



# **STATEMENT**

**BY**

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**AT THE  
GAVI GLOBAL SUMMIT: HEALTH AND PROSPERITY  
THROUGH IMMUNISATION**

**BRUSSELS, BELGIUM**

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**1. YOUR EXCELLENCIES, DISTINGUISHED DELEGATES, FELLOW ADVOCATES,** I bring you warm greetings from Sierra Leone and from every corner of the world where the cry for health equity still rings out.

**2.** It is an honour to join you at this important Summit, where global leaders come together with a unified purpose: **to protect the health and prosperity of future generations.**

3. Today, I assert a truth we can no longer ignore: **health through immunisation is not a privilege — it is a right.**
4. No child should be denied the protection that science provides.
5. No parent should have to witness their child suffering from a preventable disease.
6. Immunisation is one of humanity's greatest public health achievements, yet its benefits are still not distributed evenly.

7. When a child is denied a vaccine, they are denied opportunities for life, growth, and advancement.
8. This is not only a failure of health systems but also a failure of justice.
9. **In Sierra Leone, immunisation is at the core of our national development agenda.**
10. It is how we safeguard our future, child by child, vaccine by vaccine.

- 11.** Over the years, we have significantly expanded access to life-saving vaccines.
- 12.** For instance, to protect our children, we have introduced the malaria vaccine and rolled out the human papillomavirus (HPV) vaccine for girls.
- 13.** Today, we proudly maintain over 90% coverage of key childhood vaccines — one of the highest rates in our region.

**14.** These achievements have led to a significant impact: **child mortality has decreased by more than half, and our communities are healthier, stronger, and more resilient.**

**15. Behind every statistic lies a story:** a child protected from disease, a family spared from grief, and a health worker empowered to serve.

16. Yet even as we advance, new threats emerge.
17. Earlier this year, Sierra Leone declared an MPOX outbreak.
18. Our response drew on hard-won lessons from Ebola and COVID-19 — **emphasising early detection, rapid coordination, and strong community engagement.**
19. We were once again reminded that establishing health security is ongoing and never truly finished.

**20.** As global aid continues to change, Sierra Leone remains steadfast in its commitment.

**21.** We are increasing domestic investment in healthcare, exploring innovative financing solutions, and remaining committed to global partnerships.

**22.** As we all know, no country or institution, no matter how determined, can accomplish this alone.



**23. As I conclude, HONOURABLE DELEGATES, I applaud the importance of GAVI's new five-year strategy (GAVI 6.0), which aims to increase access to vaccines and strengthen health systems in low-income countries, thereby improving equity in immunisation delivery.**

**24. I want to express my gratitude to our hosts — GAVI, the European Union, and the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation — for bringing us together.**

**25.** They have **reaffirmed the important truth that immunisation is not only a health issue but also a foundation for equity, stability, and shared prosperity.**

**26.** We must therefore protect the gains we have made — and push further.

**27.** No child should suffer or die because of where they were born, what their family earns, or the circumstances they did not choose.

**28.** A healthy child is not only a sign of progress;  
it is a promise of the future.

**29.** When we invest in healthcare, we invest in  
education, productivity and peace.

**30.** We break cycles of poverty and open doors  
to possibility.

**31.** I implore everyone to reaffirm our  
commitment to building a world where  
every child will have access to the full  
protection of immunisation.

**32.** A world where no mother has to beg for medicine, and no father has to choose between food and healthcare treatment.

**33.** Health is not a privilege for the fortunate; it is a right for everyone.

**34.** And the promise of vaccines must reach every child, in every nation.

**THANK YOU.**