure compliance with laid down public financial management procedures and controls on a routine basis.

We promised, and we delivered.

### **FOREIGN POLICY -Regaining Sierra Leone's Place on the International Stage-The Voice of Africa**

112. Mr. Speaker, Honourable Members, to further re-invigorate our foreign policy and international cooperation, my Government prepared and launched for the very first time, a comprehensive Foreign Service strategy - the Sierra Leone Foreign Service Transformation Strategy, 2014 – 2018.

113. My Government's foreign policy emphasis is shifting towards economic diplomacy. This involves strengthening of Economic Cooperation and Resource Mobilization by signing and implementing Joint Cooperation Agreements and Bilateral Memorand of Understanding with several countries, including China, Saudi Arabia, Turkey, South Korea and the United States of America. These have ensured international support for the implementation of Government priority programmes in the Agenda for Prosperity, and emergency response.

114. We have strengthened multilateral relations by facilitating the ratification and/or domestication of several international agreements, protocols and conventions.

115. More than ever before, we have moved to strengthen bilateral relations. This year alone over 30 ambassadors presented their credentials to me, a massive demonstration of our growing international cooperation with countries from every region of the world. We have expanded our diplomatic presence through the establishment of new embassies and consulates in strategic geographical locations to promote Sierra Leone's interest. These include Kuwait, South Korea and the United Arab Emirates. We have also relocated our Mission in Tripoli, to Cairo. We are in the concluding phases of establishing new embassies in Kenya and Turkey, and we are in discussions to re-open embassies in France and Cuba.

116. As a government committed to infrastructural development, while our predecessors sold off our properties abroad, we have rehabilitated and furnished dilapidated foreign missions that we inherited, and constructed newer embassies and diplomatic residences in Addis Ababa, New York, and Monrovia. We have acquired land for the building of new embassies in Banjul and Accra.

117. With the implementation of our Foreign Service Transformation Strategy, we have increased and enhanced staff capacity through the largest ever recruitment of professional staff and facilitation of diplomatic and other technical training all over the globe.

118. Sierra Leone is providing leadership in several sub-regional, regional, continental and global initiatives. We have been at the forefront of peace and democracy consolidation efforts in the Gambia, Guinea Bissau and Cote D'Ivoire. We have led Africa's efforts to reform the United Nation's System. We are also chair of the G7+ Group of countries; the voluntary association of countries that are or have been affected by conflict and are now in transition to the next stage of development. Our party's standard bearer in his capacity as our Foreign Minister, serve as chair of Africa's Candidatures Committee, charged with increasing the number of Africans in leadership positions in international organizations.

We promised, and we delivered!

## CONCLUSION

119. Mr. Speaker, Honourable Members, the gains my Government has made over the last ten years are to the benefit of the people of Sierra Leone. From Alhaji I Kallon, dealer in electronics in Koidu, who says he now spends less on fuel because of the availability of electricity in the town; to Bockarie Sawie of Jawei Chiefdom, who feels very proud of his community because of the road between Kenema and Pendembu; to Mariama Jabbie, a grandmother in Kono who expressed great joy over the satisfactory free treatment her grandchild received at the Koidu Government Hospital; to Musa Kanu, a pupil in Konakri Dee Junior School, who says with the solar lights, he can now study at night till he gets tired; unlike before when the fumes from naked sources of light affected his eyes.

120. From Samuel Gbla, a driver for ten years plying between Masingbi and Kono who says, now, unlike before, travel time has reduced, number of visits to the garage minimized and he is no longer covered in dust or mud throughout the journey; to the thousands of Sierra Leoneans whose dignity and rights we have restored through free legal aid; to PC Banya of Luawa chiefdom, and PC NGombu Clar of Kailahun district, to PC Adikali Mayla II of Maforki chiefdom in Port Loko district, all of whom believe that their chiefdoms are far better today than they were ten years ago - the APC Government's development agenda has touched every region, every district, and every chiefdom. The sheer breadth of our programmes, and the unprecedented reach of their impacts, show that we are on the path to attaining our national ambition of becoming a middle income country by 2030. The foundation having being laid, our task therefore is to sustain these great achievements for the ordinary man and woman; expand the range of our support; and overcome the remaining challenges. It is our responsibility to sustain the building of new roads; sustain the construction of new schools; sustain the opening of new universities, hospitals and power stations. It must be our commitment to move forward with the expansion of our people's access to justice that uphold their rights; jobs that support their livelihoods; leadership positions that embrace their youthfulness; programmes that promote gender equity; and actions that integrate the physically challenged into the achievements of the promise of Sierra Leone.

121. Mr. Speaker, Honourable Members, on March 7, 2018, our nation is going to the polls to make the important decision of electing its new leaders. In doing so, we must remember where we are coming from; the struggles we

have undergone, and the gains we have made. In making that important decision; we must all remember that we do not have another Sierra Leone, and that elections are not, and should not be a life or death affair. In making that decision, we must remember that we owe it to ourselves and to posterity, to keep the peace and to prove to the world once again, that we are ready to move on to become a prosperous member of the world community. On my part, I will continue to provide the level playing field for every compatriot to participate in a free, fair and democratic environment. And I want to entreat all the aspirants to understand that Sierra Leone is bigger than every one of us; and to tone down the rhetoric, for in the end, we are all one family; related by blood, by marriage, or by affiliation. Let us go to the polls in peace and in harmony; and come out a stronger and a more united country.

122. Mr. Speaker, as I prepare to leave, I must admit that I am not a perfect man, I am not without faults; but I have worked to ensure that as I came with clean hands, I am going to leave with clean hands. Mine is the only Government that has not hanged anyone; mine is the only Government that has never put anyone before a firing squad. I am not a perfect person, and it is impossible to be a leader and not hurt people, every day I ask the good Lord to grant the spirit of forgiveness unto those I might have hurt, and I pray in the tradition of my faith to forgive all those who might have trespassed against us. And I also pray, that as we move into this testing moment in our country's history, we find the courage to assert the better values of our magnanimity, our tolerance and our friendship.

123. Once again, thank you Sierra Leone, Thank you Mr. Vice President, Thank you Mr. Speaker, thank my Lord the Chief Justice, thanks to past and current ministers, thank you past and current Members of Parliament, thank you to our security forces, thanks to our civil and public servants, to our media and civil society, to our farmers, to our drivers, our motor bike riders, our carpenters, our builders, our electricians, our welders, our school going children, our university students, our teachers and lecturers, our market women; and to our international development partners, I thank you. I wish you all Happy Christmas.

124. God bless the Republic of Sierra Leone!



SIERRA LEONE GOVERNMENT

# VALEDICTORY PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS

DELIVERED BY

**HIS EXCELLENCY THE PRESIDENT  
DR. ERNEST BAI KOROMA**

*President of the Republic of Sierra Leone  
Supreme Head of State and Grand Commander of the  
Order of the Republic  
Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces  
Fountain Head of Unity, Honour, Freedom and Justice*

AT

**Parliament Building, Tower Hill, Freetown**

ON

*Thursday, 7th December, 2017 at 10:00 a.m.*

**On the Occasion of the Dissolution of the Fourth  
Parliament of the Second Republic of Sierra Leone**

**In the Chamber of Parliament Building  
Tower Hill, Freetown**