



PERMANENT MISSION OF THE REPUBLIC OF SIERRA LEONE TO THE UNITED NATIONS

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STATEMENT BY

His Excellency Alhaji Dr. AHMAD TEJAN KABBAH
President of the Republic of Sierra Leone

AT THE

HIGH LEVEL PLENARY MEETING OF THE 60TH SESSION OF THE GENERAL
ASSEMBLY

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CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY

Mr. President,

This Summit offers us a unique opportunity to improve the effectiveness of the United Nations system and to further strengthen international cooperation for global security and development.

Events of the past few days clearly demonstrate that we are all deeply committed to the achievement of these objectives. It is also clear that differences remain among us on the appropriate methods for accomplishing our objectives, as reflected in the outcome document that is before us for adoption.

Mr. President,

The Millennium Development Goals (MDG's)

We note the general progress that has been made by many countries towards the achievement of the MDG's. We are concerned however that many sub-Saharan countries, particularly post-conflict countries have not achieved as much as their efforts would have justified.

We are encouraged that several initiatives including those by the Africa Commission chaired by the Rt. Hon. Tony Blair, have been proposed to identify the obstacles to our progress and determine the appropriate strategies for overcoming them.

Many of the recommendations from these initiatives have already been endorsed by the donor community, including the G8 and Multilateral Financial Institutions. We therefore urge that their implementation be accelerated particularly in the areas of financing for infrastructural development, agriculture and capacity building in the public sector. We should also move quickly to restructure the partnership between the donor community and recipient countries to allow for greater flexibility in the utilization of development assistance and better recognition of the development priorities set by our countries.

Efforts should also be made by the six countries out of twenty-two donor countries that have not pledged to achieve the 0.7% GNP for Overseas Development Assistance (ODA), since their GNP add up to roughly half of the global total.

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National Efforts for Achieving the MDG's

Within our limited capacity, we have made considerable efforts to create a conducive environment for achieving the MDGS, through the strengthening of democratic institutions, including the judicial system and public accountability mechanisms, principally the anti-corruption commission. We have also decentralized government to allow local communities to have a greater role in the way they are governed and to be able to hold public officials accountable. We are restructuring our public financial management system to enhance transparency in the use of public funds. We have established an independent public procurement authority and introduced regular public expenditure tracking surveys.

We have also developed a poverty reduction strategy paper and adopted a national plan for meeting the MDGS. These actions are complemented by a far-reaching restructuring of our security institutions, namely the police and the armed forces in order to enhance their operational effectiveness in defending the security of our country and to strengthen their respect for human rights.

With the assistance and cooperation of UNAMSIL and the International Military Advisory and Training Team (IMATT), the Republic of Sierra Leone Armed Forces have assumed their full constitutional responsibility for the security of the State. We have also made special efforts to consolidate the peace by promoting national cohesion and by addressing the special needs of war victims including the payment of reparations as provided for by the Lome Peace Agreement. In this connection we would appreciate contributions from the international community towards the operationalization of a Trust Fund to be set up for that purpose.

Reform of the United Nations System

We agree with the Secretary-General that the outcome document provides a basis for recommendations to reform the organization. We welcome the agreements reached on several elements of the reform process, including the establishment of a peace building commission and a Human rights Council as well as the conclusion of an international instrument against terrorism. We also welcome progress in the negotiations on the areas of Secretariat and management reforms, impunity, peace keeping, and the agreement to support the development of a capacity building programme within the African Union over a period of ten years.

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We urge that effective measures are taken to implement decisions that have already been agreed, so that we can build the

foundation for rapid progress towards reaching agreement on the outstanding issues.

It is important to quickly resume negotiations on such outstanding issues as the reform of the Security Council and related institutions of the UN, in order to take full advantage of understandings already reached in other areas.

Mr. President,

Five years ago, from this rostrum at the Millennium Summit, I, like other leaders, spoke about the imperative of adaptation. We urged the United Nations to continue to adapt and equip itself to deal with the perennial problems of human insecurity and underdevelopment, particularly the new manifestations of these problems, namely terrorism and extreme poverty. Five years on, rather than subsiding, these problems seem to have escalated, posing serious threats to international peace and security. We must therefore strengthen our resolve to adopt effective measures to eradicate these problems. A reinvigorated United Nations can play a crucial role in this endeavour.

I thank you for your attention.