



**STATEMENT BY HIS EXCELLENCY THE
PRESIDENT AT THE OFFICIAL LAUNCHING
CEREMONY OF THE INDEPENDENT CROSS-
PARTY COMMITTEE ON ELECTORAL SYSTEMS
AND MANAGEMENT BODIES REVIEW
STATE HOUSE FREETOWN, SIERRA LEONE
21ST NOVEMBER 2023**

The Honorable Vice President
The Chief Minister
Ministers and Deputy Ministers
Your Excellencies, Members of the Diplomatic and Consular
Corps
Political Party Leaders and Representatives Present
Media and Civil Society Representatives
Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen

Good Afternoon

- 1.** We are once again gathered as leaders and stakeholders of this great nation, to advance, strengthen, and deepen our democratic commitments and credentials as a nation; a creed that we all believe in and most dearly cherish. We gather to show the world that our commitments to peace, unity, and national prosperity, is bigger than our political and individual differences; and that our individual interests must have a commonplace in our shared national interest.
- 2.** We could recall that following my election in June 2023, and the post-elections concerns raised about the conduct of the multi-tier elections, I proposed the setting-up of a National Electoral Systems Review Committee, with a view to strengthening the institutional, legal and operational regimes for future elections.

- 3.**I note with utmost satisfaction and pride that during the inter-party dialogue facilitated by ECOWAS, the African Union, and Commonwealth (under the auspices of the Independent Commission for Peace and National Cohesion), the parties adopted a 7-point resolution as a framework agreement for national unity and cohesion. My proposal for electoral systems review was adopted as the third resolution.
- 4.**Let me thank the leadership of the main opposition, and most especially its National Leader, my friend and brother Dr. Samura Kamara; as well as the team from Government led by Dr. David Sengeh, for those two days of heart-to-heart conversation as Sierra Leoneans, and for agreeing on a pathway to reconciling our political differences.
- 5.**Once I was briefed on the outcome of the facilitated dialogue, I immediately took steps to implement Resolution Number 1, and indeed addressed the nation on October 24th. I also note with delight that the main opposition has delivered on Resolution Number 2, by bringing an end to their non-participation in governance.
- 6.**Today, we are giving effect to Resolution Number 3, which is the constitution of a tripartite committee for the review of electoral systems and management bodies. The announcement and launch of this three-

way committee (involving government, development partners, and the main opposition) is indeed an important step to building systems, collectively working towards addressing the issues that affect our people and democratic process, and more importantly, institutionalizing dialogue in our body politic.

7. Political dialogue is never a sign of weakness as some may want to perceive it; rather, it is a symbol of our commitment to peace and national cohesion.

8. After the general elections of 2018, my administration instituted a national peace and reconciliation dialogue, and one of the outcomes of that engagement was the Independent Commission for Peace and National Cohesion.

9. The Independent Commission for Peace and National Cohesion has been very pivotal in bringing together international partners to foster a political dialogue after the June elections, and the outcome of which, is the reason we are here today.

10. This is a testament that although our democracy might not be as matured as we might want it to be; yet we are a growing democracy that has endured and continue to surmount immense challenges on our path. We are fulfilled that together with our partners we can

dialogue to deepen the spirit of congeniality, rather than projecting our self-interests and vain glories.

11. As President, I am delighted that the three-way committee we are unveiling today is a home-grown initiative grafted in my address to the sixth Parliament on 3rd August this year. And I made that pronouncement with the firm belief that systems and institutional development, as well as inter-party consensus-building, can help resolve most of the bottlenecks and impasses in our political and social environments.

12. Let me therefore express gratitude to all partners (local and international) who are supporting our search for common grounds, and helping to bolster our electoral mechanisms. Let me pledge my government's unflinching commitment to the work of the committee we are launching today, and to ensuring the full implementation of the remaining resolutions contained in the agreement of the dialogue.

13. It is therefore with pride and honour that I formally launch the Independent Three-Way Committee on Electoral Systems and Management Bodies Review.

14. May God bless us all, and our beloved Republic.

Thank you.