



Seventy-seventh World Health Assembly
May 2024
Agenda Item 3, “All for Health, Health for All”

Statement of Honourable Dr Austin DEMBY, Minister of Health of the
Republic of Sierra Leone

Mr. President, Director-General of WHO Dr. Tedros,
Excellencies, distinguished delegates, ladies and gentlemen,

Mr. President, the 77th WHA theme, “All-for-Health, Health-for-
All”, resonates with Sierra Leone’s new transformative approach
to health care delivery.

Through the leadership of the President of Sierra Leone HE,
Brig (Rtd) Dr. Julius Maada Bio, healthcare and its delivery is

not an end in itself. Together with Education, Food Security, and Infrastructure, Health is a major platform for our national development. Our focus is on Human Capital Development as we build a nation that is responsive to the needs of her peoples.

To ensure that healthcare reaches all 8 million of us Sierra Leoneans, each and everyone of us has to be visible to the healthcare system and each citizen has to see themselves in the healthcare system.

Our approach is to provide healthcare services through the Life Stages, from pregnancy, to the newborn child, to adolescents, adults, and senior citizens. At each node in the evolution of life we have an opportunity to impact the wellbeing of that individual by the quality of preventive, supportive, and curative services we provide.

With this approach we are beginning to see dramatic gains with a more than 60% reduction in maternal mortality over the past decade, and over 30% reduction in infant deaths. We have seen dramatic increases in vaccine coverage including the introduction of new vaccines such as the new Malaria vaccine.

With our experience dealing with Ebola and COVID-19, we have set up a new health security architecture that truly focuses on Prevention, Preparedness and Response. A new National Public Health Agency has been established as an institutional home with surveillance capabilities to detect and coordinate our national response to outbreaks and pandemics. Mr. President, this new agency is built on a solid platform of Primary Health Care, with tripwires and early warning systems backed up by Rapid Response capabilities.

As we embark on this journey of transformation, we continue to count on our development partners including WHO to Accompany us. The new 14th WHO program-of-work truly reflect the leadership and coordinating role that member states like Sierra Leone are very pleased with.

We continue to ask WHO and our development partners to listen to us at the global and country level. For us in Sierra Leone, with only six more years to go before 2030, **Accompaniment, Acceleration and Alignment** are the most critical tools we need to attain the SDGs.

Together with our phenomenal healthcare workers and partners, we Must and We Will meet and exceed the SDGs.

I thank you.