



**STATEMENT BY HIS EXCELLENCY,
PRESIDENT DR. JULIUS MAADA
BIO, ON THE OCCASION OF THE
CORONATION OF NEWLY
ELECTED PARAMOUNT CHIEFS IN
KONO DISTRICT, KOIDU TOWN –
11 JUNE 2022**

Madam First Lady
Chief Minister and other Government Ministers
The Chairman, Council of Paramount Chiefs
Other Paramount Chiefs Present
Regent Chiefs Present
Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen

1. As the son of a Paramount Chief, it is always a special privilege to be with you on the occasion of the coronation of newly elected Paramount Chiefs.

2. Such an occasion aligns with my Government's commitment to ensuring that the institution of Chieftaincy will be given the recognition and respectability it deserves. This commitment has been borne out of the singular consideration that the past administration failed to introduce any serious agenda that would uplift the conditions of our Paramount Chiefs as the beacons of state governance.

3. In the last four years since my assumption of the reins of State Governance, my administration has been making conscious efforts to ensure that the noble institution takes its rightful place among other national institutions and structures of Government. I have ensured that there is no major national development intervention or process that would be planned and organised without making concrete efforts for inclusion and participation of our Paramount chiefs.

4. My administration has ensured that the institution of Paramount chieftaincy is insulated from the challenging national politics. I have also ensured that under my supervision, the issues of central government political manipulation of Paramount chieftaincy elections are slowly becoming a thing of the past. Therefore, let me assure you all that the institution of Paramount Chieftaincy will continue to regain its past glory of being one that guarantees only official and rightful families compete among themselves in our various Chiefdoms across this Country.

5. The institution of Chieftaincy is and would remain a critical element of the administration of this State, and I want to reassure all of you, especially the Paramount Chief elects, that the sustainability of our nascent democracy and promotion of effective and community-national development cannot take place without your full and active involvement.

My administration is therefore mindful of your very important role and place in governing this Country.

6. On this occasion, let me state that I will continue to ensure that there is a strong and effective working partnership between the executive arm of Government that I lead and you the Paramount chiefs. I want to also assure you all present and even those who could not make it to this gathering that with me as President and my administration, Paramount chieftaincy is protected and will remain secured and respected in Sierra Leone.

7. The development challenges confronting Sierra Leone are huge and diverse. As your leader, I am convinced that with my determination and Vision and backed by your support as Paramount Chiefs, we can build a stronger and resilient country.

8. On an occasion like this, I want to publicly recognise and express my sincere appreciation to all Paramount Chiefs across the country. As Paramount Chiefs, you provide the superstructure or foundation on which I and my Team in the executive arm of Government rely to function and execute the mandate of planning and delivering vital services as well as leading sustainable national development.

9. The country is at a critical crossroad as the efforts to transform Sierra Leone like for most other developing countries is being undermined by external forces outside our control. When we took office, we had to grapple with a weak economy and as we set out to rebuild it, we had the global Covid-19 pandemic that disrupted normal life across the country. As a Government, we formulated policies and designed programmes to cushion the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic. And, in the last three months, the Russian-Ukraine war broke out. This has greatly damaged our gains and has placed pressure on the ability of the Government to raise and spend resources to support our manifesto commitments. However, we remain resilient and determined.

10. In the midst of all the challenges confronting us as a Government, we continue to support our Free quality school education agenda, provide essential services and working on long-lasting and viable development projects. We are determined to do more, and we will work against all odds to do more. As a Government, I would continue to call on you as Paramount Chiefs for your understanding and cooperation.

11. Therefore, let me implore you as Paramount Chiefs to reach out in your chiefdoms and help explain our development efforts as well as the challenges that we face because of the external and global factors. As trusted partners, I rely on you to educate your people so that they are not used by ill-motivated politicians for misinformation and incitement.

12. Let me also take this opportunity to thank all Paramount Chiefs across the country who took the side of responsible citizenship and mobilised their people to get involved and be counted in the 2021 Mid-Term Population and Housing Census. The uses of credible Census data go beyond political functions such as boundary, constituency and district delimitations as some opposition parties will want you believe. The Census data has other uses mainly for planning, resource allocation and delivery of services. I will encourage you as Paramount Chiefs to continue educating members in your communities about the positive and several other uses of the Census results.

13. It is also important to state that as Paramount Chiefs you must continue to do all you can in your communities to consolidate peace and cohesion. There is no greater asset for a nation than Peace as conflict has no friend, no neighbour or safeguards no one. In conflict there are also no ethnicity or political parties. I therefore entreat each one of you as Paramount Chiefs to be Peace Ambassadors in your various chiefdoms.

14. Today, you have received the symbol of authority - Staff and other insignia of Office. I want to implore you to see them as symbols of service to your people and your chiefdoms. I will encourage you all to go back to your chiefdoms and embark on your maiden task of healing the election divides, embrace your competitors and adopt a strategy of winning together. It becomes much easier to settle down to your core function of governing when Peace and Unity are nurtured and allowed to blossom in your chiefdoms. With Peace and Unity, you can plan for and deliver development for the benefit of your people.

15. On that note, I wish all the newly elected Paramount Chiefs a successful tenure and as you commence your reign remember that the destiny of your people is now your responsibility.

I thank you all and May God bless us all.