



**KEYNOTE ADDRESS BY HIS EXCELLENCY  
PRESIDENT DR. JULIUS MAADA BIO,  
NATIONAL LEADER OF THE SLPP AT THE  
SIGNING OF THE SLPP-NGC ALLIANCE  
AGREEMENT AT BINTUMANI  
CONFERENCE, SUNDAY 23ND APRIL 2023**

The Honourable Vice President and Deputy Leader

Madam First Lady

The Chairman, PPRC

The Leader of the NGC

The National Chairman and members of the SLPP

The Chairman and members of the NGC

Distinguished Guests

Ladies and gentlemen

Good afternoon,

### **Marriage dae yah, marriage dae!**

1. In 1951, our Founding Fathers built the SLPP upon the foundation of a great aspiration: One Country, One People. They combined a largeness of vision with a largeness of heart. They built a party that would provide a broad umbrella for every Sierra Leonean.

2. Our Founding Fathers did not hesitate to build alliances. They frequently extolled the virtues of National Unity or of a United Front. This was what brought Sir Milton Margai, Chief Bai Farama Tass, Chief Bai Shebora Yumkella, Lamina Sankoh, Kandeh Bureh, Mohamed Sanusi Mustapha, and several others together to seek national statehood and build a brand-new nation.

3. Seventy-two years on, today, we seek to reaffirm our faith in the founding aspiration of our Party and continue the tradition of our Founding Fathers as we formalize the Progressive Alliance between the Sierra Leone People's Party and the National Grand Coalition for the June 24th multi-tier elections.

4. Ladies and gentlemen, this Progressive Alliance has a fundamental purpose - to promote inclusive governance and national cohesion, in line with my

vision for our beloved country. Therefore, this is a special moment for me personally and our country as we join forces towards an Alliance for Transformational Development in Sierra Leone.

5. Today, as we sign this Alliance Agreement, I want to express my gratitude for the commitment and dedication of our two parties in coming together for the greater good of our nation.

6. I am pleased to note that for the past several months both leaderships of the SLPP and NGC have engaged in extensive discussions rooted in the desire to form an Alliance that is strong, strategic and transparent. As leaders, we were guided by a purpose larger than our individual ambitions. We resolved to work together towards transformative and inclusive development in Sierra Leone, believing that by joining

forces, we can achieve greater impact and create more positive changes for our beloved country.

7. In a world full of conflicts and divisiveness, we understand the importance of national cohesion. Our respect for political, social, and religious diversity is what makes us a great nation. We believe that our diversity should be our strength, not our weakness.

8. Distinguished guests, inclusive governance is at the heart of this alliance. Every Sierra Leonean, regardless of background, ethnicity, or political affiliation, must have a voice in the decision-making processes of our nation. Through this alliance, we aim to foster unity, tolerance, and understanding among all Sierra Leoneans and promote a sense of national pride and identity that transcends political differences.

9. Five years on, as President and Leader of the ruling SLPP, I am proud of our remarkable achievements and the visible progress we have made: over (1) million more new learners have access to education than five years ago; we have recruited over 12,000 teachers more than five years ago; we have constructed almost 200 health facilities more than five years ago; we have recruited over 5,000 health workers more than five ago; our infant and maternal mortality rates are far lower than five years ago; more Sierra Leoneans have access to electricity nationwide than five years ago; more Sierra Leoneans have access to water supply than five years ago; we have constructed more roads and bridges than five years ago; we have produced more metric tonnes of rice than five years ago; mining communities receive more payments in the Community Development Agreement than five years ago; our country is internationally more respected than five years; and

our global leadership is more prominent than five years ago.

10. For the first time in history, we are eligible to develop the MCC compact, passed the MCC scorecard for four consecutive years, passed the control of corruption indicator for five consecutive years, repealed the 55-year old seditious criminal libel law, abolished the death penalty and enacted the Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment Act 2022 which crystalised the 30% representation of women across governance.

11. Therefore, the NGC is forming an Alliance with an SLPP which is not only proud of its achievements in government but also experience in winning national elections.

12. Today, with the formation of this Alliance, we will continue to implement policies and programmes that improve the lives of our citizens. We will initiate transformative projects across sectors, create jobs, empower the women and youth, and ensure that no one is left behind.

13. As we move forward, the SLPP and NGC will work collaboratively, leveraging our collective strengths, expertise, and resources to achieve our shared goals. The signed Agreement has set out the intendment of this Alliance and as Leader of the SLPP, I commit to abide by and uphold the spirit of the Agreement.

14. Our core campaign messages will be the same, emphasizing the commitment of my administration to peace and national cohesion and inclusive development. Our nation has experienced its fair share of challenges. The decade-long civil war left



deep scars and divisions among our people. As we move forward, peace and national cohesion will be fundamental pillars of our development agenda.

15. As President of Sierra Leone, I am committed to peace and national cohesion. We cannot let political or ethnic differences divide us to the point of conflict. Instead, we must work towards a common goal of building a prosperous and united Sierra Leone which is anchored on the rule of law, good governance and accountability.

16. As an Alliance, we will strive to create space for open and respectful discussions where all voices are heard and diverse perspectives are considered. We will work towards building bridges, mending relationships, and healing the wounds of the past. I call upon all Sierra Leoneans to join us in this noble endeavor.

17. Ladies and gentlemen, the formation of the Progressive Alliance for Transformational Development by the SLPP and NGC is a testament to our commitment to inclusive governance and national cohesion.

18. Our vision is unified, and our ideas are cross-fertilized. We are united in our love for Sierra Leone. Our Alliance will accelerate the development efforts that my administration has been undertaking.

19. I want to take this opportunity to acknowledge Dr. Yumkella's contributions as an effective parliamentarian and a great partner in our development efforts. Even where we differed, we remained committed to our country.

20. To members of the NGC, you are our brothers and sisters. For many of you, the SLPP was once your home and a place where we shared memories of joy and sorrow. They often say “home is where your heart is”, so as we mark the signing of this Alliance today, I am hopeful that this journey takes your hearts closer to home.

21. To members of the great SLPP, let us embrace our NGC brothers and sisters without fear, suspicion and hesitation. Let us use this opportunity to demonstrate that the SLPP can forge an Alliance with all who share our vision of inclusive governance, national cohesion, and transformative development. As a Party, let us aspire to build more alliances as the credible pathway for sustainable progress.

22. Let me conclude by thanking this Alliance for endorsing me as the sole Presidential Candidate for

the June 24th Presidential election. In April 2018, we took off in a plane journey. Despite the twin turbulences of Covid-19 pandemic and the Russia-Ukraine war, we have laid the foundation not only for human capital development but also for a progressive nation.

23. Five years on as your pilot, I have learnt that sometimes it is not about the journey or the destination but about the people you meet along the way. As I travelled across the country, I know citizens need more schools, more health facilities, more food self-sufficiency, more access to electricity, more access to water supply, more roads and bridges, more resilient and inclusive economy that tackles the high cost of living and more progressive legislations.

24. We cannot change an experience pilot for an inexperience pilot when the plane is mid-air. I am the

only candidate with the experience and proven track record to deliver on the aspirations of our people.

25. Therefore, at the end of this ceremony, let us go out, proud of the achievements we have made as a government, confident in the ability of your sole Presidential candidate and energized by the strength of this Alliance to propagate our message of five more years for progress and food security.

26. Together, we can shape a brighter future for Sierra Leone, where all citizens have an equal opportunity to thrive and prosper.

27. Thank you.