



**SECOND NATIONAL ADDRESS BY HIS
EXCELLENCY PRESIDENT JULIUS MAADA BIO
REGARDING THE NOVEMBER 26, 2023,
FAILED ATTEMPTED COUP D'ÉTAT
- SATURDAY 2 DECEMBER 2023**

- 1.** Fellow Citizens and Residents of this great Nation, I greet you in the name of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ and Allah Subhanahu Wa Ta'ala.
- 2.** Five days ago, on Sunday 26th November, at around 3:00 am, the gunshots heard from the Wilberforce Military Barracks in the Western Area of Freetown was a ploy to unleash anarchy on our capital, Freetown, by a group of ruthless hooligans.
- 3.** The armoury at the Wilberforce Military Barracks had been violently breached by unknown assailants. After intense gunfight, our loyal forces eventually repelled them.
- 4.** The unlawful assailants proceeded to diverse locations, mainly in Freetown, in the course of the day, causing wanton destruction of lives and property.
- 5.** We sadly mourn the tragic loss of our gallant officers who paid the ultimate price in defence of our peace, security, and democracy.
- 6.** Our hearts and our prayers go out to the bereaved families during these trying times, and we pray that

the souls of the dearly departed rest in eternal peace.

- 7.** We wish our wounded comrades in the hospital a speedy recovery. Thank you for your bravery in defense of our democracy.
- 8.** Fellow Citizens, investigations conducted so far by our Security and Intelligence Community strongly indicate that the November 26 infraction was clearly and unambiguously an attempted coup d'état.
- 9.** Their action was premeditated and coordinated and was executed to unseat the democratically elected Government by violent and unlawful means, topple constitutional order, and reverse our decades of investment in peace and democracy.
- 10.** Some arrests have since been made, and full investigations have been launched. The Sierra Leone Police released a list of wanted persons on November 28th. I strongly encourage citizens and non-citizens to provide useful information that would lead to the arrest of fugitives and aid the investigations.
- 11.** Fellow Citizens, this attempted coup is taking place exactly five months after we went to the polls and

exercised our franchise in an election that has been widely acclaimed as the most peaceful in our country's post-conflict electoral history.

- 12.** To seek to overturn the people's will by unlawful means is the gravest and most unpardonable of sins. **TO THOSE WHO SOUGHT TO DISRUPT OUR DEMOCRACY, LET ME BE CLEAR – YOU WILL NOT SUCCEED.**
- 13.** Sierra Leone, the Land of Unity, Freedom, and Justice, is a multi-party democracy underpinned by values enshrined in our 1991 Constitution.
- 14.** We are a constitutional democracy with an avowed commitment to honour our laws above individuals, political parties and religion.
- 15.** As a nation, we have made tremendous progress since the end of the gruesome ten-year civil war 21 years ago, when we lost over 50,000 precious lives.
- 16.** As a nation, we have suffered from the scourges of the Ebola Virus in 2014/2015 and, most recently, the COVID-19 pandemic. We weathered the horrendous mudslide of 2017 that led to heavy loss of life and property.

- 17.** One thing remains constant through all these grave challenges since our nation gained its independence — **the RESILIENCE and DETERMINATION of our people — the hope of a brighter future. A future of peace, justice, security and dignity for all.**
- 18.** Fellow Citizens, in June 2023, you again chose me, Julius Maada Bio, and the Sierra Leone People's Party to lead our country to continue to build upon the gains we have made in my previous mandate and to push ahead unrelentingly with the bold and transformative socio-economic programs we have rolled out for the next five years, with FEED SALONE as the flagship.
- 19.** I remain grateful and humble to serve you as President and reiterate my pledge to improve the quality of lives of our citizens amidst unprecedented global economic times.
- 20.** Fellow Citizens, nations that have made great advances have been able to do so because they chose certain fundamental pathways to development and have consistently followed these paradigms.

- 21.** Over two decades ago, this nation chose peace and multi-party democracy as our strongest levers for progress and development, and I urge us to stick to these pursuits. Our commitment to democracy, justice, and the well-being and safety of our citizens remain unwavering.
- 22.** Good Citizens of Sierra Leone, as a nation deeply rooted in the rule of law, let me assure you that no matter the provocation, our response to the events of November 26 will be measured and determined along **ONLY ONE** parameter: **THE RULE OF LAW, Nothing More, Nothing Less.**
- 23.** The attempted coup will, therefore, be dealt with by my Government purely as a law-and-order issue, not a political, tribal or religious matter.
- 24.** Therefore, let all be rest assured that we will follow the evidence wherever it leads us, and all those found culpable, no matter their status, shall be held fully to account for their actions within the confines of the law whilst at the same time also recognising the wider demands of justice and freedom.

25. I thank leaders all over the world and our bilateral and multilateral partners (including ECOWAS, the African Union, the Commonwealth, the European Union and the United States of America, the United Kingdom) for standing by us at this challenging moment.

26. ABOVE ALL, I THANK YOU, THE CITIZENS OF OUR GREAT NATION.

27. As your President and Commander-In-Chief of the Armed Forces, I repeat my call for us all to come together and embrace the values of peace, stability and democracy and reject every attempt to divide us through violence and unconstitutional means.

28. I CALL ON ALL CITIZENS TO SAY NO TO UNCONSTITUTIONAL CHANGE OF GOVERNMENT; NO TO ANY ATTACK ON OUR PEACE, SECURITY, AND DEMOCRACY; AND NO TO ANY PERSON OR GROUP WHO CHOOSES TO PUT THEIR PERSONAL INTEREST ABOVE OUR COLLECTIVE NATIONAL INTERESTS.

- 29.** We have shown the world that we are a resilient people. We have demonstrated that we stand for peace and democracy at all times.
- 30.** As One Nation and One People, we shall remain firmly united and stand invincible, guided solely by the Rule of Law.
- 31. MAY GOD BLESS AND PROTECT THE GREAT PEOPLE OF SIERRA LEONE AND OUR FRIENDS AND PARTNERS LIVING IN SIERRA LEONE.**
- 32. LONG LIVE THE REPUBLIC OF SIERRA LEONE.**