

**NATIONAL STATEMENT BY THE MINISTER OF  
ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE CHANGE, REPUBLIC  
OF SIERRA LEONE AT THE SIXTH SESSION OF THE  
UNITED NATIONS ENVIRONMENT ASSEMBLY,  
NAIROBI, KENYA FROM 26<sup>th</sup> FEBRUARY TO 1<sup>ST</sup>  
MARCH, 2024.**

Madam President  
Madam Executive Director  
Colleague Ministers  
Excellencies  
Distinguished Delegates  
Ladies and Gentlemen.

1. I bring you fraternal greetings and very best wishes from His Excellency President Julius Maada Bio, President of the Republic of Sierra Leone.
2. Let me, on behalf of my government and people, express our very deep and sincere gratitude and appreciation to the Republic of Kenya, and the United Nations Environment Programme for the excellent facilities that have been made available for this conference. I also thank our partners that made this meeting possible through their support to ensure the large participation of Parties.
3. Madam President, Sierra Leone aligns itself with the statements delivered on behalf of the African Group and Group of 77 and China. For almost 8 decades, multilateralism has been an effective tool for tackling complex global issues. It is

fitting that the theme for this year's conference is "Effective, inclusive and sustainable multilateral actions to tackle climate change, biodiversity loss and pollution". Effective multilateral actions require pooling of resources such as scientific and indigenous knowledge, technology, physical assets, public and private capital, and political will. The world's desired outcomes depend on availability of these resources and their efficient allocation to tackle global problems. At UNEA 5.2, Member States adopted landmark resolutions to ramp up efforts to curb pollution, mitigate and adapt to climate change, and protect and restore nature worldwide. Let us seize this opportunity to make UNEA-6 another historic conference.

4. Madam President, in Sierra Leone the planetary environmental crises have adversely impacted the lives and livelihoods of majority of our citizens. To reduce its vulnerability, Sierra Leone has mainstreamed inclusive green growth in its development process as evidenced by her Medium-Term National Development Plan (2024-2030).
5. Madam President, The Upper Guinean Forests is a West Africa endowed biome with a globally recognized biodiversity hotspot. It is a biogeographic region with a significant amount of biodiversity that is threatened with destruction. The forests are home to an exceptional concentration of vulnerable, threatened, or endangered species as defined by CITES and the Red List of Threatened Species compiled by the Nature IUCN. These species include forest elephants, pygmy hippopotamuses, and rosewood, among many others. The Upper Guinean Forest ecosystem, which once extended across

much of the West African region, is now found in fragments and remnants across part of Guinea, Sierra Leone, Liberia, Côte d'Ivoire, southern Ghana, and southwestern Togo.

6. Our government plans to leverage its natural assets to respond to the environmental crises by embarking on a national ecosystem restoration program that will not only be inclusive and sustainable but will also transform the local economies of communities living in or close to the forests. This restoration program will address underlying factors that have driven deforestation and degradation of the ecosystems. Our government is leveraging bilateral and multilateral partnerships to design, implement and monitor the progress and success of this program.
  
7. In conclusion, the Government of Sierra Leone reaffirms its commitment to environmental multilateralism and cooperation for the impactful outcomes at this sixth session of UNEA.

Thank you for your kind attention.