

**MINISTRY OF DEVELOPMENT AND  
ECONOMIC PLANNING**

**THE FOURTH STATE OF THE NATION  
SYMPOSIUM**

*DELIVERED BY: THE MINISTER, HON. MOHAMED B.  
DARAMY*

*JULY 2003*

**Mr. Chairman/Madam Chairperson**

**Colleague Ministers of Government**

**Honourable Members of Parliament**

**Your Excellencies**

**Members of the Diplomatic and  
Consular Corpse**

**Members of the National Policy Advisory Council**

**Representatives of UN Agencies**

**Representatives of International and  
Local Non-governmental Organisations**

**Officials of Ministries, Departments  
and Agencies of Government**

**Members of the Fourth Estate**

**Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen**

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**INTRODUCTION OF KEY STAFF**

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**I would like to take this opportunity to express on behalf of**

**the Deputy Minister, the Development Secretary, staff of the Ministry of Development and Economic Planning and on my own personal behalf my profound gratitude and appreciation to the Minister and staff of the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting for hosting this fourth State of the Nation Symposium at the Atlantic Hall of the National Stadium Complex.**

**This symposium, in my judgment, is important for several reasons. FIRST, it underscores the importance His Excellency, Alhaji Dr. Ahmad Tejan Kabbah, the President of the Republic of Sierra Leone attaches to transparency, probity and accountability in the management of the affairs of state. SECOND, it underpins what His Excellency has preached in most areas around the country that public officials, including Ministers of Government, are servants of the people and that he is the Chief Servant. THIRD, this symposium should provide the public with an opportunity to know the mandate of the Ministry, its objectives and programmes within the overall structure of Government. FOURTH, it will provide an opportunity for the public to review and assess the activities of the Ministry and to be able to evaluate the impact of those activities on the welfare of the citizenry of Sierra Leone. FIFTH, I hope that this symposium will enlighten the general public about the fundamental role and functions of their Government, that is, as a provider of infrastructure facilities, essential non-economic services, good governance, maintenance of good relations with our international development partners both bilateral and**

multilateral and as the establisher and maintainer of a conducive enabling environment etc.

## **MY PRESENTATION WILL BE DIVIDED INTO CERTAIN KEY AREAS.**

### **GENERAL**

#### **a. HUMAN DEVELOPMENT**

Human Development is a broader concept. It is about people, about ways to expand their choices to live full, creative lives with freedom and dignity. Economic growth, technological advances, increased trade and investment are means, NOT ends. In this context, freedom, is the right to live your lives and to raise your children in dignity, free from violence and oppression; equality, is used in a specific sense to mean, there should be no law, policy or regulation that denies anyone in our society the opportunity to benefit from development. Tolerance, which means the respect we as human beings must have for one another, without regard to our diverse, cultural, religious and language differences is very much in place in our society.

This Government has made efforts to achieve the above since this administration assumed power in 1996 and these, include, but are not limited to:

1. Establishment of the Independent Media Commission  
Communication policy has been developed to link Government, the media and the people. Registers newspapers and is a quasi-judicial institution.
2. Education and Health budgets have been protected since 1996 in our budgetary allocations;
2. Agriculture, Increases to pre-war production levels may soon be achievable;

4. **Reform of the security sector. Security, peace, stability, development and prosperity are all interrelated-Security Sector reform (Army, police, intelligence)**
5. **State Proceedings Act, 2000**
6. **The creation of NASSIT**
7. **The creation of the National Revenue Authority**
8. **The Environmental Protection Act and the National Environmental Policy**
9. **The National Youth Policy and the National Youth Programmed**
10. **The office of the Ombudsman**
11. **The Anticorruption Act**

**Government has established these Institutions, enacted these Acts, and promulgated these regulations and policy guidelines that its believe are prerequisites for good governance and for the maintenance of law and order in our society, previously conspicuously absent in our previous administrations.**

**c. CONTRAST IN EVOLUTION OF DEVELOPMENT PATTERNS**

**In the myth of Development, a book written by Oswald de Rivero, the former Peruvian diplomat and Ambassador to the UN, he says, “ in the majority of the industrialized states, national identity, preceded the crystallization of the state authority. In other words, the nation, reflected in a common culture, and above all in the emergence of a middle class and a national market, existed before the modern state was formed”**

**In contrast, in the majority of our states, “the political authority, that is to say, the state emerged from the Independence process before the nation, before the national cultural identity and before the development of a true middle class and a unifying market”.**

#### **d. Millennium Development Goals (MDGs)**

**To guide our national efforts and international support for goals. From democratic governance to economic stability to commitment to health and education.**

- 1. Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger by 2015**
- 2. Achieve universal primary education**
- 3. Promote gender equality and empower women**
- 4. Reduce child mortality**
- 5. Improve maternal health**
- 6. Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases**
- 7. Ensure environmental sustainability**
- 8. Develop a global partnership for development**
  - a. DEPAAC**
  - b. Monterrey Consensus**
  - c. CG Framework for Peace, Recovery and Development**
  - d. 10-year GOSL and UK/Ireland Poverty Framework Agreement**
  - e. Rich in natural resources, minerals, factors of production, market forces (supply and demand)**
- 9. Short term goals, medium term goals and long term goals and give examples, Development Credit Agreements (disbursements in tranches)**

## **1. PREAMBLE**

**Encouraged by the extreme desire of the citizens of Sierra Leone to renounce war and engage their collective strength in the transformation of their society,**

**Understanding that peace, as well as mental and physical security, is a necessary prerequisite to sustainable development;**

**Wishing to utilize the goodwill of the international community to empower Sierra Leoneans to take charge of their social, economic and political development,**

**Aware that Sierra Leoneans must not come to depend exclusively on the goodwill of the international community but utilize international assistance to create viable institutions that can survive future challenges;**

**The Ministry of Development and Economic Planning in the year 2002 therefore patterned its activities to prepare the country for a smooth transition from the emergency to the development phase to bring about the much needed change in the living standards of the people. His excellency' vision during his inaugural and state opening of Parliament address, highlighted the development priorities and goals, which fundamentally involves the improvement in the socio-economic welfare of all**

sierra leoneans through a systematic process in a transparent, accountable and democratic environment.

## **2. MISSION STATEMENT**

The Ministry continues to regard its mission as attainment for all Sierra Leoneans a high level of social and economic well-being through a systematic and conscious development planning process, formulation and coordination of sectoral policies and priorities, effective resource mobilization and its optimal utilization, which stimulates growth and social equity on a sustainable basis.

## **3. STRUCTURE OF THE MINISTRY**

In terms of structure, the Ministry of Development and Economic Planning is comprised of an Administrative Division, a Central Planning Unit and supervises the National Authorizing Office, a quasi-government institution. The Central Statistics Office, which used to be an integral component of this Ministry, has recently been turned into an autonomous organization by an act of Parliament. It is now known as Statistics Sierra Leone and this Ministry continues to give policy oversight to the new Statistics Sierra Leone.

Another autonomous unit: the National Poverty Alleviation Strategy Co-coordinating Office (PASCO) was established within

the Ministry in March 2002 to co-ordinate the preparation of the Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP).

#### **4. SHORT TERM GOALS OF THE MINISTRY**

Our short-term goal consists of mobilizing resources to support short-term programmes in place, as identified under the Interim Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (IPRSP) and the National Recovery Strategy (NRS). The programmes are geared towards improving the living standards of the most vulnerable groups including returnees, internally displaced persons (IDPs) and other war victims as well as addressing the urgent rehabilitation and reconstruction requirements of post conflict Sierra Leone. We also continue to work hard on the production of the PRSP to meet the completion date of December 2003.

The Ministry's active participation in the November 2002 Consultative Group (CG) meeting on Sierra Leone, at which the international community pledged USD 650 million towards the reconstruction and rehabilitation of our social and economic infrastructure, was in fulfillment of these goals.

#### **5. STATUS REPORT OF ON-GOING ACTIVITIES RELATING TO THE SHORT TERM GOALS**

##### **5.1 NATIONAL RECOVERY STRATEGY**

With the return of peace to the country in 2002, the Government was faced with the challenge of grappling with the aftermath of

the war including restoring civil authority in seven (7) districts. The Government with its development partners decided to put a national recovery strategy document together to source funds and to meet the immediate post war recovery challenges. The overall National Recovery Strategy document aims at providing a framework for:

**EXPAND ON THESE AREAS:**

- Restoration of state authority
- Rebuilding communities
- Peace building and human rights
- Restoration of the economy

I want to take this opportunity to thank publicly those donors who provided the initial resources with which we were able to commence our recovery efforts almost immediately peace was achieved. Notably among these are the UNDP, the World Bank, DFID, the EU, and USAID etc. With support of the above donors and our own funding, we were able to rehabilitate structures like administrative buildings, prisons, the courts, schools, health centers, and markets. As a result, local administration was restored to seven districts in record time. Local administrative staff, including 90 paramount chiefs, police personal, teachers, nurses and doctors returned to their various post in the Provinces. I am happy to report that largely these institutions

are functioning effectively thereby facilitating the restoration of civil authority consolidating peace and restoring law and order.

The NRC under the chairmanship of the Vice President is currently undertaking monitoring visits to the twelve districts to evaluate the achievement of the various districts recovery committees and monitor the ongoing recovery work.

## **6. MEDIUM TERM GOALS**

Poverty Reduction remains our medium term goal. The completion of the PRSP document will be our key instrument in accessing resources to support medium term programmes in the area of (a) Good Governance; (b) revival of the economy (c) Social Sector Development (d) mobilization of resources to fund such programmes and (e) completion of the ongoing programmes under the IPRSP and NRS.

## **7. STATUS REPORT OF ON-GOING ACTIVITIES UNDERTAKEN ON THE MEDIUM TERM GOALS.**

### **7.1 POVERTY REDUCTION STRATEGY PAPER (PRSP)**

You will recall that in September 2001 the major donors adopted the Interim Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (I-PRSP), which afforded us resources to the tune of Le 73.5 Billion under HIPC resources to fund our short-term programmes. Despite the constraints posed by a relatively fragile security environment

partly because of the ongoing civil unrest in neighbouring Liberia, the implementation of the transitional phase of the I-PRSP was successfully executed by end December 2002.

The preparatory activities for the preparation of the full PRSP commenced immediately. There were some delays due to a number of exogenous factors including the delayed completion of the disarmament and demobilization of ex-combatants, the uncertainties relating to the conduct of presidential and parliamentary elections, the lag in the provision of external financial and technical assistance. However, work on the document has progressed steadily as follows:

- The PASCO Secretariat has been established and it is now fully functional with all key members in post. All the institutional and governance arrangements have been established
- The consultative process of the PRSP is scheduled to commence immediately after the formal launching of the PRSP in August or in early September March 2003. Adequate mechanisms are being developed to include the views of key stakeholders, including parliament, the media, the poor and marginalized in rural communities, and other interest groups throughout the country. The national consultative activities will encompass regional, district, chiefdom and village levels.

- **An Integrated Household Survey (SLIHS) to generate baseline information for planning and providing critical information for the PRSP process is now quite advanced. This actually is critical because the last household income survey was conducted in 1989. An interim report is expected by October 2003, which will feed the PRSP.**
- **Several sector policy reviews that will inform the PRSP process have either been completed (e.g. CFFA, the Transport Sector Strategy and the Micro finance strategy) or are being planned. Sector policy reviews have commenced or will soon commence for the key sectors including Agriculture, Mining, Education, Health and Gender. The various Poverty Reduction Working Groups (PRWGs) have submitted the draft terms of reference (TORs) for these studies to PASCO for review. An assessment of the impact of HIV/AIDS will also be conducted within the framework of the recently initiated Sierra Leone HIV/AIDS Response Project (SHARP).**

**My gratitude goes to the World Bank and the UNDP and DFID who have provided the initial funds for the exercise so far. I also wish to thank donors like the EU, the ADB and other donors who have made firm commitment to fund the PRSP preparation process.**

## **7.2 THE DEVELOPMN BUDGET AND HIPC DEVELOPMENT TARGETED EXPENDITURE 2002**

### **7.2.1 THE DEVELOPMENT BUDGET AND THE PUBLIC INVESTMENT PROGRAMME (PIP)**

Complementary with the Government's medium term policy and goals, the Ministry has prepared a medium term investment programme covering the period 2003-2005. The PIP contains a list of priority projects for rehabilitation of economic and social infrastructure. These projects are considered by government to be absolutely essential for the country's economic recovery. The total PIP is estimated to cost \$323.5 million over a period of 3 years with the very high priority projects amounting to \$268.3 million.

### **7.2.2 PIP 2002 TO 2004**

There were seventy-five (75) projects in the 2002 to 2004 Public Investment Programme of which 33 projects were wholly funded from Government of Sierra Leone resources. The remaining 42 were foreign funded projects for which the Government of Sierra Leone provided the requisite counterpart funds.

Domestic resources funded the first of the 2002 to 2004 Public Investment Programmes (2002 Development Budget Estimates) estimated at 11.343 billion. By the end of December 2002,

**disbursement of these resources amounted to 10.308 billion or 95 percent of the estimated amount approved for the fiscal year.**

**In the 2003 to 2005 Public Investment Programme, 73 projects have been approved in favour of various sectors, which address requests submitted by line ministries and departments.**

### **7.2.3 THE HIPC DEVELOPMENT EXPENDITURE 2002**

**The designation of Sierra Leone as a highly indebted poor country has given Sierra Leone the opportunity to access additional resources from debt relief. In July 2002, additional resources were provided under HIPC initiative amounting to Le26.599 billion in support of government's development-targeted activities. An amount of Le12.365 billion was disbursed as at 31<sup>st</sup> December 2002, in which education recorded a total disbursement of 26%; Roads 24%; Agriculture 17%; war affected children and social institutions 14%.**

### **7.3 NGO UNIT**

**As we move from emergency to the development phase, NGOs must continue to be a major implementing partner of government. In this regard, my ministry hosted a 2-day NGO Policy Review Workshop to revise the policy and map out strategies to prepare NGOs for the task that lie ahead. The various Stakeholders, viz Donors, Civil Society Groups, NGOs, Government Line Ministries and our Local Authorities were**

invited and participated in the Review Workshop to look into gray areas in the current Policy and the role of NGOs in our current development process.

Reports from our monitoring exercise nationwide have revealed that a number of NGOs have ceased operation. Coupled with this and contrary to the NGO Policy Regulations, a sizeable number of NGOs did not apply for renewal of registration for the year 2002. As a result, the names of these NGOs have been deleted from the Register of NGOs and all concerned bodies have been informed of the status of these NGOs. The updated Register of NGOs has been sent to the various line Ministries, Donors and other Agencies for appropriate action. Meanwhile, registration status has been granted to fifty (50) approximately new Organisations that met the stipulated criteria for a trial period of one year.

The Ministry has again commenced the renewal process for registered NGOs for 2003. We intend to improve the process of registration and renewal after the Review Workshop when it is hoped that funding will be sourced for a decentralized NGO Unit. However, we are still contemplating further reduction of the number of NGOs operating, as we will look into the geographical and sectoral concentration/spread. This move will enhance opportunity for a wider intervention to achieve a high coverage and to improve service delivery.

**My Ministry and the NGO community are working together to address complains from the public. Better accountability to the local community is being encouraged. The Ministry welcomes any suggestions from the public geared towards improving the policy environment for NGO operations and the performance of NGOs in Sierra Leone.**

#### **7.4 THE STRATEGIC PLANNING AND ACTION PROCESS (SPP)**

**The Strategic Planning and Action Process Technical Committee (SPP/TC), in collaboration with the Ministry of Finance, conducted focus group discussions for the Budget Oversight Committee. This was aimed at enabling the committee members to prioritize the allocation of resources according to the critical poverty reduction sectors of the economy. This is reflected in the budget for 2003 fiscal year.**

**The retraining of SPP facilitators is in progress. Forty facilitators have already been retrained in the western area in December 2002. Plans are underway for the retraining of 120 facilitators at regional level. The regional planning officers will identify five district level facilitators for the training. This is in readiness for the various focus group discussions and consultations for the final PRSP document and the specialized focus group discussions for institutions and organisations.**

A service delivery survey, as a follow-up to the 2000 Baseline Service Delivery Survey, was conducted in October-December 2002 by the SPP Technical Committee to complement the current information on poverty. These surveys will provide data on service delivery especially in the rural areas as well as determine community perception of progress in poverty reduction effort using appropriate indicators.

#### **7.5 POPULATIONS AND HUMAN RESOURCES SECTION (PHRS)**

A workshop for sixty participants on Population and the Environment for community leaders, women and youth was organised at the Pastoral Center, Kenema, in collaboration with the *Friends of the Earth*, a local NGO based in Kenema. Friends of the Earth has over the years assisted the Regional Planning Officer; East, of the Ministry of Development and Economic Planning, in organising population related activities in that region.

The MODEP continues to provide technical backstopping to some newspaper journalists attached to the *Vision*, *New Citizen* and *Freedom Newspapers* to publish population and development related articles. The aim is to build capacity on reporting on population issues and also sensitise members of the public on key activities and issues. Past publications have included current status of the census, the formation and activities of the Parliamentary Action Group on Population and Development, reproductive health service to commercial sex workers and population and family life education at the MMCE.

Technical backstopping services have been provided for various institutions in the area of population and development. The MODEP assisted the UNFPA in organising four sensitization seminars in Freetown, Bo, Kenema and Makeni for the Sierra Leone Police. The purpose was to create awareness and assess the need and scope of a project on HIV/AIDS for the Police force in Sierra Leone. MODEP also assisted the Network of Women Ministers and Parliamentarians (NEWMAP) in organising meetings on issues like Reproductive health, sexual violence and population advocacy. MODEP and staff of the UNFPA held meetings with some parliamentarians aimed at reactivating the Sierra Leone Parliamentary Action Group on Population and Development. MODEP will provide technical backstopping to the process in due course.

Preparatory activities, including identification of issues/topics, tutors, venue and beneficiary institutions were carried out for the conduct of the In-Service Training Course in Population and Development, to enhance the capacity of officials in various line ministries in integrating population concerns into their sectoral plans and programmes. The Institute for Population Studies (IPS) is a key collaborating partner in the conduct of this activity. The Population and Human Resources Unit (PHRS) continue to play a coordinating role for the conduct of the training activity.

The MODEP assisted the UNFPA in undertaking preparatory activities leading to the formulation of the UNFPA Country programme for 2004 to 2007, which will be part of the

synchronized UN System programming cycle. The preparatory activities included the preparation of thematic sectoral review and the conduct of a meeting for the development of a Country Programme Outline document.

#### **7.6 THE FORMULATION THE SIERRA LEONE HIV/AIDS RESPONSE PROJECT (SHARP)**

This Ministry completed the process of the Formulation of the Sierra Leone HIV/AIDS Response Project (SHARP) in 2002. The Fifteen Million (USD 15 Million) United States Dollars, World Bank funded project was finalized in October 2002 culminating in the establishment of National AIDS Secretariat, now under the Office of the President. The Secretariat is now fully operational and robustly addressing the incident of HIV/AIDS.

#### **7.7 ECOWAS LOCAL UNIT**

The Ministry houses an ECOWAS Local Unit to coordinate, liaise, monitor and implement Community Acts, Decisions and regulations at national level. This involves organizing meetings, seminars/workshops both at national and sub-regional level to implement ECOWAS Decision.

Currently, this Ministry is monitoring the ECOWAS Community Levy. The Community Levy imposes 0.5% taxation on the Custom, Insurance and Freight (CIF) value of imports coming from non-ECOWAS Member States. The proceeds from the

**Community Levy are used by a member state to meet its financial obligation to ECOWAS as follows: -**

- to Compensate member states for implementing the ECOWAS Trade Liberalization Scheme (ETLS).**
- To meet the annual contributions and arrears of contributions by member states**

**Since most ECOWAS member states were finding it difficult to meet their financial commitments to ECOWAS from their national budget, the levy enables member states to meet their contributions to community institutions such as the Secretariat, the Fund, the Court and the Parliament. The proceeds from the Community Levy are also used to implement projects that have a regional dimension such as communication, energy, transportation, inter-state highways, fishery and livestock development, etc.**

**It is worth mentioning that Sierra Leone's arrears of contributions to the ECOWAS Institutions as at October 2002 will be addressed from the levy proceeds at the Bank of Sierra Leone. Since its implementation proceeds from the levy stands at 2.3 billion Leones as at February 2003. This Levy is boosting Sierra Leone's financial position to ECOWAS, and has brought respite and improved our capacity to meet our financial obligations on a timely and sustained basis.**

During the period under review, MODEP worked in close collaboration with the Ministry of Finance and the Bank of Sierra Leone to formulate policies to enable Sierra Leone meet the criteria for joining the West African Monetary Zone (WAMZ) whose objective is to ensure that non-CFA member states have an alternative currency by the year 2005. The new currency will then be fused with the CFA Franc to form a single currency in the sub-region by 2006. Sierra Leone was the only country that met three (3) of the four-(4) macro economic convergence criteria in 2002. Consequently, if Sierra Leone should enter the monetary union in 2005 it has to maintain 5% inflation rate and meet the other macro economic primary and secondary convergence criteria.

#### **7.8 MANO RIVER UNION**

The Ministry houses a unit responsible for MRU activities. The critical activities undertaken in 2002 focused on restructuring of the Mano River Union to forster peace building within the Sub-region.

In the area of restructuring of the MRU, a consultant with ECA completed a document on the restructuring of the MRU Secretariat and is now ready for submission for donor funding. Also, an Intra-trade project document for the sub-region has been processed for donor funding and a project document on the Civil Society is now ready for presentation at a donor's conference scheduled for July 2003.

Regarding peace-building initiatives, series of meetings have been held at the Technical and Joint Security Committee (JSC) levels. In addition to this, a project document is being prepared with the aim of strengthening peace and security within the Sub-region.

## **7.9 EUROPEAN UNION ACTIVITIES AND SUPPORT**

The National Authorizing Office coordinates European Union activities and support to this country. The Ministry of Development and Economic Planning is the national authorizing officer. It is again worth mentioning that the EU has been a dependable source of support to this country since 1975, when Sierra Leone became a signatory to the Lome Convention.

During the year 2002, EU support continued in the following key areas such as institutional capacity building, food security, health, education and transport, because of their commitment to reducing poverty.

### **7.9.1 Capacity Building**

One of the most successful areas of EU support continues to be the provision of technical assistance to the Accountant General's Department in the Ministry of Finance. The result of this has been the reduction of waste, fraud and improvement of financial control and management. Modalities had been put in

place for a second phase, which would consolidate the achievements of the first phase.

### **7.9.2 Roads**

European Union support to the transport sector in 2002 consisted of institutional capacity strengthening, comprising technical assistance and other support for the Sierra Leone Roads Authority (SLRA), provision of equipment for leasing to domestic contractors, by the creation of the Mechanical Services Unit (MSU) and trunk road rehabilitation and maintenance. Spot improvement of the following roads, all totaling over 300Km, is nearing completion:

- Masiaka-Taiama,
- Kenema-Zimmi,
- Port Loko-Pamelap,

Also, bridge rehabilitation on the Blama-Boajibu and the Kenema-Sulima roads, and the construction of drainages on town roads in Bo and Kenema are underway.

Furthermore, major rehabilitation of highways will include the following:

- Masiaka/Makeni,
- Freetown/Conakry
- Masiaka/Bo

Work on the Masiaka/Makeni Road is expected to start by mid 2003, while that of Freetown/Conakry by last quarter of 2003. Work on the Masiaka/Bo is expected in early 2004.

The implementation of these projects will contribute significantly to employment creation, poverty reduction and ease of accessibility to key centers of the country. Indeed, the large employment of ex-combatants assisted greatly in the peace process.

### **7.9.3 Rehabilitation and Resettlement Programme**

In the resettlement and rehabilitation sector, 415 projects valued at 13.8 billion Leones have been completed. These projects focused on improving food security (agriculture, fisheries), rehabilitation of rural infrastructure such as health centers, schools, markets, access roads, water and sanitation facilities, and the provision of resettlement packages.

Already, a second phase, has been approved. The objective of this second phase is to contribute to increased security, social stability and economic revival by helping the population and communities affected by the rebel conflict, as well as former combatants to return to normal productive lives. The initial amount allocated to phase II was Euro 30 million. However, Euro 10 million of this amount was subsequently related to the DDR multi- Donor Trust fund to facilitate DDR activities. The

first programme of phase II has seen a total of 106 projects, valued at Le13.23 billion approved countrywide and implementation of these EU funded projects has commenced. The aim is to fast track the reintegration process and enhance the consolidation of the current peaceful atmosphere.

#### **7.9.4 Fisheries**

Hopes of resuming export of fish products from Sierra Leone to the European Union were revived last year, with the formulation of a project to assist ACP countries like Sierra Leone, which had been under a ban from exporting fish products to the European Union since 1998, because certain sanitary requirements imposed by the EU could not be met by these countries. The Financing Proposal for the project was submitted to the EDF Committee for approval and was subsequently approved in the framework of a Regional programme. Sierra Leone stands to gain from improved export trade in terms of foreign exchange revenues as well as jobs in fishing and processing.

#### **7.9.5 Energy Power**

In the power sector, the National Power Authority is implementing an Emergency Action Plan in concert with the World Bank, which includes projects for generation and provision of goods and services. However, the transmission and distribution system has been in a deplorable state. The European Union has during this period, made contributions

towards alleviating this problem. Five primary stations have been commissioned through EU and Government co-financing. In addition, the supply of urgently required transmission and distribution materials, and the provision of consultancy services to assist in the rehabilitation of the network have been achieved during the period under review. Also, to further strengthen the transmission and distribution network, a project of about Euro 2 million has been approved. The impact of such an intervention cannot be overemphasized. Not only will the improved electrical supply positively impact on socio-economic development, but will contribute in enhancing the security of a war-weary population.

#### **7.9.6 Budgetary Support**

During the period under review, Sierra Leone also benefited from the Post Conflict Budgetary Support (PCBS) Programme. The objective of this support programme is to enhance economic stability, build conditions that can make peace permanent, including the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration of ex-combatants, and secure some rapid improvements in the public service. The PCBS programme is valued at Euro 34.7million and is divided into three tranches. The first tranche of Euro 16.57million was credited to the Bank of Sierra Leone's Pound Sterling Account at the Bank of England in January 2001. This enhanced accessibility to foreign exchange resources that was utilized to support Government's auction programme. The local currency thus generated (about

**25 billion Leones), went to support the social sectors (health and education).**

#### **7.9.7 Health**

**After more than a decade of destructive civil war, the national health indicators are among the worst in the world. The health sector infrastructure is in a poor condition. The administration of the health care delivery system had virtually collapsed due to insecurity and flight of qualified personnel and NGOs. It was against this background that Government requested EU support for the health sector. I am pleased to report that the Financing Agreement for a Health Sector Support Project (HSSP), valued at Euro 28 million has been signed and implementation started. The major objective of the HSSP is to support the Ministry of Health and Sanitation in the establishment and implementation of necessary systems to achieve the following results: (a) availability and accessibility of primary and first referral health services; (b) reinforcement of human and financial resource to the health sector; (c) accessibility of essential drugs; and (d) reinforced stakeholder participation.**

#### **7.9.8 Support to Rutile**

**With the continued improvement in the security situation, Government renewed its request to the EU for funding to restart the Sierra Rutile Mines under the SYSMIN Programme. Listeners may be aware that prior to its closure in 1995 because of rebel**

**attack, Sierra Rutile contributed about 50% of the country's foreign exchange earnings and was the country's largest employer. Consequently, the restarting of this economic activity will greatly improve the revenue base of the Government and assist in its post-war recovery programme. The restart of the mine will also help alleviate the high level of poverty and suffering and offer long-term economic activity not only in the area of location of the mine, but also the entire country. A Financing Proposal has been approved and a grant of Euro 25 million will be made available to the Sierra Leone Government for release to Sierra Rutile on loan soon.**

**The strides made to rehabilitate and restart operations at Sierra Rutile will also add to the recovery momentum. It is estimated that Rutile when restarted will directly employ about 1,800 people plus or minus 10% and another 5,000 will derive their livelihood from the activities of the mine. In not too distant a future, we expect Rutile to take its once rightful place as the largest taxpayer, largest foreign exchange earner and the largest private employer in Sierra Leone.**

**Furthermore, in pursuance of its objective of promoting a stable and democratic environment, the EU provided support to the tune of Euro 2 million towards the holding of the last general Elections.**

### **7.9.9 The New Cotonou agreement**

**Cooperation between the EU member states and the African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) countries, including Sierra Leone, are governed by framework agreements; the latest being the COTONOU AGREEMENT, signed in June 2000. This Agreement will last for 20 years, with a financial protocol of five years each. Each signatory to that Agreement was required to ratify the agreement and the ACP countries will, in addition, draw up a document for the first five-year financial protocol: i.e. the National Indicative Programme (NIP) for the 9<sup>th</sup> EDF, on the basis of which further EU support will be secured. I am pleased to report that the Country Strategy Paper, which will define the development co-operation between Sierra Leone and the European Union, had been approved and an indicative figure of Euro 220 million has been earmarked for Sierra Leone for the period 2003-2007.**

**The end of hostilities in the country has encouraged Government and the European Commission to expand and enhance this co-operation towards addressing the challenges facing a post-conflict country. In future, more authority will be given to the local E.C. Delegation to facilitate more speedy decision-making process on project implementation. The road sub sector will in particular benefit more substantially with the new momentum that has been built up.**

## **7.10 THE COMMONWEALTH SECRETARIAT**

The Ministry continue to strengthen the relationship between the Commonwealth Secretariat and the Government. This has led to marked increase in the level of commonwealth assistance to this country ranging from capacity building to the provision of consultants experts and other programmes, which address post-war development activities and poverty reduction as outlined below:

The Police Development Task Force wherein a number of personnel are provided to fill strategic gaps in the police force thus contributing to the current restructuring and transformation of the Force to Force For Good.

In the last general elections, the Commonwealth provided Legal and Special Advisers. These assisted in the handling of legal and management issues relating to various aspects of the general electoral process, chieftaincy elections and even the forth-coming District Council Elections.

The implementation of the second phase of the Resource Based Building Materials Programme, which seeks to transfer building technology suitable for mass affordable housing using locally available raw materials, is still in progress. The training of youths and provision of roofing tile-making machines, cinvaram block-making machines have been completed in 34 beneficiary chiefdoms. With Government intention to spread the technology

throughout the country, moves are being made for a Third Phase that will cover more chiefdoms.

Other Commonwealth approved programmes in the pipeline are as follows:

- The establishment of a stock exchange in Sierra Leone, considered necessary for the promotion of capital market in the country. Based on the findings and recommendations of the mission fielded a few months ago, the Commonwealth would be providing a long-term expert to start the programme and enhance the establishment of a stock exchange.
- Programme for the provision of oil palm processing facilities, which will go a long way in boosting the oil palm sector and provide jobs for rural people, is underway. The processing facilities will be located in oil palm producing and strategic areas. The services of Njala University College will be utilized in the implementation of this project.

The development of small and medium scale enterprises is also among the Commonwealth development agenda. Feasibility studies have been completed for the provision of manufacturing /processing facilities, transfer of technology in the areas of rice milling, cashew nut processing, cassava processing, fruit and

vegetable processing, timber and wood processing and refined salt processing. The project will initially start as pilot schemes with the possibility of being replicated in other parts of the country. The essence of these projects is to modernize the present operations of identified beneficiary institutions, add value, and reduce cost.

## **7.11 SIERRA LEONE - CHINA COOPERATION**

### **7.11.1 SIERRA LEONE - OIC COOPERATION**

Under various bilateral agreements between Sierra Leone and China, resources in the form of grants and concessional loans have been made available to the Government of Sierra Leone for:

- the production and exportation of value added products from cotton, ginger, and cassava starch for industrial purposes,
- the importation of Chinese commodities, and
- setting up a general administration of quality supervision and inspection of products.

Private sector development promotion initiatives under the bilateral agreement include the following:

- Provision of concessional loans to government and the City Council of Freetown for the construction of a multi-purpose market in the Western Area.

- **Signing of a Memorandum of Understanding to set up an Export processing zone in Sierra Leone.**
- **Signing a lease for the rehabilitation of the Magbass Sugar Complex**

**In 2002, the Chinese Government rehabilitated the National Stadium. Bintumani Hotel was also privatized and rehabilitated by a Chinese Company. The Chinese Government is currently rehabilitating the Youyi Building and Parliament Building.**

#### **7.12 THE UNDP**

**The UNDP continue to play a major role in our development agenda through various programmes with a mix of upstream and down stream interventions. Of particular reference are the following:**

**Support to the VISION 2025 document, which aims at developing a long-term national vision and development strategy based on the hopes and aspirations of the people. The document has now been completed and will be launched soon officially in March 2003.**

**UNDP continue to support the National Recovery Committee, charged with the responsibility of facilitating the coordination of humanitarian assistance and the restoration of civil authority. The support has particularly been focused on:**

- **Funding for the needs assessment survey of priority needs of all the 12 districts.**
- **Development of Comprehensive National Recovery Strategy.**
- **Interventions relating to the restoration of civil authority, rebuilding communities, peace building and human rights and restoration of the economy.**
- **Provision of equipment and support for the NRC/TC Secretariat and the District Recovery Committee.**

**The UNDP was very supportive to the Government during the preparatory activities, leading to the November CG in Paris from the 13<sup>th</sup> – 14<sup>th</sup> and co-chairing it. The UNDP is now actively involved in post CG activities to ensure the fulfillment of donor and government commitments at the CG meeting.**

**To assess Sierra Leone's achievement of the targets set out in the Millennium Development Goals, the UNDP is working in close collaboration with the Government and the various stakeholders in preparing the report on the MDGs. The data have been compiled, harmonized and validated in collaboration with other stakeholders. The UNDP Country Office is currently preparing the report.**

**To facilitate UNDP interventions on the ground, the under mentioned programmes are being implemented under the direct execution modalities:**

**Community Arms Collection and Development Programme:** Designed to complement the disarmament and demobilisation programme, and promoting peace and security by reducing the proliferation of arms in the country.

**Interim Governance Programme (2002 – 2003):** Makes provision for the implementation of the governance priorities identified in the I-PRSP with emphasis on decentralization and local governance, justice, rule of law and human rights, public service and public sector reform, security, citizen's capacity building for governance and development.

**Interim Recovery Programme (2002-2003):** This makes provision for immediate implementation of the governance priorities identified in the National Recovery Strategy.

**Building Capacity for Pro-Poor Policy formulation and Poverty Monitoring:** This project aims at strengthening frontline government institutions and civil society to formulate and implement well-targeted pro-poor strategy for poverty reduction.

**Reintegration of Ex-combatants through Capacity Building and Self-employment:** The project supports government's efforts in the re-integration and resettlement of ex-combatants and other vulnerable community members through the promotion of skills training, formal education and creation of self-employment opportunities in Kono, Koinadugu and Kailahun Districts.

**Country Programme Outline for Sierra Leone:** This gives broad outline of UNDP's future interventions in Sierra Leone for the period 2004 – 2007. The country programme outline is based on the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) that was prepared in collaboration with other agencies. The UNDAF was based on the country's development agenda as articulated in the IPRSP, the NRS and other document.

### **7.13 STATISTICS SIERRA LEONE (SSL)**

#### **7.13.1 Surveys**

The SSL successfully undertook the following national surveys:

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- **A Survey on Re-insertion and Reintegration Assistance to Ex-Combatants for the NCDDR in August 2002**
- **A census of Health Providers for the Ministry of Health and Sanitation in November 2002**
- **An inventory of Health Facilities in Bombali, Koinadugu, Kono and Moyamba Districts for the Ministry of Health and Sanitation in December 2002**
- **A Survey on War Affected and Street Children on behalf of NACWAC in December 2002.**

### **7.13.2 2003 Population And Housing Census**

With respect to the 2003 population and housing census, cartographic work started in March 2002 with twelve teams in Kambia and Port Loko Districts. By the end of the year, the teams had virtually completed the Northern Province and some were already deployed in Kono District in the Eastern Province in December, 2002.

UNFPA provided a permanent Cartographic/GIS Advisor with backstopping from the regional cartographic Adviser based at the UNFPA-CST in Addis Ababa. There were other technical assistance visits on census publicity, organization and the development of the questionnaire.

To show its commitment to the hosting of a successful census, the government continued its massive support of the census programme with the payment of Le1,000,000,000. The amount was used to purchase 14 field vehicles and to pay salary and other support for the field teams. The GOSL strengthened census operations with the enactment of the “Census Act 2002” by locating the census secretariat in the SSL, increasing the supervisory role of the Director of Statistics and establishing a National Census Advisory Committee, which will include donors to oversee the entire census process. The EU also approved the provision of EURO 5.5 Million for the census activities and for statistical capacity building.

**The President will soon be officially ordering the 2003 Population and Housing Census.**

### **7.13.3 Sierra Leone Integrated Household Survey (SLIHS)**

**The Household Income and Expenditure Survey, which had been proposed in the I-PRSP document, was expanded into the Sierra Leone Integrated Household Survey with a focus on covering the Millennium Development Goals Indicators (MDGs). Statistics Sierra Leone was contracted by the GOSL to undertake the survey. The World Bank provided funding of \$254,000 for the survey.**

**The SSL is poised to fulfill its mission of producing timely, accurate and accessible official statistics that will help advance economic growth, development and democracy in Sierra Leone.**

### **7.14 AID CO-ORDINATION**

**The Government and its development partners have agreed to restructure the aid coordination unit of MODEP. The new Restructured Joint Aid Coordination Unit will bring Government and donors together to address the following:**

- Integration of aid into national policies and priorities**
- Systematic dialogue on policy issues and coordination among donors in support of national priorities**

- **Better and timely dissemination of data and analysis to the Government on aid flows including from non-governmental sources and their use in planning and budgeting as well as for sector groups that have been established as part of the PRSP preparatory process**
- **Improved planning and monitoring of aid utilization**
- **Avoidance of duplication, gaps or undue competition, wastage and sub-optimal use of resources**
- **Increase effectiveness and reduce the transaction costs of aid management**

**The Vice President is the chair of the new joint aid coordination committee and will host and supervise the Secretariat.**

#### **7.15 FOOD SECURITY**

**In view of the importance of food security, this Ministry (in dialogue with WFP) is putting in place the necessary institutional mechanisms for the implementation of appropriate food aid interventions. The Ministry will further put in place a food security coordinating and monitoring office to monitor all multi-sector intervention in the area of food security.**

#### **7.16 MICRO FINANCE**

**The Ministry facilitated the formulation of a micro finance policy aimed at providing guiding principles based on “best practices”**

for the micro finance interventions in the country. Under the policy, government will source funding for building viable micro finance institution to manage disbursement and recovery. Government will monitor interest rates and the impact of the scheme on the clientele. Government believes that the establishment of viable institutions for micro finance operations is crucial for the success of the industry. Government regards micro finance as an effective tool for addressing poverty in the short and medium term.

## **8. LONG TERM GOALS**

The long-term goals of the Ministry are a better future of the country characterized by peace, stability and economic progress. In furtherance, the Ministry embarked on a National Long Term Perspective Studies in 2002. The purpose of the study is to translate the aspirations of the people into a vision of the future and to develop a robust and comprehensive national strategy for achieving that vision. It is Government's belief that the achievement of our long-term goals will involve consistent efforts and mutually reinforcing actions of all actors; ranging from government, private sector, civil society and other development partners. It is also our belief that poverty reduction is a long-term challenge. The vision provides for the placement of the short and medium term PRSP strategies within a long-term perspective.

The vision is now complete and will be launched in March 2003.

## **9. ACTIVITIES UNDERTAKEN OUTSIDE THE STATED SHORT TERM, MEDIUM TERM AND LONG TERM GOALS**

### **9.1 THE COUNTRY STRATEGY PAPER – ACTION PROGRAMME FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF SIERRA LEONE 2001 – 2010**

In 2001, Sierra Leone prepared a National Action Plan For The Development of Sierra Leone for 2001 – 2010. This action plan was adopted in the UN Conference on Least Development Countries (LDCs) in Brussels in May 2001. Considerable external assistance is needed for the realization of the programme of action. I must admit that for us in Sierra Leone, we have enjoyed the support of our development partners in meeting our development challenges, which are consistent with the commitment contained in the programme of action. These commitments are:

- **Fostering a people-centered policy framework**
- **Good governance at the national level**
- **Building Human and Institutional Capacities**
- **Building productive capacity to make globalization work for LDCs**
- **Enhancing the role of the trade in development**
- **Reducing vulnerability and protecting the environment**
- **Mobilising financial resources**

The implementation of the LDC Programme of Action commenced when the country was still grappling with the issue of meeting the immediate humanitarian needs created by the decade long civil war, peace building and promoting political stability. Nonetheless, some efforts were made at implementing some aspects of the seven areas of commitments at the national level as called for in the programme of action.

I will therefore appeal to our development partners to continue their support and assistance for the successful implementation of the programme of action for LDCs, the Millennium Development Goals, the PRSP and others.

## **9.2 VISIT OF THE COMMONWEALTH DEPUTY SECRETARY-GENERAL, MR WINSTON COX – 18 – 25<sup>TH</sup> NOVEMBER, 2002**

The Deputy Secretary General of the Commonwealth and the Chief Programme Officer in the Special Advisory Service Division of Commonwealth Secretariat paid an eight days official visit to this country in November, last year.

The visit was in fulfillment of H.E the President and the Commonwealth Secretary General's decision that the Deputy Secretary-General should visit this country as often as possible for wide ranging consultations relating to the socio-economic situation in Sierra Leone, with a view to strengthening technical corporation programmes with the Government. The visit was

also meant to facilitate the monitoring of the progress of Commonwealth funded programmes on the reconstruction and rehabilitation, of the economy, poverty reduction, capacity building and improvement in good governance, with a view to the Secretariat's providing appropriate political and economic support. This visit was quite rewarding and has resulted in the approval of various projects that were before the Commonwealth for consideration.

### **9.3 THE NEPAD**

The New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) is a visionary document, which maps out the way forward for poverty reduction and overall socio-economic development in Africa within the context of a globalising world. It is anchored, among several things, on a renewed and consolidation relationship between Africa and the international community. The document also recognizes that good governance; democracy and strong political leadership are required for the proper management of proposed programmes.

The agenda for the implementation of NEPAD is based on African/Country ownership and management. It calls for national and regional priorities and development plans that must be prepared through a participatory process.

Within the framework of NEPAD, each African country is expected to embark on massive sensitization campaign to create

the awareness of the general population on the ideals of the initiative. Countries are also expected to draw up national programmes of action for the implementation of NEPAD at the national level.

The Ministry of Development and Economic Planning has been charged with the responsibility of popularizing the NEPAD initiative and preparing a national action programme.

A committee, under the chairmanship of my Ministry, has been formed to spear head NEPAD's sensitization campaign and National Action Plan formulation. Sensitization will start in April, 2003.

#### **9.4 DISASTER MANAGEMENT**

The Ministry is currently engaged in discussions with UNDP and other donors for assistance to formulate policies strategies that will lead to the establishment of a disaster management institution for Sierra Leone.

#### **9.5 PARLIAMENTARY ACTS, RATIFICATION OF DOCUMENTS AND SIGNING OF AGREEMENTS**

Since I assumed office, the Ministry facilitated the passing of the following Acts;

- the Census (Amendment) Act 2002 which now simplifies the coordination, planning and implementation of census activities
- the Statistics Act 2002, which opened the way for the restructuring of the Central Statistics Office into an autonomous institution, called Statistics Sierra Leone.

Also, I facilitated the ratification of the Development Credit Agreement (DCA) for the Sierra Leone HIV/AIDS Response Project (SHARP), which was one of the credit effectiveness conditions that opened the way for the implementation of the SHARP under the Office of the President.

#### **10. PROBLEMS AND PROPOSED SOLUTION FOR THE GENERAL GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE MINISTRY**

Notwithstanding the progress made so far in enhancing economic management. The Ministry faced a number of constraints in achieving its set objectives. The problem of institutional capacity accounted for the slow pace in the implementation of certain programmes and policies, as well as other structural reforms. The shortages of skilled manpower and inadequate logistics have been major constraints to the Ministry's capacity to effectively deliver services, especially to rural communities.

**In the area of development budget implementation and execution, delays in the disbursement of budgetary assistance from international donors led to the slow pace of programmes and projects implementation and monitoring. The delays also affected the implementation of critical poverty reduction programmes announced in the 2002 budget.**

**There are several constraints plaguing the Ministry ranging from accommodation to staff retention. Specifically, the constraints of the Ministry can be catalogued as follows:**

**Office Accommodation – The Ministry originally occupied the sixth and seventh floors of the Youyi Building, but with the need to accommodate other Ministries/Departments that were badly in need of office space due to the destruction of certain offices during the war, the Ministry has had to squeeze in one single floor; the 7<sup>th</sup> floor. As a result there is acute shortage of office space for Officers to carry out their duties effectively and efficiently. This problem needs to be addressed at the earliest opportunity.**

**Staffing – Over the years, staff retention is a burning issue due mainly to the poor remuneration. 50% of trained staff have left for greener fields and have not been replaced. The few remaining committed officers are also on the verge of leaving for similar reasons. Therefore, vacancies exist in both the administrative and professional divisions and remain unfilled to date. The three Regional Offices are grossly understaffed with only one officer in each of them. These offices are pivotal not**

only in national development but also in actualising our decentralisation policy and must therefore be adequately staffed.

At the lower cadre, the same situation exists. Most of the Ministry's efficient secretaries, clerks, messengers and even cleaners are leaving or retiring and are not being replaced. Training is urgently needed in the clerical division.

Logistics – Even though some improvement have been made in the area of providing basic computers for some officers and improving the working environment, further improvement is required to meet the increased demand being made on the Ministry to meet the post war challenges of reconstruction, rehabilitation and resettlement. This is moreso as we now move into the development phase in which our monitoring activities will cover the entire country. No vehicles are at the moment available for this crucial activity and in the regional offices.

Training – Given that many of the trained personnel of the Ministry at all levels have left, there is an urgent need to train the existing personnel in the appropriate fields to become efficient in the discharge of their duties.

## **11. THE WAY FORWARD**

The completion and implementation of the PRSP would exert strong pressures on the country's limited capacity and

resources would require the early release of funds by donors for a number of activities and the provision of technical assistance. In particular, technical assistance is required for a number of key tasks including poverty diagnostics, sector reviews, poverty and social impact analysis and public expenditure reviews. To address some of the constraints in the PRSP preparation process, an inter-agency donor group to facilitate systematic support for the PRSP preparation process, has been established with civil society partnerships. Timely intervention by all the parties is essential if we are to meet the completion date of 2003.

Over the next two years, efforts will be intensified to provide in-service training to staff in the Ministry and Statistics Sierra Leone to improve overall production capacity and capacity in data management and reporting. Approaches will be made to university to develop training courses at both diploma and masters levels in different courses of study to ensure that staff are trained.

A strategic plan will be developed and a national donors conference held to solicit assistance for the newly establish SSL. The way forward is increasing commercialization of the activities of the SSL to improve on income generation. There should be a more regular output of its products especially quarterly reports.

## **12 SUSTAINABLE ACCELERATED CAPACITY BUILDING IN SIERRA LEONE**

Much Pressure is been put on the Government of Sierra Leone and its development partners to ensure that capacity is put in place to run the business of government in the aftermath of the war. This is most important given the fact that many professionals had left the country and those who stayed have had to work under circumstances that did not favour skills retention and improvement. To over come the situation, project units have been established by donor agencies, paying special dolarised salaries. In addition, many people have been recruited locally and internationally to fill line positions in key ministries, departments and agencies. As a short-term measure, this approach may work. In the medium to long term, it is not only unsustainable, it weakens the support services further and causes permanent loss of the best and brightest in the public sector.

Government has expressed a strong desire to decentralize in order to help redress any regional imbalance in government-led development efforts. Development activities will therefore have a strong regional focus and a large portion of decisions will be taken at that level. Hence, capacity (both human and material) should be built at that level to enable the decentralization of decision-making and empowering and encouraging community participation in the overall development process.

**At the core of this is the need to improve the remuneration of public servants, train and build capacity in policy analysis, management and technical applications, provide logistics and institute work performance measures.**

**The ultimate goal is to rebuild the Public Service that will respond to the needs of the government and people of Sierra Leone. This will, however, depend on improving government revenues to sustain the system. As a way forward, proposals will be prepared and discussions facilitated with relevant institutions with the aim of instituting measures that will restore the glory of the public service.**

### **13. CONCLUSION**

**To my Colleague Ministers of Government, I thank you very much for your understanding, support and patience during the year 2002, in terms of, the relationship between the Ministry of Development and Economic Planning and your own Ministries. Let me assure all of you that the Ministry of Development and Economic Planning will do everything consistent with its mandate, with the vision of His Excellency, the President, Parliamentary concerns, and the provisions of the various acts and regulations governing its operations to position itself to serve you better in year 2003.**

**Let me conclude by expressing my profound gratitude and sincere thanks to all members of staff for their support and the**

encouragement I received as Minister during the period under review. I hope that this deep co-operation would continue to be manifested in the years to come. We are also grateful to our development partners for the support provided in the process of economic development. With their continued co-operation, we can create the basis for sustainable economic recovery and progressive improvements in living standards especially for the poor.

Mr. Chairman/Madam Chairperson, I would be remiss in my duty if I fail to express a very sincere and warm gratitude to the Staff of the Ministry of Finance, the Governor and his staff of the Bank of Sierra Leone. The contributions of the above mentioned played a key role in enabling the Ministry of Development and Economic Planning to discharge its responsibilities to the citizenry of our country in year 2002.

My thanks also go to our international development partners, namely, the World Bank, the IMF, the UNDP, UN AGENCIES, EU, and all those friendly countries who in diverse ways came to the financial rescue in our hour of need of a once forgotten country, on the strips of West Africa, called Sierra Leone.

To the General public, I would like to appeal to all of you to believe that all of us are equal shareholders in a company called "Sierra Leone"; that each of us should be a watchdog to protect our interests in that company; to feel that we all have only one natural country and that is Sierra Leone. Let me also appeal to all the members of the fourth estate to give credit where credit is due and to criticize objectively, factually and forthrightly; to

**assess and evaluate our country and the performance of its public officials in a dispassionate way and not from a tribal, partisan, regional or ideological conviction point of view. The Ministry of Development and Economic Planning is more than willing to receive your views as to how policies should be formulated, implemented and monitored. For example, the openness of this administration in listening to the views of any Sierra Leone “who wants to be heard”, can be illustrated by the following:**

- a) budget formulation at the Ministry of Finance in the past 2 (two) years have involved all and sundry;**
- b) the mobile cabinet;**
- c) participatory consultations on the PRSP; and**
- d) vision 2020 are other examples.**

**Mr. Chairman/Madam Chairperson, distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen, this presentation covers all the major activities of the Ministry of Development and Economic Planning in the year 2002.**

**May the Almighty God/Allah bless all of us?**

**I thank all of you for your kind attention.**