

SIERRA LEONE PEOPLE'S PARTY

2007-2012 MANIFESTO



*A PLATFORM FOR PEACE CONSOLIDATION AND
PROSPERITY*

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FOREWORD

I have now come to the end of my mandate as the President of the country, and must now pass on the baton to another. As Leader of the Party, I have guided the Party and the country through the most trying times in our history. We have survived to rekindle our hopes for a brighter future. Together we have set up the conditions for believing in what lies ahead. We have built the foundations for sustainable peace by setting up the framework for good governance. This peace will easily disappear if we do not build on this foundation, the economic opportunities for our children to enjoy higher living conditions. This is the next step in our country's journey to prosperity. We should now focus on creating jobs, empowering our youth and women, harnessing the enormous economic potential that we failed to exploit in the past. This time around we must do it with appropriate policies, modern systems of management, good governance, discipline, and the rule of law.

This is the task of the next Leader.

Solomon Berewa has been shoulder to shoulder with me, as we set ourselves to achieve the goals for constructing the foundation. He is the best foreman to guide this country as we embark on the next phase of the construction.

I have looked at the Manifesto and I am satisfied that when implemented, it will take this country firmly away from the poverty trap of the past. I therefore leave with the comfort that all the trials we have survived through, and all we have achieved as a nation, will now yield the results that we have all dreamed of for our future.

I wish him and the Party God's speed.

ALHAJI DR. AHMAD TEJAN KABBAH
PRESIDENT
REPUBLIC OF SIERRA LEONE
JULY 1, 2007

(ii)

THE LEGACY

Creating an efficient system for Sierra Leone that will guarantee Peace, Development, Progress and prosperity for all.

(iii)

MY VISION

Establishing a reliable foundation and the basic administrative, economic and social structures for the enhancement of the lives and livelihood of the people of Sierra Leone that will be free of political, religious, social and economic strife; free of corruption, inequities, and injustice whilst instituting, nurturing and protecting the individual's rights, freedoms, economic advancement through good governance, sound economic and fiscal policies and effective social engineering.

Building a Sierra Leone that will recognize and encourage the individual's skills, abilities and talents, a Sierra Leone that will recognize excellence, achievement and effort, that will create the environment that guarantees equal opportunities for all, in order to achieve sustainable growth, advancement whilst restoring the nation's pride.

Whether by legislative means or by policies developed, resuscitating and/or reinforcing certain core values among which are –

- a) Insistence on the maintenance of a workable system of law and order by all and sundry.
- b) Respect for human rights and human dignity in all its forms
- c) Respect for public property.

PREFACE BY PARTY LEADER

This Manifesto describes the platform on which the SLPP will launch its programme for the coming five years. As leader of the party my task is to transform this vision of a country that is turning its back on poverty and conflict, and is now about to face the road to prosperity, into reality.

Like all Sierra Leoneans and friends of this beloved country, I would like to see Sierra Leone become a modern society, where the tragic consequences of bad policies, corruption, and abject poverty are bad souvenirs of the past. We must march on to this vision of a society;

- that cares for the vulnerable, the weak and the defenseless;
- a society that provides opportunities for those ready to apply themselves and improve their condition;
- where the rule of law protects the rights of all and at the same creates the environment where wealth can be created with fairness and without injustice.; and above all
- that prepares its youth for taking over the mantle of a leadership that is responsible, a leadership that is proud of its country, and a leadership that is capable.

The time has come for this country to take its place in the wider global community not as a permanent case for charity, but as a dynamic example of peace, growth and prosperity using the resource endowments that we have inherited. To do so we will embrace the new technologies now available, we will adopt modern management systems, and we will reform our production and trade patterns.

In the next five years I will focus on economic expansion; I will work tirelessly to increase the incomes of the poor and reduce the obvious inequalities that now characterize our society and that promote tensions and instability. The agenda for doing this is outlined in the pages of this document. Empowering and training the youth, creating the space for women to release their enormous potential for enhancing the welfare of our citizenry, expanding agriculture, increasing rural transportation, intensifying support to the private sector, providing energy not only in urban but also in rural areas, fighting corruption; are some of the key components of the agenda.

Among the inheritance that the current government is leaving us, is the legacy of excellent relationship with the international community. This must be nurtured and expanded. Our relationship has been characterized by free and frank dialogue on our part, and a commitment to maintain support for this country on their part. The successful Consultative Group meetings with them are a testimony of the credibility of this government. I undertake to maintain this; but at the same time we cannot continue to depend on handouts. We must learn to rely on our own efforts. With discipline, rigour, and proper systems that are vigourously applied, we can soon depend on the resources God has given us.

In leading this country forward I will be guided by six principles;

1. Zero tolerance for corruption
2. Accountability for results and an end to impunity
3. Promoting unity while respecting diversity.
4. Enforcing modern systems of management, and
5. Insistence and due enforcement of fundamental human rights, and
6. The interest of the country supersedes all considerations

I am determined to lead this country on the path towards prosperity and I am asking all progressive Sierra Leoneans to join me in this march. We will succeed only if we marshal all our resources towards one objective, making Sierra Leone a successful, peaceful and prosperous nation.

Together as one people we can do it. Whether you are in the country or in the Diaspora I need your support. The country needs your commitment. In this march forward we will raise the ranking of Sierra Leone in the Human Development index, and other indices; we will improve the chances of this country attaining the targets of the Millennium Development Goals; and above all we will give hope to our youth especially the women, that the peace is here to stay and that jobs and prosperity are the new targets for our onslaught.

It will be recalled that since my election as Leader of the SLPP and therefore as that Party's Presidential Candidate for the 2007 Presidential elections, I have stated publicly on a number of occasions that voting for me was voting for continuity. There have been those who have derided this statement by asking "continuity of what" thereby suggesting that nothing was done in the last three or four years by the Tejan Kabbah administration of which I have been part and parcel of. It is now manifestly clear that continuity here simply means proceeding to the implementation stage arising from the long and torturous studies, debates, analyses, investigations that His Excellency Tejan Kabbah and myself had quietly conducted through interaction with people, through involvement with the work of NGOs, Parastatals, donor countries, through the scrutiny and detailed analysis of various reports and studies conducted, which finally gave us not only a clear global picture, but also a detailed understanding of the problems of Sierra Leone and pointing to the potential solutions. This makes me a unique candidate in the sense that I am like the medical practitioner who is about to administer treatment to the ailing patient armed with a precise and accurate diagnostic analysis and report. The question is; what right thinking patient would at that very precise point decide to abandon the doctor to seek the services of another who (assuming he is very efficient) will have to spend the next so many years conducting the very diagnostic exercise all over again before embarking upon treatment. What property owner would wait for the fire fighters to complete the marshalling of their equipment and manpower and just as they are about to switch on the water hoses, will tell those fire fighters to go away and call upon another group to replace them which will entail their travelling from their headquarters to the site of the fire and then conduct the same marshalling exercise, by which time the property obviously would have been destroyed?

Convinced therefore, after hearing the cries of the youths, and of the suffering masses, and after seeing the desperation and deprivation in society, that I have finally found the source of our problems. It is my determination that if I am elected President of the Republic of Sierra Leone, it is my sincerest wish that my legacy should be that I was able to call upon all Sierra Leoneans from all walks of life, irrespective of tribe, gender, religion, political affiliation, and even social standing (inclusive of the "Borbor Pains"), to successfully work with me in designing and adopting a completely new administrative, economic, social and commercial system for Sierra Leone that will serve as a sound foundation and guarantee peace, freedom, development, progress and prosperity for all. And it is to this end that I hereby present this manifesto entitled "A Platform for Peace Consolidation and Prosperity" (which I believe is the ultimate solution to the problems experienced by the people of Sierra Leone today) to the electorate.

Solomon Ekuma Berewa
Presidential Candidate (SLPP)
2007 Presidential and Parliamentary Elections

BRIEF HISTORY OF THE SIERRA LEONE PEOPLE'S PARTY (SLPP)

The Sierra Leone People's Party (SLPP) was formed in 1951. Three semi-political organizations merged to form the SLPP. They were the Protectorate Educational Progressive Union (PEPU), the Sierra Leone Organisation Society (SOS) and a Colony-based People's Party (led by Lamina Sankoh). The Party's motto is ***One Country, One People*** and symbol is the ***Palm Tree*** and ***Green*** and ***White*** are the Party's official colours. The Party stands for Unity, Freedom and Justice. It is the Party in which every ethnic group, every religious group, and every shade of opinion is well represented. SLPP believes in equality of all ethnic groups, equal opportunity for all, tolerance, respect for human rights, the rule of law and democracy.

Today, the SLPP is one of the oldest ruling political party in Africa and largest party in the Country. It pioneered the fight for freedom that made the people of Sierra Leone independent in 1961 from the British colonial rule. It again won majority seats in the 1962 elections. In 1967, the Party lost power to the All People's Congress (APC) making it the first political party to lose power through a democratic process. Among its many successes, between 1962-67, the SLPP rapidly expanded education including the opening of Njala University College, Milton Margai Teachers College and many secondary schools. It also opened the Bank of Sierra Leone and introduced the national currency, the Leone.

The opposition party APC, ushered in a regime of intolerance, disrespect for the rule of law and destruction of democratic values. After two poorly stage-managed elections in 1973 and 1977, the APC forcefully imposed the One Party State in 1978 creating a perfect situation for reign of terror. The gross excesses that accompanied this misuse of power were later resisted by rural youths and urban lumpen in the form of a rebel war which started in 1991, led by the Revolutionary United Front (RUF). The war caused the loss of many lives, destruction of properties and bringing a near state collapse.

In 1996, first multi-party elections were conducted after 30 years and the Sierra Leone People's Party (SLPP) was returned to power with majority seats in the legislature. The period 1996-2002 was one of instability of which the 1997 coup and the January 6, 1999 were most remarkable. In July 1999, the Lome Peace Accord was signed between the government and the warring factions. This provided the framework for sustained peace in Sierra Leone. With the assistance of the International Community, Government disarmed and demobilised over 70,000 ex-combatants and provided reintegration services to at least 56,000 of these. Through the tireless efforts of the Government, the war ended in 2002. The Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) was set up as required by the Lome Peace Accord and the Special Court by a UN resolution.

In 2002, presidential and parliamentary elections were conducted. The ruling SLPP secured its second mandate to rule Sierra Leone with majority seats in parliament. It

had to carry out the huge task of economic recovery. Notable gains include economic and political stability, reconstruction of state infrastructure (including schools and health facilities), restoration of social services, rebuilding state institutions, conduct of chieftain elections (at least 70 paramount chief elections since 2003) and local government elections in 2004; restoration of rule of law, enforcing the fundamental human rights including freedom of expression, movement and association.

I. INTRODUCTION

(a) The Country's Past

The immediate post-independence era was a period of a golden age for Sierra Leone when rapid development was recorded under a progressive democratic SLPP leadership. However, from 1967-1996, the national polity came to be generally characterized by poor leadership: lacking in vision, applying inappropriate and misguided policies and dogged by successive administrations preoccupied with crises management. Previously the envy of many less endowed countries in the developing world, Sierra Leone plummeted from such apogee to the bottom of the international development league.

The General Elections of 1996 and 2002 ushered the SLPP into government. The country once more came under a new democratic leadership that wasted no time in demonstrating vision, commitment and dedication in addressing the manifold challenges left behind by previous administrations and a decade-long civil conflict.

By far the biggest challenge that confronted the new SLPP Government since 1996 was how to end the war and reconstruct and transform Sierra Leone into a united, open, progressive, competitive, transparent and corruption-free country, able once more to resume its rightful position in the New World Order. This challenge defined our mission in 1996 and again in 2002. In fulfillment, a great deal has been achieved and our record speaks eloquently for itself. But we do also admit that much more remains to be done. We need to undertake and accelerate appropriate reforms and build on the foundation laid during the last five years, in order to prepare the country for a more propitious future

(b) The SLPP Agenda (2007-2012)

The agenda of the SLPP in the next five years is to consolidate the peace and set the country on the road to prosperity. This is the new mandate we seek from the people of Sierra Leone: a mandate to complete the unfinished tasks of installing good governance and eradicating poverty and now take on the challenges of the march to prosperity. It is certainly not the time to wipe the slate clean and start afresh, as other political parties are wont to do. That would mean squandering all the peace dividends we as a country, have gained since we brought the rebel war to an end. Rather, as a country, our task now is to proceed with the implementation of the visionary and credible policies we have designed for the transformation of Sierra Leone into a better country. This vision is found in policy frameworks such as Vision 2025 and the Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP). These instruments have been carefully worked out and nurtured with the co-operation and collaboration of the Party, Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) and other development partners. No political party can assure the successful implementation of these policy frameworks better in the next five years than the SLPP Government under whose stewardship they were crafted.

This Manifesto (herein referred to as the **PLATFORM**) is the SLPP's agenda for the next 5 years. The SLPP has since 1996 taken this country from a devastating conflict with all its horrors, to peace. Having won and maintained the peace, it has set the foundations for now launching the country to a development path that is dynamic, sustainable, and that will directly benefit Sierra Leoneans.

This therefore, is the **PLATFORM** from which the agenda from Peace Consolidation to Prosperity will be launched. This **PLATFORM** is as much about preserving the peace, as it is about taking the country to prosperity. We firmly believe that only by lifting the majority of our citizens, particularly the youths, from poverty and hopelessness can we be assured of a future free from disenchantment and conflict. For too long the majority of Sierra Leoneans have been forced to remain in poverty and be satisfied with subsistence existence. The time has come for us to begin the march on the road to prosperity.

In the last SLPP Government, we put in place the key elements to consolidate our peace and also installed the pillars for the foundation of a country marching to sustainable economic growth. As with all countries coming out of a long conflict, during this transition period, the benefits of institutional development and good planning are not immediately visible to the average citizen. Now is the time for us to complete the foundation and begin the superstructure that goes on that foundation. Now is the time for the people to begin to reap the benefits through increased jobs, better, increased and quality health and education services, greater access to rural areas and agricultural services, increased quality of services in health and education, and greater access to improved services for the youth, the women and the vulnerable groups. In this context we are determined to empower and provide opportunities to the youth and the women, so that we can unleash the latent talents they possess and enable them to play the critical role in ensuring a future more promising than the past.

In our determination to preserve the peace, the **PLATFORM** emphasizes actions aimed at improving economic and political governance and reinforcing the effectiveness of the security sector. For the Security sector, continuous training, adequate equipment and supplies, and promoting regional and sub regional collaboration constitute the major elements of our security strategy.

Despite some successes so far, corruption and inefficiency continue to bedevil our public service delivery systems and performance in general. Enforcing accountability for development results and ending impunity are central to our plans for improving economic governance. Directly linked to this will be the completion of the reforms of the public service and instituting modern management systems. This combined with renewed emphasis on anti-corruption measures will constitute our programme for dealing with corruption and promoting accountability.

This PLATFORM is also about the march towards prosperity. After the widespread destruction of assets during the conflict, the negative changes to work ethics that occurred, and the distortions introduced in our production patterns and our distribution

networks, the march towards prosperity is going to be long and hard but we must start now. The key is to promote the type of economic growth and development that will generate more wealth in the country and also directly benefit the poor – pro-poor growth.

Development involves change; and change often requires adjustment. During this period the poor, particularly the youth and women, must be protected from the adverse effects of adjustment through adequate and affordable health and educational services and livelihood support. The PLATFORM outlines the measures for the provision of micro finance, improvement on rural transportation and communication and creation of more , job opportunities especially for the youth and rural dwellers, all designed to ensure that the poor benefit directly from the economic growth we will embark upon.

Sierra Leone is a natural resource-rich country. Our immediate sources of growth are therefore in agriculture, fisheries, mining and tourism. In agriculture, reduction in post-harvest losses, opening up of productive areas through rural roads, diversifying crop production and modernizing farms to accelerate entry into the global supply chain are among the initiatives planned. For fisheries, promoting both artisanal fishing and creating the environment for large scale fishing will be the priorities. In the case of minerals, the emphasis will be on reviewing and enforcing mining laws and regulation, using mining proceeds for the socio-economic development of mining areas, promoting private sector involvement in mining through transparent and consistent mining policies, promoting tourism, particularly through developing tourism infrastructure and eco-tourism. In this context we will redouble our efforts at protecting our environment.

Success in the above areas will depend on the performance of the private sector. In turn this requires the removal of some binding constraints to private sector development. This **PLATFORM** outlines pro-active measures such as the review of our tax laws, direct support to small businesses, facilitating joint ventures, all aimed at reinforcing and promoting our local businesses. Of note will be the creation of Centres for youth development and training that will provide them with the skills required for the growth economy. The binding constraints include inadequate energy and water supply, undeveloped transport system, and low levels of skills in the workforce. The special programmes underway in these areas are to be completed as a matter of priority.

In conclusion, this **PLATFORM** recognizes that the post-conflict nature of Sierra Leone's economy imposes some major constraints and challenges, in addition to the normal complexities of a developing African country that must be faced in taking the country forward. At the same time being a small country, Sierra Leone must embrace the changes occurring in the global economy, and make full use of opportunities offered by being part of, and benefiting from the global production and distribution supply chains now in existence. These considerations underlie our strategy for wealth creation and future prosperity.

The traumatic experiences of this country from 1990 to 2002 make peace preservation an overriding and pervasive consideration in any plans for the future. However, the only

way to consolidate our hard won peace is improving the living conditions and welfare for all the people. Our successes and achievements so far justify our conviction that only the SLPP can lead the country successfully to the path of prosperity beginning with the next five years. The entire population, public servants, CSOs, NGOs and other development actors and partners are enjoined to read and understand this **PLATFORM**. As a government, we will deliver on these promises, and will hold ourselves accountable to the people for the results outlined in this **PLATFORM**, reporting regularly through dialogue and frequent communication to the people, on the progress we make.

I. GOVERNANCE AND SECURITY

Since assuming political power in 1996 the SLPP has had to grapple with returning the country to peace and stability the bedrocks of which are good governance and security. Without peace and stability there can be no sustained development and improvement in the welfare of our citizens; and without improvement in the living conditions of our people, peace cannot be guaranteed. This PLATFORM is about breaking out of this trap.

To this end, since 1996, the SLPP has spared no effort in creating and strengthening national institutions and championing the enactment of relevant laws and regulations.. The Party will continue to build on the gains already made in the governance arena and improve on the functional efficiency and delivery capacity of these institutions. We will also review and enforce laws and regulations in order to deliver the much needed development dividends of peace and stability.

(i) Democratic Governance

The party takes pride in its achievements in the field of democratic governance. **No other party has produced** a more democratic Government in the last 30 years. The SLPP's governance architecture in the next five years will be dominated by policies and programmes aimed at improving and strengthening the capacity and functionality of the basic institutions, structures and legislative frameworks we had previously established for the creation of a more tolerant, stable, secure, progressive and well-managed society grounded in the values of democracy and the rule of law. Taking government to the people at grassroots will remain our main thrust.

The Local Government Act enacted in 2004 led to the holding of the first local government elections in 32 years after the abolition of elected local councils by the APC led administration in 1972 which encouraged increasing centralization of state authority with its attendant marginalization and exclusion of Rural Sierra Leone. The 2004 Local Government elections facilitated the creation of 19 Local Government Councils in which are now reposed, by way of devolution, power and authority previously belonging to the central government. The SLPP intends to reinforce this successful devolution of power to elected local councils, based on the conviction that the realization of the policy objectives of decentralization and local governance can contribute immensely to the consolidation of peace in the country. And, through increased financing and collaboration, the SLPP Government will use the local government structures to improve participatory governance as well as facilitate the effective and efficient provision and delivery of services at the local level.

Resuscitating Local Government Councils is, however, only half the task done. The other half, requiring even more special attention, is the balance between leadership and responsibility on the one hand, and between power and accountability on the other. This problem will need special attention, considering that these Councils have been moribund for well over three decades.

In the wake of the devolution process the nation also witnessed over 70 paramount chieftaincy elections since 1996. The traditional respect and authority of chiefs have been fully restored. All of this is designed to contribute in no small measure to the maintenance of peace and stability at the grassroots level. The SLPP will continue to respect the institution of chieftaincy with its attendant culture, and will do everything possible to protect it from undue interference.

(ii) Reforming the Legislature

Lawmakers the world over usually play an important role in their legislative calendar. But nowhere does this role assume extraordinarily imaginative and proactive dimensions than in countries emerging from the throes of internal conflict, faced, as they invariably are, with disintegrating structures of democratic governance. The task therefore becomes one not only of re-establishing such structures but also of creating a robust environment for domesticating and deepening the culture of democratic governance. For this to be achieved in Sierra Leone, our Parliament needs and deserves men and women of proven ability, competence, commitment and dedication,

Parliament can only be as efficient and effective as the men and women who serve in it. It is most important, therefore, that special regard be paid to ensuring that people of the requisite competence and dedication are returned by the electorate to the next Parliament following the 2007 elections. The SLPP, as a party, will take the lead. It will ensure that in the selection of its own parliamentary candidates, the highest possible premium is placed on capability and competence. Internal party guidelines were devised to ensure this goal is achieved.

(iii) One Country One People as a National Ethos

“One Country One People” is now more than a slogan of the SLPP. It is the *raison d’être*, indeed the very essence of the Party. Over the years it has been translated in practical terms to underpin the unity and oneness of the people of this country. The next administration will continue to promote this in its drive to consolidating peace and enhancing prosperity.

(iv) Human Rights and the Rule of Law

No Government other than the SLPP Government can claim the accolade of heightening public awareness about human and citizens’ rights under the rule of law. And at no time have people become more conscious about their rights than now. This is a great achievement by any standard. But our work in this regard is not yet complete. In the post-election years ahead, we will set in motion a new public enlightenment campaign in order to ensure that every citizen of this country is fully aware of their civic rights as they are of their correlative civic obligations and responsibilities.

Human Rights, the Rule of Law and Rights-Based Governance will be made an essential part of the school curricula across the country.

(vi) Promotion of Ethics

We know it is generally more difficult to change people's attitude than it is to change institutions. But the SLPP will never shy away from a problem because it is difficult. On the contrary we will embrace it precisely because others see it as difficult. Emphasis will be placed on promoting patriotism and national consciousness to stimulate altitudinal change.

Overarching all development programmes is the individual Sierra Leonean and his attitude to work. He will now be placed at the centerpiece. We will do so because we know that unless Sierra Leoneans are ready to change their attitude, ready to be prouder of, and more positive about whom they are, our efforts at transforming this country for the better will come to naught. In particular, the issues of promptness, timeliness, productivity, avoidance of waste, respect for others, and respect for institutional mandate are part of the national ethos to which all public and private sector actors will subscribe. Being a good citizen will now be measured by the contribution one makes to the nation's GDP.

In the same vein, public enlightenment campaigns will be introduced, making our citizens take pride in being Sierra Leonean, and making them appreciate the fact that there is no better home anywhere else than this place called Sierra Leone.

(vii) Promoting Improved Accountability

Graft and abuse of office in the public service remain serious problems. They dilute the rule of law, undermine national development, and entrench mass poverty. No civilized society, can afford to condone such nefarious practices. Accordingly, the SLPP Government set up, for the first time in the history of Sierra Leone, an Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC) and enacted the relevant laws to combat corruption in all its manifestations. But experience has shown that much more needs to be done to make the ACC more efficient and effective in preventing and combating corruption. The legislation will therefore be reviewed to enable the Commission to live up to public expectation. The internal procedures of the Commission will also be reviewed to ensure greater transparency and accountability in the discharge of its functions and duties.

Accountability has usually been viewed in terms of fiduciary responsibility. Accounting in terms of results has been less emphasized. Currently, there is no system-wide and modern approach to the operational modalities of the Civil Service. These were set up before independence and generally responded well to the needs and objectives of the colonial administration. In recent years some major changes have occurred in financial management but otherwise the principles underlying management systems have hardly changed. For example, the structure of incentives, methods of evaluation, recruitment procedures and human resource management, have all not changed fundamentally. Recently as well, there have been major changes to budgeting and financial controls.

Nevertheless, management of assets and more importantly the methods of planning, monitoring and implementing programmes have all remained the same for decades.

Against this background, the SLPP Government has set up a system for planning, monitoring and reporting on Development Results referred to as Results-Based Management (RBM). The development targets will be set at the start of each year and senior managers will be accountable for delivering on these results. The aim is also to compile on one single platform all the key activities undertaken by Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs) each year. A database is being developed that will permit reports to be produced by outcome, by year, by institution etc. In short, information showing the status of any activity, for any programme undertaken by any government institution, will be available in a single location. The information will show the development result planned and its target for the year, disaggregated by quarter. The plans will be presented in the form of outcomes/sub-outcomes; for each quarter an indicator is identified that will show progress towards reaching the outcome at the end of the year. This system will be applied throughout the government for management and accountability.

The SLPP is mindful of the necessity for improved social accountability. Therefore it will continue to improve on mechanisms that will promote downwards accountability in which public officials and non-state actors will give account of stewardship by intensification of the outreach and content of mechanisms such as Public Expenditure and Tracking Survey (PETS), District Budget Oversight (DBO) by citizens; regular audit of public finances and dissemination of findings and recommendations as well as strengthening network with civil society institutions working on issues of social accountability.

(viii) Enhancing the Capacity of the Civil Service

The Party recognizes and appreciates the invaluable role of civil servants in the machinery of state and the Party's leadership remains fully committed to further the enhancement of the productive capacity of all civil service personnel. To this end, it pledges to adopt a comprehensive public sector reform with special emphasis on Civil Service as a matter of top priority. The reform will be aimed at improving the conditions of service and working environment of all civil servants, including but not limited to the provision of reasonable remuneration, revival and expansion of the Civil Service Training School affiliated to a tertiary institution as a means of ensuring sustainability as well as facilitating expansion across the country to offer pre- and in-service training courses, facilitation of study tours and exchange visits between certain cadres of our workforce and their counterparts in Africa and overseas, and the regulation of upward mobility based on merit.

With assistance from external partners, management and functional reviews have been conducted. The reviews focused on the mandates of core Ministries, capacities, functional linkages, policy environment and realignments. A few of the

recommendations have been implemented. The next Administration will implement the key recommendations from these reviews.

(ix) Supporting an Independent Judiciary

Rights, whatever their description, are hollow until they are stoutly protected by the judicial system. That system, given the degree of independence and impartiality and effectiveness it enjoys, can itself contribute greatly to increasing or decreasing public confidence in the Government and the State. The SLPP Government will therefore continue to support the on going judicial reform for the dispensation of justice for the citizens. Moreover, given the apparent shortages of skilled personnel, efforts will be intensified in seeking multilateral as well as bilateral assistance.

(x) Diplomacy and Foreign Relations

For the SLPP, foreign policy will be guided by the following objectives; (a) promotion and protection of our national interest; (b) safeguarding our independence and protection of our territorial integrity; (c) promotion of sub-regional, regional and inter-African cooperation and unity; (d) promotion of international cooperation for consolidation of international peace and security and mutual respect among all nations and respect for their territorial integrity and independence; and (e) respect for international law and treaty obligations as well as the settlement of international disputes by peaceful means.

Since 1996, the promotion of good neighbourliness has been at the heart of the SLPP Government's policy towards our immediate neighbours. With the installation of a democratically elected government in Liberia, our relations with that country have improved considerably. The Mano River Union (MRU) has been revived and we hold high hopes for its future.

Sierra Leone will continue to play an active role in the development of Economic Community of West Africa States (ECOWAS), and the African Union (AU). It will be fully committed to its blueprints including the New Partnership for Africa Development (NEPAD). Sierra Leone will also continue to be active in the Commonwealth, Non-Aligned Movement and the United Nations.

Having reassessed the critical role of diplomacy and international cooperation within the paradigm of promotion of our national interest, the next SLPP Government will place the highest premium on economic diplomacy. Our representatives abroad must be more than arm-chair diplomats. They have to be more robust in promoting our national interest of integrating our economy into the global economy through trade and investment and maximizing the benefits from globalization. To this end, new embassies/missions will be opened where it is in the best interest of the country to do so.

A cadre of professional diplomats to man our diplomatic missions will be trained and deployed. The Results-Based Management system will be introduced in order to make diplomatic missions more accountable. Furthermore, public relations and trade capacities of our missions will be developed to enable them market competitively the potentials of the country overseas.

(xi) Information and Broadcasting

Sierra Leone is a democracy. This enjoins us to respect the principle of freedom of information. However, this freedom is meaningless if the majority of the population do not have access to radio, newspaper and other means of information. It is precisely for this reason that in Sierra Leone today, there is so much press freedom with over 40 registered newspapers and 32 radio stations nationwide, a private TV station in Freetown and state television now in Bo, Kenema and soon in Makeni. The arbitrary arrest of journalists is now a thing of the past.

In addition, and in keeping with its constitutional responsibility, the SLPP Government has created the Independent Media Commission whose responsibility it is to regulate and monitor media institutions in order to ensure that they operate in a way that promotes the public good.

The next Administration will continue with on-going efforts aimed at expanding the reach and coverage of the public media services for the benefit of the vast majority of our citizens. It will also encourage and promote private investment in the media.

(xii) Security (Army, Police, Prisons, Fire Force, Immigration and National Drug Control Agency)

Our recent history teaches us that governments can best function in a climate that is peaceful and secure. This makes security an indispensable part of good governance. The SLPP has always been alert to this and will work tirelessly to ensure national security, national stability, and national peace. Much has been done in this direction already, especially putting in place the legal, regulatory and policy frameworks for the security sectors. For example, the SLPP Government has enacted the National Central Intelligence Act 2002, which established the National Security Secretariat responsible for coordinating, building of synergies and partnerships with traditional and non-traditional security actors and with Government Ministries. We have also developed a National Protective Security Policy for the management of public assets as well as a regulatory framework for private security companies.

More particularly, the SLPP Administration's investment in the security sector has paid positive dividends by increased national security which has witnessed citizen's confidence to the extent that mass transit takes place at all hours of the day on all major highways and trunk links across the country. This is a positive development given

the immediate challenges of insecurity in most post conflict countries. However, we recognize that more remains to be done to enable these institutions work more responsively to the needs and aspirations of us all.

In this connection, the next SLPP Administration will continue with the on-going Security Sector Reform (SSR) of our security sector institutions, particularly in such areas as accountability, improved governance, strengthening parliamentary oversight bodies and civil society organizations. We intend also to continue with the process of holding regular consultations with these institutions in order to inspire public confidence, restore their good image and make them more people friendly. Special attention will be paid to the Police and Army. Already, considerable progress has been made in developing their capacities in terms of systems development, staff development and logistics. The next administration will sustain these efforts and speed up other reforms in the pipe-line

With regard to the Fire Force, the SLPP remains fully committed to the revitalization of this vital agency of government. We have already completed the setting up of Fire Force stations in all the provincial headquarters towns and acquired new fire engines. Our next target is to significantly improve the capacity of the service and expand it to the various district headquarter towns.

The current situation of over-crowded prisons and location of some in the centre of towns because of urbanization is a matter of concern for the SLPP. Plans are underway for the relocation of the Prisons in Freetown and for the reduction of the backlog of cases. These plans will be implemented during the tenure of the next administration.

The Party is keenly aware of the strategic role of the Immigration Department particularly in the area of data collection. We will therefore continue to provide the necessary technical and logistical support and encourage reforms geared towards enhancing the efficiency and effectiveness of the Department.

The SLPP administration has started work on a National Identification System. The new administration will accelerate efforts to ensure that every Sierra Leonean is provided an ID card.

With over 55 percent of our population being young people, and recalling that the rebel war had exposed a significant number of our youths to the evil of drug abuse, renewed effort will be made to prevent Sierra Leone from being used as a transit point for drug trafficking. This discredits the image of the country overseas. We shall therefore spare no effort to eradicate this evil from our country and punish offenders. As a first step, we will work to ensure that the Narcotic and Psychotropic Substance Bill will be passed into law.

II. THE ECONOMY

(i) The Macroeconomy

The improved security situation combined with the continuing implementation of sound economic policies has had a positive impact on economic activities in the country. The economy recovered strongly during 2002 to 2006, reflecting increased activities in key sectors of agriculture, mining, manufacturing, construction and services. This was achieved by the SLPP government through improved economic management. Total Gross Domestic Product (GDP) increased from US\$ 805.6 million to about US\$1.1926 billion in 2006. Average growth in GDP exceeded 6.5 percent between 2002 and 2006 and was estimated at 7.5 percent in 2006. Between 2002 and 2005, inflation has been under control averaging about 10 percent and was estimated at 6.3 percent in September 2006.

There has been an improvement in Government finances. The improvement in tax administration, following the establishment of the National Revenue Authority (NRA) resulted in higher domestic revenue collections. The improved revenue collection combined with stringent expenditure management and controls, enabled Government to increase domestic financing of the budget.

Despite challenges in the productive sector, export growth was robust, particularly diamonds, during the period. Government facilitated the resumption of rutile and bauxite mining in 2006, thereby boosting growth in export revenues. Total exports of diamonds increased from US\$ 41 million in 2002 to over US\$ 125 million in 2006.

Government has also increased foreign reserves to a comfortable level, rising from less than US\$51.9 million in 2002 (about three months of import cover) to about US\$153.9 million in 2006. This serves as a buffer against external shocks. Consequently, the exchange rate has also remained relatively stable.

During the next SLPP administration, the main macroeconomic objective will include the maintenance of sustained high real growth and stable macroeconomic environment. To this end, agriculture and mining are central to our country's development. Agricultural development will continue to be in the next five years, given its importance for food security and job creation. Our mineral endowments will continue to contribute to the increase in domestic output and facilitate job creation.

Private sector development and an improved investment climate will be vital for the achievement of high sustained output growth and prosperity for our people. The SLPP will pursue reforms to raise private investment in the coming years.

Between 2007-2012, the objectives of macroeconomic reforms will include:

- Increasing and sustaining the growth of domestic output at an average of 12 percent in the medium term, underpinned by broad-based sectoral growth to facilitate the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).
- Maintaining inflation to single digits, through continued prudent macroeconomic policies.
- The gross foreign official reserves will not be allowed to fall below three months of import cover, with increased revenues from the rutile, bauxite and diamond mining, as well as from increased agricultural exports.

The maintenance of sustained high real growth and stable macroeconomic environment will be the cornerstone of our macroeconomic programme. To this end, agriculture and mining will remain central to our development and will continue to be so in the next five years, given their importance for food security, job creation and domestic revenue. We plan to modernize agriculture, employ more innovative approaches in the exploitation of mineral endowments so as to maximize job creation, revenues and in general augment the returns to our economy.

Private sector development and an improved investment climate will be vital for the achievement of high sustained output growth and prosperity for our people. The SLPP will pursue reforms to raise both domestic and foreign private investment in the coming years.

(ii) Fiscal Policy

The SLPP government realizes that sound fiscal policy is central to meaningful economic reform efforts. The maintenance of strict fiscal discipline will continue to be a guiding principle during the next SLPP administration, keeping overall expenditures consistent with price stability and overall external balance.

The SLPP administration has undertaken several reforms aimed at improving fiscal management and some are on-going. Notable among these are the National Revenue Authority and several tax reforms. Government's fiscal policy will continue to be driven by measures to rationalize the tax system, intensify efforts to strengthen tax administration by providing training, logistics and appropriate incentives to enhance their capacity in tackling issues of tax evasion and avoidance. Simultaneously it will review the tax regime to ensure that it promotes, not discourages private sector growth

Improved expenditure management will continue to be the lynchpin of the fiscal policy of the next SLPP administration. The next government will fully comply with the existing laws such as the Government Budgeting and Accountability Act, Public Procurement Act and strengthening the operations and roll-out of Integrated Financial Management System (IFMIS) to all major institutions (MDAs) in order to enhance the Public Financial Management. The preparation of the budget will continue to be transparent and

participatory, existing systems for budget management and oversight as well as Public Expenditure Tracking System (PETS) will be strengthened.

The overall budget deficit (excluding grants) as a percentage of GDP dropped from 16.5 percent in 2002 to 8.3 percent in 2006. This has reduced the risk of inflationary financing and the consequent price instability. The next administration will sustain these gains.

Comment [hpi1]:

(iii) Monetary Policies

In the next 5 years, monetary and financial policies in the medium-term will continue to aim at controlling inflation and maintaining positive real interest rates in order to promote domestic savings and ensure efficient allocation of financial resources. Major monetary instruments will include open market operations and statutory reserve requirements.

The government will encourage the central bank to pursue modernisation of the national payments system. Appropriate legislation, aimed at ensuring efficiency of the payments system, will be enacted. These reforms will also be undertaken within the framework of the proposed harmonisation of national payments systems in the West African Monetary Zone.

(iv) Financial Sector

Currently, Sierra Leone's financial sector is dominated by the banking sector, which comprises the Bank of Sierra Leone at the apex, 7 Commercial Banks and (6) Community Banks. During the war, the commercial banks' network of branches across the country was substantially reduced as many branches were either burnt down or severely looted. Since then, with the encouragement of the SLPP administration, several commercial banks, with branches national-wide have been opened. The newly established community banks provide more concessional financial services to local communities compared to the commercial banks. These banks are empowering communities to own and manage their development process, broaden the financial system, and provide institutional anchor to the government's micro-financing programme. Additionally, they provide banking services to rural population and the Local Councils.

The on-going reforms in the financial sector will address systemic and institutional bottlenecks. These and other reforms will improve access to finance especially to small and medium-sized enterprises.

The next SLPP government will continue to encourage investment in the commercial banking sector, continue the expansion of community banks, with a view to mobilizing rural savings for investment in the rural sector. The banks will also be encouraged to invest on new products such as housing and mortgage schemes. Providing development

credit for profitable ventures will be a priority for the next administration. Financial intermediation will be strengthened further by the continued support to the Stock exchange Market and facilitating the creation of a Venture Capital Fund.

(v) External Debt Policy

The SLPP Government has successfully achieved the HIPC Completion Point, leading to the 100 percent cancellation of our external debt. Accordingly, for the period 2007-2015, the budgetary savings to Sierra Leone will amount to US\$674 or an average of US\$80 million per annum for the next five years. This milestone was attained through good governance including prudent financial management practices undertaken by the SLPP government. This debt relief would be judiciously used for promoting growth as well as the expansion of the provision of social services such as education for our future leaders, health for all, youth employment schemes, and safety net for our senior citizens.

The SLPP Government will continue to maintain a prudent external debt policy; and is committed to using the needed resources more effectively. We will account to the people of Sierra Leone for the use of associated resources. We promise that our country will no longer incur unsustainable debts with little benefit to the country. There will be regular disclosure on debt obligations to make sure our people are aware of contractual agreements that future generations will have to pay for. The next administration will also continue to contract Concessional loans with long-term repayments period, long grace period and low interest rates and service payments.

(vi) Trade and Private Sector Development

The Government recognizes the centrality of the private sector to its poverty reduction and growth efforts in post-conflict Sierra Leone. The private sector will be promoted and enhanced to be the engine for generating growth, job creation, increasing incomes and consequently reducing poverty. Hence a comprehensive programme is envisaged for creating opportunities and access for private sector development.

Sierra Leone's small size and natural resource endowments make the trade sector a strategic one for the growth of the economy. Hence the new SLPP government will place Trade high on its list of priorities. A number of studies including administrative barriers to trade and investment, a Diagnostic Trade and Investment Study (DTIS) and a WTO Trade Policy Review have been completed. Government has started the implementation of some of the recommendations of these studies. Also, consultations are on-going with development partners on the process for the development of a Competition Policy.

To reduce the cost of imports and to promote exports, the highest tariff band was removed in 2004. In January 2005, Sierra Leone became the first ECOWAS member state to adopt the Common External Tariff (CET) and when given the mandate, the SLPP Government will fully implement the CET.

The next SLPP regime will pursue the following:

- Complete the formulation of a comprehensive Private Sector Development Strategy that will address all the remaining constraints to private sector operations.
- Design schemes to encourage local businesses and credible Sierra Leoneans in Diaspora participate in the local private sector.
- Implement recommendations from studies, particularly those relating to administrative barriers to investment
- Revisit the Investment Code and make it more robust
- Revisit the privatization scheme, with the objective of moving the privatization of selected public enterprises to the next stage where identified assets will be sold;
- Continue to work on the development of a new Companies Act, a Bankruptcy Act, a Securities Act and a venture capital scheme.
- Continue the implementation of the ECOWAS Common External Tariff (CET).
- The SLPP Government will remain committed to improving regulations that affect businesses and will therefore broaden and deepen regulatory reforms in areas such as labour laws, property registration and licensing procedures.
- Aggressively market our business potentials through the organisation of business forums in Sierra Leone and participation in fora overseas.

(vii) Agriculture

Crop Production

Agriculture is the dominant sector in the economy, accounting for about 30 percent of GDP. It employs about 75 percent of the country's estimated population of five million people and 70 percent of the poor are in the agricultural sector. The crop sub-sector, with rice dominating, contributes about 75 percent of agricultural GDP but only 10 percent of export earnings. Tree crops plantations, constitute the bulk of agricultural exports- coffee, cocoa, kola nut, oil palm, and cashew and more recently ginger. Overall, the sector accounts for half of the GDP.

The strategic priorities for agriculture are currently driven by the presidential pledge on food security, and are articulated in the Agriculture Strategic Plan covering 2003-2007. The Plan proposed rapid revitalization of the sector based on investments in priority areas of high potential.

The last time this country was food self-sufficient was in 1966, during the SLPP rule. We have since become a net importer of rice, the local staple. In a bid to return Sierra Leone to its glory days, by ensuring food self-sufficiency, the SLPP government increased the tractor fleet from 20 by end of 2002 to 135 in 2006, increased access to

seed rice, and to extension services. This has led to a reduction in rice importation, and even a modest export of rice. Rice production increased from 422,065 mt to 758,800 mt in 2005 and food self-sufficiency was estimated at 85% in 2006.

To energize crop diversification, the SLPP government introduced a new variety of ginger from China, as well as new high yielding oil palm varieties from Malaysia, with the objective of producing palm oil for industrial uses and for export. This export diversification will empower farmers, increase rural incomes and subsequently reduce rural poverty.

The next SLPP Government will intensify agricultural production and monetise the rural economy by increasing access to modern agricultural inputs and agricultural credit. This will be done through farmer access to seasonal credit for inputs, advisory service for adoption of improved technology, and increased access to development credit by private sector input and output market suppliers. Complementary actions will provide support to the agricultural system by strengthening rural marketing infrastructure, private trader investment in marketing services and the availability of appropriate crop conservation and marketing technologies. The Government will continue its efforts to give prominence to the small farmer through increased provision of facilities such as the cost-recovery tractor scheme, with the major source of funding being the community banks.

Fisheries

The fisheries sector provides for the livelihoods of many thousands of poor people, and has the potential to contribute to pro-poor growth and welfare enhancement through appropriate exploitation and utilisation of fish stocks. At the moment, the existing small-scale fisheries are underdeveloped, and represents a source for wealth generation with better organization and management .

The fisheries sector was a major foreign exchange earner before the war. Since most of infrastructure was destroyed, government intends to expand industrial fisheries. A recent fisheries sector study estimates annual revenue of about US\$60 million from licenses and royalties alone, if hard-earned peace is sustained.

The private sector will be encouraged through favourable policy environment and access to business credit to invest in infrastructure, including processing plants and fishing harbours to increase local value.

In addition, during the next five years, the SLPP government will promote graduation of the sub-sector from artisanal to small-scale industrial fisheries; primarily by increasing access to formal credit.

The development of a modern industrial fish harbour is a priority for the SLPP Government. This harbour will not only ensure that value is added to most of the catch

from our exclusive economic zone, it will serve other neighbouring countries that lack such facilities, while acting as a source of employment for youths coming out of polytechnics.

The SLPP government, recognizing the importance of international standards, will promote Partnership Agreements that: respect sustainable fishing levels; account for environmental costs; protect local fishermen; increase access to credit; include compliance with flag state laws; are based on best practice fisheries management; include cooperation on research and monitoring; ensure adequate monitoring and enforcement capacity; ensure fairer sharing of economic benefits between producer and extractor nations; ensure adequate information on trade matters is available to all stakeholders for better informed decision making processes.

The Livestock Sector

Livestock have always played an important role in the Sierra Leonean household economy where 70 percent of rural families keep animals as a store of wealth. Before the civil war, the contribution of the sub-sector to the national economy was estimated to be about 2.7 percent of GDP. The effects of the war on the livestock population have probably been the most devastating as compared to any other sub-sector of the agricultural economy. What was not slaughtered was led out of the country into Guinea. The SLPP embarked on restocking of chickens and small ruminants, through the assistance of its donor partners. This process is contributing to significant improvement in rural livelihoods.

There has therefore been a steady increase in household stock numbers both in the rural and urban/peri-urban areas, since the herders are returning with their cattle from neighbouring countries.

The SLPP Government when re-elected will reinforce institutional capacity to provide support services to the livestock industry. The quality of the Veterinary Department's capability to monitor, diagnose, vaccinate, treat and report on diseases will now be given a high priority. Private-sector service providers for the Livestock sub-sector will be given the right incentives to participate in the sector.

(viii) Tourism

Tourism can be a powerful tool for economic development in least developed countries. Sierra Leone's tourism sector was almost completely destroyed by the war. However an unintended result of this provides Sierra Leone with unique opportunities to use innovative approaches for redevelopment of the tourism sector. With sustained peace, tourism presents encouraging opportunities for support services sector and providing job opportunities for the semi skilled.

The country is fortunate to have several primary attractions with international market potential. It can develop a niche in the markets of ecotourism, cultural tourism, particularly with reference to African ancestry. Sierra Leone has several primary attractions with international potential, including The Western Peninsula, Bunce Island, and to a lesser degree Tiwai Island and Outamba Kilimi. Sierra Leone's closest competitors – Ghana and Gambia – have seen a 5% annual growth of leisure visitors between 2000 and 2004. It is reasonable to predict, that with appropriate steps to develop the tourism industry – and if the country maintains its peaceful status – it could begin to see an annual growth rate of well over 5 percent in the next 5 years.

The next administration will focus on attracting: (i) African Americans interested in their roots, (ii) European sun and sand market looking for unspoiled pristine locations, and (iii) eco-tourists interested in wildlife viewing. There is also a growing interest in Sierra Leone from investor, philanthropic, and non-profit groups to promote tourism that help address poverty, environmental degradation and the sustainable development of local communities.

The next SLPP government will focus on improving on the following:

- intensive marketing to target segments;
- operational management improvements in tourist accommodation and attractions;
- public services and utility services that are reliable and affordable;
- the capacity of the National Tourism Board and Hotel Tourism and Training Institute through training and infrastructural development;
- government's capacity to protect the natural and cultural environments, upon which tourism depends.

In summary, the SLPP government intends to allocate higher priority to tourism, develop a clear vision and mission for tourism planning and development, and focus on building the private sector's capacity to develop sustainable tourism.

(xi) Mining

The mining sector continues to be the largest foreign exchange earner a major contributor to GDP and providing jobs for thousands of the population. This sector was severely affected by the war with key mining installations forced to shut-down and legal artisanal mining halted. Between 2002 and 2007, the SLPP government made considerable efforts to reactivate this sector. Total exports of diamonds increased; large-scale kimberlite diamond mining operations resumed; Sierra Rutile re-opened in 2004 and currently employs over 1000; mining of bauxite in Mokañji started with over 600 currently employed. In all, over 38,000 are now employed in the sector.

Important geological prospects have been identified and are being investigated further. In 2001, the SLPP government also initiated Diamond Area Community Development Fund. The funds are now disbursed to chiefdoms through the district councils and are used for micro community development projects identified by the chiefdoms. In 2005, a Cadastre System was established to ensure transparent and efficient allocation and administration of mineral rights. All artisan mining licences in Kono are now fully administered under the Cadastre System.

The government also introduced the Kimberly process that certified the origins of diamonds. This was aimed at eliminating conflict and blood diamond in the market.

The SLPP government also formulated a Core mineral Policy with a view to creating an internationally competitive and investor-friendly business environment in the mining sector. The Policy is also intended to enable the private sector take the lead in exploration, mine development and marketing.

Between, 2007-2012, the next SLPP administration will ensure that mineral wealth of the nation continues to make positive contributions to economic and social development throughout the country. Income from minerals through licensing fees, royalties, taxes etc will be enhanced through an auction system. All mining, trading and exporting companies in the minerals sector will be monitored to ensure they operate within the laws and that comply with international trading protocols.

The next SLPP government is committed to a free market approach and the development of the mining sector will be in accordance with international best practice. The government has adopted the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative, EITI. As part of its commitment to ensure that the sector is managed in a transparent, open and accountable manner.

. The next government will review all the laws and regulations governing the mining and marketing of minerals in Sierra Leone to ensure that these laws are in line with international law, best practices, and are comparable with others in the sub-region. The review and any subsequent amendments will ensure that the legal and fiscal framework is consistent, clear and unambiguous. In particular, the 3% export taxes on diamonds will be reviewed. Also, the next administration will introduce auctioning schemes in licensing in order to maximise revenues.

The SLPP government will stimulate and guide potential and domestic investors in the mineral sector by making available at a reasonable cost, geological data and other information required by prospecting, exploration and mining companies at a specified government institution. Government will create a publicly accessible system for publishing export dealing and mining licence applications which will be updated on a regular basis.

The next government will actively encourage and assist national and internationally companies that will enhance value added for the metals and minerals mined in the country. Government will encourage the establishment of jewellery manufacturers and retailers, diamond cutting and polishing facilities and other businesses that will add value to exports and increase earnings.

The next government will continue to support the Kimberly Process. The trading and exporting of rough and polished diamonds from Sierra Leone will be carried out in accordance with the rules and principles of the Kimberly process and the laws of Sierra Leone. The government will ensure compliance with the process by improving the monitoring, licensing, mining, dealing and exportation procedures in the diamond sub-sector.

The next SLPP government will enforce the existing laws designed to provide protection for the workforce and the environment, while developing health and safety legislation, underground mining regulations and reviewing existing environmental legislation in particular the law regarding the rehabilitation of 'abandoned' mine-out areas. The government will also develop appropriate legislation to prevent the use of child labour.

The next SLPP government will continue its commitments to the development and increased efficiency of the artisanal mining sector. To this end the development of credit schemes and formation of co-operatives designed to disseminate information on more efficient and safe mining practices and better organization of artisanal miners will be encouraged.

The SLPP government will also strengthen the institutions that administer, regulate and monitor the mineral industry in Sierra Leone and will encourage the provision of opportunities for improving the qualifications and experience of people involved in the minerals industry.

Furthermore, to ensure that the Sierra Leone's mineral wealth supports socio-economic development and benefits the population, the areas devastated will receive additional assistance for rehabilitation. The government will continue the Diamond Area Community Development Fund. This fund will provide a percentage of proceeds from licences to diamond mining chiefdoms for development activities. The government will also be prepared to enter into joint venture agreements to provide infrastructure to mining communities in partnership with the investors. Government will also assist initiatives that will provide improved levels of remuneration for Sierra Leonean workers in the minerals industry.

III. INFRASTRUCTURE

An adequate and reliable physical infrastructure is essential for social and economic development. For Sierra Leone, three decades of neglect, exacerbated by a devastating ten year war, have left the economy deprived of the most basic of infrastructure services. Unless issues of coverage, reliability and cost of services are urgently and seriously addressed, infrastructure will continue to pose severe barriers to sustainable economic growth.

The absence of a culture of maintenance of our infrastructure during the almost three decades of APC rule has left our infrastructure in a dilapidated condition. This is true for roads, sea ports and airport infrastructures, as well as power generating and water supply equipment. The next government is committed to changing this culture. The SLPP Government, apart from ensuring that existing infrastructure are well maintained will also endeavour to further improve on access to infrastructural services for the citizenry in its drive for greater prosperity.

Consistent with the worldwide shift from public ownership and operation of infrastructure services to greater competition and private involvement, the SLPP Government has taken steps to encourage greater private sector involvement in infrastructure development.

The policies and strategies outlined will be applied to Local Government structures that will take on increasing responsibility for infrastructural services over time. The SLPP Government will continue assisting Local Government structures in this respect.

(i) Energy

Adequate energy supply is absolutely necessary if Sierra Leone is to achieve the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), as well as the objectives of the pro-poor growth strategy (2008-2012). The SLPP Government will put the comprehensive development of Sierra Leone's energy resources at the core of the country's sustainable development agenda. The Energy sector is at present within the purview of various MDAs: Energy and Power for Electricity, Agriculture for fuel wood and charcoal, Trade and Industry for Petroleum products and the Petroleum Resources Unit for Petroleum exploration. The Government has made efforts over the years to coordinate the work of these MDAs in addressing Sierra Leone's energy needs and will intensify institutional changes to achieve these goals.

Modern forms of energy, including renewable energy forms like solar energy schemes and hydro electricity would need to be encouraged to reduce our dependence of fuel wood as a predominantly major source of energy, as well as reduce dependence on imported petroleum products.

In the area of electricity production, the overall strategy is to improve coverage of electricity supplies throughout the country. The following are some of the projects underway:

- a. A 22.6 MW (thermal) Arab Bank for Economic Development in Africa (BADEA) project, scheduled for completion by the second quarter of 2008.
- b. A 10 MW (thermal) Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) project, to be completed in the last quarter of 2008.
- c. A 50 MW (Phase I) (hydro) Bumbuna project that should be completed in 2007
- d. The 4 MW to 12 MW Goma hydro facility upgrade/expansion at Dodo by China National Electric Equipment Corporation (CNEEC)
- e. A feasibility study for the 85 MW Bekongor project on the Sewa river in Kono

A team from Morocco is at present doing refurbishment work to improve the capacity of the Kingtom power station.

The completion of Bumbuna later next year (2008) will greatly enhance the current electricity situation. Government is pursuing a policy of reforming NPA by instituting a contract management team and corporatising the institution. NPA will no longer have a monopoly on the supply of power; a sector regulating body will be put in place and private Independent Power Providers (IPPs) will be encouraged.

The Government fully intends to expand access to improved energy services and improve energy supply reliability in order to reduce poverty and lead to sustainable development; special emphasis will be laid on rural energy supply. It will do this by reforming the electricity sector to encourage greater private sector participation, encouraging the use of modern and renewable forms of energy, whilst reducing the importation of petroleum products. The exploration and exploitation of petroleum locally will be encouraged.

The next SLPP administration will adopt the following strategies:

- Vigorously follow up on the reform of the power sector, include the restructuring of NPA
- Exploit the country's renewable energy resource base (biomass, solar and wind)
- Rehabilitate/Restore district headquarters power stations and their associated transmission and distribution networks
- Enhance petroleum exploration activities
- Promote energy efficiency measures
- Institute a Rural Electricity Board and a Rural Electricity Fund to promote electrification of rural areas
- Put in place an electricity sector regulator
- Promote the use of renewable and modern forms of energy like Liquefied petroleum Gas (LPG): encourage the start of mini hydro schemes, solar energy schemes and LPG and provide special financial incentives

(ii) Transport (Roads, Air, Rail and Sea)

Transportation services were severely disrupted by the war. Nevertheless, the Government has made considerable strides to redress the situation and in many instances has improved upon the situation that existed before the conflict.

The Government will consolidate and build upon the gains already made in the transportation area which include:

- Institutional reform of the sector- Sections of the Ports Authority are slated for privatisation and improved management has resulted in the paying of dividends to Government for the first time in a long time. The Road Transport Corporation will also be privatized. The parastatal agencies responsible for overseeing subsectors would be restructured and reformed, with an emphasis on management improvements, privatization of certain functions and sustainable financing through user-fee based services.
- Physical Improvements have been made to the Port of Freetown, and Organizational Improvements to the Sierra Leone Ports Authority (SLPA).
- Physical and Organizational Improvements were also made to the Lungi Airport and Sierra Leone Airports Authority (SLAA). Further improvements are planned.
- Some jetties have been refurbished all over the country to improve river transportation.
- Completion of the Lumley-Kent road, Masiaka-Bo road, Rogbere-Pamlap road.
- Commence work on Kenema Koidu road, Bo-Mattru road, Matotoka-Koidu road, Bandajuma-Waterside road, Kenema-Waterside road
- Several roads projects have been undertaken and several others will soon be underway. Road repairs will be intensified.
- The Government has undertaken a study on Road Fund Management that recommends strategies to ensure the independence and sustainability of the Road Fund to contribute more fully to road maintenance. These recommendations will be vigorously pursued. SLRA's role will be restricted to administration and oversight.

In the next five years, the development of the transport sector will be guided by the following objectives and strategies:

Objectives

The goal of the Transport Sector is to contribute to Sierra Leone's poverty reduction and economic development programme by providing the most efficient, affordable and sustainable transport system possible. The Government's priority is to improve land, coastal and river transport in order to increase access of the rural farming population and urban poor to market centres as well as social and economic services. The Government also realizes the importance of air and maritime transport for business,

trade and other economic activities. These objectives can be achieved through the pursuit of the following:

- Ensuring physical access for the population to services, markets and revenue-generating opportunities;
- Lowering transport costs; and
- Increasing efficiency in the delivery of transport services.

Strategies

Some of the key strategies the SLPP Government will adopt are as follows:

- Place a key focus on promoting community rehabilitation and maintenance of feeder roads and bridges and the rehabilitation of major trunk roads and jetties.
- Promote the use of non-motorized transport (such as pushcarts and bicycles) in rural communities.
- Establish transport management systems that ensure reliable, affordable and continuously improving transport services.
- Properly plan transport services to directly serve the country's poverty reduction strategy programme.
- The continued strengthening of the public sector in its revised role as planner, supervisor and regulator of the transport system.
- The continued strengthening of the private sector to carry out an increasing share of engineering, construction and transport services.
- The continued emphasis on network planning, programming and sustainable maintenance.

The new SLPP Government will enhance current strategies by pursuing an approach aimed at integrating the various modes of transport, river, rail, roads and air in order to obtain optimal results for economic growth and reducing poverty. The elements of such an approach are:

- The planning of transport services to directly serve the country's poverty reduction strategy programme;
- The continued strengthening of the public sector in its revised role as planner, supervisor and regulator of the transport system;
- The encouragement of the private sector to carry out an increasing share of engineering, construction and transport services;
- The continued emphasis on network planning, programming and sustainable maintenance;
- The targeting of donor resources for road rehabilitation
- The continued emphasis on sustainable and transparent maintenance and management systems.
- The institutions responsible for the various modes of transport will be further strengthened.

In the road transport area, it will be ensured that physical access to markets and basic social services is facilitated through an improved, sustained and maintained road network. The construction of these roads will greatly enhance road transportation when completed. The facilitation of international and domestic trade through safe, affordable and reliable maritime transport services will be the major objective for maritime transportation. The Government will also ensure that the international and domestic movement of people and goods is facilitated through an effective and safe air transport system. River transportation will be given special consideration. The SLPP fully realizes that reaching markets in coastal areas will improve on the economy of these areas and greatly contribute to the national economy; the Government will continue with its present thrust of constructing/rehabilitating jetties and regulating coastal transportation. It will improve the policy environment to attract the private sector in this sector

(iii) Land and Country Planning

Access to land is an important consideration for the citizenry of any country. Although Sierra Leone's land mass is fairly large for its population, rapid urbanisation has placed severe constraints on land in urban areas. Wasteful land use practices have also placed constraints on the use of land for alternative purposes. With most of the rural population engaged in subsistence agriculture using traditional methods of allowing the land to fallow, the increasing population imposes constraints to farming in some areas. There is need for more careful planning of land, especially in urban areas, where houses and other infrastructural facilities need to be incorporated into limited spaces. Housing needs are acute and have been exacerbated by damages occasioned by the war. Administratively, the Ministry of Lands and Country Planning is responsible for lands and country planning issues and housing is now within the purview of the Ministry of Works, Housing and Technical Maintenance.

Sierra Leone has a dual land tenure system, with a freehold system in the Western Area and a tenurial system based on various types of community ownership in the provinces. In the area of housing, there is a dire need for affordable housing. The government has formulated a Lands Policy and a Lands Act. These address several issues including the creation of national and regional Lands Commissions. The Lands Commissions will inter-alia be responsible for the management and allocation of state lands and for land use planning on a wider scale. The government is committed to addressing impediments to the use of land for various purposes and will address various issues including land tenure and alternative land uses.

The capacity problems in these Ministries are being addressed as are legal problems with land ownership. The government is committed to setting up a Lands court to help speed up land cases. Land will also in future be codified-a Cadastral system is being set up to properly help codify land. The Government realises the need for people to own their own homes and will work on bringing a social housing scheme to fruition. The government also will encourage the private sector to be involved in financing of housing schemes.

An appropriate policy framework to address urban slums/shanty communities with an appropriate financing strategy will be developed.

Objectives

The government will manage the administration and planning of land to ensure that there is improved access to land for its citizenry all over the country, and for its exploitation for sustainable development.

Strategies

- ◆ A Plan of Action of accessing/allocating land for private and commercial purposes will be developed in consultation with land holding families, local and traditional authorities.
- ◆ Enhancement of balanced land administration, use, planning, management and development control;
- ◆ Promoting effective and efficient practices that will integrate economic growth, sustainable social development and environmental management;
- ◆ Fair distribution of state lands;
- ◆ Developing effective institutional capacity;
- ◆ Establishing and developing Land Information System and Network among related land agencies in the country and linking them up with sub-regional and regional networks;
- ◆ Making the Lands Commissions more effective in the execution of their functions;
- ◆ Realising the importance of the Land tenure system, for private investment the Government will continue holding discussions with various stakeholders to further remove impediments created by various tenurial systems.

(iv) Housing

The main objectives of the SLPP government, during its next five years of office are to ensure the planned growth and development of the towns and villages of Sierra Leone and at the same time promote access by all citizens including the underprivileged to safe sanitary and descent housing. In the short to medium term we will facilitate the production of affordable building materials and provide an enabling environment for construction of low cost housing.

The priority strategies and programmes include:

- ◆ Building the capacity of communities for effective housing delivery through skills training in building materials production and housing construction
- ◆ Facilitating access by the poor to affordable finance through micro finance institutions aimed at sustainable self-help housing construction

- ◆ Improving access to and ownership of land for housing by the poor, especially women and the vulnerable.
- ◆ Dealing with the environmental and social challenges of squatter settlements in collaboration with local councils.
- ◆ Providing technical and other support services to communities and NGOs assisting them in the rehabilitation/reconstruction of homes destroyed in the ten-year civil conflict and
- ◆ Facilitating the development of housing estates for all income levels nationwide, thereby providing employment opportunities for the youth
- ◆ Promoting private investment in real estate development through schemes like Home Financing institutions and introducing mortgage facilities.
- ◆ Encouraging the use of local building materials and technology
- ◆ Revisit taxes on the prices of imported building materials

(vii) Information and Communications Technology (ICT)

African policy-makers are increasingly recognizing that the transition to sustainable development and the inclusion of Africa into the global economy cannot be achieved without the adoption of new technological regimes. The SLPP Government subscribes to this view. As the parameters of international trade are gradually shifting in favour of science and technology-based competitiveness, the abundance of natural resources and low-cost labour do not necessarily constitute in itself decisive comparative advantages for the continent. Nevertheless in the reality of today's global supply chains, ICT is crucial for the efficient and effective long term exploitation of a country's natural resources..

An efficient ICT network improves human life and accelerates economic development. ICT mainly concerns voice, data and video communication and the equipment used to achieve them. This includes telephones and computing, equipment, satellite equipment, right down to a regular television and radio.

Objectives

The SLPP Government will ensure that Sierra Leone has a modern and efficient ICT network that will contribute towards improving human life and accelerating development. The SLPP will continue pressing ahead with liberalising the sector, providing good regulation and providing the enabling business environment to further develop the sector. A major thrust of the government's objective will be greater access by the population to all aspects of ICT. Particular attention will be paid to access by the rural poor.

Strategies

1. Computer training in schools and colleges will be included in school curricula and support provided to intensify learning.
2. Through the Telecommunications regulator, Government will harmonise planning and coordination of internal and external telecoms services.
3. The setting up of community radio stations will continue to be encouraged
4. Partnership between the public and private sectors involved in ICT will be promoted.
5. The teaching of science will be encouraged in schools and colleges. This will lead to a growing pool of technical and scientific labour.
6. Much liberal policies to spread the effects of ICT to the rural poor will be encouraged.

(viii) Environment

The pre-conflict economy devoted little attention to environmental issues. This neglect has had negative consequences in different spheres of the country's development, ranging from mined-out areas, to indiscriminate land use, unplanned or non-existent sanitation facilities, etc

Among the key challenges in promoting pro-poor growth is managing the relationship between rapid growth, human health, quality of life and the environment. The SLPP Government realises this and will work assiduously towards improving environmental management. Waste disposal, firewood use, climate change, soil nutrient depletion, land degradation, deforestation are all issues that affect our day-to-day lives. In embarking on the path towards rapid growth, particular attention will be turned towards environmental degradation. The SLPP Government has already set up a National Commission for the Environment and Forestry (NACEF) to facilitate coordination, cooperation and collaboration amongst government Ministries, local authorities and government agencies in all areas relating to environmental protection. Mining and Industrial establishments need to exercise social corporate responsibility for activities that impact on the environment. Similarly, apart from damages caused by Industrial establishments, environmental degradation due to traditional practices associated with day to day living, all require a concerted, coordinated approach on the part of government. This is the remit for NACEF.

The protection of our tropical forest reserves will be aggressively pursued, and measures will be taken to reforest denuded areas particularly in the peninsular area.

Sector Objective

The SLPP Government will ensure that whilst striving for economic development in various spheres of national life, appropriate environmental management practices will be adopted in order to minimise damage to the environment.

Strategies

1. NACEF will manage and coordinate national and sectoral environmental policies. This will include intensification of monitoring, setting of standards, education and training, and the provision of environmental data and information.
2. All major mining companies and industrial establishments will be obliged to carry out Environmental Impact Assessments and take mitigatory measures for damage caused by their operations. The next SLPP regime will ensure greater enforcement of existing laws and regulations.
3. The SLPP Government will encourage Local Councils to play a greater role in environmental matters, including garbage collection., providing various supports when needed.
4. The SLPP Government will subscribe to, and respect the provisions of various Conventions on the Environment and Climate change.
5. The teaching of Environmental issue will be introduced in the curricula of schools and colleges.
6. The public will be made much more aware of environmental issues through various awareness raising programmes.
7. The new Lands Commission will ensure that environmental matters are given priority in decision making on allocation of lands for various purposes. The issue of alternative land use, taking environmental damage into consideration will be included in such decision making processes.
8. Energy use and conservation will be given priority. More emphasis will be laid on the use of modern forms of energy to encourage a shift from the use of wood fuel as a major source of energy.

(ix) Forestry

The contribution of forestry to the agricultural sector's GDP has varied between 9 and 13 percent since the mid-80s. However, 90 percent of the domestic energy needs for heating and cooking are provided by fuel wood.

Present yields are low for lack of maintenance and renewal. Fuel wood and charcoal production is the most important forestry activity and provides a supplementary source of income for most farmers. Logging is of little economic significance at the moment, and has a negative impact on the remaining forest reserves.

Government recognizes the importance of forestry and has established a Forestry Commission, which is mandated with the responsibility of monitoring protected areas, including the Tiwai Island Wildlife Sanctuary, Outamba Kilimi National Park, Western Area Peninsula Forest, and the Gola Forest.

In order to address the alarming rate of deforestation and improper land use, the SLPP Government will introduce a Land Value Tax to encourage more efficient use of land and accelerate urban renewal. The Government will increase the non-taxable threshold.

IV. HUMAN DEVELOPMENT

Human development is about improving the quality of life of people. This means increasing their choices so that they have a full productive and creative life. The SLPP believes in and is committed to the notion that human development is a fundamental human right and important for attaining all the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

Investment in education, health, housing, safe water and sanitation, contributes to economic growth and improvement in the standard of living of people.

(a) Education

(i) Expanding Quality Basic Education and Training

The overall objectives of the education sector are to (a) promote basic education for all Sierra Leoneans; and (b) support manpower development in key sectors that has the greatest impact on economic growth, poverty reduction and prosperity.

The **New Education Policy 2007** provides the strategic framework for the next SLPP administration. The focus will be on the (a) improving the learning environment ; (b) promoting and expanding access to basic education with continued focus on the girl child; (c) improving teacher education; (d) promoting technical and vocational skills training in specialised disciplines, to meet the middle level human resource needs; (f) improving, planning, management and monitoring of the education sector.

Government will continue to promote and expand access to basic education (i.e. 6 years of primary and 3 years of junior secondary schooling) with a focus on the girl child. The demand for education at the primary level has continued to rise over the last few years and the SLPP firmly committed to meeting the goal of Education for All by the year 2015. The **Education for All National Action Plan (2002 – 2015)** and the newly developed Education Sector Plan will ensure this. We will give priority to isolated rural communities that need new primary schools and junior secondary schools. New facilities will be constructed to meet these important needs in all chiefdoms of the country.

It is important to ensure high quality in primary education if high-quality secondary and tertiary education is to be delivered. Two important challenges for the education sector currently are the serious congestion in schools in the urban areas, and the shortage of trained and qualified teachers, especially in the rural areas. We will address the problem of space by intensive use of existing school facilities and the construction of more classrooms. Training of more teachers at the tertiary level, and in-service training for those already serving, are strategies that will be used to address the problems of the high pupil to teacher ratio. The current distance education programme will be expanded and supported to meet the growing demand. A remote area allowance will be re-introduced to attract and retain trained teachers in the rural areas. Further incentives

will include expansion in teacher housing and facilitating transportation for teachers, especially in the rural areas.

For so long now, there has been problems with recruitment of teachers. Teachers recruited in September receive their first salary earliest January the following year. Mobility of teachers to other sector is common. Often, replacement has also been problematic. Overall, the entire institutional arrangements have been faulty. With the devolution of primary school management including the responsibility to recruit teachers, this situation is anticipated to improve during the next SLPP regime. The next administration will also establish **Teachers Service Commission** with responsibilities to establish guidelines for recruitment of teachers, transfers, promotions, disciplinary actions and remuneration levels.

Additionally, the new SLPP government will continue the practice of supplying quality teaching and learning materials to all schools at the basic level. The textbook distribution system will be strengthened and supplemented by the establishment of resource centres, libraries including mobile libraries in every district. Access to these facilities at chiefdom level will be coordinated by the district councils.

The national school feeding programme reintroduced by the SLPP Government will be expanded not only as an incentive to access school but also to improve the nutritional development of our school children. The introduction of nutritional education in schools, the establishment chiefdom-level home economics centres and individual school gardening will all support Sierra Leone's food security strategy in the medium to long term.

The SLPP plans to reduce national adult illiteracy rate from the current high 61 percent to 30 percent over the next 5 years, particularly among females and in the rural areas. Part of our strategy for doing this will be to train current adult education facilitators to the level of college-certified full time tutors. They will then significantly complement electronic mass media efforts to promote national adult literacy. These tutors will be provided incentives to enable them serve effectively.

Our present practice of buying books, buying uniforms, and paying fees for the girl child who passes the NPSE in the North and East will be extended to the South and West starting in September 2007. Similar support will be provided for boys on a nationwide scale starting September 2010. In effect, nine years of free basic education for all of our school going children is our target. Stringent monitoring measures to minimise illegal charges that threaten this objective will be enforced.

The new SLPP government will also continue free primary education, making it compulsory from academic year 2007/2008, and payment of examination fees for all pupils at NPSE, BECE and WASCE levels

(ii) Post-Basic Training

Another area of focus for government is support to technical and vocational skills training in specialised disciplines. Our country needs a lot more of this type of training to meet the current and future challenges of building a modern state. Investment in skills training will give a chance to Sierra Leonean youths to become more productive and access job opportunities and income. Through rational allocation of funds and collaboration with the private sector, technical and vocational education will be aligned to the needs of the economy, particularly private sector employers.

(iii) Tertiary Education

During the last five years, the SLPP government has undertaken major reforms in the tertiary education sub-sector. There are now two Universities; University of Sierra Leone comprising Fourah Bay College, College of Medicine and Allied Health Sciences (now including National School of Nursing) and Institute of Public administration and Management and Njala University comprising Njala University College, Community Health Services (formerly School of Hygiene and Paramedical school) with campuses in Bo and Njala. New courses have been introduced at both undergraduate and post graduate levels.

The next administration will build on these gains and improve on facilities and quality of teaching in these institutions. A university teaching hospital will be constructed to improve on the undergraduate and provide post graduate training in medicines and allied health sciences. The new regime will also continue to improve the remuneration and working conditions of the staff in these institutions. The SLPP government will introduce innovative schemes that will attract qualified Sierra Leoneans in the Diaspora to provide needed services to the tertiary institutions.

The linkage between the tertiary institutions and the public and private sector has been weak. The next administration will strengthen the linkages between the tertiary institutions and public/private sector through on-job-training, tailor-made curricula and research in order to make education more meaningful to our society.

Increased investment in primary and secondary education will undoubtedly increase demand for post school education. The next administration will ensure that all school leavers wanting high education have access in their districts. To this end, every district will have at least a community tertiary institution offering courses relevant to the district.

The SLPP government has continuously provided grants-in-aid to Sierra Leoneans in tertiary institutions. Due to the increasing number of people pursuing higher education, it has been difficult for a good number to go through higher level education without financial assistance. To ensure increased access to tertiary education, the new SLPP administration will introduce loan scheme side by side with scholarships and grant-in-aid. This will provide financial assistance to those that may not be qualified for any of these.

Provincial schools, particularly those in non-provincial capital towns lack qualified teachers in most subject areas such as mathematics and sciences. This has negatively impacted on the quality of learning. Also, qualified professionals have refused postings in rural areas. The next SLPP government will introduce a ***National Youth Service Scheme***. The scheme will oblige tertiary leavers to serve as teachers and other needed personnel in various institutions of provincial districts for a minimum period of two years. Such teachers and personnel will be provided incentive such as remote and transportation allowances during their service. This Scheme will not only correct the imbalance in the distribution of the limited manpower but can promote nation integration as people can be posted to districts other than their home districts.

(iii) Other Education Issues

Special needs education for physically challenged and vulnerable children will also be given priority in the next five years. Parents will be given every support to help with the education of their children or wards. As far as is possible, such children will be encouraged to enrol in normal primary and secondary schools. However, those with special needs will be catered for in separate facilities.

The issue of HIV/AIDS in schools and other academic institutions is one that needs great attention if the benefits of investment in education are to be realised. We will introduce a youth-friendly life skills education in our schools with specially trained subject teachers.

(b) Expanding Health and Nutrition Services

The provision of basic healthcare is considered a major priority for the SLPP Government. We will continue to demonstrate commitment to the improvement of the health status of the population, especially the rural and urban poor, in the next five years. The overall goal is to improve accessibility and affordability of health services to the population. Two important strategies to guide implementation in the next administration will be to further improve on the quality of the service provided and reviewing and restructuring the delivery mechanism.

To support the health sector priority will be given to the following:

- ◆ Preventive care and treatment of communicable diseases. The focus will be on diseases that reduce (a) maternal, infant and under-five mortality and (b) morbidity and mortality due to malaria and other communicable diseases. C) The incidence of HIV/AIDS and other sexually transmitted diseases.
- ◆ Improving the nutritional status of infants and children, and pregnant and lactating women, as part of the food security strategy. We will intensify support to these groups through supplementary feeding and maternal and child health programmes. Other equally important programmes will involve the promotion of positive

behavioural change among women with respect to nutrition and reducing the prevalence of anaemia among children and women

- ◆ Strengthening primary and secondary level care, which will be consistent with the overarching objective of decentralising the provision of basic services to the population. Devolution of health care management systems will encourage community participation and effectively support implementation of the Bamako Initiative. The roles and responsibilities of all stakeholder organisations will be clarified following the devolution of functions to the newly elected District and Town Councils. We will accelerate the establishment of Nurses Training Schools in tertiary institutions in all the regions to address the huge shortage of trained personnel who administer basic health care at the primary and secondary levels. In addition, incentives such as housing, remote and transportation allowances will be provided to healthcare workers.
- ◆ Strengthen some priority areas of tertiary care so as to ensure appropriate referral patterns and a continuum of care. The emphasis will be on tertiary sub-sectors that provide critical support to the secondary and primary levels, especially the provision of appropriate opportunities for training of health care and service delivery personnel.
- ◆ Promoting Public-Private Partnerships. The next administration will revisit service delivery mechanisms with a view to assessing strengths and weaknesses of various delivery agents. Hard choices will be made to reassign responsibilities with the objective of delivery health services in an efficient manner.
- ◆ Revisit the current arrangements in Health Care Financing. The cost recovery system based on the Bamako Initiative collapse since the war period. The next administration will revisit the current arrangement and put in place a sustainable and affordable health care delivery system.
- ◆ Construct and develop at least one hospital of excellence to provide health care for critical ailments. Patients suffering from critical ailments such as cardio-vascular diseases are flown out as there are no specialised hospitals/facilities to treat them locally. The poor cannot afford the cost of overseas treatment. A few are financed by the government. It is therefore necessarily that specialised hospitals/facilities be available to treat people with critical ailments.
- ◆ Immediately revisit the policies for recruitment, remuneration, transfers and retention of medical doctors and others categories of health care workers
- ◆ Provide free or subsidised health care to vulnerable groups like the children, fewer than fives, school-going children, pregnant and breast feeding mothers, the handicapped (amputees, polio victims, the blind, deaf and dumb, etc.), aged or elderly, widows and orphans, etc.

© **Increasing Access to Water and Sanitation**

Our overall objective is to increase access to safe drinking water and improved sanitation for all in both urban and rural areas. The strategy in the five years is to continue to expand and strengthen the decentralised network of facilities for the delivery of safe drinking water and the improvement of general sanitation in both urban and rural areas. Over the period, we will, promote sustainable management of water and sanitation facilities and sensitise communities and users to pay for services.

The objective of the Government is to manage and develop the water resources of Sierra Leone in an integrated and sustainable manner, so as to secure and provide water of adequate quantity and quality for all social and economic needs, with the full participation of all stakeholders. This policy has been adopted to:

- Promote the rational use of water.
- Promote the provision of safe water supply for domestic use.
- Promote the orderly development and use of water resources for purposes other than domestic, such as agriculture, industry, mining, hydroelectric energy, navigation, fishing, conservation and recreation.
- Control pollution and promote the safe storage, treatment and disposal of waste that pollutes water and harms health.
- Promote and preserve the health of the community through improved sanitation.

The SLPP Government will ensure that Water Institutions are well structured and run efficiently to achieve these objectives. Support will be provided for water resources institutions like the Land and Water Resources Division of the Ministry of Agriculture and Guma Valley Water Company and SALWACO and the Water Supply Division (WSD) of the Ministry of Energy and Power. The Government will follow through on recommendations made in the Water Policy and other recommendations for improvements in various assessment reports. The restructuring and improvement programme for Guma will be supported to get the Institution to a state where it will be able to meet the water needs of the increasing Freetown population. Measures adopted include refurbishment of equipment, awareness raising programmes, conservation measures, creation of additional water impoundment areas and measures generally leading to improved financial viability. The Government will also continue supporting the restructuring of SALWACO and WSD to be more fully geared to provision of provincial water supply. It will endeavour to resuscitate damaged Provincial water treatment operations and will encourage and support various water supply schemes in Provincial areas including water wells. The assistance of various donors and Non Governmental organisations will be sought in this respect. Already negotiations are advance for the construction of the Orogu dam in the east of Freetown to complement current water sources. The Government will also fully support the gradual decentralisation of water supply to Local Councils.

(d) Social Security

Before the SLPP government, the payment of retirement benefits including pensions was problematic. It was a daily occurrence for long queues of pensioners outside the national treasury. The SLPP Government recognises that the provision of social security is a right for all workers and therefore established the National Social Security and Insurance Trust (NASSIT) to provide financial security to all employees in Sierra Leone in the form of old age benefits, invalidity benefits and survivors benefits based on social insurance principles. The work of NASSIT over a short period of time has been

impressive. The next government will continue supporting NASSIT and will be encouraged to lay out additional benefits consistent with its financial viability.

The SLPP government has also initiated a social safety net to provide humanitarian assistance to the elderly. The next administration will continue lending financial support to the Social Safety Net programme to protect vulnerable groups in society, especially the old.

(e) Improving the Quality of Life of the Vulnerable

The past war and its overall humanitarian and household-level impact have led to both a marked increase in the number of vulnerable individuals in the country and a significant reduction in the capacity of traditional family and community structures of coping.

Initiatives of the current SLPP government in the past to address some of the problems include special homes, orphanages, and the setting up of NaCWAC for children. Various agencies have set up special youth projects for the disabled, the handicapped, jobs for amputees, skills training projects, and provision of food.

Our overall objective is to ensure that vulnerable groups have a voice in the community through empowerment and inclusion into mainstream society. The strategies in the Kabbah administration included: (a) focus on their integration into society and the economy through access to productive, social and economic resources, (b) provision of selected short to medium term social protection, and (c) a multi-sectoral disability policy framework, with emphasis on providing access to sector programme interventions. One immediate measure to be undertaken is the formulation and implementation of a national social protection policy for vulnerable citizens on the lines indicated in the strategies listed above.

The next administration will continue to address the needs of the vulnerable. The SLPP believes that the physically challenged (including the amputees) have the right to live a decent and dignified life and can contribute meaningfully to national development. The next administration will therefore set up a separate **Commission** to address the needs and concerns of the physically challenged. This Commission will address policies relating to disabilities and ensure the mainstreaming of disability issues in macro and sectoral policies. The Commission will also coordinate and monitor various interventions affecting this category of the population.

(f) Promoting a Child First Policy

The SLPP Government recognises that childhood is a one-time opportunity for physical, mental, emotional and social development. The war devastated the lives of a high proportion of children. They were perpetrators and victims of violence. They suffered from separation and displacement. We also know that they are the first casualties of

extreme poverty and deprivation. Investing in children is therefore a priority and not a choice.

In the last five years, our Government and partners have been providing support for the welfare of children, especially the war-affected. Our objective during our next term of Government is to ensure a Child-First approach for the survival, protection and development of children, including disabled and vulnerable children. The next administration will ensure the implementation of the Child Rights Bill. We will focus on developing a national framework to address the issue of children including;

- ◆ Improving the services delivered to children in the social sectors, especially in education, health and nutrition
- ◆ Taking protection measures that support the orderly development of children within the family and community
- ◆ Providing protection for the child within the criminal justice system and
- ◆ Addressing Child labour issues

The next administration will also reintroduce a ***National Commission for Children*** with robust mandate. This Council will address policies relating to children, ensure the mainstreaming of child rights in policies and coordinate and monitor various interventions affecting this category of the population.

(g) Promoting Youth Employment and Development

Sierra Leone has a high proportion of youths (15 – 35 years) and their percentage is growing. Across the country young people are striving to make important contributions as innovators, entrepreneurs, productive workers, good citizens and members of civil society. They are at the forefront of the on-going democratization and peace building processes. Some are artistes and athletes. They are the greatest assets for the present and the future, assets that Sierra Leone cannot afford to squander because today's young people are the next generation of workers, entrepreneurs and leaders.

Young people have undergone a violent and radical transformation in the last 30 years. In the pre-war years, the state failed to prepare them for productive citizenship. The state then made deliberate efforts for the young to be violent and destructive. The very low investment in education and youth development resulted in weak opportunities for employment. Consequently, the share of underutilized and untapped youth among the total youth population increased alarmingly, acting as fuel for the ten year carnage.

The SLPP Government views the Sierra Leone youth problem as a human development and security challenge that must be given appropriate attention to help the country consolidate peace and build a prosperous nation. Our Government has created the right policies, institutions and programmes for youth development. Policy initiatives and programmes undertaken so far include: the creation of the Ministry of Youths and Sports, development of a National Youth Policy and a national drug control strategy. We also have a national HIV/AIDS policy and have provided expanded training and

educational opportunities. The establishment of youth councils as an arm of local government ensures the participation of young people in policy processes at local and national levels. The recent Youth Employment Scheme has already started providing jobs for youths.

All of these efforts are designed to a) increase opportunities for youth; b) develop their capacity to access these opportunities so that they could reach their potentials and c) create second chances for those that did not have such opportunities when young.

Specific strategies for youth development to be pursued include:

- ◆ Increase in state resource allocation to youth activities to enable wider response to the youth problem at national and district levels.
- ◆ Mobilize external support specifically focused on youth empowerment and employment
- ◆ The establishment of a National **Youths Commission and Youth Trust Fund**. The Commission will address the needs and concerns of the youths. It will address policies relating to the youths and ensure the mainstreaming of youths in macro and sectoral policies. The Commission will also coordinate and monitor various interventions affecting youths. The **Youth Trust Fund** will finance the Commission.
- ◆ Our Government will stimulate action within the private sector to generate more jobs for young men and women. This will be supported by appropriate civic education to develop work ethics and achievement motivation among youths. We will urge private entities to improve the capacity of the young by providing training for unskilled or semi-skilled.
- ◆ We will also support local councils to mainstream youth employment and participation issues into economic and social policies, strategies and programs at the Chiefdom and District levels.
- ◆ The SLPP Government will also identify ways by which young men and women will participate in constructive dialogue with state institutions as a necessary pre-requisite for responsible citizenship.

(h) **Sports**

The SLPP believes in sports as a unifying force and as entry point for sustainable peace. Sports defy social, ethnic and regional boundaries. Competing fearlessly and courageously but fairly, honestly and honourably is the SLPP way. The next administration will continue to encourage young sportsmen and women to always remember this.

The next administration will focus on the following:

- Encouraging professionalism. Sports academies will be established and provided facilities around the country.
- Encouraging and supporting national sports organisations and associations to be truly independent and self-supporting. The next administration will launch a

vigorous awareness and advocacy campaign for national and international support from benevolent sympathisers to complement our efforts in this direction.

- Developing the administration, technical and support services for the improvement of the game locally.
- Strengthening sports offices and provide sports facilities in the provinces for better administration.
- Ensuring Sierra Leone compete in the all African Nation's Cup and the next world cup.

(I) Music and Performing Arts

Today, the music and performing arts industry is one of the fastest growing industries in Sierra Leone. It is contributing significantly to our way of life. It creates jobs for hundreds of youths and provides a source of livelihood for them. It can be a major instrument for promoting tourism and culture. Over the years, modern organised recording studios have been developing through private initiatives. Recently, key stakeholders (within the music industry) came together and formed the National Association of Performing Arts (NAPA). The objectives include; the continuous protection, development and enhancement of Sierra Leonean music and various forms of performing arts. In addition, NAPA aims to promote the highest standards of professionalism and quality within the audio and performing arts industries.

The Party is also encouraged by the efforts of individual Sierra Leoneans to engage in the production of film and video content that espouse Sierra Leonean culture. It is the hope that such a development will help to support the music industry through the production of video clips that will meet international standards.

The next SLPP administration will take these private initiatives forward to ensure that the quality and standards of Sierra Leonean music and arts are improved and the gains from investment in this industry are meaningful to both the promoters and the artists.

Specifically, the next SLPP government will pursue the following:

- Developing a structured environment for promoting music and performing arts
- Revising Sierra Leonean copyrights laws and piracy to ensure profitability in the industry
- Formulating policy and standards for enhancing the image of Sierra Leonean music nationally and internationally as well as the maintenance of good business ethics
- Enhancing the skills of Sierra Leonean artists
- Promoting film and video production

(J) Gender Equality and Empowerment

Women accounts for about 51 percent of the population. The economic, social, cultural and political status of women in society has been identified as a major determinant of the poverty status of a country. Recognition of women's roles and their empowerment is critical to poverty reduction at the household level and to the overall development of the nation.

The SLPP fully appreciates the challenges women face in their communities, in accessing protection and justice, social and economic opportunities, and seeking overall advancement.

Some of the specific challenges to be addressed in the next five years include (a) gender-based violence, (b) barriers to women's economic empowerment, especially in terms of access to markets, training, finance, infrastructure, technology, education, counselling and entrepreneurship development to build on their social capital, (c) exploitative or hazardous forms of livelihood of poor, unskilled women and girls, especially commercial sex workers, and (d) inadequate sensitisation and education on gender and development issues and e) low political participation.

Our Government has adopted various measures in the past decade to address some of the concerns of women. These include the setting up of the Ministry Social Welfare Gender and Children's Affairs, special women-focussed programmes for micro credit loans and initiatives in education and agriculture. We have also signed major international and regional human rights instruments, including the ratification of the Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) and its Optional Protocol. However, more radical progress is required in the situation of women in Sierra Leone to enhance their effective contribution to the reduction of poverty and the attainment of the MDGs.

The overall objective is to work towards gender equality, equity and empowerment, as well as promotion and protection of the rights of women. In recognition of their importance in all key productive, infrastructural, tertiary and human development sectors, gender-related issues have been mainstreamed into the sector strategies and programmes under each pillar. Additional strategies will focus on establishing a legal framework to address gender-based violence, increasing their participation in decision making and reducing the exposure of women and the girl child in particular to sexual exploitation and abuse.

In addition to the free girl child education, the next administration will advocate for constitutional amendments that will provide affirmative actions for women. A minimum percentage of councillors, parliamentarians and ministers must be women. Affirmative action will also be considered in other areas.

(j) HIV/AIDS Prevention and Control

HIV/AIDS is a complex, multifaceted problem. A rapid spread of the HIV/AIDS epidemic could have damaging economic and social consequences for individuals, families, communities and the nation at large. Sierra Leone has all the conditions for a potentially rapid and devastating spread of the HIV. It is emerging from years of rebel conflict, characterised by widespread rape and unsafe sex; there is low knowledge about the virus among the youth, other risk groups and the public in general; and there is a widespread practice of commercial sex among young men and women. Government is receiving assistance in the fight against the epidemic and technical support in formulating a comprehensive policy framework. However, these efforts still need to be stepped up to match the challenge of prevention and care in the medium to long term.

Our objectives are to prevent and control the spread of the epidemic, and to provide care and support for the infected population. This is consistent with the commitment to human resource development and the attainment of the MDGs. The strategies to achieve these objectives include a) focus on priority high-risk groups – youths and adolescents, commercial sex workers, uniformed personnel, migrant populations, truck and taxi drivers – for communication on behavioural change and adoption of safer-sex methods, b) use of social, political and religious structures to transmit awareness of the causes and prevention of HIV/AIDS. In the period 2005 – 2007, we have integrated prevention strategies in the reproductive health programmes focusing on young men and women, the education system, private sector, and the defence sector.

CONCLUSION

This then constitutes the ***PLATFORM*** on which the SLPP promises to build on the gains achieved so far in winning and consolidating the peace. We have chosen this ***PLATFORM*** after extensive consultation with the people of this country at home and abroad. The message from the people is quite clear. The peace we now enjoy and treasure can only be preserved if the economic development policies we pursue yield improvement in the living conditions of everyone. This is why our strategy is to continue to enhance the capabilities of our people, particularly the youth and the women, by expanding education, increasing access to health, and creating equal opportunities to all. To this end, we commit to a regime of good economic and political governance. Our strategy is therefore to consolidate the peace and begin the march to prosperity

No country in today's world can ever expect to progress without a constructive relationship with the outside world. Our successes so far, demonstrated by our attainment of HIPC status, support from the Peace Building Commission, and encouragements from multinational and bilateral partners, all put the SLPP leadership in a unique position to reinforce the reforms necessary for bringing prosperity to this country. At this juncture in the history of our country, we cannot afford to experiment, with untried leaders. Nor can we afford to pass on the leadership once again to those whose policies have failed in the past. The SLPP agenda is clear; it is achievable; and we hold ourselves ready to be judged on our performance by future generations.

While we are careful in not promising paradise, yet on this platform we can see paradise from a distance. Our Manifesto is therefore a platform for hope, and reflects the aspirations of the population. Yet it is distinctive in its realism.

As we seek a mandate for the next five years we call upon all Sierra Leoneans to work hard and to commit to a future where poverty becomes history for all of us.

ONE COUNTRY ONE PEOPLE

