

**National Statement by the H.E Dr. Julius Maada Bio, President of the Republic of Sierra Leone, at the 28<sup>th</sup> Conference of Parties of the United Nations Framework Conventions on Climate Change in Dubai, United Arab Emirate; 1<sup>st</sup> – 2nd November 2023 .**

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Your Excellency Antonio Guterres – Secretary General of the United Nation, the COP28 President - Sultan Al Jaber , the UNFCCC Executive Secretary – Simon Stiell -, Excellencies, Heads of states, Distinguished Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen

On behalf of my Government and the People of Sierra Leone, I am pleased to address this first part of the high level segment under the Presidency of the United Arab Emirates and to re-affirm Sierra Leone’s commitment to the reduction of global temperature to save our planet.

This 28<sup>th</sup> Conference of Parties which centers around the first Global Stocktake presents another global platform for countries to share experiences on actions taken in the face of this global scourge, and to draw on best practices adopted by countries with a view that no country is left behind in this fight. Climate change is real; its catastrophic impact keeps manifesting across the continent. More and more frequently, countries and cities of the Global South are facing climate-related disasters such as floodings, mudslides, drought, extreme heat and disappearing coastline. It is no secret to this august gathering that Sierra Leone remains one of the countries that has been globally acclaimed to be prone to climate change vagaries.

***Excellencies, and Distinguished Delegates***

Sierra Leone is among the lowest emitters of Greenhouse Gases (GHG) on the globe; yet it is one of the most climate-vulnerable countries in the world. This vulnerability keeps increasingly affecting diverse sectors in the country. The biggest threat posed by climate change in Sierra Leone is its looming effects on the agricultural sector; which happens to be the mainstay of our economy. Sadly, climate change has no boundaries and if appropriate global action is not taken; climate variability is projected to increase in terms of frequency and severity in the coming decade and this will pose elevating threats to diverse sectors especially food systems. This climate crisis, if not nipped in the bud, could have severe

repercussions particularly in rural Sierra Leone where the majority of household heads are women and depend on natural resources and the agricultural sector for their livelihood

### *Excellencies, and Distinguished Delegates*

Sierra Leone is committed to increase her climate ambitions to fulfill the commitments stated in our updated Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC) – a strategy addressing priority areas mostly affected by the effects of climate change including agriculture, energy, fisheries and coastal zone management, tourism, disaster management, gender and social inclusion, among others. The NDC was developed based on a consultative approach and has given a special consideration for the most vulnerable groups, such as rural women, children and youths.

To contribute to the mitigation of global GHG emissions, Sierra Leone's commitment is to reduce its domestic GHG emissions by 10% by 2030 through the implementation of emissions reduction from Deforestation and Forest Degradation programmes, as well as promoting innovation and technology transfer for sustainable breakthroughs in energy transition, mainstreaming climate change into development of port facilities, roads, and bridges. We have also introduced programmes to restore our forests on 960,000 hectares.

Our portfolio of actions includes building our nation's resilience and adaptive capacity through a multisectoral approach that puts community led engagements at the heart of what we do. We therefore, will leave no stone unturned to support community-based adaptation strategies in the agriculture sector through the implementation of my flagship Feed Salone programme. The policies my government has developed – and is rolling out – will improve our integrated water resources management systems, climate smart agriculture, strengthen climate-induced risk management, improve meteorological services for early warning systems, and enhance conservation and protection of the natural habitats and ecosystems.

*Your Excellencies and delegates,*

To improve the coordination and collaboration of most sectors with a mandate over environmental issues, my Government established a standalone Ministry of the Environment

and climate change in 2019. The Ministry of the Environment and Climate Change, will continue to work tirelessly to deliver its climate-oriented action programmes. My country remains a strong supporter of the African Union resolution, the African Climate Summit declaration and your Presidency's agenda to deliver bold, ambitious, and focused outcomes after this conference .

To help the most climate-vulnerable countries implement their most urgent climate strategies, we need to remove finance barriers faced by the Global South and agree on a clear roadmap of unlocking adequate climate finance for the most vulnerable countries standing at the front line of climate change. This targeted financing should provide flexibility for accessing funds promptly as global warming is fast transiting to global boiling. Thus, I therefore join colleagues' parties to call on Developed countries ( especially the higher emitters) to continue with their profound commitment and leadership in the provision of the necessary financial supports.

*Excellencies, distinguished delegates,*

We are aware of the limited resource capacities of countries; especially the Least Developed Countries (LDCs). But we are also aware and acknowledge the tremendous efforts and diverse supports this Body had given to countries. Nonetheless, these supports are way below the target to ensure emission reduction as stated in the IPCC 6<sup>th</sup> Assessment report.

As I conclude, let me emphasize Sierra Leone commitment to implement outcomes from this conference to make planet earth a safer heaven.

I will remiss in my submission if I fail to acknowledge and thank the Government and people of the United Arab Emirates for organizing this conference amidst the global financial challenges.

**Thank you all for your kind attention.**