



**REMARKS BY HIS EXCELLENCY, DR.
JULIUS MAADA BIO, PRESIDENT OF THE
REPUBLIC OF SIERRA LEONE AT THE
COMMISSIONING OF 3.25 DRY METRIC
TONNES PER ANNUM EXPANSION SITE OF
MARAMPA MINES LIMITED, LUNSAR – 5
MAY 2022**

Ministers of Government,
Honourable Members of Parliament,
My revered Paramount Chief, Kblo Queen, and all traditional rulers present,
Members of the Diplomatic and Consular Corps,
Executives and Staff of Marampa Mines Limited,
Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen,
Good morning,

1. It is a real pleasure to be here this morning to see, firsthand, the magnificent work that is being done here at Marampa Mines Limited.
2. I wholeheartedly agree with the CEO, Mr. Craig Dean, that this mine is a product of the healthy and fortifying relationship that we enjoy as key stakeholders in this mine's operations. At a time when the mining sector as a whole is confronted with substantial challenges, including the effects of the global geopolitical problems in Europe, fluctuating commodity prices, and the slow recovery from COVID-19, the optimism expressed by all the speakers is indeed gratifying.
3. It is indeed a new opportunity where we have gotten everything right – a re-start of operations; beneficiation of this premium ore; revenue share for the Government of Sierra Leone; thousands of jobs for direct employees and employees of local sub-contractors; a very significant impact for the local economy; and most importantly, the very significant 1% of the free-on-board value of exports that will go under community development.
4. So, let me, therefore, start this short statement by thanking everybody: the Gerald Group, the US Government, the Paramount Chief, traditional and community leaders, and local stakeholders, for their courage, patience, understanding, confidence, and perseverance on all sides. To those who mediated, to those who listened, to those who believed that we could get it right and have got it right, thank you. We are all where we are today because we have done what is right. Thank you. Indeed, as CEO, Craig Dean, indicated, we have a shared vision for Marampa Mines – one that is

a model for how mining investors should co-exist with governments and local communities. Thank you.

5. As a Government, we urge investors to be patient, open, and engaging and we will do everything necessary to nurture a very healthy relationship – one that fosters goodwill, and from which the investors can register healthy profits and reinvest or repatriate those profits. So, I find the deep commitment to what Craig Dean calls “the inherent long-term value and potential in Sierra Leone,” very assuring. Rest assured, therefore, that Government will fully play its part in not only meeting the terms of the MLA but also supporting the operations of Marampa Mines Limited as described by the COO in his presentation.
6. As a Government, we believe that the mining sector is critical to our national development and future prosperity. That is why we commissioned a comprehensive, nationwide geophysical survey to obtain first hand data about what we should negotiate with potential investors. We are also reviewing a favourable and inviting taxation and regulatory regime that promotes beneficiation, community development, and Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) initiatives. As you already know, we have worked very hard over the last four years to make Sierra Leone a low-risk investment destination.
7. We are working towards providing available infrastructure to support operations and it is good to see a company that is ready to move to production. We recognise that use of the rail and port infrastructure will contribute significantly to the reduction in the Marampa project carbon footprint. It is clearly a win-win in all respects. Additionally, may I suggest that with new renewable energy technologies, MML could do better by integrating the use of cleaner energy in parts of its operations. This could be part of a future growth and sustainability strategy and clearly one that presents Sierra Leone’s mining sector as one that is open to innovation and low-carbon sources of energy. So, in a lot of respects, Marampa Mines Limited is working ahead of anticipated

- progressive changes in the industry that will benefit everyone and also mitigate the challenges relating to climate change.
8. I am particularly delighted about a number of initiatives that have already been mentioned by previous speakers including the Minister in his short statement. First, that gender is firmly on the agenda of Marampa Mines Limited: that women are a meaningful part – a significant part of the workforce. Addressing the issue of gender parity in the mining sector is a novel idea that sits very well with my Government's overarching priority of gender equality and women's empowerment in national development. I believe that what men can do in the workforce, women can do and perhaps even better.
 9. Secondly, I am also pleased about MML's modernisation and digital transformation of their equipment monitoring, supply chain, and finance management systems. It is a far cry from the idea of pickaxes and grimy men's faces or massive dump trucks driven by men who spend the day swearing at each other. The implementation of the modernisation tools described earlier will result in paperless processes and the utilisation of online tools and mobile devices by MML staff performing these functions. Remote monitoring of the health of the equipment and collecting and analysing big data will then become jobs for brains and not just brawn. So, women who are now encouraged to study STEM disciplines for free through 17 years of school and university under my Government's free quality school education agenda can get preferential placements at these kinds of mine sites.
 10. Additionally, collaboration with the engineering departments of our universities and my Government's Directorate of Science, Technology, and Innovation may yield significant outcomes for all parties. I therefore urge deeper engagement. Still on the issue of skills training, it is also possible for MML to find ways in which it can strengthen vocational education in fields that are relevant to its operations. An apprenticeship pledge, in the long term, may be also helpful for MML to attract, upskill, and probably hire workers who they know and who know about their operations and their facilities.

11. The third is something very close to my heart – the sustainable farm on site that will supply food for the entire project (about 1,000 meals per day) which will bring numerous other benefits for local agricultural production and the agricultural value chain. I am informed that eventually, the farm will include vegetable and livestock farming. Boosting local food production is one of the central balusters of my Human Capital Development priority and demonstrating that nutritious meals can be produced locally on a sustainable 70-hectare plot adjacent to a mining site is indeed very positive.

12. Let me speak about the benefits of Negotiating a good deal for all parties –
 - ✓ thousands of jobs, good for the local economy,
 - ✓ good for local content and sub-contractors and supplies;
 - ✓ good for vocational and skills training especially if MML considers Your Excellency's proposal of a commitment to vocational education;
 - ✓ Particularly good for women -women will be given preference.
 - ✓ Emphasise the Community Development Agreement of 1% of the Free-on-board value of exports –
 - ✓ no mining community is getting that or has ever received that in the history of Sierra Leone.
 - ✓ Government negotiated that primarily so that the people of Lunsar can benefit fully from the operations of MML.

I thank you.