



**ASSESSMENT OF PRESIDENT JULIUS MAADA BIO-SIERRA
LEONE PEOPLE'S PARTY (SLPP) GOVERNMENT'S FIRST
100 DAYS IN POWER**

25TH JULY 2018

PRESS BRIEFING

I wish to welcome all of you yet to another press conference at our Party's headquarters in just one month. Until the Sierra Leone People's Party (SLPP) government desists from the unabated human rights abuses and state condoned widespread spate of violence against the people of Sierra Leone, we will continue to invite you to serve as the channel of information between the general public and us.

Owing to the prevailing threat to freedom of expression, let me use this opportunity to thank you all for the objective dissemination of our response to the SLPP government's biased GTT report. At least, we were able to prove that the GTT is a carefully orchestrated tool of oppression targeted at selected people based on their political association.

It is now apparent that we are all missing the All Peoples Congress (APC) government's remarkable commitment to democracy, good governance and development of the past ten years. I must add that I am proud of the level playing field the APC government provided for all political parties to participate in the four-tier elections in March 2018.

Overall, the All Peoples Congress has revealed too many missteps in these early days to warrant vigilance by citizens. As our revered founding father of the APC, Dr. Siaka P. Stevens reminds us of the immortal words of United States President Thomas Jefferson when he said: "Eternal vigilance is the price of liberty".

History has taught us that the 100-day benchmark started when America began assessing their Presidents in 100-day increments. The practice dates back to President Franklin Delano Roosevelt, who it is said was an overachiever by his “swift, take-charge method of governing,”

The principal aim of the 100-day retrospective is to assess a new leader after he had enough time to take action on his public policy pledges. In that respect the APC has a national duty to keep “a vigilant watch and close scrutiny of its public servants and a fair and reasonable estimate” of President Julius Maada Bio of the SLPP.

In this regard, we will turn to President Dr. Ernest Bai Koroma, the predecessor to President Julius Maada Bio. President Dr. Ernest Bai Koroma took up office with a sweeping agenda to restore Sierra Leone’s image globally and to rebuild the nation after a protracted war followed by the military regime of force, the National Provisional Ruling Council.

On his platform of an Agenda for Change, he proceeded to implement his public policy pledges focusing on generation and distribution of electricity in Freetown, the country’s capital that had subsisted in perpetual darkness, in his first 100 days in governance.

Topmost in his governing doctrine – The Agenda for Change was his strategic priority, which included infrastructure, energy, agriculture, education, and public health. The sign of change in Government was visible everywhere as he hit the ground running in his first 100 days. Aware of the purpose of the 100 Days, we will now turn the review of President Julius Maada Bio’s stewardship to the nation in his first 100 days.

A retrospective of what the Bio administration impresses on the minds of the people in his last 100 days exposes inexperience in the elements of good governance as glaringly seen in the quick-and-eager-to-please actions for political gain rather than rational basis in development undertakings. These lofty goals without the essential groundwork on how public policy is made will inevitably lead to failure.

In so many pages of self-praise on “Transforming the Economy; Human

Development; Improving Governance and Improving Infrastructure,” we see the familiar grounds impressively covered by President Dr. Ernest Bai Koroma. A ‘new direction’ from where President Koroma left is akin to taking the well-paved road Julius Maada Bio has arrived on and wants to veer off to a new start instead of building up the way to a well-ordered path to a Middle-Income economy.

Let us review the highlights of the document that says so much but contains too little to behold as ‘achievements’ to the ascendant SLPP administration that has already lost its way in a ‘new direction’:

THE ECONOMY

In 100 days of the Julius Maada Bio administration, we have not seen any improvement in the economy although amidst the noise of fiscal responsibility in managing the economy, we have heard of donor-driven assumptions most of which started under the APC management of the economy that endured for many years until the after shocks in the iron ore market and the Ebola Virus Disease. If the SLPP continues with the recovery plan initiated by President Dr. Ernest Bai Koroma to put back on track the plans for a Middle-Income economy, it would be in our national interest and the credit of the APC for sustained management of our economy.

EDUCATION

Every parent wants free education within the framework of a good system. Pitfalls lie ahead in the proposed overhaul of the 6-3-4-4 system because of the hasty manner it is being done. The sudden change from 6-3-4-4 to 6-3-3-4 is not being done before an inquiry by thoughtful educators to weigh the strengths and weaknesses of both systems.

The 1991 Constitution proposes that: “The Government shall strive to eradicate illiteracy, and to this end, shall direct its educational policy towards achieving—
(a) Free adult literacy programmes; b. free compulsory basic education at primary and junior secondary school levels; and (c) free senior secondary education as and when practicable.”

So, free education has been long contemplated by the Constitution and every administration has considered a well-hewn plan and, together with costs within the

national budget. We urge the SLPP administration to take the logical necessary steps towards the provision of free education so that it becomes sustainable.

REVIEW OF PRESIDENT JULIUS MAADA BIO'S EXECUTIVE LEADERSHIP

All political parties and citizens alike require the evaluation and assessment of the ascendant SLPP administration. What arises from the evaluation and assessment of President Julius Maada Bio's first 100-days milestone in Sierra Leone is thus:

The Legislature: The Founders of the 1991 Constitution framed a constitutional democracy, which is predicated on the separation of powers, and related checks and balances among the three coordinate branches of Government. A review of the March 7 2018 official Parliamentary results declared the All Peoples Congress in Parliament with 68 Seats out of 132 Ordinary Members of Parliament; followed by the SLPP 49; Coalition for Change 8; National Grand Coalition 4 and 3 Independent Members.

The SLPP government through intrigue masterminded to diminish the majority status of the APC in Parliament and subverted the proper establishment of Parliament. This is an outrageous abuse of power to rank the APC as a Minority Party when it holds the majority of the Seats in Parliament. The SLPP administration, through frivolous court injunctions usurped the APC's parliamentary majority and undemocratically overturned the will of the people.

Consequently, not only has the Julius Maada Bio administration disenfranchised voters in our stronghold but has unconstitutionally established a lopsided parliament to favour the SLPP by plotting to elect a speaker contrary to the constitution of Sierra Leone and the Standing Orders of Parliament.

Now, Parliament, the cradle of our democracy has been thrown asunder by the SLPP imposing a Speaker of the House and assuming a Majority status. More than this, by sending the Sierra Leone Police to invade the sanctity of the Chamber of Parliament to forcefully and violently eject all 68 APC Members alarmed one of the Architects of the Constitution of Sierra Leone 1991.

Hon. Justice Dr. Abdulai O. Conteh noted that the act: "Is reprehensible and

disgraceful and is the lowest point so far in our democracy and the administration of justice. It smacks of no less than contempt of parliament and abuse of the process of law and the rule of law.”

Use & Abuse of Executive Orders: President Julius Maada Bio has begun his administration of Sierra Leone with blunder, abuse of power and unsettling the three pillars of our democracy over the last 100 days. President Julius Maada Bio has taken measures incompatible with the expressed or implied powers vested in the President or authority granted by Parliament. He has issued a number of questionable Executive Orders, which undoubtedly deserve scrutiny.

For instance, he abrasively dismissed Ady Macauley, Commissioner of the Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC), by sending him on “Special Leave” where Parliament had prescribed a clear method of removal.

Hence, the first 100 days have begotten zero good governance of the SLPP administration of the Republic of Sierra Leone.

State of Democracy and Human Rights: The importance of political stability cannot be overemphasized in our young democracy. The SLPP has not been magnanimous in victory. The SLPP has used its narrow and questionable victory as a license to vilify the APC and to govern in their 100 days in military autocracy.

Sierra Leone’s post-elections environment has had strained socio-economic uncertainties resulting from political intolerance, harassment, intimidation and violence.

These uncertainties have been compounded by a spate of marked instances of Human Rights abuses especially aimed at APC public officials and our party-faithful. For example, there was an earlier cowardly attack on the new Mayor of Freetown, Her Worship Yvone Aki Sawyer by SLPP hoodlums on her way to the office. This was followed by recent brazen attack on her in front of her office while other SLPP outlaws, tore down a perimeter fence that was being erected by city workers for the safety of the Mayor and councilors from frequent harassment and physical violence.

Then, there was the heinous murder of the APC Tonkolili District Youth Leader, Issa

Kamara (AKA Adel), Lumley Zonal Chairman, Abu Bakarr Kamara and the ensuing harassment of APC Ministers together with the violent attacks on APC supporters across the nation. There were also forceful displacement of Women and Children of APC families from homes of their birth to distant districts while the SLPP lawlessness extended to the looting and burning of shops and homes belonging to APC adherents. Other attacks on APC offices, unwarranted detentions and travel bans on political opponents among other instances of Human Right abuses have become a commonplace.

Most shocking is that the government grounded the Cross-party Committee report, a Committee the APC leadership asked H.E. President Maada Bio for because of the unbearable post-election violence, which was thoroughly investigated by all political parties in Parliament, the SLP, the military, the Sierra Leone Human Rights Commission, the Inter-Religious Council and local stakeholders nationwide.

For the most part, women and children, the most vulnerable members of our society, have been the most affected. For Example:

The Cross-party Committee discovered despicable human rights violations on especially women. One notable example was the gang rape of one Sata Lamin, an APC supporter, by several men in Kailahun. The identified assailants include; Brima Morie, son of SLPP Chairman of Nyanyahun town, Kailahun District, Sama Bonda, Maya Bonda, Massaquoi Senessie, Alieu Kanneh, Aruna Bockarie, Sao James, Mohamed Lamaningo etc.

Despite the fact that Sata Lamin knows her assailants, identified them in her testimony before the Cross-party Committee team, and reported the matter to the SLP, no action was taken. Sata Lamin licked her wounds, bore the medical cost and carried the stigma as well as the consequent separation from her SLPP husband who would not continue his marriage with a woman who had been raped by seven men.

These attacks against political opponents have been extended to another opposition leader, Mohamed Kamaraimba Mansaray, Leader of the Alliance Democratic Party, who has been ordered arrested after his public remarks on the first 100 Days of

President Julius Maada Bio.

Also similar human rights suppression of freedom of expression and rights to assembly were extended to Civil Society Activist, Edmund Abu when he called for a peaceful demonstration against the hike in price of fuel and the high cost of living in the country.

And we will endeavour to update you on some of the human rights abuses of the SLPP government in its first 100 days of power:

- 1 Arbitrary termination of workers perceived to be APC supporters mostly by Executive Orders or instruction from the President;
 - a. Dismissal of 101 members of staff from the State House,
 - b. Dismissal of the Chief of Immigration Officer,
 - c. Dismissal of the Chairman of NATCOM,
 - d. Dismissal of the Anti-Corruption Commissioner,
 - e. The dissolution of all boards and its subsequent dismissal from work of all board members,
 - f. The dissolution of the Sierra Leone Human Rights Commission (SLHRC) and the National Commission for Democracy (NCD) along with all the commissioners and their entire staff,
 - g. The frivolous termination of 56 regent chiefs in the North and two regent chiefs from Kenema District and Kailahun District respectively.

- 2 The APC party has also registered a series of physical, psychological and emotional human rights violations against its members especially in the South-eastern region and in the capital city, Freetown;
 - a. The repeated physical assault of the City Mayor of the Freetown City Council,
 - b. The rash and unlawful repatriation of diplomats and non-payments of benefits of former ministers, former diplomats and other former government operatives,
 - c. The brutal killing of an APC Zonal Chairman in Freetown, on Sheriff drive in broad daylight,

- d. The endless and unabated persecution of APC supporters in the southeast,
- e. The forceful displacement of APC supporters mostly women and children from Kono to Masingbi,
- f. The indiscriminate arrest of perceived APC supporters in Freetown,
- g. The unlawful breaking into and searching of the houses of APC supporters and former government officials without warrant e.g. the forceful breaking into and searching of the former Minister of Internal Affairs' house in Freetown and the looting and carting away of valuables from his house,
- h. The beating up of APC members of Parliament and the brutal removal of 68 APC members of Parliament,
- i. The forceful removal of a high court judge from his rightfully assigned vehicle in broad daylight in Freetown by the government vehicle recovery team,
- j. The embarrassment of the former President's daughter and husband in their house by the government vehicle recovery team,
- k. The poorly investigated and written GTT report which named former APC ministers and government officials as suspects of investigation and promoted SLPP officials who bear equal or similar responsibilities,
- l. The blanket order for all former ministers, government officials to surrender their ordinary and diplomatic passports and all other travel documents to the CID as if they are all criminals or subject of investigation,
- m. The unending burning and looting of the houses and properties of APC supporters in the southeast as well as the gang rape of Sata Lamin in Kailahun etc.
- n. The intimidation of and sometimes arrest of opposition party members e.g. the arrest of the ADP leader for criticizing President Maada Bio.

To avoid the consequences of human rights abuses once more in our country, we must take notice of Philosopher George Santayana's admonition: "those who do not remember the past are condemn to repeat it".

In that regard, Sierra Leoneans are asked to recall the lessons of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) Report which spoke of major human rights abuses among others that tore our society apart.

The Judiciary: Apart from abuse of power, disdain for the rule of law, the intimidation, harassment and violation of human rights, there is apprehension in the Superior Court of Judicature of Sierra Leone; which will disturb the independence of the judiciary.

The Constitutional right to travel under the Freedom of Movement of the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of the Republic of Sierra Leone has been indefinitely suspended. Such executive actions tend to lead to interference of the independence of the Judiciary.

Conclusion: Finally, President Julius Maada Bio has spent his first 100 days bouncing between a series of blunders in quixotic military manner.

Ladies and Gentlemen, APC has looked back at the first 100 days of President Bio along with independent views and we have found the first 100 days troubling, and his stewardship troublesome.

Based on the evidence cited above including abuse of power, disdain for democracy and the rule of law, abuse of human rights, and civic incompetence among other signs of unfitness for the highest office of the land. President Bio is ill prepared to steer the Ship of State, as he is unable to inspire the nation. This is the view from market women, farmers, grassroots, school children, teachers, okada and kekeh riders, Civil Society, the youths, People with Disabilities and the citizenry of Sierra Leone both at home and abroad.

Ladies and Gentlemen, to conclude our review of President Maada Bio of his first 100 days, we estimate his early stewardship as a failure in the manner of Giordano Bruno, the Mathematician when he said on such measures, "If the first button of one's coat is wrongly buttoned, all the rest will be crooked."

Finally, let me make it categorically clear to all and sundry that the APC cannot be intimidated, that the APC cannot be annihilated, that the APC

will not succumb to war of attrition aimed at rendering the APC an endangered political party.

I Thank You.

Long Live the APC God Bless the Republic of Sierra Leone!

Signed.....

Amb. Dr. Alhaji Osman Foday Yansaneh