



**STATEMENT BY HIS EXCELLENCY**

**DR. JULIUS MAADA BIO**

**PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF SIERRA LEONE IN  
HIS CAPACITY AS CHAIR OF THE GROUP OF SEVEN  
PLUS (g7+) AT THE HIGH-LEVEL POLITICAL FORUM  
ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT**

**MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 18, 2023**

**GENERAL ASSEMBLY HALL, UNHQ**

**Mr. President,**  
**Mr. Secretary-General,**  
**Your Excellencies,**  
**Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen**

1. I am honoured to deliver this statement on behalf of the **Group of Seven Plus Countries (g7+)** at this High-Level Summit convened at the mid-point of implementing the 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) — a critical juncture characterised by recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic, ongoing geopolitical tensions, and environmental threats.

- 2.** The 2030 Agenda and the SDGs, the agreed global plan for sustainable development, adopted in 2015, was conceived to leave no one behind in countries around the world and support global public goods related to peace, environmental protection and an inclusive global economy.
- 3.** The g7+, comprised of countries affected by or recovering from conflict, were among the principal advocates of the SDGs, particularly Goal 16 on **“promoting peaceful and inclusive societies, providing access to justice for all**

**and building effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels”**. As a group of countries, we have collectively learned through our experiences that sustainable peace, effective State institutions and access to justice are key pillars to stability, development, and resilience.

4. However, since the start of the implementation of this global blueprint, fragile and conflict-affected States are the furthest behind in meeting the SDGs, and this dilemma only worsened with the advent of the COVID-

19 pandemic and other global crises, including the triple-planetary crises and food insecurity.

**Mr. President,**

5. Against this backdrop, the member States of the g7+ recommend the undermentioned as the possible pathway toward the realisation of transforming our world and leaving no one behind in this decade of action.

**6. Firstly**, promoting peace and stability should continue to be central to implementing the SDGs, as violence and insecurity undermine development gains. In advancing the development agenda, we must seek to promote and support peace efforts that address the root causes of conflicts and tackle economic and social inequalities and exclusion, especially in countries contending with high levels of threat and fragility that require heightened attention.

**7. Secondly,** resilience should be one of the guiding principles to achieve the SDGs. In this age of complex crises, we must deliberately embrace resilience as it helps to ensure progress is not derailed or reversed in times of adversity. For instance, ending extreme poverty and thriving in complex and adverse environments requires building capacities, mechanisms, and institutions to promote a sustainable future for all.

**8.** This is why the g7+ will continue to advocate for debt financing, debt relief, and technology transfer for the Least Developed and Conflict-affected countries. Debt financing and relief for our respective countries would unleash the resources that could be utilised to realise the ambition of Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development.

**9. Third and lastly,** we call for a joint commitment by development partners to work through and support Government-led country platforms in conflict-affected and fragile countries to enhance development



cooperation by addressing complex political, social, and economic realities. While we acknowledge the trend of support for country platforms over the last five years, it is imperative to raise awareness for Governments and partners to embrace this collaborative, risk-informed, and flexible mechanism. It ensures that development agendas are localised.

**10.**Let me conclude, **Mr. President**, by stating that meeting the SDGs in this decade of action could be challenging, but with sustained multilateral support to a holistic national ownership of the 17 SDGs, distinct global leadership, resource mobilisation, capacity building and mutual accountability, specific progress can be envisaged and achieved with the appropriate scale.

**I THANK YOU.**