



**INDEPENDENCE DAY BROADCAST
BY HIS EXCELLENCY, DR. JULIUS
MAADA BIO, PRESIDENT OF THE
REPUBLIC OF SIERRA LEONE.
FREETOWN, WEDNESDAY, 27th
APRIL 2022**

INDEPENDENCE DAY STATEMENT 2

Fellow citizens:

Asalamualaikum warahamatu-ilahi ta allah wa barakatuhu

1. May this Holy month of Ramadan strengthen our taqwa. May Allah subhanahu wattahallah bestow on us peace, abundance, and blessings.
2. Our country, like all countries around the world, has continued to wrestle with the immense global economic crises and the lingering effects of the COVID-19 pandemic. Global supply chains have been disrupted and everything around the world is now more expensive in every country. Food, fuel, and other goods are now more expensive in United States, United Kingdom, France, China, Australia, India, Nigeria, Ghana, Guinea, and even in Sierra Leone than they were just a few months ago.
3. But Allah subhanahu wattahallah has continued to be merciful to our great nation.
4. My Government has taken immediate steps to soften the impact of these hard economic times. Our quick action economic recovery programme and other subsidies and tax incentives have kept essential goods in the market. Government has also undertaken social safety net programmes to help out the hardest hit and most vulnerable of our citizens.
5. Multilateral partners have praised my Government's actions in successfully battling waves of COVID-19. In the last two years, our response to the pandemic has been praised by the World Health Organisation and the Centre for Disease Control.
6. We have also managed the economy responsibly and supported private sector growth. We have also kept our investments in human capital, infrastructure, energy, while protecting and promoting rights and good governance.

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7. We have built and rehabilitated more school infrastructure, committed more money to supporting education, extended universal access to free quality education to all children, provided free learning and teaching materials, revamped vocational education, and fundamentally changed education in just four years. This is more than any Government has ever done in four years.
8. In just four years, we have hired and trained more nurses and doctors, reduced maternal and child mortality, minimised the common disease burdens, built and rehabilitated more hospitals and community health care centres, expanded private sector investment, regularised the delivery of low-cost drugs, introduced an effective national ambulance service, initiated innovative health-provider services, and gained the confidence of our partners with their investment of hundreds of millions of dollars in that sector. This is more than any Government has ever done in four years.
9. In four years, we have increased agricultural productivity, introduced more mechanisation in all sixteen districts, provided more input support for farmers, established more new cash crop fields, and expanded agricultural value-chains. This is more than any Government has ever done in four years.
10. We have built more roads and bridges, including rural roads and bridges, major international highways to Liberia, a highway to Moyamba, the Mabang bridge, and the Magbele bridge. We are working on new highways in the Kono and Kailahun districts.
11. With regard to public infrastructure, we are building a \$270M airport terminal, rehabilitating the national stadium for about \$40M, building an ultra-modern foreign service academy, erecting several modern NASSIT regional offices, and all but completed the ACC and NATCOM headquarter buildings. We have turned sod for several infrastructural projects, including the Kono University. Two days ago, I commissioned an imposing Myohaung Officers' mess and a 104-bedroom single officers' quarters. Yesterday, I commissioned the massive 30-acre APP-SL petroleum storage tank farm that expands the storage capacity and hence assures the availability of fuel in the Sierra

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Leone market. When we talk about infrastructure, we talk about purposeful infrastructure that assures the resilience of this nation.

12. In just four years, we have expanded energy access and provided electricity to more towns and villages in Sierra Leone than any government has ever done.
13. Masiaka, Foredugu, Mambolo, Mange, and Rokupr in the north; Moyamba Junction, Taiama, Sumbuya, Koribondo, and Sulima in the south; and, Gorahun, Boajibu, Jojoima, Mobai, and Manowa Town in the East can now boast of electricity for the first time. Bo and Kenema now have regular supply of electricity and work is ongoing on all district headquarter towns. My Government is working assiduously on more energy generation capacity for the Western Area and have invested more in refurbishing transmission and distribution assets and lines right across this nation. This is more than any Government has ever done in four years.
14. We have expanded access to potable water across the country with brand new investments in water infrastructure and assets in all district headquarter towns and other towns and villages across the country. On Saturday, I visited Guma Valley, and yesterday I commissioned 15 brand new water bowsers to support the distribution of water in under-served communities in Freetown. This is in addition to the 20 bowsers my government purchased just two years ago. UNICEF and WHO assert that my Government has increased access to potable water by 24% in the rural areas and 6% in the Western Area. This is more than any Government has ever done in four years.
15. In sectors such as fisheries, mining, tourism, the downstream petroleum sector, the environment, and more, my Government's performance over these four years has been highly commended by independent international organisations.
16. In just four years, my Government has either passed or is working on more laws and policies for the protection of girls, especially from sexual offences, and, the promotion of gender empowerment and

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equality laws, disability rights and empowerment, mental healthcare and more.

17. In just four years, we have passed the Millennium Challenge Corporation scorecard every year excelling in the areas of control of corruption and ruling justly. We have abolished the death penalty, repealed seditious libel laws, actively advocated for investments in an independent media industry, and joined the International Religious Freedom or Belief Alliance. No journalist is in prison for the practice of journalism and we have continually reduced prison populations. We have invested in and registered remarkable improvements in access to justice, disaster management, public safety, and the correctional system. This is more than any Government has ever done in four years.

Fellow citizens,

18. We are a tough and optimistic people. In spite of the distractions of a few people, who have made talking bad things about their country a political hobby, we are making great progress on all fronts. Let us focus on staying together to continue building a more resilient and progressive nation.
19. We have now earned the respect of nations all over Africa and the world. International cooperation and support are at an all-time high. We will keep doing more. Three days ago, the Ministry of Hajj and Umrah in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia allocated the highest numbers of pilgrims to Sierra Leone -- 500 more than at any time in the nation's history.

Fellow citizens,

20. In this holy month of peace and benevolence, let us continue to love our fellow-countrymen and women and understand that our purpose as a nation is bigger than our personal ambitions.

Fellow citizens,

Ramadan Kareem and Happy Independence Day