



SPECIAL ADDRESS

BY

HIS EXCELLENCY DR JULIUS MAADA BIO

PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF SIERRA LEONE

AND CHAIRMAN, ECOWAS AUTHORITY OF HEADS

OF STATE AND GOVERNMENT ON THE OCCASION

OF THE GROUNDBREAKING CEREMONY – 255KM

PRIMARY ROADS PROJECT (DBOT PPP)

FRIDAY, 17TH APRIL 2026 | BO WATERSIDE BORDER

POST, LIBERIA

- **Your Excellency, President Joseph Nyuma Boakai, Snr.,**
- **Honourable Ministers of Government,**
- **The Honourable Minister of Public Works and your entire team,**
- **Honourable Members of Parliament,**
- **Development Partners,**
- **Distinguished Members of the Diplomatic and Consular Corps,**
- **The Leadership of Pavifort AI Associates (SL) Ltd.,**
- **Traditional Leaders and Community Representatives,**

- **Members of the Private Sector, Civil Society, and the Media,**
- **And most importantly — the great people of Liberia and Sierra Leone: GOOD AFTERNOON**

1. It is a real pleasure for me to be here today at the **Bo Waterside Post**.
2. **Some borders divide nations — this one connects futures.**
3. This Border Post is more than just a crossing point for many of our people.

4. It is where families meet, where trade happens, and where the connection between Sierra Leone and Liberia is lived every single day.

5. This Groundbreaking Ceremony is for our great people gathered here — our traders, our farmers, our mothers, our young people and security personnel of both our nations.

YOUR EXCELLENCY, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,

6. I once met a woman trader at a border crossing much like this one.
7. She had been waiting hours because the road ahead was impassable after the rain.
8. She did not complain. She simply said: "**We are used to waiting.**" That sentence never left me.
9. Today, we are here to make sure that her daughters — and your daughters — never have to say those words again.

10. The waiting is over. The building begins.

**11. Your Excellency, my big brother, President
Boakai — thank you.**

12. Thank you for this invitation.

13. Thank you for the vision your administration has shown in structuring this project, and for the confidence you have placed in a Sierra Leonean company to help deliver it.

14. That confidence is received as both an honour and a responsibility.

15. You have **chosen cooperation over competition, partnership over pride.**

16. That is leadership — and you have shown it.

Thank you.

YOUR EXCELLENCY, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,

17. Both Liberia and Sierra Leone know what it means to lose everything.

18. We also know what it takes to rebuild — from nothing — with too few resources and the whole world watching.

19. For decades, roads like these were not just unpaved — they were unsafe.

20. Unsafe not because our people lacked the will to build them, but because the conditions for peace, for investment, and for governance had not yet been built.

21. Collectively, we built conducive environments for peace, stability and good governance.

22. Our people built those conditions — with resilience, with sacrifice, and with a refusal to be defined by our worst chapters.

23. So, when I stand here today, I do not just see a groundbreaking for the construction of roads.

24. I see the dividend of peace. I see what stability makes possible.

25. To the great people of Liberia and Sierra Leone: you have earned this moment. Never let anyone diminish what it took to get here.

26. Be steadfast in carrying out your duties as law-abiding citizens, and continue to contribute meaningfully to the building of our nations.

YOUR EXCELLENCY, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,

27. I stand before you not only as **President of Sierra Leone**, but as **Chairman of the ECOWAS Authority of Heads of State and Government** — and in that capacity, I say with the full weight of that office: **This is not just a Liberian road construction project. This is a regional statement.**

28. The corridors we are breaking ground on today — **255 kilometres of roads** — are part of the connective tissue of West Africa's economic future.

29. They strengthen the **ECOWAS Free Movement Protocol**. They bring our single market closer to reality.

30. As **ECOWAS Chair**, I am calling on the **ECOWAS Commission, the African Development Bank, Afreximbank, and all multilateral partners** to study this model, finance this model, and replicate it across every cross-border corridor in the ECOWAS region.

31. If we are serious about ECOWAS, projects like this must become the rule, not the exception.

- 32.** We should be focused on not just policies, but pavement. Not just summits, but shovels in the ground.
- 33.** When the **79-kilometre Klay to Bo Waterside road** is complete, the traders crossing this border daily will reach their markets faster, with their goods intact and their costs lower.
- 34.** When the **30-kilometre Madina Junction to Robertsport** is done, farmers who today lose harvests to impassable roads will reach the port in time.

- 35.** When the **38-kilometre St. Paul Bridge to Klay** opens at four lanes, the artery feeding Monrovia's economy will finally flow freely.
- 36.** A business owner in Monrovia will ship goods to Freetown in under a day.
- 37.** A young entrepreneur near this border will have access to markets, universities, and opportunities that today feel impossibly far.
- 38. We are not just building roads. We are building a future.**

YOUR EXCELLENCY, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,

39. I feel particular pride today because the company building all of this is from Sierra Leone.

40. Pavifort AI Associates (SL) Ltd is not a distant multinational.

41. It is a company from our soil, built by our people, now trusted with a landmark project on a brother nation's ground.

42. Pavifort has earned that trust through quality construction delivered in record time.

43. Today, they prove that African excellence has no borders.

44. But **Pavifort** is not an exception — they are a signal.

45. A signal that the West African private sector is ready to compete, ready to deliver, and ready to build this region from within.

46. And so, I issue a challenge — to every entrepreneur, every engineer, every young business owner listening today: **If a Sierra Leonean company can cross a border to**

build Liberia's roads — what is stopping a Liberian company from crossing one to build ours?

47. The opportunity is here. The frameworks exist.

What we need now is the audacity to act.

48. To the private sector of both nations — and across ECOWAS, the era of waiting for governments to build everything is over.

49. Public-Private Partnerships (PPPs) are not just a financing mechanism.

50. They are a declaration that when government and the private sector align around the public good, the results are transformative.

51. The **Design, Build, Operate and Transfer (DBOT) model** here is exactly that. Design it. Build it. Operate it. Transfer it.

52. The private sector builds with excellence because its reputation depends on it.

53. The State retains the asset. The people receive the value.

54. This is the model I am championing across Sierra Leone and across ECOWAS. And this project is the proof that it works.

55. To every entrepreneur watching today: the door is open. Come. Build. Partner.

56. To **the women traders** who cross this border every day carrying goods, children, and hope — these roads are built for you.

57. Your time has value. Your labour has been subsidising poor infrastructure for too long.

That changes now with the construction of these roads.

58. To the young people of both nations — the graduates, the engineers, the nurses, the entrepreneurs: every kilometre of this road is a kilometre of new economic territory opening for your generation.

59. Be ready to meet it.

I. CONCLUDING REMARKS

YOUR EXCELLENCY, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,

60. As we turn the sod today, we are honouring everyone who waited too long at crossings like this one.

61. We are redeeming the promise we made to our people when they chose peace.

62. We are answering the question every young person in this region is asking: Is this continent really building for us?

63. Today, the answer is yes.

- 64.** The true measure of this project will not be in kilometres completed.
- 65.** It will be in the woman who reaches her market on time.
- 66.** The farmer who no longer loses his harvest.
- 67.** The child who grows up in a town that finally feels connected to the world.
- 68. Some borders divide nations. This one — today — connects futures.**

69. And when we build roads like this, we are not just connecting places. **We are connecting possibilities.**

70. May God bless the Republic of Liberia, may God bless the Republic of Sierra Leone, and may God bless our shared and unstoppable future.

I THANK YOU.