



**REMARKS BY HIS EXCELLENCY, DR. JULIUS MAADA
BIO, PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF SIERRA
LEONE, AT THE 34TH ORDINARY SESSION OF THE
AFRICAN UNION ASSEMBLY ON THE C-10. 6TH – 7TH
FEBRUARY, 2021**

Mr. Chairperson of the AU Commission, Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

1. From the outset, let me, on behalf of the Committee of Ten (C-10) Heads of State and Government on UN Reforms, thank you all for the diverse ways in which you have continued to support the work of the Committee in implementing our mandate to canvass, promote, and defend the Common African Position on UN Security Council reform.

2. My remarks today provide an update on our 21st Report that was adopted during the 33rd Assembly held in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia in February 2020.

3. This past year has been challenging due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic and its impact on lives and livelihoods. This has also affected the work of the Committee and the Intergovernmental Negotiations process in New York.

4. The disruptive effect of the COVID-19 adversely affected the implementation of the recommendations of the Twenty-first Report and its Decision on the reform of the United Nations Security Council adopted by the 33rd Ordinary Session of the African Union Assembly.

5. Furthermore, our planned High-Level meeting that would have been held in Uganda was postponed due to the pandemic. We are hopeful, however, that the meeting will be held when health conditions return to normal.

6. Despite the negative impact of the pandemic on our work, the Committee was able to successfully participate in the two meetings of the Intergovernmental Negotiations process and related matters held in the informal plenary of the UN General Assembly in New York.

7. I embarked upon consultations with my peers and colleagues within and outside Africa. I intend to continue with these consultations in view of emerging issues and progress made. Also, my Minister of Foreign Affairs held virtual consultations with the P-5, and our Permanent Representatives in New York also held consultations with

other Interest groups, the Co-Chairs of the Intergovernmental Negotiations, and the President of the United Nations General Assembly, on the way forward.

8. In view of those engagements and mindful of our reporting obligation, I requested my Minister of Foreign Affairs to hold a virtual Ministerial Meeting of the Committee. A supplementary report emanating from that meeting has been circulated and the Outcome of the Ministerial Meeting is annexed to it.

9. Noteworthy at the Intergovernmental Negotiations meetings in New York during the last session, was the increase in the continual support and sympathy expressed by UN Member States for the Common African Position on UN Security Council reforms as outlined in the Ezulwini Consensus and the Sirte Declaration.

10. The Committee will continue to be guided in its work by the recommendations of the Twenty-first Report and its Decision both at the Intergovernmental Negotiations and all other engagements relative to canvassing, promoting, and defending the Common African position as outlined in the Ezulwini Consensus and Sirte Declaration.

11. We will also continue with our high-level consultative meetings, including the Summit of C-10 Heads of State and Government, Meeting of Foreign Ministers, and we will also intensively engage other Interest Groups and stakeholders including the current Five Permanent members (P-5).

12. Mr. Chairman, Excellencies, the Intergovernmental Negotiations continue to be challenged by the very complicated nature of the various positions and proposals of the UN Member States, which are divergent in substance with inherent nuances. There is also the issue of continual divergence on procedural matters related to the reform process.

13. In such a complicated process, the road ahead may be long, rocky and hard, but we should persevere and stay focused on building on the gains made in canvassing, promoting, advancing and defending

the Common African Position on United Nations Security Council Reform. Only that will eventually lead to achieving decisive progress in the not-too-distant future.

14. I, therefore, encourage you all, Excellencies, that we remain cohesive on all aspects of the reform process, continue to speak with one voice in unity of purpose, until the demands of the Common African Position as articulated in the Ezulwini Consensus and Sirte Declaration are achieved.

15. In closing, I would like to acknowledge and commend the inclusion of the issue of the reform of the UN Security Council in statements made by a number of African leaders during the 75th UNGA Annual debate of Heads of State and Government.

I thank you for your attention.