



## PRESS STATEMENT

### **ECOWAS-UNOWAS-COMMONWEALTH (INTERNATIONAL MORAL GUARANTORS) JOINT ASSESSMENT MISSION TO SIERRA LEONE ON THE AGREEMENT FOR NATIONAL UNITY AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE TRIPARTITE COMMITTEE'S REPORT**

#### **FREETOWN, SIERRA LEONE**

The International Moral Guarantors on the implementation of the **Agreement for National Unity** (ANU) signed between the Government of Sierra Leone and the All People's Congress (APC) party on 18 October 2023 undertook a third assessment mission to Sierra Leone from 13 to 20 April 2026 to assess the implementation status of the **Agreement for National Unity** and the recommendations of the **Tripartite Committee's Report**, with a view to ensuring the country remains on the path of peace and stability, through strengthened democratic and electoral processes.

The Joint Assessment Mission, which was co-led by **H.E. Fatoumata Jallow-Tambajang**, former Vice President of the Republic of The Gambia, **H.E. Barrie Freeman**, the Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary-General for West Africa and the Sahel (UNOWAS) and **H.E. Ambassador Tanmaya Lal**, Deputy Secretary-General of the Commonwealth Secretariat, was supported by **H.E. Ambassador John Azumah**, Resident Representative of ECOWAS to Sierra Leone and **H.E. Seraphine Wakana**, the UN Resident Coordinator in Sierra Leone. The Mission was facilitated by the Independent Commission for National Cohesion (ICPNC) and backstopped by technical experts from ECOWAS Commission, UNOWAS, the Commonwealth Secretariat and the office of the UN Resident Coordinator.

The Mission paid a courtesy call on the President of the Republic, **H.E. Brigadier General (Rtd.) Dr Julius Maada Bio**, and held consultations with the relevant Ministers of the Government of Sierra Leone including the Chief Minister (Dr. David Moinina Sengh) and the Attorney General and Minister of Justice (Mr. Alpha Sesay), the leadership of the APC Party (led by the Acting Chairman, Ambassador Alhaji Osman Foday Yansaneh), other political parties, the Political Parties Regulation Commission (PPRC), the leadership of Parliament, the security agencies, the Electoral Commission for Sierra Leone (ECSL), Statistics Sierra Leone, the diplomatic corps, the media and civil society organizations (CSOs), and National Moral Guarantors.

The Mission acknowledges the progress made and the challenges in implementing the Agreement for National Unity and the recommendations of the Tripartite Committee's Report. The Mission notes the expressed commitment by the Government of Sierra Leone

and the APC Party to deepen collaboration and renew trust, build consensus, sustain dialogue, improve information sharing and inclusive decision-making processes to ensure the full and timely implementation of the Agreement of National Unity and the Tripartite recommendations.

The Mission welcomes the tabling of The Constitution of Sierra Leone (Amendment) Bill, 2025 in Parliament. It urges Parliament, relevant national institutions and Ministries, Department and Agencies (MDAs), political parties, and civil society to work collaboratively towards the finalization of ongoing constitutional and legislative reforms, as well as institutional strengthening processes through regular consultative and inclusive decision-making among key political actors to accelerate the implementation of the Agreement for National Unity and Tripartite recommendations.

Supported by the ICPNC, the Mission convened and facilitated a dialogue between the Government and APC to resolve institutional and operational issues of the Tripartite Steering Committee through restructuring and expansion of the Committee to ensure balanced representation of the Parties, constructive dialogue, information sharing and inclusive decision making. At the end of the dialogue, the Parties agreed on the following:

- i. The government to engage the leadership of Parliament to urgently constitute the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Electoral Matters in the spirit of the **Agreement for National Unity**, specifically Recommendation 20 of the Tripartite Report to review the electoral cycle, inquire into electoral preparedness and guide legislative reforms towards the 2028 general elections. The Parliamentary leadership to ensure the development of Terms of Reference for the Standing Committee, but within the context of Section 32(11) of the Constitution.
- ii. Restructure and expand the implementation framework of the Agreement of National Unity and the Tripartite Recommendations through revised Terms of Reference that include:
  - a. the establishment of a High-Level Oversight Mechanism with a mandate to provide strategic oversight of the Tripartite Steering Committee.
  - b. the expansion of the Tripartite Steering Committee to include additional APC members and other voices currently excluded, namely other political parties and civil society, to ensure inclusion.
- iii. Constitute a Team of Legal Experts on Constitutional and legislative reforms, with representation from the APC, the government and other relevant groups.
- iv. On National Peace and Election Management Security, parties were informed that there already exists a structure that incorporates platforms of security agencies and civil society, and same will be strengthened. The Vice President to

engage the National Security Council and revert on the practicality of the structure's engagement with political stakeholders.

- v. The proposal on the Electoral System is part of The Constitution of Sierra Leone (Amendment) Bill, 2025 currently in Parliament. The choice of the Electoral System will therefore be determined through Parliamentary processes on bill consideration.
- vi. On the ongoing Population and Housing Census, both parties agree that census data is primarily used as a developmental and governance tool as well as for election purposes. In this regard, the Government of Sierra Leone commits to have an all-stakeholder approach, including political parties, on the use of the 2026 census data. .
- vii. The Parties commit to implement electoral reforms as contained in the Tripartite Committee Recommendations, in particular recommendation 36. The Parties commit to restructure the Electoral Commission for Sierra Leone (ECSL) within the framework and principles of the ANU not later than 31 December 2026. The Parties further agree that where there is undue delay in implementing the reforms within the agreed time lines the parties and moral guarantors will reconvene to review the situation.
- viii. The APC and its elected officials to immediately end the boycott and ensure an inclusive, transparent and effective governance process at all levels in the country.

The Mission encourages all parties and stakeholders to work together on the use of census data, including for electoral governance and development ahead of 2028 general elections.

The Mission emphasizes the importance of inclusive and continuous consultation and dialogue among all political actors, the National Parliament, and civil society regarding critical constitutional and electoral reforms. Specifically, the Mission highlights the need to reach consensus on the electoral system for the 2028 general elections, strengthen voter registration and results management systems to ensure an inclusive and transparent electoral process, in conformity with international good practices, for presidential, parliamentary, and local council elections. In this regard, the Mission encourages the parties to take advantage of the existing platforms to hold regular meetings to facilitate the implementation of the outstanding recommendations of the Tripartite Report.

The Mission urges all political leaders, political parties' executives, supporters, and all citizens to exercise restraint and refrain from the use and/or propagation of hate speech, inciting statements and dis/misinformation, to help de-escalate current political tensions and create a conducive environment to foster mutual trust, national cohesion, peace and stability in the country.

The Mission reiterates its call to all stakeholders to take action to build trust through sustained inclusive dialogue as a pathway to achieve lasting peace and national stability.

The Mission acknowledges the presence and contribution of both delegations, led respectively by the Honourable Vice President, Dr. Mohamed Juldeh Jalloh for the Government and Dr. Kaifala Marah, Chief Negotiator for the All Peoples Congress (APC), during the facilitated dialogue.

The Mission expresses its sincere appreciation to the President, H.E. Brig. General (Rtd.) Dr. Julius Maada Bio, the Government and people of Sierra Leone, the ICPNC, the international community and local partners for the warm reception, support and cooperation provided during the mission, which ensured the smooth and successful conduct of the assessment.

The International Moral Guarantors remain committed to supporting the Government and all stakeholders of Sierra Leone in their efforts to strengthen participatory democracy and inclusive governance for the peace and prosperity of the people of Sierra Leone.

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**Freetown, 20 April 2026**