



**GOVERNMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF SIERRA LEONE**

**STATEMENT  
Delivered By:**

**PROF. DAVID J. FRANCIS  
MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION**

**At the**

**High-Level Summit of the g7+ Member States held on Friday 23<sup>rd</sup>  
September 2022 at 1:30pm to 3:00PM at the Conference Room of the  
Permanent Mission of Monaco to the United Nations**

**New York, 23<sup>rd</sup> September 2022.**

*Check against delivery*

**Your Excellency Jose Ramos-Horta, President of the Democratic Republic of Timor-Leste**

**Excellencies**

**Eminent Person of the g7+**

**Representative of the Secretary General of the United Nations**

**Members of the g7+ Secretariat**

**Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen**

At the outset, allow me on behalf of H.E. Dr. Julius Maada Bio, President of the Republic of Sierra Leone, to extend appreciation to Your Excellencies and esteemed personalities for sparing time to attend this High-Level Summit of the g7+ Member States, held on the margins of the High-Level week of the 77<sup>th</sup> Session of United Nations General Assembly. Let me, respectfully convey the warmest regards of His Excellency the President, who would have loved to grace this meeting with his presence but due to equally important commitments, could not fulfill such.

Let me also acknowledge the presence of not only the Member States of the g7+, but also our committed and dedicated partners, who have been with us in this journey of

conflict prevention, peace building and sustaining peace. Indeed, your shared sense of commitment to the cause of the g7+ is highly commendable.

Additionally, sincere appreciation and thanks is extended to the Secretary General, through his representative, for honoring our invitation to serve as the keynote speaker in today's event. Your participation is a testament of your unwavering support to the group of conflict-affected countries in transition to the next phase of development.

Sierra Leone, as Chair of the g7+, is honored to co-host this High-Level Meeting in collaboration with the Government of Timor-Leste, in their capacity as the Secretariat of the vibrant group of countries.

This High-Level Summit is a fulfillment of one of the key decisions reached during the g7+ Ministers of Foreign Affairs Meeting held in September 2020, in which it was agreed that the Group should convene regularly at the highest possible level on the margins of the High-Level week of the UNGA in order to galvanize the highest political support in advancing the work of the Group, most especially at this important

phase when it has attained an Observer Status at the United Nations.

### **Excellencies,**

It is worth noting that the g7+ came into being to convene conflict affected countries on a platform that would serve as an avenue to advocate for better peacebuilding, statebuilding and development policies. In that regard, I am pleased to state that, Sierra Leone has made significant progress in rebuilding and strengthening post-conflict institutions and addressing some of the immediate needs of its people. We have successfully held national presidential, parliamentary and local council elections in 2007, 2012 and 2018, and the next to be held in 2023. All of these represent an important democratic and peacebuilding milestone.

Sierra Leone has exited the formal agenda of the PBC which is a remarkable progress. The country still engages with the PBC to consolidate peace gains within the identified Sierra Leone PBC roadmap priorities, focusing mainly on national cohesion, human capital development, economic

diversification, institutional resilience and governance, as well as COVID-19 response and recovery efforts.

### **Excellencies,**

We can all agree that we are living in a fragile moment, that has been triggered by the COVID-19 pandemic, unprecedented climate crisis and rising geo-political tensions, leading to severe socio-economic challenges that is adversely impacting the world's Least Developed and conflict affected countries. Our nations still lack the capacity and resource capabilities to contain the negative consequences of these global challenges. Unless we, collectively as a group, act now, our citizens will continue facing the brunt of this global turmoil.

Today's meeting is therefore very crucial as it provides a platform to raise our voices on specific issues relevant and peculiar to the Group. Through the exchanges, we should consolidate our views on how the recent global crisis have disproportionately affected countries by eroding the painstaking gains made in some g7+ member states.

I urge us all to agree on a collective way forward to mitigate the risks, caused by the global crises, share views on how the g7+ can scale up its efforts to pursue peaceful means to conflict resolution and agree on a coordination framework to optimize the use of the Observer Status at the United Nations

Bound by the notion of solidarity, we must reaffirm the potential of the g7+ and its members to influence global discourse, particularly at the United Nations to promoting lasting peace and stability in conflict affected countries. In that same solidarity and support, I am pleased to announce Sierra Leone's bid for a seat at the Non-Permanent category of the United Nations Security Council for 2024 to 2025 for which elections will be held in 2023. Sierra Leone therefore solicits the Group's full support in this regard.

Equally so, with the attainment of Observer Status at the United Nations, we must continue, as a likeminded group of countries, to galvanize our efforts to bring our experience, lessons learned and influence to bear on global policies relating to peace, stability and addressing extreme poverty.

We therefore urge all the members of the Group, along with our partners to reaffirm their commitment to the cause of the g7+ and play an active role in realizing it.

We will be happy to hear your views on how we can strengthen and further consolidate our voices at the UN and other global forums.

Sierra Leone remains fully committed to the work of the Group and we look forward to engaging constructively.

I thank you.