



STATEMENT BY HIS EXCELLENCY, DR. JULIUS MAADA BIO, PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF SIERRA LEONE IN RESPONSE TO THE REPORT ON THE TARGETED REVIEW ON HEALTH GOVERNANCE AND COVID -19 RESPONSE IN THE REPUBLIC OF SIERRA LEONE. 25th MARCH 2021

H.E. Felix-Antoine Tshisekedi, Chairman of the African Union and President of the Democratic Republic of Congo,
H.E. Cyril Ramaphosa, Chair of the 30th African Peer Review Forum of Heads of State and Government, and President of the Republic of South Africa,
H.E. Moussa Faki Mahamat, Chairperson of the African Union Commission,
Colleague Excellencies, Heads of State and Government,
Dr. Akinwumi Adesina, President of the African Development Bank,
Distinguished Members of the APRM Panel of Eminent Persons,
Dignitaries and Delegates,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

Good Afternoon

1. Permit me from the outset, on behalf of the Government and people of Sierra Leone, to join in expressing condolences for the sad loss of one of our colleagues, His Excellency, John Pombe Joseph Magufuli. For this great loss, my country mourns with the Government and people of the United Republic of Tanzania.
2. Excellencies, Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen, the last one year has been fraught with a multitude of socio-economic and financial constraints that have largely scuppered the even progress we had been making in most of our nations. We have navigated and we are still contending with uncertainties arising from this global pandemic.
3. COVID may have shaken our bold development strides on the continent, but it cannot, and should not dampen our resolve to consolidate accountable democratic governance,

maintain peace, and sustain our drive to achieving inclusive development.

4. Our development in Sierra Leone is firmly anchored on our Medium Term National Development Plan and our core priorities as a Government remain human capital development within the context of a nation that is conducive for investment and business. It is an agenda that we deem necessary for building resilience in a nation that has been knocked to the ground many times and stood up with much verve every time. It is with that spirit and that will to survive and persist that we have confronted COVID-19 over the last one year.
5. So let me thank the APRM Secretariat and all distinguished members of the APRM Governance Team. Let me also thank the National Governing Council and Secretariat in Sierra Leone for their salutary work that has led to this targeted review on Health Governance and COVID -19 Response in the Republic of Sierra Leone.
6. Let me also thank the entire APRM Family for their immeasurable support and tireless effort to promote democratic good governance in APRM member states and the African continent as a whole. In particular, I wish to thank Ambassador Inonge, APRM Member of Eminent Persons responsible for the Republic of Sierra Leone, for leading the Targeted Review Mission Team to Sierra Leone during this precarious global health crisis.
7. Let me also thank Professor Eddy Maloka, Chief Executive Officer at the APRM Continental Secretariat and the entire Secretariat staff for not only selecting the Republic of Sierra Leone as one of four APRM member states to conduct a Targeted Review on national response to the COVID-19 pandemic but, also for their enormous financial and technical

support that culminated in the production of the Report we have before us today.

8. Excellencies, Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen, this report is not only about sharing our success story as a nation. It is about discussing, candidly, the drive to continue doing even better for the sake of our nation and its people. Evidently, this targeted review will inform the ensuing National Programme of Action for strengthening our capacity as a country to deal with future Public Health Emergencies and also serve as a basis for overhauling our health sector in the Republic of Sierra Leone.
9. We therefore welcome the clarity and objectivity of the observations, findings, and recommendations outlined in the Targeted Review Report we have in front of us.
10. Our governance policies, public health measures, and public emergency structures have been well documented. Our anticipation, our risk communications and social mobilization, our leveraging of technology, our reliance on expert scientific opinion, our use of data, have all been documented in this report.
11. So too are our regular engagements with development partners, civil society, the private sector, at-risk populations, the security services, local councils and traditional leaders, parliamentarians, academics, and every citizen.
12. Excellencies, Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen, our commitment to delivering quality and sustainable healthcare services through and in the post-COVID-19 is driven by Cluster 1.3 of our Medium Term National Development Plan. The data speaks to how policymakers will structure bespoke interventions and build a nimble sector that is sustainable, efficient, and fit-for-purpose.
13. I would also like to reaffirm government's commitment to working with the APRM, the AU, the UN and all of our

esteemed development partners in translating the findings of the Targeted Review Report on Health Governance and COVID – 19 Response in Sierra Leone into viable programmes of action.

14. To that end, I believe we must sustain focused engagements and cooperation among states right across the continent. Ultimately, if we should build back better and stronger, we must continue to heed the lessons we have learned through this dark period, implement thoroughgoing policies, continue investing in purposeful mitigation and response structures, and maintain a clear-sight on recovery and resilience not just within our individual nations but across our continent at large.

I thank you for your kind attention.