



PERMANENT MISSION OF THE REPUBLIC OF
SIERRA LEONE TO THE UNITED NATIONS

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STATEMENT

by

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at the

High-level Plenary Meeting of the General Assembly
for the Adoption of the Post-2015 Development Agenda

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Check Against Delivery

**Mr. President,
Mr. Secretary-General of the United Nations,
Excellencies,
Distinguished delegates,**

I have the honour, on behalf of my country, Sierra Leone, to participate in this historic summit for the adoption of Agenda 2030 on Sustainable Development.

At the outset, allow me to acknowledge with sincere thanks and appreciation, the leadership role of the outgoing President of the General Assembly, H.E. Mr. Sam Kahamba Kutesa for successfully guiding the process.

Sierra Leone endorses the adoption of the Post-2015 Development Agenda and fully aligns itself with statements of support delivered by the distinguished representatives of South Africa and Benin on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, as well as by many other speakers before me.

Mr. President,

The United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development held in Rio three years ago was a critical step forward to build the world we hope for. In this regard, we should now commit ourselves to walking out the ambitions set out in Agenda 2030. We must strive to transform our world through a new development trajectory, and take concrete, “bold and transformative steps” to end extreme poverty, which as aptly described in the 2030 Agenda, “is the greatest global challenge and an indispensable requirement for sustainable development”.

We note the important progress made in the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). The major challenge in ensuring success of the SDGs is working out a proactive and effective implementation strategy that must include firstly, a seamless transition between the MDGs and the SDGs and secondly, the development of new approaches that include issues of multi-stakeholder ownership, institutional partnerships, universality, empirical analysis and knowledge sharing. We must therefore take the gaps and challenges in the implementation of the MDGs as our takeoff point in the implementation of Agenda 2030 on Sustainable Development.

To this end, we should also ensure that the new development paradigm adequately addresses the needs, challenges and development priorities of every Member State, and we must remain steadfast and resolute in our pledge to leave no one behind.

Mr. President,

Many countries in Africa, particularly fragile and conflict-affected countries were confronted with challenges beyond their capacity to achieve the MDGs. These challenges remain enormous, ranging from poor infrastructures to weak institutions, low human capital and lack of adequate and predictable financing despite the noticeable strides made in promoting democracy and good governance. This new Agenda therefore presents a unique opportunity to not only ensure that the critical issues confronting Africa and other parts of the World: Poverty, hunger, youth unemployment, social inequality and the impact of climate change, to name but a few; are effectively addressed, but also to find integrated and innovative solutions to address the special needs of the conflict affected, fragile and Least Developed Countries.

Sierra Leone therefore welcomes the recognition of the need to mobilize adequate resources for conflict-affected countries. We underscore the significance of a long term, stable and predictable flow of financing in order to reduce the inherent problems that are associated with uncertain or short term financial flows. This is why we endorse the new financing framework which “requires public finance, policies and regulatory frameworks, unlocking the transformative potential of people and the private sector, and incentivizing changes in consumption, production and investment patterns to support sustainable development”.

We firmly support the call to tackle climate change, and urge all member States and other stakeholders to maintain the momentum in collaboratively mobilizing the political will towards achieving a meaningful, universal climate change agreement in Paris in December this year.

Mr. President,

Official Development Assistance (ODA) remains one of the main sources of international financing for many developing countries. Sierra Leone strongly believes that ODA is essential as a catalyst for development, including meeting the unfinished business of the MDGs and the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals. But ODA must be “smart”: it must focus on ‘aid orphans’ and due consideration should be given to conflict affected countries within the spirit of the ‘New Deal’ which we believe should be mainstreamed within the UN system.

The 17 SDGs and 169 targets are indivisible, which simply means that success on all of them is required for a truly transformative world that can better the lives and dignity of the human race.

Sierra Leone welcomes goal 16 of the SDGs which underpins the importance and interlinkages between peace, security, stability human rights and the rule of law as necessary conditions for development.

Sierra Leone will continue to build on the remarkable progress in political stability which is critical to development. We have put people at the center of development and will in that regard, continue to place emphasis on the protection of the basic rights of our people. We will continue to adopt measures to build on progress made in addressing the root causes of conflict. We have laid the foundation for medium and long-term national development and will continue to build on them. Building peace, security and consolidating good governance reforms will continue to be among our priorities. These provide us the appropriate healing therapy for a country that has emerged from a massively devastating conflict and now Ebola.

We have moved from a country on the agenda of the Security Council to a nation that is a storehouse of lessons on how to successfully move away from war to peace and development. Notwithstanding the unprecedented Ebola Virus outbreak which gravely impacted negatively on our socio-economic development, we are resolute and committed to implementing our Agenda for Prosperity which is tailored along most of the goals of the 2030 Agenda together with the post Ebola recovery strategy. We wish to commend and express our special thanks to the United Nations and the International Community for their support to end the epidemic as well as in pursuing our post-Ebola recovery plan.

To conclude Mr. President, amidst our current challenges, we will continue to build on progress made in addressing key development priorities, particularly in the areas of gender equality and women’s empowerment, youth unemployment, management of natural resources, food security, effective delivery of public services and a robust private sector led growth that

would translate into more tangible peaceful dividends. We therefore look forward to meaningful partnerships as well as a structured and forward looking successful implementation of the SDGs within the next fifteen years.

Together we can build a better world for succeeding generations.

I thank you.