



## **KEYNOTE ADDRESS**

**BY**

**HIS EXCELLENCY DR. JULIUS MAADA BIO  
PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF SIERRA LEONE**

**ON THE OCCASION OF**

**LIBERIA ARMED FORCES DAY**

**THEME: "SUSTAINABLE PEACE AND SECURITY  
THROUGH STAKEHOLDER'S ENGAGEMENT: THE  
ROLE OF THE ARMED FORCES"**

**MONROVIA, LIBERIA**

**FEBRUARY 11, 2025**

**YOUR EXCELLENCY JOSEPH NYUMAH BOAKAI,  
AMBASSADORS & MEMBERS OF THE DIPLOMATIC  
COMMUNITY,  
HONOURABLE MINISTERS OF GOVERNMENT,  
CHIEF OF DEFENCE STAFF AND SENIOR OFFICERS  
OF THE ARMED FORCES OF LIBERIA,  
DISTINGUISHED GUESTS,  
GOOD MORNING!**

1. It is an honour and a privilege to stand before you today on this solemn yet inspiring occasion of the **68<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Liberia Armed Forces.**
  
2. I bring warm greetings from the Government and people of the Republic of Sierra Leone as we join you in **celebrating the valour, dedication, and sacrifice of the men and women of the Armed Forces of Liberia.**

**3.** As we gather to pay tribute to your unwavering commitment to peace, security, and national development, **I recall with nostalgia our days in the military, when we fought alongside the courageous soldiers of this great Country – Liberia,** in defence of lives and properties and to bring lasting peace and security to our people.

4. For us as soldiers, nothing else mattered more than protecting the territorial integrity of our beloved country and that of our neighbours.
5. Today's event brings back memories while reminding us of the task ahead.
6. The event's theme, "**Sustainable Peace and Security through Stakeholder's Engagement: The Role of the Armed Forces,**" is timely and relevant.

7. It speaks to the core of our shared aspirations as nations that have endured the trials of conflict, emerged stronger, and continue to build institutions that safeguard democracy, stability, and progress.

**YOUR EXCELLENCIES, DISTINGUISHED LADIES  
AND GENTLEMEN,**

8. The **Armed Forces** have always played a central role in ensuring national and regional security.

- 9.** Beyond the conventional duty of defending territorial integrity, today's military institutions are pivotal actors in fostering peace, responding to emergencies, supporting development initiatives, and strengthening democratic governance.
- 10.** Liberia and Sierra Leone share a history that underscores the importance of sustainable peace and security, a history that binds us in our commitment to a peaceful future.

**11.** We have witnessed firsthand the devastating consequences of conflict and also experienced the power of resilience, reconciliation, and rebuilding.

**12.** Our nations have learned that **sustainable peace is not merely the absence of war but the presence of justice, good governance, social cohesion, and economic opportunity.**



**13.** In this context, the engagement of all stakeholders — government, civil society, international partners, and the security and armed forces — is not just important; it is indispensable. **Your role is crucial in our collective pursuit of peace and security.**

**14.** The military cannot alone maintain peace and security.

**15.** It requires a concerted effort involving political leaders, security institutions, community organisations, and ordinary citizens.

**16.** Stakeholder engagement fosters inclusiveness, while trust and cooperation are all essential for stability.

**17.** The **Liberia Armed Forces** have undoubtedly demonstrated a commendable commitment to working with various sectors of society, reinforcing the idea that the military is not an isolated entity but an integral part of the nation's fabric.

**18.** Through peacekeeping missions, humanitarian assistance, disaster response, and community service, they exemplify the evolving role of the **Armed Forces** in a democratic society.

**19.** Similarly, Sierra Leone has embraced this approach. Our **Armed Forces** continue to engage with national and international stakeholders to uphold peace, support economic recovery, and contribute to regional stability through the **Economic**

**Community of West African States  
(ECOWAS) and the African Union (AU).**

**YOUR EXCELLENCIES, DISTINGUISHED LADIES AND  
GENTLEMEN,**

**20.** As we reflect on and celebrate **the Armed Forces'** achievements, we also acknowledge the challenges ahead.

**21.** The threats to peace and security in our region are evolving, ranging from transnational crime and cyber threats to

climate-related conflicts and economic disparities.

- 22.** To address these threats effectively, we must strengthen our Civil-Military relations, promote capacity building, enhance regional collaboration, and strengthen democratic institutions.

**YOUR EXCELLENCIES, DISTINGUISHED LADIES  
AND GENTLEMEN,**

**23.** Today, we must collectively celebrate not only the courage and sacrifice of the **Armed Forces of Liberia** but also the fundamental role that they play in safeguarding peace, stability, and democracy in Liberia and the wider West African region.

**24.** Like many of our nations, Liberia's history has been shaped by challenges that tested its institutions' resilience and people's will.

**25.** Through these trials, one truth remains evident: **sustainable peace and security cannot be achieved without the steadfast commitment of professional and disciplined Armed Forces – an Army that serves not only as the protector of national sovereignty but also as a pillar of democratic governance.**

**26.** In a world where democracy is constantly challenged by forces of division, conflict, and instability, **I charge you, the gallant men and women of the Armed Forces of Liberia, to stand firm as guardians of the democratic order.**

**27. Uphold the rule of law. Defend constitutional governance.**

**28. Remain above politics, and let your loyalty be to the people, the Constitution, and the democratic institutions that form the foundation of this great nation.**



- 29.** History has shown us that when the military aligns with democratic values, nations prosper; when it deviates, societies falter.
- 30.** Your commitment to professionalism, respect for human rights, and collaboration with civil institutions will not just strengthen Liberia's democracy.
- 31.** It will set an example for the region and reassure the people of your unwavering dedication to democratic values.

**32.** Let your service be marked by integrity, patriotism, and an unwavering dedication to peace.

**33. Be the shield that protects, not the sword that divides.**

**34. Be the force that ensures stability, not the one that undermines it.**

**35.** Comrades, the people of Liberia look to you with trust. The region looks to you with expectation.

**36.** And history will remember you for your steadfastness in upholding the principles of peace, justice, and democracy.

**37. Long Live the Armed Forces; Long Live the Republic of Liberia; Long Live the Republic of Sierra Leone; Long Live the Continent of Africa,**

**38.** I wish you all a wonderful celebration. May God bless us all.

**39.** Thank you for listening