



## **SIERRA LEONE PEOPLE'S PARTY**



### **THE NEW DIRECTION:**

***CONSOLIDATING GAINS AND ACCELERATING  
TRANSFORMATION***

***PEOPLE'S MANIFESTO 2023***

***ABRIDGED VERSION***

# FREETOWN INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT

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## FOREWORD

Five years ago, the Sierra Leone People's Party (SLPP) under my leadership promised the People of Sierra Leone a "New Direction" in the People's Manifesto. That Manifesto represented a contract between the SLPP and the Sierra Leonean electorate. Our Vision of a united, peaceful and progressive Sierra Leone presented in that Manifesto won your approval and vote, and you elected me as President of the Republic of Sierra Leone. When I took the oath of office on my inauguration day, I Leoneans, regardless of political affiliation, religion, and tribe.

By the grace of God, five years on, I can say to the People of Sierra Leone that under my leadership and the New Direction Government I put together, we have made good on the most critical promises for transforming Sierra Leone. As we embarked on setting our country on a new path, the COVID-19 Pandemic broke out with far reaching consequences on the lives of millions in Sierra Leone and testing our resolve to transform the country. I am proud to say that we passed that test, with Sierra Leone seen as an exemplary case for effectively addressing the Pandemic when it inevitably reached our shores. We are currently in the midst of a global economic shock resulting from the Russia-Ukraine Conflict that has potential to upend gains we have made in my first term.

In the last five years, we took on big challenges and we succeeded in addressing them even under these unprecedented global challenges. We prioritised human capital development as the flagship programme. The results we have achieved are laudable even to our most stern critics. On almost every single indicator in education, from access, literacy and numeracy rate, gender parity in outcomes, transition rate, etc., Sierra Leone is better today than five years ago. It gives me great hope that our children are learning in schools again while removing the burden of school and exam fees from parents. On health, Sierra Leone has not only improved, but we perform better on most health outcome indicators than most of our regional neighbours. Far less women die during delivery and more infants grow up to see their 5<sup>th</sup> birthday, than five years ago. My Presidency has perhaps been most consequential for promoting rights for women and children. We have engrained in our laws that women should have the same opportunities as men in every facet of life, and we continue to empower them to do so. The "Hands off Our Girls" campaign led by the First Lady has considerably helped to keep our girls longer in schools and protect them from early pregnancy and marriage. With increased investments in tertiary education and technical vocational training, our youth are better trained than before. Our social protection programmes like the unconditional cash transfer by NaCSA continue to give dignity to the most vulnerable in our society.

We have also given a facelift to our infrastructure. We have paved additional township roads, linked more district headquarter towns and constructed bridges and feeder roads to ease access to market from our production centres. We have increased the proportion of households with electricity and built the capacity to double access while also reducing cost. Internet penetration has quadrupled in the last five years, and mobile connectivity has expanded to more remote locations. We have leveraged digitalization to bring efficiency in service delivery and to support innovation in the private sector. The banking sector now benefits from interoperability offered by the National Switch, with even more promise for wider financial inclusion.

Ensuring that people have trust in our democracy and government has been critical to me and the SLPP. My government has been the most aggressive at tackling corruption. Our



effort in this regard has been noticed and rewarded by many reputable international organizations, including the Millennium Challenge Corporation (MCC) and Transparency International, that consistently rank my administration among the most corrupt-free in the region. We have removed the death penalty, and repealed the seditious libel law, giving the press more freedom. I made it a personal interest to rebrand the image of Sierra Leone in the international community because this is important for attracting investors and buying us good will. Sierra Leone now holds several leadership roles on critical issues at the international stage.

The hardest challenge we have faced is rise in cost of living resulting from the multiple global shocks. My resolve has been to do all we can to shield our people from these economic shocks. We have ensured that essential commodities are available in the country even when others experienced prolonged shortages. We invested to boost local food production. We have increased the salaries of teachers, nurses, the police, and the military, and we have consistently paid salaries on time. We have raised the minimum wage and increased pension for retirees, and created jobs.

I am motivated by the gains we have made and the potential to do even more. Therefore, I humbled again to lead the SLPP into another election, and to ask the people of Sierra Leone to renew the contract I signed with them five years ago. We are presenting a new manifesto; ***"The New Direction Agenda: Consolidating the Gains and Accelerating Transformation"*** which gives account of our stewardship in the last five years and lays out the vision to continue transforming Sierra Leone.

This is an agenda that promises to consolidate the gains we have made, and to take advantage of new opportunities we have created, while addressing emerging challenges. Our vision remains to get Sierra Leone to a middle-income status by 2030. We believe we have put the right policies in place to support this agenda.

In the next five years we will prioritise the following five initiatives as anchors for faster and lasting transformation; **Feed Salone**, which entails an ambitious programme to boost staple food production to drastically minimize our reliance on food imports, increase our exports, create jobs, boost economic growth and reduce poverty, **Human Capital Development for Nurturing Skills for 21<sup>st</sup> Century Industry**, with a gender focus, a **Youth Employment Scheme (YES)** that aims to create jobs for through a focused initiative that I will lead, a **Tech and Infrastructure Programme** to serve as pathways for sustained economic growth, and **Revamping the Public Service Architecture**, for delivery efficiency and professionalism. I believe that making progress in these key areas will set Sierra Leone on a path of transformational change, poverty reduction and resilience in the face of external shocks.

The choice is stark for the June 24<sup>th</sup> elections. We have presented an account of our stewardship and the responsibility you bestowed on us five years ago. We have also presented a focused agenda for building on the progress we have made. Under normal circumstances the gains we have made will guarantee landslide electoral victory for the SLPP. But I urge every SLPP supporter and well-wisher to avoid complacency as the opponents will aim to exploit effects of the global economic shock for electoral advantage.

I again commend this Manifesto for your approval and ask that you vote for my re-election to protect investments we have made in your children and the future of Sierra Leone.

Brigadier (Rtd.) Dr. Julius Maada Bio  
SLPP Candidate for 2023 Presidential Elections



## Part II: OUR TAKE OFF POINT



## A Steep Climb from Eleven Years of Mismanagement

In 2018, H.E President Bio and the Sierra Leone People's Party (SLPP) were entrusted with the responsibility of leading Sierra Leone towards a new direction of stability, accountability, and prosperity. They recognised the enormity of the challenges caused by the eleven years of APC rule and the pressing need to tackle them head-on. At take-off in 2018, we were faced with:

- **A crumbling economy** characterised by state declared austerity, high rates of poverty and food insecurity, rise in cost of living, elevated national debt levels accumulated arrears to contractors, backlog payments to public workers like teacher nurses and high levels of unemployment among the youth.
- **Low human capital base:** With limited access to education for children, high rates of dropout and teenage pregnancy among our young girls, high maternal and mortality rate and unequal opportunities for women across all facets of government.
- **A huge infrastructure deficit:** With limited roads in townships and weak links to production centres limited access to electricity, with most district headquarter towns without power and a weak digital infrastructure.
- **A broken governance system:** with unchecked and high levels of corruptions and low accountability in governance, a weakened press, low trust in government.

The SLPP's People's Manifesto, The New Direction, presented a comprehensive plan and vision to tackle the challenges facing Sierra Leone. Prioritizing human capital development, we embarked on an ambitious social program to enhance education and healthcare systems, expand social protection, and provide adequate nutrition for children in rural areas. We also championed the protection of young girls and the promotion of gender equality across all sectors of society. Critics claimed it was too expensive and that we lacked the necessary resources to succeed, while others argued it was not politically prudent as the benefits of such investments extend beyond the president's term.

But SLPP is as convinced today, as then, that investing in women and children holds the best promise for inclusive prosperity today and in the future. We got to work and focused on raising resources so that we can deliver on our promises. For the last five years we have consistently allocated 22% of government budget to education and increased allocation to health to 11%. The returns from these investments have been encouraging; with more children enrolled in schools but without the burden of school and exam fees on their parents. We have higher transition rates than ever before, and we have closed gender parity in primary education attainment. Far less women now die from childbirth and more infants grow up to see their first birthday. Our public health and emergency response systems is rated among the best in the region. We passed a law to create equal opportunity for women in government and to protect our young girls.

We made cost effective investments to modernise our infrastructure with a focus on improving electricity and road network in our production centres and rural areas. Sierra Leone now boasts of a modern international airport at Lungi. We have improved governance and regained the people's trust in our democracy. Sierra Leone is today rated among the least corrupt, and most peaceful in the region. We repealed seditious libel law and ended the death penalty. Sound macroeconomic management has been the bedrock of what we have been able to do. We have put the economy on a growth trajectory, increased revenue generation, and reduced our exposure to external debt.



**PART IV: LEADING  
THROUGH EXTERNAL  
SHOCKS**



# EXTERNAL SHOCKS, THEIR EFFECTS, LESSONS, AND OPPORTUNITIES

## 4.1 Effects of Shocks

In 2018, H.E President Bio took over power with a clear mission to fix the mess left by the previous administration and deliver on our commitments to the people of Sierra Leone. However, we faced unexpected challenges in the form of multiple global shocks that have had an unprecedented impact both globally and locally. These shocks exposed the depth and scale of the challenges we inherited, and made our task even more difficult.

Less than two years after the transition of power, the COVID-19 Pandemic struck disrupting every aspect of public and private life, and provided the biggest test to the new SLPP administration. While the country experienced perhaps the fewest direct fatalities from the disease than any other in the region, the toll on the economy and the livelihood of millions of people was most devastating.

Lockdowns, curfews and travel restrictions collapsed businesses, made people jobless and obstructed the flow and distribution of essential items such as food across the country. International border closures meant our tourism sector and associated industries came to a halt. We had laid the perfect foundation to welcome investors, with several impactful projects lined up, but all of these fizzled out and delayed for another two years. In essence, the Pandemic brought our economy to its knees and wiped out the hard-won gains in stabilising the economy.

At the peak of the crisis, the Sierra Leone economy experienced a negative growth rate of -2%. Furthermore, as a net-importer of most essential commodities, disruptions in global supply chains and inflation for essential commodities in the world market have increased cost of living for millions here at home. At the same time, Government lost revenue that was badly needed to implement our social programmes.

As an empathetic leader, H.E President Bio did everything possible to shield the people of Sierra Leone from the full brunt of the effects of these external shocks. The New Direction Government devised the Quick Action Economic Response Programme (QAERP) to bolster the economy and protect livelihoods.

The Government extended up to \$100 million in credit facilities to importers to ensure essential items such a food and fuel were available throughout the country. As a result of this effort Sierra Leone did not experience shortages as we saw in other places.

The government also expanded mechanisation to quickly boost local food production and provided another \$10 million in credit facility for importers of agriculture inputs such as seeds and fertiliser. We provided jobs through cash-for-work programmes and encouraged the youth to farm through youth operated farms in every chiefdom in Sierra Leone.

The Government maintained zero import duty and GST on rice importation. It deferred tax payments for industries most affected by the crisis and expanded social safety net programs to worker affected by layoffs and the most vulnerable. To encourage businesses to invest and grow again, the Government supported Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) through the revolving MUNAFA Fund.





The economy responded to these interventions and real GDP growth was on an upward trajectory when the Russia-Ukraine conflict broke. The effect of this conflict on the global economy and geopolitics has landed the biggest blow yet to our recovery efforts. As a small open economy that relies heavily on the import of essential commodities, global commodity price hikes and extended disruptions in the global supply chain for critical inputs such as fertiliser and fuel have resulted in even further prices increase here at home and increased cost of production, stalling economic growth.

Policy responses from the West, including the appreciation of the US dollar has led to a decline in value of our currency, that translates into increases in our debt burdens, import bill and a further squeeze to the limited fiscal space available for Government. Furthermore, unlike the Ebola crisis when the world poured resources into Sierra Leone, the existing crises have also squeezed fiscal space from our traditional partners, and we have had to move our key programmes largely from our own resources.

## 4.2 Lessons from Shocks

The achievements the SLPP have recorded in these past five years have happened largely in this backdrop of these crises. The crises exposed glaring vulnerabilities in our economy, and there are critical lessons we have learned that informs the bold and targeted agenda we are proposing for the next five years.

In governing in this crisis period, we have learned the following:

- Our dependence on food import has been a drag on the economy and a lost opportunity to create market for Sierra Leonean farmers.
- Building resilience from the ground up requires creating job opportunities for our people, especially the youth.
- Our economy can only sustain growth and withstand shocks if growth sectors are diverse and have possibilities for value addition.
- Sound economic management is the bedrock for driving an economic and social agenda.
- While external borrowing can be useful to fund capital projects, overexposure can lead debt stress in these uncertain times.
- Sierra Leone needs multiple financing models and options, including from domestic and international, public, private as well development partners to undertake financially sound capital-intensive projects.
- Our investment infrastructure must be cost effective and linked to growth activities.
- Our immediate neighbours and regional markets provide an opportunity for mutual benefits in trade.

## 4.3 Emerging Opportunities

In addition to these lessons, the crises and our good governance have also presented new opportunities that will guide our agenda for the next five years. Some of the most promising opportunities include:

- Sierra Leone is in advanced stages of developing an MCC compact that will support a rapid expansion in energy for growth.



- The Government of Sierra Leone's Agriculture Delivery Compact was positively received by the Africa Development Banks and will receive support to attract funding from the private sector for implementation.
- Increases in price for commodities such as oil palm and wheat flour provide an opportunity for Sierra Leone develop export value chains around these or their substitutes.
- By creating the Ministry of Environment (MOE) and the National Disaster Management Agency (NDMA) we are building the capability to sustainably use and protect our environment, as well as help access climate finance opportunities.
- We have developed and launched the National Switch which now enables interoperability between banks and holds great promise for enabling a cashless community and financial inclusion.
- Our investments and successes in Basic and Senior Secondary Education has attracted further funding for the country to do more in Foundational Learning and in Technical and Vocational Learning.
- The legislative gains in extending rights for women will boost their participation in the public and private sector, and hence boost growth.
- Our partnership with the SUMA Group to build a modern International Airport in Lungi is likely to attract other investment to undertake other capital projects in adjacent sectors, such as hotels and hospitals in Lungi.
- The SLPP government has just launched a \$50 million World Bank funded project to improve the digital ecosystem that will clear the way for further investments in technology and digital innovation.
- The SLPP Government launched the digital National Identification Number systems that will support multiple service delivery use cases.

#### **4.4 Prioritising the Flagship Agenda**

In the last five years, significant progress has been made in achieving the goals set in the 2018 Manifesto. Now, the focus for the next five years is to consolidate these achievements and institutionalize them to ensure sustainability and prevent any potential setbacks. Ongoing programs under the New Direction agenda will be completed during this period. Moreover, the efforts made in the previous years, combined with the evolving global dynamics, have created new opportunities that can accelerate the transformation of Sierra Leone.

To drive this transformation and address the most pressing challenges, the government will prioritize five strategic initiatives as part of the President's flagship agenda for the next five years. These initiatives will serve as the foundation for bringing about change and will directly tackle key issues. They are seen as game changers that will stimulate economic growth, reduce hunger and poverty, enhance the efficiency of the public service, generate employment opportunities, and promote resilience in the face of challenges.

By focusing on these strategic initiatives and leveraging the lessons learned, the government aims to build upon the progress achieved so far and propel Sierra Leone further towards sustainable development and prosperity. The goal is to create a solid framework that will ensure the continued advancement of the country and capitalise on the potential for growth and positive change in the years to come.



## The Big Five: Game Changers for Building an Inclusive and Prosperous Sierra Leone





## 1. Feed Salone: An Initiative to Boost Agriculture Productivity to Ensure Food Security and Inclusive

The topmost priority for H.E President Bio in his second term is to ensure Sierra Leone is food self-sufficient within the next five years. Our dependence on food import makes us vulnerable and weakens our sovereignty. The next SLPP Government will boost agriculture productivity to fuel inclusive growth, boost food production, reduce hunger, boost export earnings, create jobs, and build resilience.

To achieve these objectives the SLPP makes the following pledges:

- Increase Government budget allocation to agriculture to at least 10%
- Develop policies to make local production of rice competitive
- Invest in research to boost the yields of priority crops like rice, cassava, cocoa, coffee and cashew, as well as livestock productivity
- Expand area under rice cultivation through mechanisation and irrigation in the rice bowl of the country
- Provide financing options to de-risk private sector investment in processing and value addition
- Include key agricultural inputs, such as fertiliser on the list of essential items
- Develop financing and insurance schemes to encourage production from small holder farmers in horticulture
- Establish a homegrown institutional (school, military, hospitals) feeding programme to induce food production from farmers
- Facilitate the establishment of cash crop cooperatives and commodity exchanges to support food processing and aggregation
- Provide training and incentives to attract youth in agriculture
- Establish at least five Farmer Service and Agri-business Centres across the country in the next three years to support knowledge transfer and provide critical service to farmers



## 2. Human Capital Development: Nurturing Skills for 21st Century Industry

Building our human capital base continues to be a priority for the SLPP. In the past five years we made tremendous gains with our Free Quality Secondary Education flagship, with the country experiencing one of the largest pass rates in the university entrance examination in recent times. We are poised to achieve even bigger gains with the policy and legislative foundation we have laid. We have learned in the process that investing in Foundational Learning will make our job easier at the primary and secondary levels. At the Higher and Technical we have made gains by expanding access especially in the areas of Science, Technology, Engineering, Agriculture and Mathematics (STEAM) courses. We have established technical and vocational centres in almost every chiefdom in the country.

Our investment in health systems will continue to be a key driver for building a productive society ready to add value in the modern era. We will build skills for the health sector by focusing of specialized skills, and mass public health and emergency systems to meet the rising demand for healthcare in the country.

Creating equal opportunity for women across all facets of life is a core goal of the human capital development agenda. The Government will build on the Gender Equity and Women's Empowerment (GEWE) ACT 2022 to support women's active and productive participation in government and in the private sector.

In the next five years the SLPP will focus on translating these gains into developing a highly skilled labour force that is ready for the 21st century industry. We will focus on reducing the missing middle in our labour force. At the same time, we will develop talents for professional jobs in the private sector and the civil service. The SLPP pledges the following:

- Sustain government budget allocation education
- Continue to expand access in primary and secondary education
- Invest in Foundational Learning
- Provide free sanitary pads to girls in schools
- Continue to invest to attract women in STEAM courses
- Provide funding from Technical and Vocational Training in universities and other formal Government sponsored training institutions
- Implement the Sierra Leone Health Insurance Scheme to expand access to health care and reduce out-of-pocket expenditure.
- Extend free healthcare services to all school-going children nationwide
- Digitalise the HRH system to inform human resource planning, management and decision making
- Develop a robust plan for the Implementation of the GEWE Policy 2020 and Gender Empowerment Act 2022
- Mainstream gender empowerment in policy and programming across the board
- Build the capacity of the Ministry of Labour to provide certification for trainings in Technical Vocational Skills and a Labour Management Information System (LMIS)
- Establish a wage support scheme for people that get certification and get hired in technical and vocational jobs



### **3. Youth Employment Scheme (YES!): A Presidential Initiative to create 500,000 jobs for the youth in five years**

Persistent youth unemployment poses a big threat to sustaining economic growth and stability. Youth, those between the ages of 15-35 make up more than a third of the population in Sierra Leone. Of this population, those that are not in school, university or engaged in formal training are largely unemployed in urban centres. In the rural areas too, youth have found little incentive to engage in productive work. Our graduates from the universities are largely underemployed. These unemployed youths especially in the urban centres often fall prey to opportunists that use them in violent protests and thuggery.

The SLPP harness the energy of the youth to create an inclusive and lasting prosperity in Sierra Leone. In the process we build patriotism, national pride, and resilience among our youth. The next SLPP Government will establish a Presidential initiative for job creation for the youth that will aim to create 500,000 jobs in the next five years. These jobs will include skilled and unskilled, long term, as well as seasonal jobs across all sectors.

The SLPP pledges the following to achieve this goal:

- Provide targeted incentives (tax and non-tax incentives) for the private sector to hire youths
- Set aside a special fund to reimburse costs of hiring, training and upskilling youth incurred by private sector
- Adopt a Government policy that encourages the inclusion of youth in public work and infrastructure projects
- Establish a Youth Opportunity Centre in every district headquarter town to support youth in their quest to get employment
- Provide access to capital for youth that wishes to start their own venture
- Establish a database to track employment of youth in both public and private sector
- Provide special incentives for youths in the ICT and creative industry
- Design a special programme to create job opportunities for out of school young girls



## 4. Revamping the Public Service Architecture: Delivery, Efficiency and Professionalism

The Public Service is the backbone for driving transformation in Sierra Leone. Since assuming office in 2018, the New Direction government has developed a Civil Service Training Policy to provide the general framework for comprehensive capacity building in the public sector and the running of the Civil Service Training College. While these efforts have increased the capacity on the margins, the Public Service architecture in Sierra Leone still requires strategic changes to be fit for purpose for the Governance agenda of H.E President Bio. The SLPP is committed to reforming the public service to that focuses on delivery, fosters a culture of professionalism, meritocracy, and continuous improvement to enhance its effectiveness and efficiency in serving the people of Sierra Leone. Our goal is to build a Public Service that attracts and keep our brightest talents to be at the forefront of tackling our hardest challenges. With ongoing constitutional review process provides an opportunity for a lasting transformation in of the Sierra Leone Public Service. The SLPP Pledges the following:

- Review the policy and legal framework for public service to make it more professional and attractive to Sierra Leonean professionals who would like to work for Government
- Establish a centre of Government delivering unit in the Presidency with a coherent connection to smaller delivery units in line ministries
- Improve incentives to support productivity and merit-based system in recruitment and progression of the workforce
- Introduce standardise exams for recruitment in the Public Service
- Strengthen the Performance Management of MDAs by review the existing frameworks and developing Performance Management Policy
- Develop an Electronic Personnel Management System to keep track of professionals recruited into the Civil Service
- Operationalise the Wages and Compensation Commission Act 2023 to will spearhead the welfare of the Public Service



## 5. Tech and Infrastructure: Pathways for Sustained Economic Growth (TIPEG)

Targeted investments in infrastructure tied to economic growth activities is indispensable to the transformation agenda of the SLPP. High cost of energy and poor road network linking production centres to markets has been a key bottle for private sector growth in Sierra Leone. With the MCC Compact development well on the way, the next SLPP Government is poised to rapidly expand energy in key production zones of the country, relying on both renewable and non-renewable sources. Similarly, the Government has several roads and bridge construction projects in the pipeline, most of which are planned for the production areas.

In addition, the SLPP Government understands that technology and digital innovation is a vital enabler and presents the greatest opportunity to accelerate transformational change in Sierra Leone. In the last five years, the SLPP Government established Directorate of Science Technology and Innovation (DSTI), and together with the Ministry of Information and Communication (MIC) have laid the foundation for Sierra Leone to benefit from the power of technology and innovation to deliver services and grow our economy. We have extended the national fibre network, increased internet, and mobile access, mobile money agents are in almost every chiefdom, by making needed improvement in the ecosystem. In the next five years, infrastructure and technology and innovation will be critical enablers for boosting and sustaining high economic growth. We aim to make most transaction in the economy cashless and increase financial inclusion. Will expand energy production for productive use, and build roads linking production centres to markets. The SLPP pledge the following:

- Expand the Switch to include all commercial banks and other financial institutions.
- Build the infrastructure to support and operate digital payment options.
- Establish a national Data Centre and cloud computing Infrastructure for Government data and content hosting
- Develop a national digital addressing system to promote e-commerce
- Protect personal data in digital transactions and communications through Public Key Infrastructure (PKI) (Certificate Authority) to promote trust in online transactions
- Use the post office infrastructure across the country as service centres for digital financial inclusion
- Complete the Southern and Nothren Transmission Line Project that links Mamamah – Songo – Rotifunk - Bauya - Moyamba – Rutile – Pujehun
- Commence Power Import from CLSG via Guinea to add another 120MW
- Complete district capital electrification in all 16 locations
- Increase investment in road construction in key agriculture production and fish processing zones in the country
- Identify and construct economically strategic bridges across the country
- Establish a Rural Energy Directorate to oversee access expansion in all provincial HQ towns and rural areas
- Increase investment in tourism enhancement roads - focusing on roads leading or going through tourist attraction areas in the country





**PART VII: CALL TO  
ACTION**



## Stay the Cause and Seize the Moment

As a country, Sierra Leone has come a long way. We have made a lot of progress in our quest to be free, united, and prosperous. As a people, we have also been tested along the way, but we have prevailed because of our courage and collective love for Mama Salone. We are again being tested by the painful effects of a multitude of global crises. At times like these it easy to lose hope and lose sight of our collective strength in service of Sierra Leone.

But we must rise to the occasion. This is a pivotal moment that demands visionary leadership, bold action, and the courage to enact transformational change. The challenges presented by the global crises require solutions that last, not only through the current crisis, but for future shocks. We must build resilience in our economy, institutions, and our people.

Under the leadership of His Excellency President Bio and the SLPP, we have made strides in shielding our people from the worst effects of the crises while laying the foundation for accelerated transformation. With a clear focus on investing in our people, particularly our children, we are well-positioned to build a capable and resilient society. By prioritizing human capital development, we have built the necessary foundation for lasting change that will prepare us for future shocks. Furthermore, we have installed critical growth promoting infrastructure and have a pipeline to do more. We have built trusted partnership across the globe with states and with the private sectors. We passed laws and made reforms that inspire confidence from our people and investors, enabling our economy to continue on an upward trajectory despite the challenging global economic conditions.

As we look towards the future, we are filled with hope and determination. The plans we have laid out for the next five years promise to tackle our most pressing challenges head on. We are committed to boosting agriculture productivity, tackling food insecurity once and for all, and reducing our dependence on food importation. Our goal is to bring electricity to more homes, build more roads to link our production centres to market, and create job opportunities, especially for the youth. With these initiatives, we are setting our country on a path towards middle income status by 2030.

The June 24<sup>th</sup> election is a critical moment in our country's history. Voters have the solemn responsibility to elect the leader and the political party that are best suited to steer our country through the current challenges, and towards lasting transformation. His Excellency President Bio and the SLPP are the best suited to continue the progress we have made and build on it for a better Sierra Leone. Steady and emphatic leadership under the SLPP has brought us this far, and we have what it takes to take us even further. A vote for President Bio and the SLPP is a vote for continued transformational change that leaves no one behind. On the other hand, a vote for the opposition would mean taking a step back towards the mess that we have been trying to overcome.

We invite all Sierra Leoneans to join us in our efforts to secure a brighter future for Sierra Leone. It is crucial that we all show up and vote on June 24<sup>th</sup> to ensure our country is on the right path towards transformational change. Together, we can continue the hard work that is necessary to build a better Sierra Leone, with a clear vision of progress and prosperity. We urge all well-meaning Sierra Leoneans to vote for the SLPP and help us transform our beloved country into a beacon of hope and opportunity for all.

