

JOINT STATEMENT BETWEEN THE UNITED ARAB EMIRATES AND THE REPUBLIC OF SIERRA LEONE

On Monday 2nd February 2026, His Highness Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan, President of the United Arab Emirates, met His Excellency Julius Maada Bio, President of the Republic of Sierra Leone, in Abu Dhabi to advance the strong bilateral relations between their two countries.

On the margins of the World Government Summit 2026, the two leaders witnessed the signing of the Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA), marking a pivotal step toward unlocking new opportunities for trade, investment, and private-sector collaboration, and further enhancing economic cooperation.

The two leaders welcomed the constructive high-level engagement between the UAE and Sierra Leone and underscored the Summit's role as a global platform for advancing dialogue on governance, development, and international cooperation.

They emphasized the importance of expanding economic cooperation across priority sectors, including artificial intelligence, energy, agriculture, infrastructure, logistics, and healthcare. Discussions also covered prospects for enhanced defense and military cooperation.

The President of Sierra Leone welcomed the UAE's launch of the USD 1 billion "AI for Development" initiative, announced at the G20 Leaders' Summit in Johannesburg in November 2025, and both leaders affirmed its potential to support Africa's development priorities through innovation and digital transformation.

The two leaders exchanged views on significant regional and global issues, reaffirming their shared commitment to the principles of international law and the peaceful resolution of conflicts. The UAE praised Sierra Leone's constructive role within regional and international forums, including the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), and underscored their shared commitment to multilateral cooperation in addressing common challenges.

On Sudan, both condemned the atrocities against civilians by the warring parties, underlined that the primary responsibility for ending the civil war lies with both warring parties, and called for accountability for violations of international humanitarian law. The two leaders stressed the urgent need for an immediate, unconditional humanitarian truce, a permanent ceasefire, unhindered humanitarian access throughout Sudan, and the formation of a civilian-led government independent of the warring parties that reflects the aspirations of the Sudanese people.

Both sides stressed the importance of upholding international law, including the UN Charter, emphasizing respect for sovereignty, territorial integrity, non-interference, and the prohibition of the threat or use of force. They called for ending the occupation of the three UAE islands—Greater Tunb, Lesser Tunb, and Abu Musa.

They reiterated support for a peaceful settlement of the dispute over the three UAE

islands through bilateral negotiations or referral to the International Court of Justice in accordance with international law and the principles of the UN Charter.

Aligned with the 2026 African Union theme, Assuring Sustainable Water Availability and Safe Sanitation Systems to Achieve the Goals of Agenda 2063, Sierra Leone expressed its appreciation for the UAE's continued engagement with Africa and its support for sustainable development initiatives across the continent.

Both sides welcomed the 2026 United Nations Water Conference, co-hosted by the UAE and the Republic of Senegal, and held in the UAE at the end of 2026, as a key opportunity to accelerate the implementation of Sustainable Development Goal 6. Sierra Leone commended the UAE's efforts to elevate the global water agenda through initiatives like the Mohamed bin Zayed Water Initiative and the Abu Dhabi Global Water Platform, agreeing to cooperate closely, toward tangible, action-oriented deliverables.

Both sides acknowledged the urgency of accelerating climate action and the energy transition. The UAE praised Sierra Leone for boosting resilience and expanding clean energy access, while Sierra Leone recognised the UAE's support for renewable energy, including its global leadership through initiatives like the Global Energy Efficiency Alliance. This leadership has been instrumental in advancing the UAE Consensus and supporting the implementation of the Global Renewables and Energy Efficiency Pledge adopted at COP28.

Both sides reiterated the importance of enhancing cooperation in the renewable energy sector, highlighting ongoing engagement between Global South Utilities and Sierra Leone's authorities to improve grid reliability and foster the development of sustainable energy solutions.

The two sides pledged to maintain close coordination and expressed confidence that this engagement will further elevate UAE–Sierra Leone relations to new levels of cooperation.

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