



**STATEMENT BY HIS EXCELLENCY,
PRESIDENT JULIUS MAADA BIO IN
COMMEMORATION OF INTERNATIONAL
ANTI-CORRUPTION DAY, 2018**

Fellow citizens, in Sierra Leone, those who indulge in corruption see it as a source of wealth; a source of privilege; and, a route to or a demonstration of power that they often abuse. Much more worrying is that across the country, political leaders and ordinary citizens engage in corruption shamelessly and with arrogance and impunity.

Corruption in all its forms has a cost and it has real human victims when critical infrastructure like hospitals and schools are not built and when citizens are denied their rights and equitable access to service delivery. Credible foreign and local investors whose investments create good-paying jobs for citizens avoid corrupt countries.

Corruption also stalls economic development, compromises ethical conduct and national values, and, violates the fundamental rights of citizens. Above all, corruption undermines democratic institutions of governance and the stability of a country. For the foregoing reasons, corruption is a national security threat.

During the election campaign, I strongly advocated that we fight and fight relentlessly against corruption. Immediately after winning the presidency, I kept my promise to the people of this country by setting up a Governance Transition Team to review the governance landscape we were taking over. Their report identified serious deficiencies in governance, financial management, and accountability. They advised thorough forensic audits and the setting up of

an independent Commission of Inquiry. The legislature has now ratified the setting up of an independent Commission of Inquiry that will work thoroughly, independently, and transparently.

As President, I also appointed a new, young and vibrant leadership at the Anti-Corruption Commission who has injected new energy, increased public confidence and restored faith in the Anti-Corruption Commission. Therefore, it is refreshing that this year, Sierra Leone has passed the "Control of Corruption" Indicator in the Millennium Challenge Corporation Scorecard, scoring 71 percent. We have moved 22 points upwards, moving from 49 percent last year. This is the country's highest score in the 'Control of Corruption' Indicator since the introduction

of the MCC Scorecard in 2004. If we are to develop as a nation, we must draw a line under the perverse, arrogant, and reckless looting of the state. Corruption is a fight we must win and it is fight we will win.

Fellow Sierra Leoneans, few days ago, the International Monetary Fund also gave Sierra Leone a resounding vote of confidence by bringing us back into programme. They recognized our compliance with a series of programme-requested reforms such as the Treasury Single Account, legislation on revenue from the extractive industry, and the removal of much-abused fuel subsidies and duty waivers among others. We went beyond their requests by undertaking other economic reform initiatives including the biometric verification of public sector workers, the

introduction of a transparent fleet management policy, and a deeper and close look at procurement processes. International partners who had withheld budgetary support from the past government, such as the European Union, DfID, the World Bank, and the African Development Bank, have now indicated their confidence in our credible management of the economy by reinstating budgetary support.

We are ready to do more as a government and we are going to do more.

1. We have strengthened the hand of the ACC to investigate and prosecute cases of corruption without fear or favor in accordance with all existing anti-corruption laws.

2. We will use international anti-corruption agreements to ensure that persons who steal Sierra Leone government funds have no places to hide or enjoy their ill-gotten wealth.
3. We are undertaking reforms that will bring more predictability and transparency about business processes, taxes, costs, and the business climate in general.
4. We will continue to deploy science, technology, and innovation to leverage greater transparency. Early successes encourage us to expand its use from a biometric census that has unmasked 10,000 ghost workers to dozens of missing government vehicles.
5. Greater emphasis on corruption and ethics education through such courses as Social Studies in schools will

help orient our next generation to its on their civil obligations with regard to corruption. Ethics and integrity training for our public service officials will be instituted with a view to minimizing instances of corruption.

6. Hospitals and public institutions must craft service delivery charters and mission statements that state clearly their obligations to the general public and display the cost of services and expected services.

Fellow citizens, fighting corruption and supporting the fight against corruption, no matter who is involved in corruption is good for Sierra Leone and for every Sierra Leonean. I thank you for listening and may God bless this our great republic