



**KEYNOTE ADDRESS BY HIS EXCELLENCY
DR. JULIUS MAADA BIO PRESIDENT OF
THE REPUBLIC OF SIERRA LEONE AT
THE LAUNCH OF THE NATIONAL
SECURITY POLICY AND STRATEGY
(NSPS) OF SIERRA LEONE FOREIGN
AFFAIRS TRAINING ACADEMY
FREETOWN THURSDAY 8TH AUGUST
2024**

- **Mr Chairman**
- **Honourable Vice President**
- **Honourable Speaker of Parliament**
- **My Lord, the Chief Justice - Honorable Ministers of Government - Excellencies, Ambassadors and Members of the Diplomatic Corps**
- **National Security Coordinator and Heads of Security Sector Institutions**
- **Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen**
- **GOOD MORNING!**

1. Security is the bedrock of a prosperous and stable society. It underpins economic development, social cohesion, and the overall well-being of our citizens.

2. I, therefore, welcome you all to this epoch-making event as we officially launch the maiden National Security Policy and Strategy (NSPS) of Sierra Leone.

3. This launch marks a pivotal moment in our nation's history, as the NSPS document embodies our collective commitment to safeguarding the security, peace, and prosperity of our beloved country.

4. Today, as we unveil this comprehensive policy and strategy, my Government is yet again reaffirming our commitment to safeguarding the sovereignty, integrity, and peace of Sierra Leone.

DISTINGUISHED LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,

5. Ensuring the safety and security of the nation and its citizens is the first duty of every Government. My Government takes that duty seriously. Although the nature of the threats may vary from time to time, our commitment to fulfilling this sacred duty has never changed.

6. In an increasingly complex global environment, the challenges to our national security have become multifaceted and dynamic.

7. This policy provides a robust framework to address these challenges holistically, ensuring a secure and peaceful Sierra Leone.

8. This NSPS is designed to address the multifaceted and evolving threats that we face in today's world.

9. Such threats include border management and security, climate change, disasters, economic security, environmental security, social media misuse and cybercrimes, and transnational organised criminal activities.

10. These predatory security threats call for effective coordination, collaboration and adaptive response mechanisms across multiple Government agencies that leverage external partnerships and develop prudent capabilities.

11. The NSPS is the outcome of extensive national consultations involving all the relevant stakeholders. It describes the fundamental values that our society must prioritise in providing for national security and public safety.

12. The NSPS takes a holistic and inclusive approach to national security, underscoring the importance of collaboration among various sectors of society.

13. However, in an increasingly interconnected world, no nation can address security challenges in isolation. Therefore, our NSPS emphasises the importance of regional and international cooperation.

14. We will continue to work with our neighbours and global partners to address cross-border threats and contribute to international peace and security.

15. Security is essential for citizens' livelihoods, access to goods and services, and the free exercise of civil, political, social, and economic rights. The NSPS is a critical step towards safeguarding these rights.

16. It provides a national approach to the planning and development of specialised strategies and budgeting, which will enable us to allocate resources in accordance with security and development priorities.

17. Doing so transparently and accountable will build citizens' confidence in the security sector.

18. It ensures that security officials remain accountable to the people and their Government and solely operate within the rule of law.

19. Security threats are becoming increasingly dynamic, intertwined, and complex. The manner and procedure through which such security threats are to be perceived, assessed, and addressed have to be collaborative, inclusive, legally appropriate, and meet the expectations of the citizens and their Government.

20. This is the standard I think we must strive to achieve in implementing the NSPS.

DISTINGUISHED LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,

21. The traditional approach to national security focuses mainly on the threats posed to the existence of the nation-state and its

territorial integrity. It places the security of the state at the core of its priorities.

22. However, these threats are no longer the main source of insecurity. The modern approach to security recognises that the challenges we face are constantly changing and that they are no longer limited to national territories.

23. They are both physical and virtual and could be coordinated locally or from international territories.

24. Addressing the growing complexity and evolving security threats requires detailed planning and collaboration.

25. It also requires resource input to be at par with the challenges posed to the peace and well-being of all.

26. To do this, we must formalise a new strategic approach. That is why my Government has fast-tracked the development and launch of the NSPS.

27. The publication of this new overarching security strategy provides a reference point for decision-making in the security sector, enabling the effective coordination, alignment of resources, leveraging of partnerships, prioritisation of security threats, and shared understanding of national security vision and objectives needed to address the challenges of an ever-changing global security environment.

DISTINGUISHED LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,

28. Security is a collective responsibility. I, therefore, call upon all Sierra Leoneans to actively participate in the effective implementation of this policy.

29. We can all do so by staying vigilant, reporting suspicious activities, and supporting our security forces. When we understand that security is everyone's business, we can create a safer and more secure environment for all.

30. The NSPS sets out the direction we must take to achieve this objective. It enables all elements of the security sector to align their sector-specific strategies and internal policies to accomplish the NSPS's objectives.

31. The new Strategy seeks to create a unified and secure nation where our core values and national interests are protected and enhanced.

32. It helps to strengthen our instruments of national strength, which are exercised through: — Leveraging our diplomatic ties; — Maximisation of our information resource; — Deployment of security assets; — Utilisation of our economic potential; — Collaboration with Civil Society; and — The application of our legal provisions.

33. The NSPS does not duplicate or overlap with other existing national security policies, plans, and strategies. Rather, its intent is to strengthen the effective coordination of the implementation of those extant policies, plans, and strategies.

34. As we launch this historic document, I call upon all Sierra Leoneans to embrace this vision for a secure and prosperous nation.

35. We must move forward with a determination to eschew all divisive rhetoric and embrace unity and peace.

36. As in the words of the late Martin Luther King Jnr, "Peace is not merely a distant goal that we seek, but a means by which

we arrive at that goal". Our collective aspirations as a people will remain a mirage in the absence of peace.

37. Likewise in the implementation of the NSPS, we cannot do it alone without collaborating with other stakeholders and partners.

38. I sincerely thank our Development Partners for their assistance in developing and launching the NSPS.

39. I also express my heartfelt gratitude to all those who have contributed to the development of the NSPS. Your dedication and commitment have made this moment possible.

40. It is, therefore, my singular honour as President of the Republic of Sierra Leone and Chairman of the National Security Council to officially launch the first **NATIONAL SECURITY POLICY AND STRATEGY OF SIERRA LEONE.**

41. Thank you very much for your attention.