

**MINISTRY OF TOURISM AND CULTURE**

**THE FOURTH STATE**

**OF**

**THE**

**NATION SYMPOSIUM**

**AUGUST, 2003**

## **MISSION STATEMENT OF THE MINISTRY OF TOURISM AND CULTURE**

- \* Mr. Chairman,
- \* Colleague Ministers of Government
- \* Members of the diplomatic & Consular Corps
- \* Hon. Members of Parliament
  
- Distinguished Guest
  
- Ladies and Gentlemen

It is with great pleasure and humility that I appear today in the Nation's Symposium for the second time since my appointment as Minister of Government. last year I appeared before this nation for the first time as Minister of Energy and Power. Now I am doing so as Minister of Tourism and Culture.

Mr. Chairman, I crave your indulgence to allow me quite briefly to make certain highlights in the form of definitions which are fundamental to the understanding of the issues we will be deliberating on in this presentation.

Tourism means the activities of persons traveling to and staying in places outside their usual environment for not more than one consecutive year for leisure, business and other purposes. The usual environment of a person consists of certain area around his/her place of residence plus all other places he/she frequently visits. During holidays people are not to be involved in any income generating activity; they are to be spending money they have earlier saved for their vacation.

**DOMESTIC TOURISM:** Means the activities of residents of a given country or other area travelling to and staying in places inside that country or other area but outside their usual environment for not more than one consecutive year for leisure, business and other purposes.

**INTERNATIONAL TOURISM:** Means when people travel from their country and outside their usual environment to another country for holiday, relaxation and pleasure for not more than one consecutive year.

**A TOURIST:** (Overnight visitor) is a visitor who stays at least one night in a collective or private accommodation in the place visited.

**CULTURE:** definition – Culture is the integration pattern of human knowledge, belief and behaviour that depends upon man's capacity for learning and transmitting knowledge to succeeding generations or the customary beliefs, social forms and material traits of a racial or religious group.

Culture was created in the human being by the Almighty God since he created mankind just like the environment, therefore culture and mankind are inseparable. Culture is a powerful instrument for conflict, resolution, for restoring peace and security.

### **THE IMPORTANCE OF TOURISM AND CULTURE**

The importance of Tourism and Culture cannot be over emphasized; being the biggest industry on earth, it is the largest employer, the biggest and most dynamic economic activity of our time. It is because of these qualities that tourism and culture can be more effectively harnessed to address the problems of poverty more directly.

## **1. MISSION STATEMENT OF THE MINISTRY OF TOURISM AND CULTURE**

The Ministry of Tourism and Culture is charged with the responsibility to develop Policies and Programmes geared towards the Promotion of Tourism and Culture in Sierra Leone by carrying out activities under the following major headings;

- Development of a National Policy on Tourism
- Development of a National Policy on Culture
- Supervision of National Tourist Board
- Monitoring and Evaluation of all tourist and cultural affairs
- The national Dance Troupe
- Preservation of Ancient Monuments and Relics and Environment protection for tourism development
- Export License and Antiques
- Promotion of Internal Tourism
- Collaboration with relevant Government Ministries, and National and International Organisations/Institutions.

## **3. SHORT-TERM GOALS OF THE MINISTRY OF TOURISM AND CULTURE**

- a. The Development and Formulation of National Policies on Tourism and Culture.
- b. Decentralizing offices to the Provincial headquarters towns of Bo, Kenema, and Makeni.

- c. Recruitment of New Tourism and Cultural Officers
- d. Rehabilitation and Refurbishing of government owned hotels leased to the private sector.
- e. The Review of the Tourism Development Act of 1990 and to review and update available documents on the Industry.
- f. Visitations/ Familiarization to Tourism and Culture Potential Areas nationwide.

**STATUS REPORT OF ON-GOING ACTIVITIES AND/OR THOSE UNDERTAKEN  
DURING THE REPORTING PERIOD ON THE SHORT-TERM GOALS**

a. **The Development and Formulation of National policies on Tourism and Culture**

In this regard, a draft policy for the establishment of the National Council for Arts and Culture has been submitted to the Law Officers Department for a legal opinion on the issue and still awaiting response

With reference to Tourism Policy Formulation , my ministry in collaboration with the National Tourist Board (N.T.B.) shall convene by the end of this year a stakeholders conference/ workshop.

The participation will involve both Private and Public Sectors. The related private sectoral agencies shall play a very vital role, to put up views , opinions, suggestions and or recommendations for the consideration of government to develop and formulate a National Tourism Policy

b. **DECENTRALIZATION OF THE MINISTRY TO THE PROVINCIAL  
HEADQUARTER TOWNS OF BO, KENEMA AND MAKENI.**

For over two decades ago, Tourism and culture had been limited to Freetown which situation did not augur well with the aims and objectives a ministry of tourism and culture should have and especially with good governance. This attitude excluded the best talents that should have been tapped for the integration into the National Dance Troupe. Within this year we have reversed the trend, thank God. We have now established offices and representation in all three provincial cities of Bo, at No.11, Tikonko Road, Kenema No. 34, Combema Road, and Makeni No15, Azzolini Highway . There are constraints here which we need through budgetary support to address but it is a way forward.

The idea of decentralizing our activities is to bring tourism and culture close to our people, create and sensitize them about the rebirth of tourism and culture in Sierra Leone. It is also to awake their memory of the importance of tourism that it does not only provide material benefits but it also brings cultural pride.

The exercise is bearing fruits as skeletal staff are in Bo, and Kenema. Newly recruited officers shall be in post to these places by the end of March this year. This will undoubtedly enable this ministry to take tourism to the rural settings, and new officers will undertake to identify and prepare inventory for tourist potential resort areas, for follow up action by other related institutions.

c. **RECRUITMENT OF NEW TOURISM AND CULTURAL OFFICERS**

The required human resource capacity to efficiently and effectively man the ministry had been seriously affected for far too long. For very many years the ministry had remained dormant.

In all the three sectors of the ministry i.e. the administrative, the tourism and culture divisions the lack of capacity was conspicuous. In the administration there is up to date only the Permanent Secretary and the Acting Deputy Secretary the rest is nil, the tourism division. There is the Director of Tourism who has always been and still ill and he is at home (May God Help Him) and the Senior Tourist Officer, the Cultural division there is the Director of Culture alone. This situation is untenable. My ministry in view of this requested the Establishment Secretary and the Public Service Commission for the recruitment of Tourism and Cultural Officers. This was granted, the vacancies for four officers in each division both tourism and cultural were advertised and gazetted and hence their absorption into our ministry for which gesture I would like to thank the Establishment Secretary's Office, and that of the Public Service Commission immensely. There still remains a gap which will have to be filled in future.

d. **REHABILITATION AND REFURNISHMENT OF GOVERNMENT OWNED HOTELS LEASED TO THE PRIVATE SECTOR.**

The second most important sector in the Tourism Industry, is accommodation ,after transportation. This sector had been a disaster because all infrastructures were comprehensively vandalized and devastated. We could not be proud of a single hotel in terms of decency, now I am proud to report that on the 31<sup>st</sup> January this year the long awaited Bintumani Hotel which was fully rehabilitated and refurbished to a first class hotel with government participation was reopened by His Excellency, the President, Alhaji Dr. Ahmad Tejan Kabbah on the 7<sup>th</sup> June, this year the Lungi International Airport Hotel also fully rehabilitation and refurbished to standard with first class catering department and in flight services facilities for supply to airlines was reopened by His Excellency, the Vice President, Solomon Berewa.

**Cape Sierra Hotel** is domiciled. Cape Management and entertainment corporation has committed itself for the refurbishing of the hotel

**Mammy Yoko Hotel** had been rehabilitated and in full operations even though UNAMSIL occupies part of the **premises** on sub-let basis from West African Holdings Company Limited.

**Brookfields Hotel**: was vacated by the Civil Defence Force (CDF) last year. It has been leased to Hill Top Management, a group of Sierra Leoneans.

e. **PRIVATE SECTOR ACCOMMODATION FACILITIES DEVELOPED.**

The Private Sector responded positively in this all important sector. This year alone within six months, His Excellency the Vice President opened the Montana Entertainments and Odeon Cinema at Howe Street, fully rehabilitated and refurbished building by Alhaji Mustapha Dahi.

**The Indochine Restaurant**, an old building at 64, Sir Samuel Lewis Road, Aberdeen, rehabilitated and refurbished by a Vietnamese family with enormous experience in far eastern cuisine - Vietnamese, Chinese, Thai, Indonesian etc; has been transformed into an excellent restaurant. The restaurant was commissioned by me a couple of months ago.

**The Light House Hotel** a magnificent structure built from scratch by Mr. Riad Muallem at man of war road, Aberdee, has just be completed. The official opening will take place by early September this year by the Grace of God. Meanwhile guests are welcome there even before the official opening. It has a capacity of about 96 rooms, including suites.

**Kimbema Hotel** in Aberdeen is also nearing completion with 30 – 40 bed rooms.

Cabenda Hotel is also nearing completion.

Cape Guest House Lodge : Which is operational and standard in terms of quality and services provides service to the public. These structural developments have increased significantly, the accommodation and its facilities thereby very soon will be attracting major national and international conferences. I must thank these gentlemen from the private sector immensely for such major contribution to the tourism industry.

f. **THE REVIEW OF TOURISM DEVELOPMENT ACT OF 1990 AND TO UPDATE OTHER AVAILABLE DOCUMENTS THAT IS TOURISM MASTER PLAN OF 1982.**

Some sections of the Tourism Development Act of 1990 are now irrelevant to the present circumstances. In this direction my ministry and the National Tourist Board shall review and recommend for the amendments of the irrelevant sections in order to match with the contemporary situation and in tandem with the pending investment code of Sierra Leone.

The Sierra Leone Tourism Master Plan of 1982 is necessary for a review and update. The follow-up action with the Law Officers to give legal opinion on the National Commission of Arts and Crafts (NCAC) will be expeditious by sending reminders and discuss the way forward with the legal experts.

g. **VISITATIONS AND/OR FAMILIARIZATION TO TOURISM AND CULTURAL POTENTIAL RESOURCES AREAS-NATIONWIDE.**

My ministry in collaboration with the National Tourist Board will undertake to reach the renowned and identified tourist/and cultural potential areas in the provinces. The team shall visit these sites and familiarize with prevailing conditions and to prepare inventory on these places as attraction and destination centers.

These resort areas shall be compiled and marketed through the National Tourist Board to related and diverse development partners within and without the country. The Promotional aspect of these tourism potential resources will be extended to the Global World Tour Markets by our representation at Fairs, the website and the distribution of promotional materials.

My ministry in its endeavour will continue to visit and familiarize with Tourism and Cultural related institutions and resorts of the Private Sector. The ministry will further visit and liaise with Non-Governmental Organizations and continue to inter face with other relevant ministries, departments, and agencies.

#### **4. MEDIUM-TERM GOALS OF THE MINISTRY OF TOURISM AND CULTURE**

1. The Stabilization and Restoration of Bunce Island
2. Lumley Beach Development Project
3. Promotion and marketing of Sierra Leone Tourism/Cultural Industry undertaking local and overseas travels
4. Awareness raising, Publicity and Printing
5. To set up inter-tourism and/or cultural committees with the relevant Non Governmental Organisations, Ministries, Department and Agencies and the celebration of World Tourism Day in the 1<sup>st</sup> week of every November.

5. **STATUS REPORT OF ON-GOING ACTIVITIES AND OR THOSE UNDERTAKEN DURING THE REPORTING PERIOD ON THE MEDIUM-TERM GOALS OF THE MINISTRY OF TOURISM AND CULTURE.**

a. **Bunce Island Project**

This is situated at the Sierra Leone River up ward and lies between Pepel and Tasso Islands. It was a famous place those days. Slave brought from the Guinea Coast were shipped to the Americas from this island. It has been declared as one of Sierra Leone's National Heritage Site.

My ministry is making every effort to contact UNESCO for its support to stabilize and restore the structure and artifacts. The project is very vital for its Historical, Educational, Scientific, Social and Cultural intrinsic values and tourist significance, which needs support to promote its values and importance world-wide.

My ministry in its wisdom, is undertaking the following activities:-

Constructing a 2-bedroom bungalow for the caretaker.

Constructing a kitchen, cesspit and fencing of the bungalow.

Rehabilitation of the jetty to the island.

Cleaning and rehabilitation of the water well

On-going under brushing of the Island/

A three-footer boat for the caretaker to and from the Island.

One (15 HP) outboard engine now fixed on the boat.

**b. Lumley Beach Development Project**

**Lumley Beach Master Plan** – According to the Master Plan of the Lumley Beach Development Project, which covers the area between the Cape and Golf Club, the National Tourist Board and the supervisory ministry and their development partners in the industry are undertaking the development and promotion of structures along the Lumley Beach Front. In not too distant future, the beach front will be sandwiched with multifaceted recreational and shopping centers, ranging from Beach Taverns, Health Clubs, Restaurants, Lodgings, Sports and Play Centres.

Applications for the use of these lands are addressed to the National Tourist Board and selection for land allocation must be in accordance with the Master Plan of Lumley Beach Development Project.

**c. Tourist Information/and Business Centre and Police Post**

The National Tourist Board with assistance from Action Aid (SL) has constructed a medium size (appropriate technology) building. Part of the building is for the exclusive purpose of providing information, enquiries and outlet for tourist souvenirs. The other part of the structure is occupied by the Sierra Leone Police – dealing with security issue along the beach.

**d. Toilets and Showers:-** The National Tourist Board with support from the European Union has constructed public toilets and showers for rinsing after sea bath along the beach front. These facilities are now in use for a minimal fee to the public.

- e. **Observation Points:** Furthermore in its endeavour the National Tourist Board with its vigorous and robust campaign, sought the support of Cocoa Cola and another agency for the erection of six observation points or mini towers. These signal posts or observation points are used by Life-Savers and/or Beach Wardens to detect disaster at sea and serve as warning post and serving people at the same time to observe afar, the ocean world freely.
- f. **Life Guards/Beach Wardens:-**These workers have been trained and deployed along the Lumley Beach Area with a view to saving lives. And protecting the beach against unacceptable standards and practices.
- g. **Promotion and Marketing of Sierra Leone Tourist/Cultural Industry:-**

The development of the industry lies with the promotion and marketing of Sierra Leone Tourism and/or Cultural potentials to ,tour investors. In this connection my ministry and the National Tourist Board have started to involve the participation of the Private Sector into the main stream and together as “Development Partners” (hoteliers, tour operators airlines , tour journalists and others) to find out their plans and expectations for 2003-2004 and to design package tours, marketing and promotions of the industry. In this direction we paid a working visit to the republic of the Gambia in February this year. My delegation included not only officials of my ministry but also the private sector.-hoteliers, airline operators, travel agencies etc. We had very fruitful meeting with my colleague in the Gambia. Hon. Yankuba Touray, both at the policy and technical levels. The existing bilateral agreement was reviewed to reflect present realities. One of the salient points in the agreement is the promotional aspect under article five and I quote – “the two contracting parties shall develop joint promotion in the tourist generating countries with a

view to better sensitizing the potential; clientele on the complimentary nature of their respective product. In markets where one of the parties is not present, the other shall allow the use of its external representation there for the purpose of tourism promotion i.e. market research, distribution of promotional material travel and media contracts etc”

**ARTICLE SIX :** says the two contracting parties shall encourage the setting up of joints ventures between Sierra Leonean and Gambia entrepreneurs in the fields of tourism and culture with a view to enhancing tourism economic growth.

My ministry and the board with our development partners will endeavour to actively represent the country at International Conferences, Seminars, Cultural Shows and Tourism World Marts and Trade Fairs to inform the Global World on the potential of Sierra Leone Beach and Sea Fronts.

Contacting, promoting and marketing to target groups cannot be over-emphasized and therefore my ministry intends to target World Tour Markets as follows:-

- France, was a patron to Sierra Leone tourism industry and therefore very pertinent to re-arrange and review visits to French business firms and French Press. Further arrangement for wider distribution of Sierra Leone materials and to be ready and be prepared to participate in French Trade Fair. I had a talk with the French Ambassador about the resumption of customer tourists and attraction of new ones.
- United Kingdom , to consider appointing a representative of the National Tourist Board, with responsibilities amongst others to brief nationals of U.K. on field trips to Sierra Leone.

- Germany/Europe, we shall endeavour to arrange distribution of promotional materials in those markets and other related tour institutions.
- United States of American (U.S.A.) to liaise with Sierra Leone National Airlines and K.T.I. on the Gullahs and Roots related tourism firms in U.S.A.
- Furthermore, we will continue to consult the indigenous partners like hoteliers, tour operators and airlines on their plans and expectations with view to promoting the industry at World Tourism Mart of 2003. We will further continue to develop promotional materials to all Sierra Leone Overseas Missions, finance houses, selected investors, international hotelier and related company firms and consultants etc:
- My ministry has scheduled a traveling mart to reach the twelve (12) districts in a nation-wide drive. The purpose and intention is to reach all identified tourism development areas with a view to initiating the development, promotion of these resorts with development partners. The local community will participate in the conservation and/or preservation of the environment.

**Awareness Raising, Publicity and Printing:-** My ministry is conscious of the fact that tourism and cultural awareness drive campaign has been limited if any. In this regard my ministry will be calling for a Stakeholders Conference with a view to heightening the awareness drive amongst participants..

Furthermore with the National Tourist Board, we shall host workshops at regional levels and to campaign to make our local community aware at those levels the enormous reward accrued to developing Eco-Tourism in those places. With reference to the period under review, my

ministry and board shall undertake activities to updating, printing and publishing of the visitors guide and travel brochures, blowing up scenic and beach fronts for intensive distribution internationally.

To set up committees with relevant Non-Governmental Organizations, Ministries, Departments and Agencies which have relations or bearing with tourism. The annual celebration of World Tourism Day is an activity to be undertaken this year in order to achieve our common aims and objectives.

### **LONG-TERM GOALS OF THE MINISTRY OF TOURISM AND CULTURE**

- a. Lumley Beach Development Project – On-going.
- b. Bunce Island Stabilization and Restoration, On-going
- c. Government to create the enabling environment and encourage – Private Sector Participation in the Industry.
- d. Private Investors in Partnership with Government to develop and set up (Tent) Camps/ Lodge Centres by Park and Sanctuaries.
- e. The Hosting of Annual Cultural Festivities
- f. The National Dance Troupe and the creating of National Commission of Arts and Crafts (NCAC)
- g. To minimize the Lumley Beach on public holidays.

### **STATEMENT ON THE ACTIVITIES UNDERTAKEN OUTSIDE THE SHORT-TERM/MEDIUM-TERM AND LONG –TERM GOALS**

- a. **Accommodation**:- The problem of office accommodation for the ministry continues to

impact negatively and unabated. The ministry made repetitive requests frantically to the authorities concern and it was re-located in August, 2002 at Miatta Conference Centre. currently the ministry has been forced again to vacate the relocated premises to another Site at the National Stadium Hostel. The office space provided at the hostel is inadequate.

- b. **Terminal Benefits:-** A Cabinet Paper of redundancy and terminal benefits to former Management and staff of the Hotel and Tourism Training Centre, Brookfields is now before Cabinet for approval, and that payment will only be effected in this Fiscal Year 2003.
- c. **Cocoanut and Acacia Seedlings:-** Even though the exercise had been going on without Success, last rainy season, my ministry requested the board for the planting of Acacia and Cocoanut seedlings along the Beach front of Lumley. The cocoanut seedlings are promising and doing well, whilst some developers have damaged some seedlings before their development frontages.
- d. **STRUCTURES:-** The ministry further requested the Professional Head of the Ministry of Works, Housing and Technical Maintenance to dispatch a technical team to assess and report on.:
  1. Bunce Island – report submitted.
  2. Perimeter fence for Cultural Village Aberdeen- report submitted.

3. Office for the ministry – report submitted and Plan and Bill of Quantities
4. Arts and Crafts Shop and Training School, - report submitted, plan and Bill of Quantities.

### **STATEMENT ON UNIQUE ELEMENTS IN THE MINISTRY**

Sierra Leone's touristic and cultural potential are vast, and a lot of opportunities exist

For the development, promotion and marketing of the industry. Our flora and fauna are abundant and virgin, fertile, unadulterated and intact. There is minimal depletion of the Eco-System in comparative terms to other developing countries.

The vast potential and diverse tourist and cultural resources make the country a distinct and unique holiday destination which is endowed with its natural phenomenon. Sierra Leone has a long coastal stretch from the north-west in Kambia and/or Port Loko Districts through the West Coast on the South of the country. Along these coastline are stretches of white, golden and silver sand beaches.

The sand beaches are distinct and unique from Conakry Dee to Yeilboya on to Lumley Beach to Lakka, Hamilton on to No 2. River, John Obbey on to Sulima. These places are tranquil, quiet, charming and peaceful for interested tourism developers or investors. These resort areas are very congenial and environmentally friendly and provides

opportunities for the development of holiday inns, golf sports, gardens and aqua sports, fishing, awash, pedal and boat excursions along the excellent beaches.

Moving towards the hinterland from Freetown, the landscape unfolds into bolis, plains and uplands areas and rises into spectacular hills and mountains. The Bintumani and Tingi Hills are the highest peak in the country, and Bintumani being the highest peak in the sub-region.

Sierra Leone lacks the big games of East Africa but Wild Life is plentiful in the identified forest reserves of the Outamba-Kilima National Parks, the Gola Forests, Mammuta-Mayoso and Tiwai Island Life Sanctuaries. These potential areas are habitats for forest elephants, antelopes, crocodiles, leopards, many kind of monkeys, hippos, chimpanzees, birds and peculiar amphibians and other forest vertebrates. These are resort area yearning for development.

### **PROBLEMS AND PROPOSED SOLUTIONS OF THE GOALS AND ITS GENERAL GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT.**

**Problems:** The ministry over the years has no coherent policy plan other than 1982 Tourism Master Plan for the development of the sector, which requires an update and to make it relevant to the present circumstances.

**Available Funds:** The budgetary provisions over the years were grossly inadequate and under-budgeted to cope with any meaningful Plans/and Programmes

**Staffing:** Staff position is an issue for concern in the whole ministry, capacity building is a very serious issue indeed. There are two divisions i.e. Tourism and Culture. In tourism, only one Director, no Deputy, nor Assistant Director, only one Senior Tourist Officer

and no Tourism Officer, for over two decades. In Culture, no Director, no Deputy, and only an Assistant Director, There are no Cultural Officers, no Welfare Officers, no Stage Officer and the middle level positions are vacant for the past two (2) decades.

**LOGISTICS/EQUIPMENT:** Even though the first batch of government purchased vehicles have been distributed, still the ministry has no official transport or vehicles of its own. Transportation will enable the ministry to effect and man the day to day running of the office and to move to assess and evaluate tourism/cultural potential areas country wide.

**Office Accommodation:** The Office accommodation is still unabated in terms of office space for the ministry. The ministry was relocated to Miatta Conference Centre in August, 2002 and currently being forced to vacate the said premises for Stadium Hostel. The ministry is yearning for an office of its own and has prepared Plan and Bill of Quantities for donor and/or government support.

**Proposed Solutions:** Government should endeavour to increase the budgetary provision to accommodate expenditure emanating from various plans and programmes and at the same time taking new programmes into the planning fold. My ministry requires a Consultant for the industry to form a core of Management Advisory Service Body for at least one year. More officers at middle level are required to beef up the staff position.

To secure permanent office is the dream of the ministry. My ministry has experienced moving from one place to another, and the situation is becoming frustrating and much more embarrassing, to vacate and to resettle takes, with unforeseen problems. My ministry is yearning for a permanent office structure in order to motivate the staff.

Transport is vital and a backbone for any successful management which facilitate to enable the movement of staff to and from places (upcountry) and inter and intra ministerial transactions and therefore the necessity for transport is pronto.

With office extension to the provinces, 3 computers and accessories, 3 digital cameras and accessories and small copiers and accessories are also pronto.

The coaxing and encouraging of the private sector is paramount and equal to non, in respect of new investment in the industry.

**The Way Forward:** The earliest review and update of the Tourism Development Act of 1990 is imperative and to match with the general investment code of Sierra Leone, in order to avoid an overlap and duplicity of duty concessions. Further review of the Tourism Master Plan of 1982 is appropriate with other research reports.

Government should vest tourism potential lands to the Board. The reason is to facilitate the acquisition of lands without complex procedures or bureaucratic red tapism which are frustrating to actual investment partners. The resort lands acquisition issues should be properly addressed along the Peninsular and Western Areas – particularly Lumley/ Aberdeen Development Areas and make free from encumbrances. The government to endeavour and with strong political will commit sufficient budgetary provisions for the ministry.

Eco-Tourism is intrinsically a rural environmental development programme relating to protection and preservation which affects more the rural poor. In this direction the government through Finance should consider the ministry under the HIPIC funds, to enable the ministry to carry out its Poverty Alleviation Programmes at Provincial Levels.

The ministry, the National Tourist Board in collaboration with Development Partners in the private sector should participate fully in policy design and formulation. The ministry and Board will continue to make aggressive promotional and awareness campaign drive from local to national and international levels for public attention and awareness.

Government with the Private Sector intend to launch Trade Fairs at national and sub-regional level, to attract investors.

Before I end my presentation Mr. Chairman, let me as a matter of emphasis briefly mention the comparative advantages of tourism and culture as a development strategy for our developing countries.

1. Tourism is an industry, both the product is consumed at the point of production. The customer travels to the destination (to the factory) to consume the product, that provides an opportunity to entrepreneurs (in metropolitan as well as rural areas) to sell additional products or services to the potential customers
2. The development of any industry requires capital, financial as well as human. The advantage of tourism is that it offers a natural capital base on which the industry can build;

- the flora and fauna of a country, its scenic beauty, beaches, mountains and wetlands are all capital assets –ready for consumption, we are in possession of these enormous tourism capital assets.
3. Tourism is more labour intensive than most other productive sectors, data from six countries with satellite accounts indicate that only agriculture is more labour intensive than tourism in LDC's.
  4. Tourism has unrestricted market access – a very serious problem for most developing countries is the issue of market access, Tourism faces non of kind. It is not hampered by tariff barriers that increase the cost of the product like in agriculture, the only barriers to international trade in tourism are **self inflicted** in form of visa restrictions and taxes imposed by the exporting country as a sources of revenue.
  5. There is a greater uptake of jobs by women than in other sectors although there is an enormous variation in this from country to country (Muslim Christian).
  6. Tourism is a much more diverse industry than many other and can build upon a wide resource base, diversity increases the scope for wide participation also by the informal sector.
  7. In many developing countries such as South Africa, China, India, and the Philippines domestic tourism is growing rapidly and like international tourism it brings relatively wealthy consumers to rural areas where they constitute an important local market, one which the poor can access at low cost, the tourist bears the transport cost.

8. Finally, some of the tourists may be potential investors after experiencing the enormous natural resources and the huge tourism potential and a very friendly population such as ours.

What is very important in tourism and culture for obvious reasons is the alleviation of poverty which is always ignored by the international aid and development agencies. The reduction of poverty is always propagated in all for a criminally neglecting the strength of tourism and culture that would help eliminate poverty. Poverty is not just the lack of income – it is more than that – it is a multidimensional and complex phenomenon with an intricate relationship to issues such as disease, illiteracy, infant mortality, environmental degradation and many other aspects. As the biggest and most diversified economic activity of our time, tourism and culture is the most appropriate aspect of change for poverty alleviation in our country –Sierra Leone. This means that a multi-stakeholders involvement is absolutely necessary.

1. **Governments**:- must lead with visionary strategies, practical policies, regulations and thoughtful, exclusionary co-ordination.
2. **The Private Sector**:- is an essential player as partner, enabler, customer, marketing channels, financial catalyser and advisor.
3. **The Poor Themselves**:- have many roles: as producers, suppliers and workers; also as participants and decision makers.
4. **Civil Society**:- has an important part to facilitate inclusion by the poor, this includes educational institution at all levels, associations, journalists, community based organizations (CBO's) and (NGO's)

5. **Donors:** Can ensure that tourism is considered when development options are being analysed, encourage the other stake-holders to increase affirmative action and provide technical assistance as well as funding for projects and expertise in the new field.

Finally, as a government and international aid and development agencies we have to strengthen the income generating sectors i.e. the economically viable Ministries/Departments to feed our social programmes such as Health, Education and others.

Mr. Chairman, the pledge of His Excellency the President , Alhaji Dr. Ahmad Tejan Kabbah for our people not to go to bed hungry by the year 2007 should be generally construed and not restricted to agriculture alone, it concerns the improvement of the overall standard of living of Sierra Leoneans. There can be no better place to achieve this sacred pledge than in tourism and Culture, because food costs money even after it would have been grown, every body needs to buy it.

I thank you for your attention.

DR. CHERNOR ABDUL JALLOH  
MINISTER OF TOURISM AND CULTURE  
DELIVERED ON THE 18<sup>TH</sup> AUGUST, 2003





