STATEMENT

BY

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AT THE G20 SUMMIT 2025

"THEME: BUILDING OUR ECONOMY – THE ROLE OF TRADE, FINANCE FOR DEVELOPMENT AND DEBT BURDEN"

JOHANNESBURG, SOUTH AFRICA

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- **YOUR EXCELLENCIES, HEADS OF STATE AND GOVERNMENT,**
- **DISTINGUISHED, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,**

1. It is an honour for Sierra Leone to address this G20 Summit at a moment when the global community is navigating profound uncertainty.

2. In 2025, geopolitical tensions, fragile supply chains, rapid technological change and intensifying climate pressures continue to reshape the global economy.

3. For developing nations, these forces translate into daily realities for our citizens.

4. Recently, in a rural town in Kambia District, a young farmer told me, ***"Excellency, I no longer know when the rains will come."***

5. His words reflect a wider truth — that our decisions here must speak to the lived experience of people far beyond these rooms.

6. Sierra Leone’s **Medium-Term National Development Plan 2024–2030** outlines our pathway for transformation through food security, human capital, digital readiness and resilience.

7. But the success of our national reforms depends on a global system that works for all.

I. BUILDING OUR ECONOMIES: TRADE, FINANCE AND THE DEBT BURDEN

YOUR EXCELLENCIES,

8. The world entered 2025 with slowing growth and tightened financial conditions that have sharply reduced investment flows to low-income countries.

9. For Sierra Leone and many African economies, rising debt service and commodity dependence restrict our ability to invest in long-term development.

10. However, Africa is moving with determination. Through the **AfCFTA** — the largest emerging single market — we are building regional value chains and preparing for continental industrialisation.

11. Sierra Leone is modernising customs, digitising border systems and improving port efficiency to strengthen our integration into regional and global markets.

12. However, ambition requires fair financing and predictable investment.

13. We urge the G20 to:

- Accelerate debt restructuring and ensure timely, durable relief;
- Expand SDR recycling to regional development banks; and
- Scale up long-term, low-cost financing for trade corridors, energy and digital infrastructure.

14. A global financial system that excludes the most vulnerable nations is no longer sustainable.

II. BUILDING A RESILIENT WORLD: CLIMATE AND FOOD SECURITY

YOUR EXCELLENCIES,

15. The **climate crisis is advancing faster than our collective response**.

16. Extreme heat, flooding and food system disruptions are becoming defining risks to global stability.

17. Africa contributes less than 4 percent of global emissions but faces the most severe impacts.

18. In Sierra Leone, floods destroy markets and roads; landslides take lives; and unpredictable rainfall undermines agriculture.

19. West Africa loses up to 5 percent of GDP annually to climate shocks. Yet adaptation financing remains deeply insufficient.

20. We call for a **West Africa Climate Adaptation Acceleration Facility** focused on resilient agriculture, clean energy, early-warning systems and coastal protection.

21. Climate resilience is now an economic and security imperative.

III. A FAIR FUTURE: CRITICAL MINERALS AND ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

YOUR EXCELLENCIES,

22. The global transition to clean energy and advanced technology is reshaping strategic priorities.

23. Africa holds nearly one-third of the world's critical minerals essential for renewable technologies.

24. Sierra Leone contributes through iron ore, rutile, bauxite and diamonds.

25. But we must not repeat the old pattern where African resources power global growth while African economies capture the least value.

26. We propose a **G20–Africa Compact on Critical Minerals** that ensures local value addition, transparent contracts, investment in processing, and fair revenue models.

27. **Artificial Intelligence** is also transforming governance, agriculture, finance and security.

28. For developing nations, AI can accelerate progress — but only if **access and governance are equitable**.

29. Sierra Leone supports a global framework for ethical and inclusive AI and calls for partnerships that expand digital public infrastructure and strengthen African innovation ecosystems.

IV. CLOSING REMARKS

EXCELLENCIES,

30. The year 2025 must mark the reset of the global development compact — a moment when the world chooses cooperation over fragmentation.

31. Let this Summit be remembered as the **turning point toward a fairer financial system, a just climate transition and a future where every nation has the opportunity to contribute to global progress.**

32. Let our collective legacy be a world where the young farmer in Kambia, and millions like him, can plan their future with confidence and hope.

I THANK YOU.