

The Republic of
Sierra Leone

50th Anniversary



A Golden Jubilee Celebration



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African Minerals is delighted to congratulate Sierra Leone on the momentous 50th anniversary of its independence

The future success of African Minerals is intrinsically linked to the future of Sierra Leone. We are wholly committed to ensuring that the development of the Tonkolili deposit into a globally significant iron ore producer enriches the future for our hosts, the wonderful people and nation of Sierra Leone, and enables the next 50 years to be prosperous ones.

African Minerals is incredibly proud of our association with Sierra Leone and we aim to be a world-class example of what can be achieved in this remarkable country.



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It has been a great privilege to edit this anniversary publication celebrating 50 years of Sierra Leone's independence.

Above The national coat-of-arms superimposed on the national flag

I first visited west Africa as a young officer cadet on leave from the RMA Sandhurst in the Summer of 1960. I can remember now so vividly the sights, smells and sounds of that fascinating, bustling and beautiful coastline. The people must be amongst the most welcoming and the most friendly anywhere in the world. Certainly the Sierra Leoneans I have worked with here in London, in particular Ade Daramy, have been utterly charming. It has been a great pleasure to work with them. Sierra Leone has a wealth of natural resources and a talented people. It has the potential to prosper. The chapters in this publication take a broad look at that bright future.

Sierra Leone has had a tough time in the past 20 years in particular. Its people deserve better – it is a country with enormous potential. I do fervently wish the nation of Sierra Leone and its people well on the occasion of their 50th Anniversary of Independence. I hope we have contributed to this celebration with this publication in some small way.

Colonel Michael Dewar, Editor

Foreword by

President Koroma



It fills me with immense pride to be the President of Sierra Leone at such an auspicious time in our country's history. And, it gives me great pleasure to welcome you to this booklet in commemoration and celebration of Sierra Leone's Golden Jubilee of independence.

As a young boy at the time of our independence, I was vaguely aware of something momentous going on in the country but was obviously too young to appreciate the significance of the occasion. It was a time of great joy and optimism and one could not help but be infected by it. At that time, none of us could have foreseen the changes that would take place in our beloved country.

I consider the day I assumed the Presidency to be one of the proudest days of my life. I was both delighted and humbled by the fact that my fellow Sierra Leoneans had entrusted me with the task of moving the country onwards and upwards at a critical time in our history. I am aware that the job of President means having to be the leader of the whole country. That has always been at the forefront of my thoughts and actions since becoming President and I remind myself of that fact everyday. My natural optimism has never blinded me to the fact that we have a lot of work to do to get to where we would like to be as a country. In fact, it has served to spur me on to be unstinting in my efforts to bring about the changes that we would all like to see and which will benefit us all.

This booklet is not intended to deliver a history

lesson, nonetheless I hope that by the time you get to the end of it, you will have learnt some more about our wonderful country. In fact, the authors deliberately steered clear of overloading the booklet with facts and figures because, above all else, this is very much a celebration of Sierra Leone and Sierra Leoneans.

It was not by accident that I decided that the theme for this year's Golden Jubilee celebrations should be "50 Years Forward - Celebrating a New Sierra Leone". In moving forward, we will of course look back at those dreams of our nation's founders and at the same time, use this anniversary as an opportunity for the regeneration of our nation.

To the casual reader it might seem that Sierra Leone has had little to celebrate in recent times but they could not be more wrong. We are determined not to be a country that is defined by war and its aftermath because we know that we are much more than that.

As a nation, we are growing ever more confident of our place in the world and are determined to be the authors of how others perceive us. For too long we have been defined by others' perception of who we are. We believe that no one is better placed than ourselves to tell our own story.

It is sometimes easy to forget that we are a young nation and that, like any young nation, there are growing pains. These have been particularly painful at times and we can only hope that we have learnt lessons that will make us stronger in the future. We are a resilient and resourceful nation with an indomitable spirit and one that has its own special brand of humour, which has helped to lift our spirits in our darkest moments. We are a nation well-known for our tradition of religious tolerance. These too, are things worth celebrating.

In spite of all the travails that we have gone through, we have reason to feel blessed that we have friends both close and far away. We thank them and we hope they will continue to be 'Friends of Sierra Leone'.

I would like to use this opportunity to call on all Sierra Leoneans and friends of Sierra Leone to come together during these celebrations and to use this 'Golden Opportunity' afforded by this Golden Jubilee to redouble our efforts to make this the county we want it to be so that we can come to embody the words on our national crest "Unity, Freedom and Justice".

Here's to the next 50 years and beyond. Read and enjoy!

Ernest Bai Koroma

President of The Republic of Sierra Leone

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It was with a sense of great pride and honour that I accepted the invitation from His Excellency the President Ernest Bai Koroma to become Chairman of the National Planning Committee to oversee our country's Golden Jubilee Independence Anniversary commemorations.

My initial thoughts were about the enormity of the task that lay ahead in the short space of time. After all, it wasn't as if there was a template that I could draw on for the job; although there had been bodies constituted and individuals tasked to oversee various independence celebrations in the past, this is a significant milestone that is being commemorated. My career and sense of patriotic duty mean that I have been able to bring all of these to bear in the service of my country at a momentous time in our history.

I have been heartened by the way Sierra Leoneans from all walks of life have embraced the idea of marking this significant milestone in a way that will be memorable, unifying and rejuvenating, as we embark on the next 50 years of our journey as an independent nation. We are all conscious of the fact that we have an opportunity to not only make a mark in this Jubilee year but also to be involved in ensuring that the nation is bequeathed an enduring legacy.

To this end, the members of the current National Committee have served their country willingly, guided by the spirit of national pride and a strong sense of duty. I hope that this sense of pride that I and my fellow committee members feel as Sierra Leoneans comes through the pages of this publication.

As I leaf through this booklet, I find myself reflecting on how far we have come as a people. Though we have faced many challenges, we have risen to the occasion each time, united in the love we share for our country.

We see ourselves as having a great responsibility for ensuring that we adequately showcase the diverse cultures and unique traditions that can be found within Sierra Leone. We would submit humbly that we hope we have managed to achieve that within the pages of this booklet.

I hope that I have been able to repay His Excellency The President's trust in me by what my committee and I have been able to deliver. It is a pleasure and an honour to have been called to this task and I will close by asking that you enjoy this publication and enjoy Sierra Leone. Join us as we work towards the next 50 years of prosperity for Sierra Leone!

*Professor Emeritus, Cecil Magbaily Fyle
Chairman of the 50th Anniversary Celebrations National
Planning Committee*

Tony Blair



Sierra Leone has had an important place in my life from a very young age, when my father first taught at Fourah Bay College many years ago. And my passion for Sierra Leone, and my commitment to its continued development, has remained undimmed since stepping down as UK Prime Minister. It is therefore my pleasure to take this opportunity to congratulate this country on its 50th anniversary of independence.

As Sierra Leone looks back at the past 50 years, it is an opportunity for reflection. This country has come through some incredibly difficult times in the past 50 years. I am proud of Britain's part in helping the Sierra Leone government to end the devastating civil war through the intervention made by our armed forces during my time as Prime Minister.

But this is also an opportunity to reflect on how far Sierra Leone has come in a short space of time. Today, Sierra Leone is a place of peace and stability, and in 2007, the Sierra Leonean people voted in free and fair elections. It is a credit to both parties that a peaceful transition of power ensued, and that democracy became firmly embedded. In the aftermath of the civil war, public services and infrastructure were in dire straits. President Koroma and his government faced a mammoth task to begin rebuilding the basic services that Sierra Leone's citizens needed – and have a right to expect. Four years on, there is still a long way to go: but I am struck each time I visit Freetown with how quickly change is happening – Sierra Leone's capital

was once the darkest in the world - now mains electricity flows through the city.

The charity I founded on leaving office, the Africa Governance Initiative (AGI), has been working in Sierra Leone for three years now, supporting the implementation of the government's priorities of agriculture, private sector development and health. This month sees another important anniversary – that of the Free Healthcare Initiative that was launched a year ago. With the support of AGI and the international community, Sierra Leone has taken a bold and ambitious step by abolishing user fees for mothers and babies, who now have better access to healthcare than ever before. I am proud that the Africa Governance Initiative has been able to support the government to make this programme work on the ground. The results are startling – already there has been a 90% reduction in child deaths from malaria.

I believe that the opportunities for Sierra Leone and for Africa today are greater than at any time since the winds of change blew through the continent, on the eve of Sierra Leone's independence 50 years ago. There is a new generation of African leaders in business and in politics that are leading the way for Africa to shake off the world's misconceptions. Their success is already beginning to reap rewards, and the global community is beginning to take notice of the array of opportunity that is available in Africa.

The key will be to make sure the economic benefits of Africa's incredible wealth of resources reach its people. Sierra Leone is a rich country – but its people are not rich. I believe the key to realising this country's vast potential is firstly effective governance, and secondly development of the private sector that will end aid dependency. Good governance, strong leadership and private sector investment are the tools that put Sierra Leone's future firmly in the hands of its citizens.

These are exciting times for Sierra Leone – and for Africa. Today is not just about hope for the continent, but evidence that change is already taking place. I am personally convinced that this can be Africa's century. As it looks forward to the next 50 years, Sierra Leone can and should be one of its most striking success stories.

*The Rt Hon Tony Blair
Patron of the Africa Governance Initiative*

Message by

Frank Timis



It is a privilege and a pleasure for African Minerals to sponsor both the publication and forthcoming celebration to mark the 50th anniversary of Independence in Sierra Leone.

Since 2003 African Minerals has been actively investing in Sierra Leone, a country rich in mineral deposits formerly undiscovered and, following a period of political instability, now experiencing favourable regeneration.

Elections, held in 2007, led to the successful transition of power and establishment of the democratic process.

It has been a remarkable journey: since African Minerals completed the country's first aero-magnetic survey during 2004, subsequent exploration programmes and multi-element sampling analysis have resulted in the Company developing a major mineral exploration portfolio, unrivalled in scale in Sierra Leone.

As a Company we have sought to meet the challenges confronting the country, consistently upgrading our infrastructure initiatives, health, education and employment programmes, and generally seeking new opportunities to improve the lives of Sierra Leone's people. All of these efforts are made in support of the government's long-term plan to help poverty-stricken communities and improve living standards for all.

Importantly, our environmental and social impact policies are structured to comply with the Equator Principles, internationally recognised as a set of benchmarks for managing the impact of large projects on local communities and the environment.

African Minerals is justly proud to have received the prestigious International Year of Planet Earth Award in 2009. African Minerals' Tonkolili Iron Ore and Infrastructure Project was awarded "Most Effective Corporate Social Responsibility Project". The UN-recognized award is a testament to the ongoing social and environmental responsibility endeavours that define the Tonkolili project. The recipient of the award is determined by a panel of social and environment authorities, and "innovation, beneficial excellence and significant achievement in the areas of environmental enhancement and sustainability of the Earth's resources" form the criteria for the prize.

African Minerals, one of the largest employers in Sierra Leone and looking to set the standard for future foreign investment projects in the country, has received the highest level of support from local communities, regional government agencies and the offices of the President of Sierra Leone.

I take this opportunity to wish His Excellency President Koroma and the people of Sierra Leone congratulations on the 50th anniversary of Independence of the Republic of Sierra Leone.

Frank Timis
CEO

Opposite Top Mangrove swamps typical of those found across the country

Opposite Bottom A traditional old village settlement, deep in the forests of the Southern Province



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London Mining Company is proud to stand together with the people of the Republic of Sierra Leone as this great nation celebrates its 50th year of independence.

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Arrival of the Portuguese

In common with most countries south of the Sahara, Sierra Leone has had to rely in large part on European or Arab travellers to tell a major part of its early history. What Sierra Leone shares with all these other countries in the surrounding sub-region is a lack of written history. It is not true to say however, that the country or the region does not have a recorded history; it very much does, and a still-vibrant one at that.

After all, this western corner of Africa is home to the tradition of the griots, those keepers of the oral history of their people, particularly the Mandinka (or Madinga) people, who can still be found across vast swathes of West Africa. A lot of oral history has been handed down but for either the casual or serious historian, this is never deemed sufficient or as persuasive as that which is written down.

What has been passed down to us relating to the earliest times has therefore consisted of a mixture of the written and the oral. Much of what was written by the earliest 'outsiders' (principally the Portuguese) was itself a mixture of their own observations and the accounts given to them by the inhabitants of the region whom they came across.

That little is known is perhaps something for which we should be grateful. Grateful because the eventual contact with 'outsiders' was not always beneficial to the people of the region. Most of the earliest European travellers, who passed the coast of what became known as Sierra Leone, did so on their way to somewhere else; somewhere which held the promise of such untold riches that there was no need to stop off and explore the hinterland beyond the shores of this part of Africa. Particularly as some who did observe it as they passed thought the terrain had a forbidding aspect to it. Journey's end for these European adventurers was the seductive pull of the spices of the East, in an age where we take such spices for granted, it is hard to conjure up today the lure and fascination that those Eastern spices had on the Europeans.

Many of the accounts looking back over the reasons for the lack of early exploration and



Above one of the traditional masqueraders

settlement in this region tend to narrow them down to four main ones. If one looks at the earliest maps that accurately trace the shape of the whole of the African continent, it is clear that these early maps drawn by the Portuguese, who were the first and most adventurous of the European seafaring nations, used the coast as pointers or landmarks to guide them as they sailed towards their main destination.

A second reason was that the business of building settlements in a place they had no intention of settling in did not make any sense and most importantly, would have been a costly business; particularly as it was the pursuit of profitable trade that was their main concern.

The third barrier was that there were times

Right A young 'Bondo' initiate – one of the oldest traditional women's 'secret societies'



Left A 'Balnji' player – one of the oldest traditional instruments – very similar to the xylophone

Sierra Leone • Arrival of the Portuguese

when, out of necessity, they had to come ashore. On such occasions they would encounter kings or chiefs who were ready to barter or trade with any who came into their domain. Again, this could prove to be a costly business. The reasoning thus was that if this was what they encountered on the coast, how much more expensive would it be if they ventured into the interior?

The fourth and one of the most crucial in terms of Sierra Leone's history and development was the inhospitable nature of the terrain and the inclement weather. When the heat was not unbearable, the fever, mostly from mosquitoes, was a killer. Yet again, the reasoning was that this area was not known at the time for having precious minerals, as was the case with the gold of Mexico, which made the privations of staying and eventually subduing those people (including their rulers) an attractive proposition.

The large belt of forest that acted as a barrier from the Sahara was another factor that prevented exploration from that part of the continent. It is thought that the reason the caravans from Arab lands stopped short of penetrating this forest belt was that early encounters had exposed them to wild animals that roamed these forests.

Someone who did record some of what came to be known about this part of Africa is often mistakenly assumed to be a Roman, Leo Africanus. In fact, this was merely a description of who he was: Leo, The African. He was from the City of Fez (In Morocco) and his full and rather impressive name was El-Hassan ben Mohammed el-Wazzan ez-Wazayyati (there are other variations on the spelling of the name).

Between 1510 and 1512, Africanus wrote what he called 'A Description of Africa'. History has taught us that he got a lot wrong but we are

Left A young 'Porroh' initiate – this being one of the oldest men's 'secret societies' in Sierra Leone

Bottom Fishing has been an important source of income for coastal dwellers for centuries



People and vessels

In a nutshell, that is the driving force behind Jan De Nul Group. Thanks to the 5,000 employees worldwide and its ultramodern fleet, today the group ranks at the top of the international dredging and marine related industry. Also with regard to civil engineering and environmental works, the group is one of the largest contractors.

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grateful to him for capturing some of what he observed or was told about. As he writes about the area now called Sierra Leone, he tells us that no great conquering armies came from that region. In fact, this area, close to the coast, he identifies as a place where those escaping war went to seek refuge or at least a place where they hoped to find peace. It is worth quoting from his account of this area:

“They make war on no one, and none sets foot outside his own country. Some worship the sun, others worship fire...’ He goes on to say “there are fifteen kingdoms known to us to stretch along the two branches of the Niger and her tributaries...”

He goes on to say that some social intercourse occurs between those farther north and those close to the coast. However, the many beliefs and languages to be found there and the treacherousness of any journey there made it difficult to access the area.

Of those who wrote at length about Africa, two stand out. Valentin Fernandes (commonly mistakenly referred to as Portuguese but actually a German from Moravia, who moved to Lisbon) and Duarte Pacheco Pereira, who was Portuguese and who was the governor of Elmina Castle (in modern day Ghana), during the time when it was held by the Portuguese, are the most notable.

Thus it is that the accounts by Fernandes and Pereira tend to concentrate on interactions with those inhabiting the coastal areas. We therefore get mentions of The Bulloms, who were said to inhabit from the coast to as far as one could paddle with



Above A carved male figure in the Nomoli Style from the 15th-17th century. (Image: The Smithsonian)

a canoe inland. The Temnes were said to inhabit the area of Kasseh on the river Scarcies. The Susus were to be found at what was described as ‘fifteen leagues from the coast. In the North, Fernandes described finding the ‘Capeos’. Some have taken this to be spelled ‘Sapios’ and ‘Sapis’ amongst numerous variations.

Although we are grateful for the early recorders of history, it is clear that they had trouble getting their tongues around some of the place names, leaving us with possibly corrupted versions of what we know to be various towns today. Early reports tell of places such as:

- Manguy, described as a village of some thousand inhabitants in 1507 - possibly Mange which is a common name for a village among the Temne
- Pinto or Pymto - a Village in the hills - possibly Gbinti

Studies show that the first people to enter what is modern day Sierra Leone, were probably the Limba, coming from the west and pushing the people known as the Gbande into what is now Liberia. Some of this is recorded in Limba legend, which says that the first man from their nation who came to Sierra Leone at the head of an army was called Mansonfundu. The legend says that the Gbande had territory as far west as the present day Wara-Wara Chiefdoms. The Gbande, The Loko and The



Bottom Left Modern example of the oldest form of traditional masquerade

Opposite Top Right Examples of the oldest form of traditional huts found across Sierra Leone

Opposite Bottom Right Traditionally-attired drummers, with some of the oldest type of traditionally made drums



Mendes have historical links. What gives credence to the legend is that part of it says that some were left behind to fight whilst the others fled to where they are now and that this explains why there is evidence of the Loko and Temne trading together from much earlier than the Mende and Temne. This would indicate that those left behind were not wiped out but fought, survived and stayed.

Susu oral history also tells us that when they came to the area close to the coast, The Limbas were already there. That history also tells us that they were 200 strong and led by one King Kanfori Domin Konteh or (Conteh). Yalunka tradition has it that they arrived in the south to escape attempts to convert them to Islam by Mansa Musa the legendary King of Mali.

That history also tells us that this was an area well populated by elephant herds. And that elephants were hunted by the early Temne arrivals towards the area where the sun sets. Legend has it that they hunted them and when they reached the coast, as the area was uninhabited, they chose to make it their home. Upon his death, King Kanfori Konteh, was succeeded by his son Manga Kombeh Balla. It was during the latter's reign that the first Portuguese were said to have landed on the coast of Sierra Leone. It is said that Manga Kombeh Balla so greatly enjoyed his trade with the Portuguese that he was the one who asked them to settle in the area.



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Today's UBA is the product of the 2005 merger between legacy UBA and Standard Trust Bank, which were then Nigeria's third and fifth largest banks respectively. The union emerged as the first successful corporate combination in the history of Nigerian banking. This was followed shortly after by the acquisition of Continental Trust Bank.

The consolidated UBA was born out of a desire to lead Africa to a new era of global relevance by championing the creation of the consumer finance market, leading private/public sector partnership in supporting the acceleration of Africa's economic development, and growing the institution from a single country focused bank to a full service African financial institution, while spreading its footprint across the globe to earn the reputation as "Africa's global bank".

The Portuguese Period

Although the name Sierra Leone is commonly acknowledged to have been coined by Pedro Da Cintra, there had already been Portuguese interaction with the people of the area long before his time. It is generally accepted that Sierra Leone's 'Portuguese Period' in fact dates back to around 1446, some 14 years before Pedro da Cintra came upon the coast. And, that was some years after Portuguese explorers making their way to the spice routes of the East first came upon the coast and mapped it. It must be remembered that this was a time when there was a great race amongst the nations of Europe to discover new lands and territories to trade with or to subdue.

Pedro da Cintra had once been a page to Prince Henry the Navigator (or Dom Henrique), the son of King Joao of Portugal. It was said that Henry had an obsession with sending ships out to find new lands and to claim them in the name of Portugal. It was therefore apt that when he died in November 1460, the king appointed Pedro to carry on Henry's nautical work. Interestingly, for all that we know about Pedro da Cintra and his life, for Sierra Leoneans, the details about the naming of the country are not to be found in accounts given by da Cintra but by an Italian, out of Venice, who as was the fashion in those days had sought and been given the 'permission' of the King of Portugal to sail as far into Africa as the river Casamance in 1456. He was Alvise Cadamosto. Cadamosto was living in Lagos in Portugal, when da Cintra's expedition returned to Cabo Sao Vicente (Cape St Vincent) in 1460. However, it was not until 1507, when he published an account of his own travels on the west coast of Africa, that he included what he says is the reasoning behind da Cintra's naming of this place.

This account lays to rest some of the myths surrounding the naming of Sierra Leone. Cadamosto recounts:

"This is what I have learnt during the time when I was in these parts; but there have been others after me. Of most importance were the two armed caravels which the King of Portugal had sent thither after the death of the Infante Don Henry. Their commander was one Piero de Sinzia a



squire of this lord's, who he commissioned to sail farther along this coast of the Blacks, and to discover new lands. With this captain went a Portuguese youth, a friend of mine, who had been there with me as a notary. On the return of the caravels, Alvise Cadamosto was in Lachus a place near Cape de San Vincenzo with the said captain returned. My friend came ashore to my house and gave me his observations point by point on the land they had discovered, the names they had given, the places at which they had stayed, all in due order... as set forth below".

He continues:

"about 24 miles beyond the Rio Verde there is another cape to which they gave the name Cape Liedo, that is in our tongue Aliegro because it seemed to them that this cape,

Above Ivory saltcellar: Carved by a Sapi artist dubbed 'The Master of Symbolism'. It features an entanglement of snakes around the lower part, four birds on the upper part. It was William Fagg, in homage to the skill of this artist, who coined the name 'Master of Symbolism'



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Sierra Leone • the Portuguese Period

with the surrounding country was exceedingly pleasant.

Beyond this Cape Aliegro begins a mountainous coast which extends for about six leagues, for it is very high, covered with tall and perennially green trees; at the end of it, about eight miles out to sea, there are three islets, the largest of which is about 10 to 12 miles in circumference. They named this the Isola Salvaza and the mountain Montagna Liona. Beyond the coast of Montagna Liona all is low land and fringed with many sandbanks which run out to sea".



He then goes on to describe other areas along the coast, taking in the Plantain Islands, The Sherbro River and Cape St Anne.

One Duarte Pacheco Pereira, another Portuguese explorer, adds:

"Many people think that the name Serra Lyoa was given because many lions were to be found in that part, but that is wrong, it is because Pedro de Cintra when he saw a land so rough and wild, called it Lyoa. That is the only reason and no other explanation is true because he told me this himself".

Pereira, Esmeraldo de Situ Orbis

Pereira would prove to be a most valuable early explorer in Sierra Leone as he would be one of the first to hand down a lexicon of words for his fellow countrymen to use to do business in the area. Some may have been lost in translation but many are recognisable as words in use today. The name of the country as we know it today is a mixture of the Portuguese and Italian spellings. Italian map-makers, who were deemed the pre-eminent practitioners of their trade at the time, most likely took their spelling from the Venetian Cadamosto.

Although, Valentin Fernandes obtained all his information secondhand, his source was an impeccable one: Alvaro Velho, a Portuguese trader who traded along the coast and had his headquarters in Sierra Leone for eight years. It is from his accounts as recorded by Fernandes that we learn that the inhabitants called their country Pymto, which was

also the name of a village in the mountains. Having hidden the region by producing deceptive maps (as was common at this time to protect 'possessions'), the Portuguese were keen to recommend the area to their king and fellow countrymen. After Pedro da Cintra, other Portuguese sailed along the coast and inland giving place names as they went. For example, we know that due to the fact that one of the Banana Islands had a rocky shore, they called them Islas Bravas or Brave Islands. And, the largest Isola Salvaza, or Healthy Island, probably because the aspect was so fair.

The Portuguese were so successful in keeping their 'secret' of Sierra Leone that Martin Frobisher's 1562 'Declaration for the trafique to Guinea' (as the area including Sierra Leone was then known) was to say erroneously that the King of Portugal had no "Castell, fort, or House of Trafique upon the coasts between Cape Verde, and the Kingdom of Binny [Benin] but onlie one small fort at Cape Trepontes called Ashien and the other, 20 leagues beyond called Castel Del Mina (Elmina Castle)". What he was not aware of were the extensive visits already made by the Portuguese and recorded on their secret maps. By the time Alvares d'Almada wrote about Sierra Leone in 1594, he did not feel the need to explain much about the terrain and the language, so well entrenched was Portuguese trade in the region by this time. D'Almada, a native of Cabo Verde (Cape Verde) instead wrote about the customs of the people including their methods of dispensing justice, even describing how cases were presented in the courts,

Left Oliphant (63 cm in length) Ivory: carved by a Sapi artist in Sierra Leone; 15th – 16th Century AD. Near the opening of the item, are carved the blazons of the royal house of Portugal; the Order of Christ, the armillary sphere and the royal coat of arms. It is believed that it ended up in Turin as part of the Duke's collection in the early decades of the 16th century as part of the dowry of Duchess Beatrice of Aziz, daughter of Emanuel I, King of Portugal. In 1521, Beatrice married Charles III of Savoy. Now in Turin, Armeria Reale

Below left Spoon (22 cm in length). Ivory carved by a Sapi artist in Sierra Leone: 15th – 16th century AD. Recorded in the Royal Collection of Denmark as far back as 1689. On the stem, a snake and another animal confront each other. Now in Copenhagen at The National Museum of Denmark

Below An Ivory carved saltcellar by a Sapi artist. 15th – 16th century AD



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Sierra Leone • the Portuguese Period



doing so and Portuguese influence continued.

The secret could not stay hidden for long and gradually, the other European slave trading nations discovered the region and their incursions led to the waning of Portuguese influence. It is perhaps significant that the Temne word for white man is Oporto believed to be a variant of Oporto, which is in Portugal.

Contrary to some accounts it is believed that it was the Portuguese and not the British who brought Christianity to the region in the 16th century. Father Barreira, a Jesuit priest who arrived in 1605 and who lived a long time in the region recalls that for 30 years the Portuguese in the area were unable to attend mass. He claims that he built a church in one of the bays (possibly Kroo Bay) and said the first mass there on St Michael's Day, 29 September 1605.

The Islamic invasion, which swept down towards the coast from the north made the country a hazardous place. However, that was not the greatest threat to Portuguese influence. That came from their traditional, European rivals the English and the Dutch. As the Portuguese had concentrated their trade along the coast and the rivers, the English pushed further inland and established settlements to make more permanent settlements and structures. Smuggling of contraband, mainly rum was common along the coast and the European nations waged war on each other in Europe as well as elsewhere including Sierra Leone, York Island and Bunce Island, where the English had now set up were attacked numerous times, with one particularly deadly attack on Bunce in 1704. Despite these setbacks, the English were determined to hold on and did so. When in 1787, the British landed 450 former slaves from America and 60 white women to found a settlement 'The Province of Freedom', the Portuguese influence in the area was truly over. This marked the real start of British entrenchment in the country.

how the inhabitants chose their rulers and how they performed their rulers' burial rites, the burying of the dead within their own houses, laden with gold in their ears, around their arms and through the nose. He also describes the year-long seclusion of young maidens and the choosing of brides by young men. Cape Verde had a most important role to play in the Portuguese interaction with Sierra Leone. It had been well settled by the Portuguese since around 1470, and they used the port of Santiago in Cape Verde as their base from which to trade with Sierra Leone. As time went on, envious eyes were cast towards what was becoming a lucrative trading area. One Zachary Rogers, an Englishman representing the English Royal African Company felt compelled to write to his directors in 1682 "Ye Cacheo [on Cape Verde] trade to Sierra Liona will be lost if the Portugeezes Company continues". The Portuguese held such sway over the region that they issued 'leases' to contractors who had to pay a fee to the Portuguese government. It is interesting to note that those granted such leases included non-Portuguese including Jews, Spanish and Italian traders.

The slave trade benefited the Spanish and Portuguese after 1580, by which time Portugal had become part of the Spanish Empire. They could trade for slaves by buying from 'unofficial traders' and so escape the taxes they had to pay when they bought from Spanish-licensed slave traders.

Bartholomew Andre was able to threaten the King of Portugal in 1602 that if he allowed the Dutch to build a fort in Sierra Leone, he would abandon the territory. The Dutch were duly discouraged from



Left A saltcellar (24 cm in height and 9 cm in diameter). Ivory; carved by a Sapi artist in Sierra Leone. A printed inventory of Marchese Ferdinando Cospi from 1680 lists this item as "an ancient ivory chalice with a lid". There are snakes confronting dogs, there is a naked woman on the back of a animal of some sort, plus two other female figures. There is a theory that the theme may have been suggested, with the aid of drawings, by the European client as these motifs are so rare in this type of carving. Now in Bologna, Italy – Musei Civici d'Arte Antica

Below Another Oliphant (56 cm in length) Ivory; carved by a Sapi artist from Sierra Leone; 15th – 16th Century AD. - depicting hunting scenes including mythological monsters and a centaur striking arrows, an elephant with a small tower on it back. Along the body of the spiral is a prayer "DA PACEM DOMINE IN DYEBUS NOSTRIS". Now in a private collection



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The British Period

As the power of Portugal waned the most significant European influence on Sierra Leone was exerted by the British. As early as 1628 there was a British trading post in the vicinity of Sherbro Island about 30 miles from where Freetown is situated today.

The British, French, Dutch and occasional Portuguese missionaries continued to trade and proselytize in the area for the next 100 years. Also during that period the first slaves were brought from West Africa including Sierra Leone to North America. Britain and British seafarers played a major role in this trade. Although Britain did not outlaw the slave trade until 1807, as early as 1787 a plan was implemented by the St George's Bay Company, composed of British philanthropists, to settle enslaved Africans who had been promised their freedom for joining the British Army during the American Revolution. Rather than having to financially support them in London, a more pragmatic solution was to settle them in Sierra Leone in what they called "The Province of Freedom". More Black Loyalists followed over the next years and by 1792 they had established a settlement at Freetown. This settlement was joined by other groups of free slaves and became one of Britain's first colonies in West Africa.

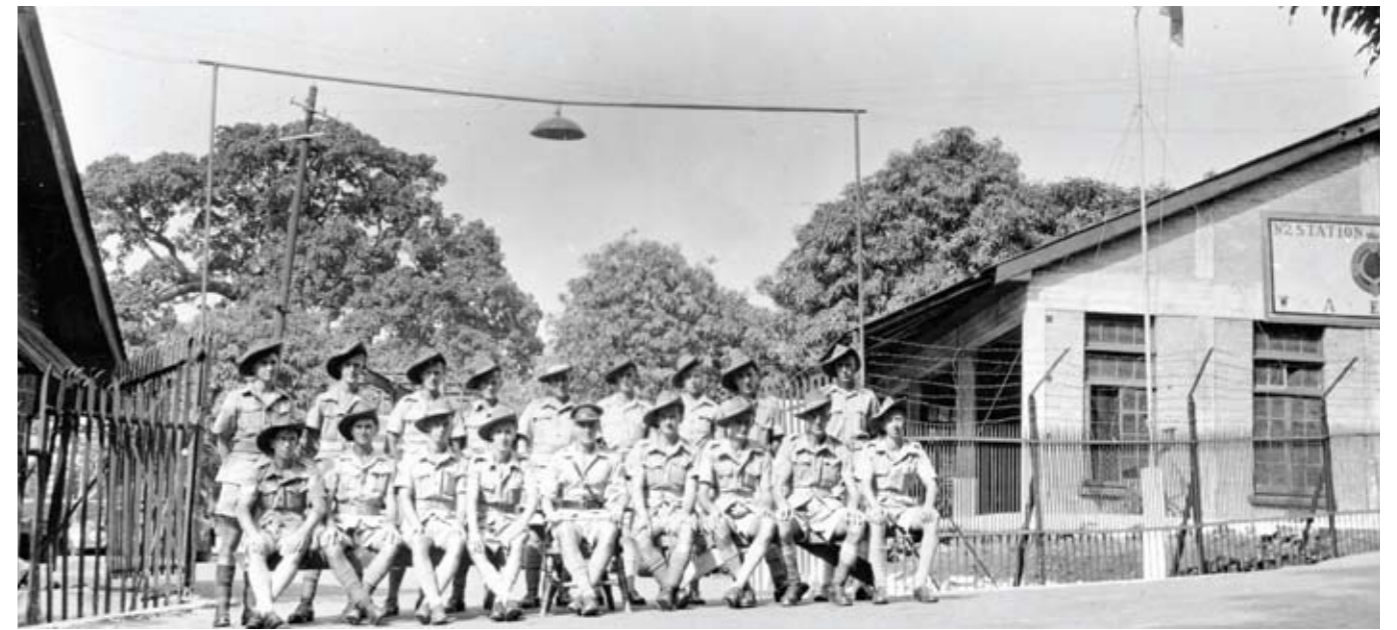
In 1800 Sierra Leone was still little more than a trading post extending only a few miles up the peninsula from Freetown. The vast majority of the land area that constitutes present-day Sierra Leone was still peopled and controlled by the indigenous tribes such as the Mende and the Temme. As happened elsewhere in Africa, the process of colonization was largely driven by trade. Treaties were made with the local chiefs to secure the local peace so that commerce could continue uninterrupted. As in India, the British Government secured the peace, not so much by the use of military force as by agreeing to pay a chief a stipend in return for a commitment from him to keep the peace with his neighbours. The British quickly realised that not only was there insufficient military force available to take and control an



Above Sierra Leone's first Prime Minister, Sir Milton Margai, dances with Her Majesty, The Queen on her visit to Sierra Leone in 1961

empire but that even if a military force could be assembled, its use might well be counter-productive in the longer term. Thus an Empire was acquired by stealth and mostly through the medium of trade. A chief might also be bribed to keep roads open, thus allowing the colonial administration to collect custom duties and to settle disputes between tribes. After 1807 these treaties required chiefs to desist from slave trading.

This is not to say that when these methods failed, the British did not use military means. In 1826, for instance, Governor Turner led a military expedition to punish a chief for refusing to cede territory to the British and for engaging in the slave trade. Later the same year another expedition went up the Jong River and sacked



Above British army officers stationed in Sierra Leone shortly after WWII, at the engineering works near Tower Hill, next to what is now The President's office

Commenda, a town belonging to another recalcitrant chief. This policy of divide and rule continued throughout the best part of the 19th Century.

Then in the 1880s the so called "Scramble for Africa", when Britain, France, Germany, Portugal, Italy and Spain all tripped over each other to grab as much land on the African continent as possible, spurred Britain to formalise its interest in Sierra Leone. The threat in this instance came from France. To forestall a French incursion into what the British had come to consider as their own sphere of influence, efforts were revived to finalise a boundary agreement with France between Sierra Leone and French Guinea. In January 1895 a boundary agreement was signed in Paris. As in other parts of the British Empire this boundary was imposed and did not necessarily conform to tribal boundaries. To this day many of the tensions within modern nation states derive, at least in part, from the artificial boundaries imposed during the colonial period. This is not to say the colonial administrators were not doing the best job they could within the context of the time. Nevertheless the legacy of many of these boundaries has been toxic.

In August 1895 an Order-in-Council was issued in Westminster to authorise the small colony centred on Freetown to make laws for the territory around it, extending out to the boundary agreed with France and which, to all intents and purposes, is the same as the

present-day boundary. On 31 August 1876 a Proclamation had been issued in the colony declaring the territory around Freetown to be a British Protectorate. Freetown remained a colony; the Protectorate was governed from it.

Almost every chieftaincy within the newly acquired territories responded with armed resistance. They objected to the fact that most of the powers of the chiefs were removed and given to courts presided over by British District Commissioners. A new tax was levied by the British and when in 1898, attempts were made to collect this tax, an armed insurrection ensued. Separate risings in the North and South are collectively referred to as the Hut Tax War of 1898. They were firmly put down by the British and its leaders were either exiled to the Gold Coast or executed. After the Hut Tax War there was no further significant armed resistance to colonialism, though dissent took other forms. For instance, Sierra Leone developed an active trade union movement whose strikes were often supported by widespread riots among the wider population.

The British continued to rule in Sierra Leone, partly by proxy. In return for maintaining the chiefs in their privileged positions, they were expected to provide policing and labour and collect taxes. Chiefs who were not willing to play this role were replaced by more compliant ones. Not surprisingly the attitude of Africans towards their chiefs was an ambivalent one. Consequently throughout the colonial period



Top Ruins of the slave merchant's house on Bunce Island

Above An old British-made cannon once used to defend Bunce Island on the shores of the island

in the 20th Century there were numerous riots directed at the tribal chiefs. These culminated in the 1955-56 riots which took place right across the Protectorate and which had to be suppressed causing considerable loss of life by the Army.

However, much of the British legacy in Sierra Leone has been positive. In the early 19th Century Freetown served as the residence of the British Governor who also ruled the Gold Coast and Gambia settlements. Consequently Freetown became the educational centre of British West Africa as well. As early as 1827

Fourah Bay College was established, which became a great centre of learning for all English speaking Africans on the West Coast. For more than a century it was the only European educational establishment of university status in Western Sub-Saharan Africa. It exists to this day.

The 1951 Constitution provided a framework for colonization. Sir Milton Margai was appointed the first Chief Minister in 1953. Finally in April 1961 Sierra Leone gained its independence. It retained a parliamentary system of Government and was welcomed into the British Commonwealth of Nations. The Sierra Leone People's Party (SLPP) led by Sir Milton Margai won the first general election in May 1962.

The British period of rule in Sierra Leone was, for the most part, within the context of its time, a relatively benign administration. Nor did the British attempt to hang on to power for any longer than was necessary to ensure an efficient handover. Indeed Sierra Leone was one of the first of Britain's colonies to gain independence after the Second World War. There are some that would argue, given what has happened in Sierra Leone since independence, that perhaps independence came too early. Yet it is difficult to see how Britain could have done otherwise. The appetite for independence in the early 1960's was intense and Sierra Leone seemed ideally qualified to make its own way in the world.



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Political Infrastructure

Sierra Leoneans like to see themselves as peace-loving people and yet the road since independence has occasionally been a very bloody one. This is a stark contrast to the day Sierra Leoneans first awoke to the realisation that they were about to join the growing list of independent nations.

On 4th May, 1960, on the steps of the famous Lancaster House in London, Iain McLeod, The Secretary of State for the Colonies addressed delegates and the press with these words:

“By signing this Report I am, so to speak, registering the birth of independent Sierra Leone on 27th April 1961. This is the great result of our talks. They have been marked by friendship and cordiality, while not lacking in frankness and plain speaking. Sierra Leone and Britain have been friends for 150 years. All of us who have taken part in the talks see no reason why, as independent states, we should not remain close friends for many years to come...”

In his closing remarks at the end of those historic talks, Sir Milton Margai responded:

“This is a memorable day. I remember how we started with friendship and the cordiality with which we have been able to discuss things. Before I left Sierra Leone, I told my people we were going to meet our friends and we should have no doubts about them. That is what has happened today...we will never be in a position to let you regret what you have done and Sierra Leone will forever be friends of Britain...”

Those remarks at the end of the Lancaster House talks perfectly encapsulated the nature of the discussions. There had been none of the rancour reported in discussions between other aspiring colonial territories and their erstwhile rulers.

When Sierra Leone attained independent status on 27th April 1961, many saw it as the end of a journey; many more saw it as the beginning of one. In a way, both sides were correct. For those in the former camp, independence was the natural conclusion to where the country had been heading inexorably, almost since the first stirrings of political enfranchisement had been awakened. Those who



Left Sign at a roundabout with the national crest and motto

held the latter, but not diametrically opposite view, saw independence as the time when the ‘real work would begin’.

These views were certainly reflected and echoed at the Lancaster House, London conference held the year before Sierra became an independent nation. Speaking at the opening ceremony at Lancaster House in 1960, at those talks the Secretary of State for the Colonies had this to say to the Sierra Leone delegation:

“Let me say here and now that I recognise the strength of your aspirations on the attainment of independence at an early date. It was in that spirit that I issued an invitation to your Government to send an all-party delegation to these talks...”



Above Election poster for one of the parties (PMD) that contested the 2007 elections

Right Brigadier, Julius Maada Bio of the National Provisional Ruling Council (NPRC) with Corporal Foday Sankoh of the Revolutionary United Front (RUF) after peace talks in Lome

The Secretary of State went on to say:

“In my communication to the Governor I referred to a number of important issues which would have to be carefully examined. I emphasised that the attainment of national sovereignty would bring with it increased responsibilities in both the international and domestic sphere, and that the conference would provide a forum for discussing all the problems that would require solution if the welfare and progress of the people of Sierra Leone were to be properly safeguarded...”

So it was that the gauntlet was thrown down to all of those attending the conference, reminding them of the responsibility that would fall on their shoulders once the goal of independence had been achieved.

The men representing Sierra Leone at that conference had no doubts that, given the tenacity that they had shown in getting to this point, they had no option other than to succeed.

To an outsider studying African politics in 1960, Sierra Leone may have appeared to be “just another of those African nations seeking to become independent”. However, to the conference delegate and all Sierra Leoneans, they had never seen themselves as belonging to “just another country”; far from it, they have always seen themselves as a country that already had an amazing history and was likely to be ruled by people determined to keep on making history.

Sir Milton Margai, soon to become the



independent nation’s first Prime Minister, had the honour of responding at the opening session of that 1960 conference. He used the opportunity to remark on the cordial nature of relations between the two countries and that the conference would end with an agreed date for independence. In concluding his opening response he said:

“...we hope that at the end we shall have reached agreement on our date for independence, and that we shall have received the promise of Her Majesty’s Government to sponsor our full membership in the Commonwealth...”

The popular, last British Governor, Sir Maurice Dorman had also been ready to lend his support, albeit sprinkled with some remarkably prescient

words at the Lancaster House opening session:

"...In present times, Sierra Leone has acquired what I can only describe as a certain notoriety both for its climate, which is admirable, and for its diamonds, which are a mixed blessing. In the future, we all recognise that hard times, economically and financially may lie ahead of us..."

The first task to be addressed by the delegates was to agree what interim changes were needed with almost immediate effect. The first to be agreed was that the Governor would hand over the Presidency of the Executive Council, which would henceforth be called The Cabinet, to the Premier, whose title would also be changed to 'Prime Minister'. It was further agreed to set up Executive Public Service and Judicial Service Commissions and agree the Ministers who would have responsibility for Defence, the Police and External Affairs.

A crucial element of the conference was the agreement that on independence, the constitution would include clauses about fundamental human rights as well as clauses relating to procedures (percentage of parliamentarians needed etc) for any changes to the constitution and for entrenching the basic tenets of the constitutional provisions.

The parallel talks held while the conference was ongoing had agreed that there would be a mutual defence agreement to be signed immediately after independence. As a further sign of goodwill, the United Kingdom Government offered assistance totalling £7.5m in the form of loans, grants and technical assistance for what were deemed 'transitional' arrangements.

At the time, there were a large number of Sierra Leonean students studying in the UK and



Left Members of the Police force march-past 2011

Below Detail from the front of the main Law Courts building in the centre of Freetown

the delegates ensured that they kept them abreast of developments. This was vital in an age where mass communication was not easy. Sierra Leone's Commissioner to the United Kingdom at the time, Dr R.E. Kelfa-Caulker, made sure to act as bridge between the delegates and Sierra Leonean expatriates.

As mentioned earlier, the attainment of independent, self-governing status had been coming since the foundation of Freetown as a 'Province of Freedom' in 1787.

Just three years after that, in 1790, 'government' of the territory had been by a Board of Directors of The Sierra Leone Company, formerly The St George's Bay Company. By 1799, not only was the Sierra Leone Company given a Royal Charter but



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the Governor-in-Council was also given legislative powers. The British Parliament abolished slavery in 1807 and was to use Sierra Leone as the point from which it enforced abolition, seizing and destroying slave-trading ships and freeing those captured in Sierra Leone. By 1808, Sierra Leone was made a British Crown Colony. As far back as 1811, it was decided that an unofficial member should be appointed to the Advisory Council. So it was that the Governor had been instructed to choose the member "from amongst the most considerable of the Protestant inhabitants residing in the Colony". And so changes came gradually until 1953, when the principle of representative government was established in the country. The following year saw the decision to accord one of the six elected Sierra Leoneans on the Executive Council the title of Chief Minister.

With the nationwide extension of the electoral franchise came the first General Elections in May 1957. This was a major step forward in the country's political growth. These elections inevitably led to the 1958 establishment of the first all-Sierra Leonean Executive Council. This year also saw the replacement of all official members of the Executive Council with the exception of the Governor.

The newly elected Chamber, The House of Representatives, now consisted of elected members with the exception of the 12 Paramount Chiefs, who were elected by the District Councils.



THE EARLY, MAJOR CONSTITUTIONAL DEVELOPMENTS:

Between 1863 and 1924, there had been Executive and Legislative Councils. The establishment of the latter led to the development of representative, elected cabinet government. The first elections in the country uniting the Colony and the Protectorate were held in 1924.

The 1951 Constitution is often cited as one of the major landmarks in the country's history and a major one on the road to self-government. This was because it created a large, unofficial majority in what was still the Legislative Council by increasing the number of unofficial members to 23 (up from 10) at the same time as reducing the officials down from 11 to seven. It was this Constitution that paved the way for the appointment of Ministers from the ranks of the unofficial members in 1953. In 1954, Sir Milton Margai was accorded the title 'Chief Minister'.

The 1957 Constitution was the one that widened the franchise for election to the legislature and ushered in a new electoral system in the Protectorate. This was the Constitution that brought the country closest to full, representative government. Most crucially, it brought with it universal adult suffrage.

THE EARLY ESTABLISHMENT OF POLITICAL PARTIES:

The General Election of 1957 was the first to be contested by four political parties; The Sierra Leone People's Party (SLPP) was the first political party to be formed in Sierra Leone, in 1951, The United Progressive Party (UPP), the Labour Party

Above President Ahmad Tejan Kabbah(L) receives the Staff of Office from Brigadier Julius Maada Bio(R) in 1996

Bottom Left Members of the Sierra Leone Army band at a march-past at the National Stadium on 1 January 2011



and the National Council of Sierra Leone (NCSL). In that election, the SLPP emerged as the clear winner and formed the government. The UPP with six seats formed the official opposition. The other two parties did not win any seats. A year later saw a new party formed by Albert Margai, Sir Milton's brother. By independence, this party, the People's National Party (PNP) had four seats in the House of Representatives. By the time of independence other parties had joined the political fray with the formation of the Independent Progressive Party (IPP), the Radical Democratic Party (RDP) and the Sierra Leone Independent Progressive Movement (SLIPM). The All People's Congress (APC), which would come to share domination of the party-political landscape with the SLPP was only formed on 11 September 1960, less than one year before independence.

Today, the APC and the SLPP dominate in most areas although the presidential and parliamentary elections of 2007 saw the emergence of a genuine 'third force' in the form of the People's Movement for Democratic Change (PMDC).

Left Bandmaster of the Sierra Leone Police Force band balances his staff; at a march-past at the National Stadium on 1 January 2011

Bottom Aerial shot of central Freetown





Far Left 2007 Presidential Election poster of SLPP candidate, former vice-President Solomon Berewa



Left 2007 Presidential Election poster of APC candidate (now President) Ernest Bai Koroma

THE FLAG, NATIONAL ANTHEM AND COAT OF ARMS:

With independence came a new flag (the tri-coloured green, white and blue) new National Anthem and a new Coat of Arms.

National Anthem - The anthem does not have an official name but is often referred to as 'High, we exalt thee' after the first words sung in the anthem.

The Flag - The National Constitution states that on the flag, the Green stands for agriculture, mountains and natural resources, the White Unity and Justice, the Blue for the capital's deep, blue natural harbour.

The Coat of Arms and the flag, were developed by the College of Arms (or Herald's College) in London, and were granted in 1960. The shield on the arms depicts a lion beneath a zigzag border, representing the Lion Mountains, after which the country was named. It also shows three torches to symbolize peace and dignity. At the base are wavy bars depicting the sea. The supporters of the shield are lions, similar to those on the colonial badge. The three main colours from the shield - green, white and blue - were used to form the flag. At the bottom

of the shield, the national motto (Unity, Freedom, Justice) motto can be seen.

There are many Sierra Leoneans who will tell you that neither the flag nor the Coat of Arms found a way of representing the nation's greatest natural resource; its people.

POST-INDEPENDENCE AND BEYOND: POLITICAL SUCCESSION

The post-independence political honeymoon certainly carried itself into the first General elections, which were won by the SLPP. By the time of the next General Election in 1967, the APC, which had been a fledgling party at independence, had built up strong support in the north and west of the country. Although both of the main political parties denied and continue to deny it, it was obvious to the neutrals that they were split and found their support along ethnic lines. Nevertheless, the parties acknowledged that they needed to appeal to the electorate with clear economic and social policies. Interestingly, in view of the fact that a few years later, it was the party that would go on to introduce a one-party state, the main battle cry of the APC in the 1967 election was its opposition to the introduction of a one-party state. This had

been proposed by Sir Albert Margai, who had taken over as Prime Minister following his brother's death in 1964. The two main parties were now led by men (Albert Margai of SLPP and Siaka Stevens of the APC) who practised a much rougher form of political antagonism than had ever been seen when Sir Milton was in power.

Although they fielded fewer candidates, the APC won more seats than the SLPP (32 seats as against 28). In the immediate aftermath of those elections, the seeds of future conflict in the country were sown. As six SLPP members opposed to the suggested introduction of a one-party state had contested and won seats as independents, the closeness of the result led to the SLPP claiming that these independents had returned to the fold and refused to concede defeat. Had they done so, it would have been the first time in post-colonial Africa that an opposition party had unseated an incumbent regime.

A day after the announcement of the election results and with the APC members on the verge of planning to take the reins of office, Brigadier David Lansana, the head of the armed forces, went on radio to announce that, due to the unstable situation in the country, he had suspended the constitution and declared martial law. That post-independence honeymoon was truly over. Sierra Leone had its first coup d'etat and a day later, it had its second: Lansana was arrested by fellow officers who set up the National Reformation Council (NRC). The NRC were themselves overthrown a year later by NCOs who handed power back to Siaka Stevens' APC. Stevens was to exact revenge by having Lansana and others tried and executed for treason. Their executions sent shockwaves throughout the

country and served to further widen the already-evident political ethnic divide.

As his intolerance of political opposition grew, it was no surprise when Stevens, who had opposed the introduction of a one-party state, became Executive President at the head of a republican Constitution in 1971 and in 1978, after elections that saw extensive violence and allegations of rigging by the ruling APC, imposed a one-party state. This is a pattern familiar to any follower of African politics. Stevens ruled for seven more years before handing power over to Joseph Saidu Momoh in 1985.

POST-INDEPENDENCE AND BEYOND: MILITARY RULE AND CIVIL WAR

On 29 April 1992, two days after Independence Day celebrations, J.S. Momoh was overthrown in a coup led by junior officers. This happened while there was a war that was to eventually engulf the whole country but which at this time was taking place many miles from the capital. The officers formed the National Provisional Ruling Council (NPRC) and were in power until 1996. It was not, however, a case of a smooth handover. In January 1996, Captain Valentine Strasser, who had been Chairman of the NPRC was ousted in a 'palace coup' by Julius Maada Bio. In spite of claims that one of the reasons why they had decided to oust Momoh was to better prosecute the war, an army-led government had been highly ineffective in stemming the advance of the rebel Revolutionary United Front (RUF) led by a former army corporal Foday Sankoh.

Strasser and the other young officers of the NPRC in fact seemed more concerned with making amendments that would have lowered the 40-

Below The main building of the International Criminal Court in Freetown



year age threshold, which barred all of them from contesting civilian Presidential elections. Eight months after assuming power, the NPRC had executed 17 fellow soldiers including the popular Colonel Yahya Kanu, who had been the most senior officer among those who had ushered Momoh into exile in Guinea. The men were accused of plotting to overthrow Strasser. The executions only served to cause greater divisions within the army.

The civil war (many Sierra Leoneans dispute the conflict being given this title) had started in 1991, when forces led by ex-Corporal Foday Sankoh had come into the country from neighbouring Liberia. Liberia was itself in the throes of a long civil war. In the 10 years that it raged, it is estimated that at least 50,000 people were killed. The war occasionally made the front pages of the world's press as being amongst the most brutal ever waged on the African continent.

There was a brief interruption in 1996, when elections were held, which were won by the SLPP now led by Ahmad Tejan Kabbah. Many opposed the elections with the mantra "Peace before elections, not elections before peace"; this, because the war was not yet over.

On 25th May 1997, the civilian regime was overthrown by the military, which installed Johnny Paul Koroma at the head of the Armed Forces Revolutionary Council (AFRC). The AFRC stated aim was that it would negotiate with the rebel RUF and bring peace. To bring this to fruition, they formed a coalition with the RUF. The regional economic bloc, the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), authorised its second military intervention in a regional conflict (the first had been in the Liberian civil war). ECOMOG (Economic Community of West African States Monitoring Group) was led by Nigerian troops. In a further round of blood-letting, in October 1998, 24 people accused of helping the AFRC oust the Kabbah government were executed, including Major Kula Samba, the only woman to be executed by firing squad in Sierra Leone's various bloody conflicts. This presaged the bloodiest day for the capital when on 6th January 1999, rebel troops overran Freetown leading to an estimated 3,000 people being killed. In October of that year, UN peacekeepers deployed to disarm the rebels instead found themselves taken hostage after a clash. Eventually, a peace accord was signed leading to the extraordinary situation where rebel leader Sankoh was brought into a government of national unity. No one had voted for Sankoh and there were severe doubts that his RUF would have won many votes in an election. Most extraordinarily, given that the RUF had been able to sustain their war by the sale of diamonds mined with forced labour (so-called 'blood diamonds'), Sankoh was made Vice-President and put in charge of the country's mineral resources.



Sankoh's time in government was not to last. In 2000, some of his supporters opened fire on protesters outside his house killing some of them. This led to Sankoh having to flee before being captured a few days later. He was indicted on 17 counts of war crimes by a UN-sanctioned court. He was taken into custody by British forces but died of a stroke before his trial could be concluded.

Above Looking east along Siaka Stevens Street in the centre of Freetown

A RETURN TO CIVILIAN RULE

The war was declared officially over in January 2002. Kabbah, who had won the 2002 Presidential Election could not contest the 2007 edition and his Vice-President Solomon Berewa was defeated by the APC's Ernest Bai Koroma. For the second time in the country's history, the APC had prevailed against a sitting SLPP Government. Although there was a brief hint of déjà vu, with Berewa reportedly considering a judicial challenge of the published result, he and the SLPP accepted that they had lost the elections and the APC were back in power.

The country had come a long way from 1961 but once again, there is optimism that the war is gone and that a brighter future lies ahead.



Marampa Iron Ore (SL) Limited (Marampa SL) is proud to stand together with the people of the Republic of Sierra Leone as this great nation celebrates its 50th year of independence.

We believe that the future of our business and this dynamic country are tightly intertwined. Marampa SL is actively progressing the development of its Marampa Iron Ore Project near Lunsar which will lay the foundations for a prosperous, sustainable future for us all.

E-mail: information@miolb.com

Web: www.capelam.com.au

Abundant Resources

On taking office in 2007, President Ernest Bai Koroma made his now-famous statement that in a bid to turn things around, he was determined that under his watch, he would “run Sierra Leone like a business”.

The statement was made in an effort to overturn years of under-performance by the Sierra Leone economy. One vocal supporter of the President’s vision has been the billionaire Philanthropist George Soros. Speaking via a videotaped message to an investment forum held in London in November 2009, Soros looked back to his visit to Sierra Leone in 2007:

“After meeting President Ernest Koroma and other members of the government during my first visit to Freetown, I came away convinced that Sierra Leone’s new government was serious about moving the country forward.

Each subsequent meeting has made me more confident that, despite many challenges, Sierra Leone has significant, unrealised potential and is open for business. If you look carefully, it is clear that the country has the genuine potential to become a leading African economy.

The foundations for a prosperous future are being laid in Sierra Leone right now. There is significant opportunity for high future returns on investment. Investing in and strengthening the economy in Sierra Leone and its neighbouring countries is crucial for building open societies

in West Africa. Sierra Leone is a stable state where good governance has taken hold. Through the Soros Economic Development Fund, I will maintain an interest in Sierra Leone for years to come.”

George Soros’ words were an echo of statements made down the years by Sierra Leonean officials. Take this statement by Mr K.A. Daramy, Sierra Leone’s Minister of Development addressing a six-day conference in Addis Ababa in November 1970, who having assured the delegates that the economy was sound, the society fine and the system of government based on a Western model said:

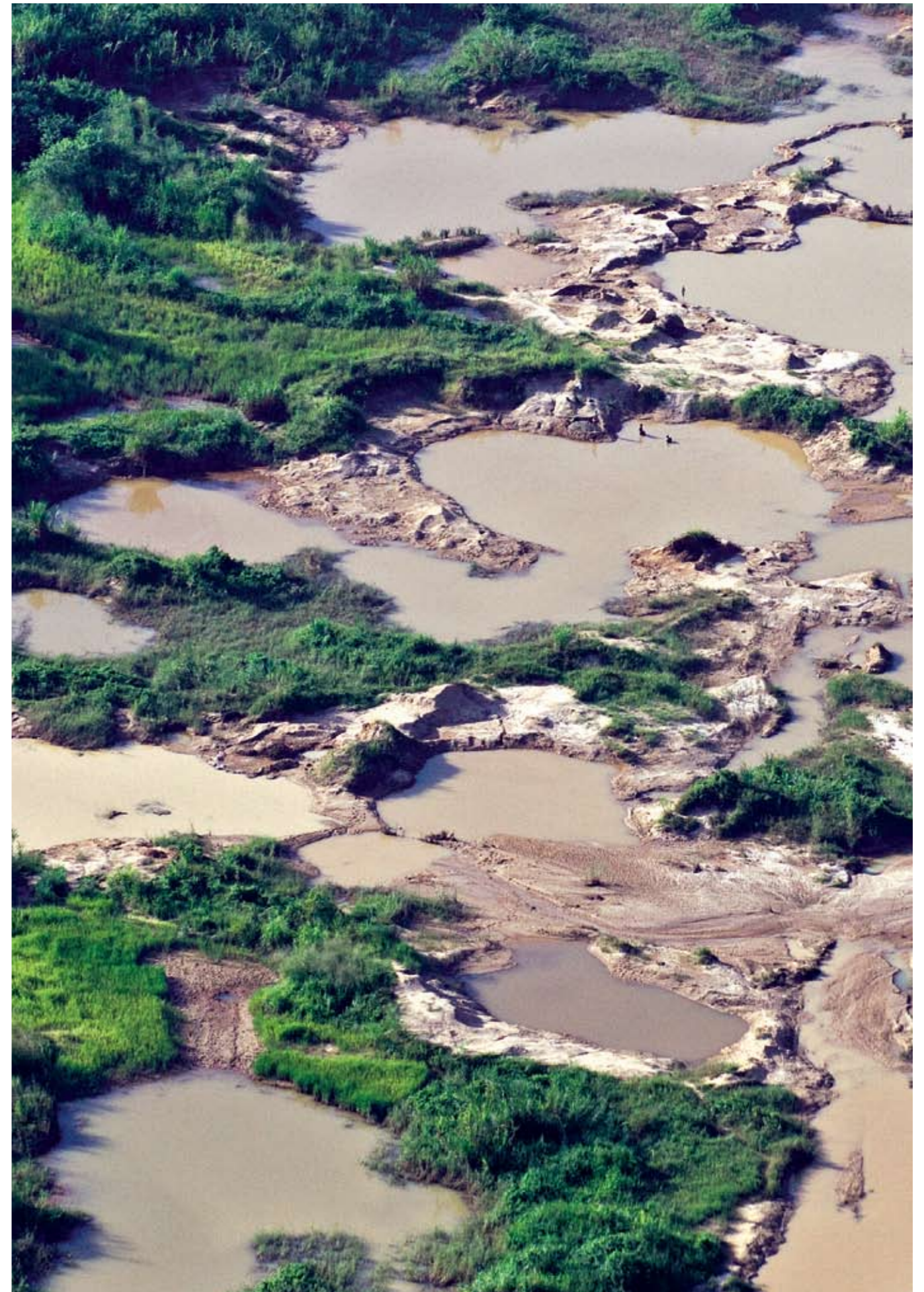
“...We therefore extend an open and warm invitation to all genuine business concerns in any part of the world to come



Left Alluvial diamond miners panning for diamonds in Kono District

Below Fishing boats at rest in Tombo Village

Opposite Typical scene of open-cast diamond mines in Kono District





Left A young boy selling bags of iced water in the streets of Freetown

The discovery of diamonds led to other surveys to uncover other mineral resources. So it was that platinum, rutile and bauxite were discovered in various parts of the country.

These discoveries led the government to launch an ambitious, £125m ten-year development plan. In 1965, it was realised that this was an unsustainable objective and the plan was amended to a five-year plan done in conjunction with the United Nations. The following year, the country had its first experience of having to resort to assistance from the International Monetary Fund (IMF). This had come about following the country's difficulty in servicing a national debt of £35m. It would not be the last time that the country would have to take such action with the resulting financial strictures attached to such remedies. In an effort not to have to again resort to such a course of action, the government announced plans to increase diamond and other mineral production and revenue.

Another programme introduced in the early 1960s was the formation of the Rice Corporation under the auspices of the Ministry of Trade and Industry. Alarmed at the increasingly large amount of rice being imported, a four-year programme was introduced with the aim of bringing 70,000 acres under rice cultivation in order to make the country self-sufficient in its staple food.

Under-investment in agriculture throughout the 70s and 80s led to the inevitable collapse of the country's once-thriving agricultural sector. This, despite pronouncements by successive governments that they took seriously the need to invest in this sector.

The civil war put paid to any thoughts of reviving the agricultural sector. The years of neglect were compounded by people fleeing the countryside for the relative safety of the big towns and cities.

Since the re-establishment of democracy and civilian rule, successive administrations have made strides to facilitate a healthier economic climate.

WHAT DOES SIERRA LEONE HAVE TO OFFER?

One of the first significant changes happened under the Tejan Kabbah regime when, in conjunction with the United Kingdom's Department For International Development (DFID), they launched an 'administrative barriers removal programme' designed to get rid of much of the red-tape encountered in doing business in the country.

Tourism: for the tourist, the country boasts 402 km of some of the most stunning, pristine and enchanting coastline imaginable. In a way, the fact that the country has never had to deal with mass

Opposite Top Right Diamond mine in Kono District

Opposite Bottom Right A selection of typical agricultural produce from across Sierra Leone



to Sierra Leone to invest and help us build our country. I assure you, on behalf of my government, that both capital and personnel will receive maximum protection..."

However, if you mention 'Sierra Leone' to someone with only a casual knowledge of Africa or of the country, they are likely to ask you whether the war is now over. If you were to push them further and ask what they considered to be the country's main source of wealth, you would probably get the answer "diamonds". Well, that may be true but it doesn't even begin to tell half the story of what the country has to offer.

While it is true that since diamonds were first discovered in the country in the 1930s they have been a major source of income, Sierra Leone has many other significant natural resources, which, if properly harnessed should see the country successfully emerge from the civil war, which so badly harmed the country in every way.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND DEVELOPMENT OF ECONOMIC POLICIES

In the immediate post-independence period successive governments tried to harness the income from diamond mining to the benefit of the whole country. The initial discovery of diamonds had been made in the Sewa River area in 1930. And, it soon became clear that other parts of the country held significant diamond deposits. Once this was known, the still-present fight to combat illegal mining and smuggling started. By independence, much of the smuggling had been eradicated. However, given the nature of these stones (small, easily portable), completely stemming the illegal trade will probably never happen.

tourism has ended up being a blessing: much of the country remains unspoilt and those in charge of promoting tourism have looked at countries with similar features and learnt lessons in what to avoid in order to keep the country pristine. Sierra Leone has the highest mountain in West Africa (Mt Bintumani), which offers stunning views from its peak as well as the opportunity to see buffalo, a species not seen anywhere else in the country.

For the eco-tourist, there are a huge number of flora and fauna unique to Sierra Leone to be studied: there are 31 (and counting) protected areas that are havens for the pygmy hippopotamus, tarpon fishing (amongst some of the largest fish that can be caught), a chimpanzee sanctuary, elephants (a reminder that in the 15th and 16th centuries, this country was home to some of the finest ivory carvers the world has ever seen) and many species of birds. Many first-time visitors go away asking the question “why don't more people know about this place?” As word gets out about the beauty of the country, this situation will change rapidly. For the ‘heritage’ tourists there can be no better country to visit given the country's pivotal role in both the expansion and the abolition of the transatlantic slave trade. African-Americans and those of African-Caribbean descent are more likely to find their ‘roots’ here than anywhere else – there are currently no less than 18 national heritage sites linked to this period of the country's history. Chief among these ‘heritage sites’ is Bunce Island, which has received a grant to rehabilitate it. In the colonial days, the country earned the title “the White man's graveyard” due to the Europeans' low resistance to malaria. For those who now visit and instantly fall in love with the country perhaps a new phrase ought to be coined: ‘once bitten, forever smitten’.

Agriculture: with some of the highest rainfall in the West African sub-region, the country is ideal for growing a large number of agricultural produce. The abundant rainfall makes irrigation easy. There are large tracts of land suitable for agriculture still being under-utilised. Some of the produce currently being harvested in varying quantities and which still require increased investment include coffee, cocoa, pineapples, mangoes, rice, ginger and palm products including palm oil, to name a few. There are opportunities to mechanise the production of these and more. With an estimated 5.4million hectares of arable land, the opportunities (and potential rewards) in this sector are enormous.

Extractive industries: it may seem that the mining sector is already well represented in terms of investors, but there are indications that there are many more untapped mineral resources (both precious and base metals) spread across the whole country.

Recent surveys have indicated that there may also be potentially significant deep-sea oil reserves. At the moment, as well as extensive large-gem diamond deposits, there are significant iron-ore deposits and well-developed bauxite and gold mining operations. Efforts by the government to ensure that the climate for these high-value investors is favourable are likely to greatly assist in bringing more investors into these sectors. Being a signatory to the Kimberly Process for diamond certification helps to ensure that illicitly mined diamonds are kept off the market. The iron-ore deposits discovered near Makeni in the north of the country are believed to be among the largest deposits ever located anywhere in the world at approximately more than 10 billion tonnes. Koidu, which already has some of the country's most significant diamond deposits, is also now an area producing large amounts of gold. Currently, minerals account for approximately 70% of Sierra Leone's foreign exchange earnings.

In 2010, the government expected exports of \$160m for diamonds, \$119m for rutile and \$50m for bauxite. Major players in the mining sector include African Minerals, which began operations in iron-ore mining in 2003, just one year after the official end of Sierra Leone's civil war. Also involved in mining are London Mining Plc and Sierra Rutile. The government continues to encourage more companies to ‘take the plunge’ and come into the mining sector, as all of the companies tend to be significant employers thereby by assisting the government's job-creation policies.

Infrastructure: The government made clear its view that there were certain sectors that were best run by the private sector and set about divesting government of these. There is an extensive programme aimed at encouraging investors to support the transportation and energy sectors. In 2010, the government listed 16 public enterprises that fell into this category. By November 2010, the concession to manage the country's main port had been signed with a French company, Bollore.

This is the full list of the 16 public enterprises scheduled to be privatised:

1. Sierra Leone Housing Corporation
2. Sierra Leone Produce Marketing Board
3. Mining and General Services Limited
4. Sierra Leone Road Transport Corporation
5. Sierra Leone Telecommunications Company Limited
6. Sierra Leone Airport Authority (Contract signed with French company, Bollore, Nov. 2010)
7. National Power Authority
8. Sierra Leone Ports Authority



Above An ‘Okada’
(motorcycle taxi) rider with passengers

9. Guma Valley Water Company
10. Sierra National Shipping Company Limited
11. National Insurance Company
12. Sierra Leone State Lottery Company Limited
13. Sierra Leone Commercial Bank Limited
14. National Development Bank Limited
15. Sierra Leone Roads Authority
16. Rokel Commercial Bank Limited

Marine Resources: as with the country's tourism sector, so too the marine industry has ‘benefited’ from a lack of capacity. This lack of capacity has ensured that the country's abundant fish stocks have not been depleted. In fact, one of the major challenges facing the authorities is having a strong enough marine defence capability to keep at bay illegal fishers from larger, stronger nations that stray into their territorial waters. With fishing expected to generate \$100m - \$200m sustainable revenue on an annual basis, it is another obvious significant area ripe for investment.

MANUFACTURING

The country already has some large manufacturers who have been established for a number of years. These include:

- The Sierra Leone Brewery – a joint venture between Heineken (which owns 83%), Guinness (11%) and PZ Cussons and local investors (6%). Incidentally, the ‘PZ’ in ‘PZ

Cussons’ stands for Paterson Zochonis, which was started on Bonthe Island, Sierra Leone in 1879 by George Paterson and George Zochonis, when they opened a trading post. In 1975, the company acquired the world famous Cussons Group Ltd. The company has gone on to make many other acquisitions since.

- Leocem – 100% owned by Heidelberg Cement, which has a grinding plant in Freetown employing 90 employees.
- Sierra Bottling Co – owned by the Equatorial Coca Cola Bottling Company, producing four million cases per annum.
- Seaboard West Africa – produces of flour. Established in 1964, with 0.1% owned by the Government of Sierra Leone.

The Sierra Leone Investment and Export Promotion Agency (SLIEPA) is the first port of call for investors wanting to find out information about investing in Sierra Leone and can be found at: www.sliepa.org

Investors are encouraged to ensure all their transactions are done through official channels to avoid the risk of being swindled.

With these vast, untapped resources and potential you wonder how long the country can continue to be an undiscovered investment destination. After all, George Soros must know a thing or two about investing!

The country really is ‘ready and open for business’.

A Fantastic Journey

Profile of Frank Timis, charismatic chief of African Minerals and African Petroleum

Few business leaders have a life story to match Frank Timis, writes Rupert Prior. Of Romanian descent, he started his working life, aged 16 years, as a labourer in Western Australia, prospecting for gold and diamonds. A decade later, he established his first mining operation and, evidence of his determination and drive, expanded his business into a group of rich natural resource assets worldwide.



Left 3D seismic boat used by African Petroleum

“Working from the bottom up, from zero” said Frank Timis, calling to mind his modest beginnings and early working years, “is the greatest experience as you see it all at that level. It’s a real advantage when the time comes to make strategic decisions.”

One of the top entrepreneurs in the UK, his adopted home, his continuing investment in Sierra Leone, in terms of both financial involvement and infrastructure initiatives, is crucial in a country undergoing intense change and redressing the imbalance after a period of political instability. Chairman of Timis Corporation, a multi-billion dollar holding of companies in the mining, oil and gas, life sciences and agricultural sectors, his affinity with Sierra Leone, the location of African Minerals Limited, Timis Corporation’s flagship enterprise, is pivotal to the success of the country. “Both African Minerals and African Petroleum want to share their resources to create a better world in Sierra Leone. Remember, we are guests in their country.”

Aim-listed African Minerals discovery in 2008 of Tonkolili iron ore deposit led to formal agreements, including an exclusive 99-year port and rail lease and an approved Mining Licence with the Sierra Leone Government. The 12.8 billion tonne JORC Compliant resource is the world’s largest, and African Minerals share in the global iron ore sector is set to markedly increase when hematite iron ore production starts later this year, to be followed by magnetite production.

Turning to the field of oil exploration, African Petroleum Corporation Limited, founded by Timis Corporation in 2003, is a West African focused oil and gas exploration and development company

with a market capitalization of approximately A\$1.3 billion, currently holding blocks off-shore in The Gambia, Liberia, and Sierra Leone. Further applications have been made to explore and develop blocks in the region. These blocks are situated along the same coastline as the billion-barrel discoveries of Anadarko and Tullow’s Jubilee oil field to the east, off the coast of Ghana, and Anadarko’s Venus Mercury oil field to the west, off the coast of Sierra Leone.

“By developing successful companies I can help communities release the wealth of their assets into the local society. In the case of Sierra Leone this is especially important” says Frank Timis, who is widely credited with introducing an ethical dimension to his endeavours. Working in company with government authorities, his efforts to improve infrastructure, fund school and scholarship initiatives, hospitals and emergency medical care, and to develop employment opportunities at local level, have proved invaluable to the community.

Cultural, environmental and charitable projects also receive significant donations, with particular emphasis on medical research for children and the sponsorship of youth-focused programmes.

“I’m putting a lot of heart into Sierra Leone. The children are bright and beautiful, and they deserve better. I want them to have the same opportunities and lifestyle as my own children, Frank and Patricia. Helping in this way is a reward in itself.”

To focus on work in progress, African Minerals, one of the largest private sector employers, is the leading sponsor of the Leone Stars, the national soccer side (football is unrivalled as the country’s favourite sport), and Frank Timis is the official

Right Frank among his workforce on the Pepel to Tonkolili rail construction

Below right Frank receives the UN designated IYPE award for ‘Most Significant Environmental and Sustainability Action Programme’ for African Minerals, the first time ever a mining company has received this award



patron of the Street Child of Sierra Leone charity. The charity’s aim is the reduction in numbers of vulnerable children living on the streets of one of the world’s most disadvantaged countries. Don Bosco, a Catholic charity based in Freetown, is another charitable organization to benefit from the encouragement of Frank Timis, who funded the Basic Mobil, a bus travelling daily to slums across the capital to collect isolated children, and bring them daily to the charity’s Don Bosco Fambul centre in Freetown.

A single-minded commitment to Sierra Leone has led Frank Timis to directly witness the deadly effects of malaria in a high-transmission area. By providing essential funding to London Pharma Limited (aka ProtoPharma), a UK medical research company, an anti-malarial spray is undergoing trial to help eliminate a disease from which an African child dies every 30 seconds. “In the fight to reduce this terrible toll” said the late Calvin J. Ross, Director of Development at the company, “the development of a new method of treatment for infants and children suffering from complicated malaria would not have been possible without Mr. Timis, who was prompted by his first hand experience of infants and children dying in Sierra Leone.”

Many institutional shareholders, who have invested in Timis Corporation since their earliest ventures, add their support to ongoing charitable efforts in Sierra Leone.

Equally deserving of mention is The Tonkolili Project, which currently employs over 4,000 people between operations and construction, of which 78% are local Sierra Leoneans. African Minerals hope that developments of Phase Two



and Three will increase the total number of people involved with the project. A project very properly given its due with the presentation in 2009 of the prestigious IYPE (International Year of Planet Earth) Award.

A prize acknowledged by the United Nations and awarded in recognition of the contribution of Timis Corporation to the sustainability of the earth’s priceless resources.

Looking to the future, Frank Timis said that “historically, in colonial times, Sierra Leone was known as the ‘Switzerland of West Africa’ and my hope for the country is that such a distinction will come again for all the deserving people of Sierra Leone.”

Foreign Policy Centre

As Sierra Leone prepares to celebrate 50 years of independence, the country finds itself thrust into a major foreign policy controversy that has been brought about by the stand-off in Cote d'Ivoire between the country's two "presidents" - Laurent Gbagbo and Alassane Ouattara.

President Ernest Bai Koroma and the presidents of Benin and Cape Verde have been asked by the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) to convince Gbagbo, the incumbent deemed by most of the international community to have lost the presidential election in November 2010, to step down in favour of Ouattara, widely believed to have been the victor.

That President Koroma has been asked to take part in this mission is eloquent testament to the high regard in which its African neighbours and the international community hold Sierra Leone.

Foreign policy constitutes a critical component of a country's conduct of public policy as it relates to other actors (both state and non-state) in the larger international system or the external environment. Altogether, foreign policy is a multi-faceted and dynamic process that entails constant flow of

information about the security-military, political, economic, cultural and institutional integrity of a state.

President Koroma's foray into the Cote d'Ivoire quagmire should not really be taxing if he takes into consideration the experiences of Sierra Leone in the not-too-distant past. After all, the stand-off and threatened military intervention in Cote d'Ivoire are issues that echo Sierra Leone's situation, where ECOWAS decided on military intervention.

The Nigerian-led ECOWAS intervention in 1998 to oust the Armed Forces Revolutionary Council created a lot of foreign policy problems. Chief among these was the circumvention of an international arms embargo against the regime of General Sani Abacha in Nigeria to provide weapons for the forces that removed the AFRC. This was a delicate problem for the newly elected British Labour government of Tony Blair, which was espousing an "ethical foreign policy".

After less than year in government, Labour realised that saying one thing and doing something different was the norm, rather than the exception, in foreign affairs. Sierra Leone had tested Labour's resolve on the issue of an "ethical foreign policy" and it invited criticism. But the Blair government weathered the storm.

Below President Siaka Stevens welcomes Cuba's Fidel Castro at Lungi Airport on his visit to Sierra Leone in 1972



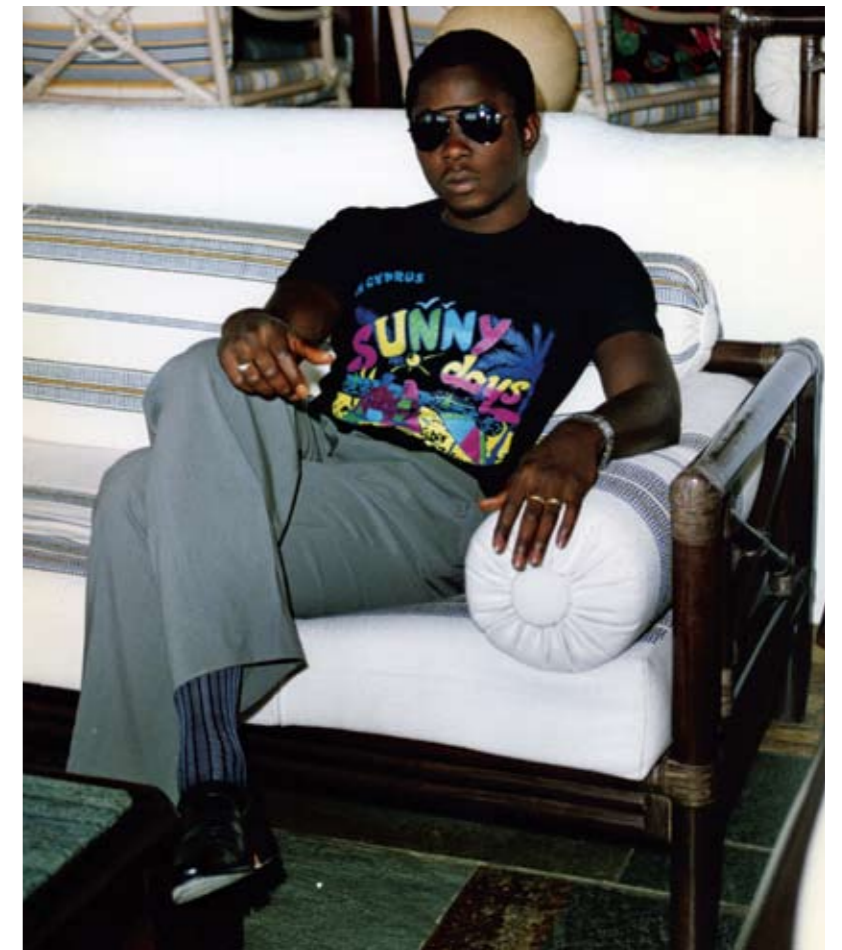
Over the years, Sierra Leone itself has been in the thick of foreign policy controversies in Africa - the thorny question of Angola's membership of the then Organisation of African Unity (OAU) in 1975 being a case in point. As the pendulum swung slowly in favour of membership - as African countries, one by one, recognised the MPLA as the legitimate government of the former Portuguese colony - Sierra Leone sat on the fence; there was stalemate.

Brigadier (as he was then) Olusegun Obasanjo, deputy to Nigeria's military ruler, General Murtala Mohammed, flew into Freetown to hold talks with President Siaka Stevens. After the meeting it was announced that Sierra Leone was no longer sitting on the fence - it had recognised the MPLA as the legitimate government of Angola, and that country was admitted into the OAU membership fold.

At the time, it was viewed as strange that Sierra Leone, which had always been at the centre of the liberation struggle (at least in terms of public pronouncements by the government), would be so reluctant to recognise the movement that had spearheaded the fight against Portuguese colonialism in Angola. After all, the alternative, UNITA, led by Jonas Savimbi, was backed by the South African apartheid regime that was wreaking havoc in neighbouring countries.

But Sierra Leone was not a country that had ever shirked its responsibilities or failed to give filial support when it came to the liberation of African countries from the final vestiges of colonialism and white minority rule. Scores of Congolese, Zimbabweans and South Africans received free secondary and tertiary education in Sierra Leone. The country had also been a haven for large numbers of Biafrans escaping the war in Nigeria. Liberation movement leaders breezed in and out of Freetown. Sierra Leone made regular contributions to the Liberation Committee in Dar es Salaam. As the 100th member of the United Nations, Sierra Leone backed the many resolutions that condemned apartheid and other forms of discrimination and neo-colonialism.

The basis of Sierra Leone's foreign policy with regard to Africa has been continental integration. It was in this vein that Presidents Siaka Stevens, William Tolbert of Liberia and Sekou Toure of Guinea came together in 1973 to create the Mano River Union to foster better economic relations among the three countries that shared borders. They were ahead of their time because this was two years before 16 West African leaders (including those of Sierra Leone, Liberia and Guinea) established the Economic Community Of West African States (ECOWAS) - primarily as an economic union that would eventually lead to a single market and currency convergence. However, there was someone who was ahead of even all of these visionaries: Sierra Leone's first Prime



Above Capt Valentine Strasser (head of the NPRC junta) relaxes on the rest day at the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting in Limassol, Cyprus (1993) (Courtesy Commonwealth Secretariat)

Minister, Sir Milton Margai, who died in 1964, had proposed the setting up of a free trade zone linking Sierra Leone, Guinea, Liberia and The Ivory Coast.

However, 15 years after the formation of ECOWAS, the hopes leading to its formation were dashed when Sierra Leone became the centre of a new development in international relations - that of a regional grouping intervening militarily in a member state to restore order. Liberia had gone up in flames at the end of 1989 when Charles Taylor, backed by forces opposed to Samuel Doe, launched an attack from Cote d'Ivoire against the Liberian government.

In 1990, the military rulers of Ghana and Nigeria, fearing (it was said) similar attacks against their regimes, decided to intervene militarily. From that moment, ECOWAS' economic integration remit was placed on the bark-burner as the organisation began a sustained period of fire fighting not only in Liberia but also in Sierra Leone and Guinea Bissau. Sierra Leone became the launch pad for the ECOWAS onslaught against Taylor's forces by allowing Lungi International Airport to be used by jets carrying out bombing raids in Liberia.

The rest is history. The ECOWAS intervention in Liberia created a precedent in international law: the



Right Her Majesty The Queen inspects troops on her visit to Sierra Leone in 1961

Below Sierra Leone's second Prime Minister, Sir Albert Margai (left) is greeted by Britain's Prime Minister, Sir Harold Wilson at the Commonwealth Heads Of Government Meeting, Marlborough House, London in 1965 (Courtesy Commonwealth Secretariat)

central role. Whether ECOWAS will achieve the desired result in Cote d'Ivoire is another matter - but Sierra Leone has acted true to form in matters relating to its foreign policy: peace and stability in Africa.

The formation and execution of Sierra Leone's foreign policy from independence to date has been one of continuity. The various administrations have broadly pursued a foreign policy based on core fundamental principles of peaceful co-existence, respect for sovereignty and territorial integrity, non-interference in the affairs of other states, regional economic cooperation and development; and strict adherence to the Charters of the United Nations and the African Union. But, as we have seen earlier, there has been a huge paradigm shift in international relations since the 1990s and Sierra Leone has had to reffthink its own foreign policy. The basic principles still stand, but these have had to be constantly re-negotiated in order to deal with the complexities that



have been thrown up in international relations since the end of the Cold War.

During the Cold War, Sierra Leone was part of the Non-Aligned Movement but there was a tendency to tilt slightly to the East. That was understandable, given the All People's Congress' close links with the former Soviet Union and China, two countries that provided numerous scholarships for Sierra Leonean students. This, though, did not affect the country's relations with the former colonial power, the UK, or the US and other Western and capitalist countries.

The APC government had to make two major decisions in the 1970s: first it severed diplomatic relations with Taiwan and recognised China in 1971, thus paving the way for Beijing to become a member of the UN at the expense of Taiwan; and then in 1973 diplomatic relations with Israel were cut in solidarity with the Arab world following the Yom Kippur War that saw Israeli troops occupy African territory in Egypt. But solidarity with the Arab world did not pay dividends because when Arab countries began using oil as a political weapon, prices escalated in the world market, distorting economies in rich and poor countries alike. Sierra Leone and other countries around the world are still suffering from the manner in which oil prices have remained exceptionally high. In all this, however, the thrust of Sierra Leone's foreign policy agenda should be understood in the context of advancing its national interests and values through bilateral and multilateral institutions guided by the vision of "...a better Sierra Leone in a better Africa in a just and equal world". From Sierra Leone's perspective, the greatest threat to peace-building and security is the prevalence of poverty. These concerns were reiterated in the 1999 protocol, where ECOWAS leaders acknowledge, in Article 25, that poverty alleviation and the promotion of social dialogue, are important factors for peace. It says member states undertake "to provide the basic human needs of their populations" and in Article 26, that they should undertake to fight poverty effectively in their countries and within the community, especially by

right of a regional grouping to intervene militarily in a member state to restore order. Certainly, this was a first for Africa.

ECOWAS symbolises the interrelationship between economic development, peace and security. This is made explicit in the preamble of its protocol relating to Mutual Assistance in Defence, signed in Freetown in 1981. It states;

"Economic progress cannot be achieved unless the necessary conditions for security are ensured in all Member states of the Community".

The linkage is also enunciated in Article 4 of the ECOWAS revised treaty, which states, for example, that

"members affirm and declare adherence to the maintenance of regional peace, stability and security through the promotion of good neighbourness and that the promotion of a peaceful environment is a prerequisite for economic development".

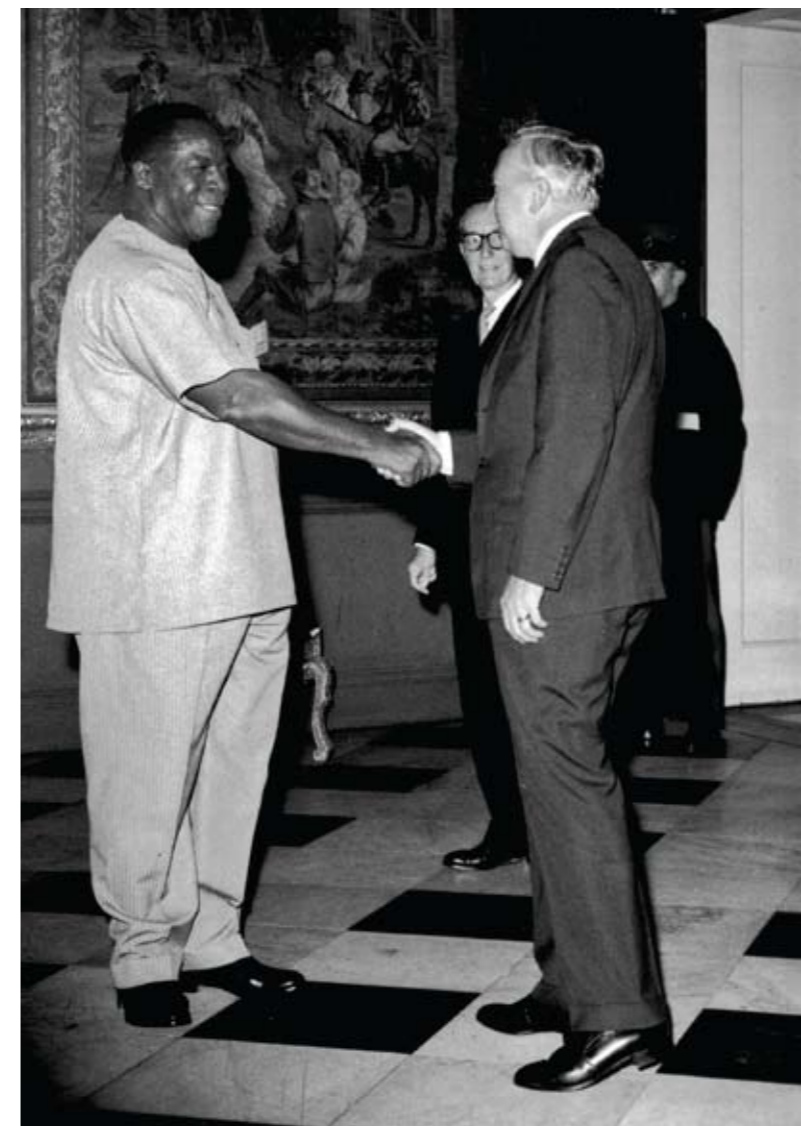
The establishment of ECOMOG (the military interventionist force sanctioned by ECOWAS) and its intervention in Sierra Leone must be seen in the context of this same fundamental principle. The mandate that ECOWAS received from the United Nations Security Council in resolution 1132(1997), under chapter VIII of the charter of the United



Above Minister of Finance, Mr CA Kamara-Taylor at a Commonwealth Finance Minister's conference in London, 1965 (Courtesy Commonwealth Secretariat)

Left Sir Abubakarr Tafawa Balewa, Nigeria's Prime Minister sits next to Sierra Leone's first Prime Minister, Sir Milton Margai at a Commonwealth Heads of Government meeting in 1963

Nations, to enforce and monitor implementation of the arms and oil embargo against the rebel-military junta was a landmark decision. It was an acknowledgement of the capacity of ECOWAS as an instrument of conflict resolution in the international system. It turned out to be one of the stepping-stones towards the peace process in Sierra Leone. Twenty years after the intervention in Liberia, ECOWAS is still grappling with the issue of military intervention and Sierra Leone has been called again to play a





It is also imperative that Sierra Leone enhances and maximises its relations with the African Union (AU) by creating much stronger economic integration across the continent, and build economies of scale to enable Africa to better compete in the global economy. African economies need to be revitalised to meet the challenges of the global economy. Africa can no longer be simply an exporter of raw materials but needs to produce high value goods for its own use and for export. Since independence, Sierra Leone has sought to play a full and active role in the international community. Sierra Leone's ties with the Commonwealth, the United Nations, the AU and ECOWAS are among its oldest, most diverse and most enduring. Relations with these latter two organisations have been largely determined by three considerations: first, the extent to which the programmes and objectives of these organisations have met the specific objectives and purposes of Sierra Leone's own foreign policy; second, the prevailing domestic situation in Sierra Leone, given the inherent asymmetry between the domestic situation and foreign policy projection and performance; and third, the prevailing global political environment. Despite the occasional upheavals within multilateral relations, the ties between Sierra Leone and these two organisations can be said to have been mutually beneficial over the last five decades. Sierra Leone's long-term interests are, and have been best served by sustaining and reinforcing these ties.



It is also important that Sierra Leone enhances and leverage its relations with the UN and the Commonwealth by firstly, wherever possible, working in collaboration and cooperation with other countries willing to share experiences, and secondly, by strengthening the country's economic base to increase its capacity for an enhanced strategic relationship with key multilateral institutions.

As has been earlier pointed out, the end of the Cold War plus globalisation have changed international relations inexorably, resulting in increasing complexity of international economic relations and in the world of diplomacy.

The question of defining the new diplomacy or post-modern diplomacy is one that most countries of the world are engaged with. After 50 years as a sovereign country, Sierra Leone needs to redefine its strategic national interest with greater focus on economic diplomacy. The centre of gravity for demand in the global economy has been shifting from the West to the East for some time now. That trend is accelerating and we have to shift too. In this increasingly complex interdependence of global politics, Sierra Leone needs to look further afield, respond to changes in economic power and must forge new and strategic relationships with countries

creating an environment "to provide investment and the development of a dynamic and competitive private sector."

Given the significant role ECOWAS played in peace enforcement, peacekeeping, and peaceful negotiation of the conflict in Sierra Leone, which has led to current peace-building activities in the country, it is important and probably inevitable that Sierra Leone places greater focus on ECOWAS and the opportunities it presents for regional integration and the economic development of West Africa.

Top Left Sierra Leone's High Commissioner to the UK, Mr Fitzjohn, accompanies Sir Milton Margai to a meeting at Lancaster house in 1961

Below Left Minister of Education, Ahmad Wurie shares a cigar and a smile with Soviet cosmonaut German Titov

Opposite Top Sierra Leone's Ambassador to Ethiopia, Dr Shirley Gbujama presents her credentials to Emperor Haile Selassie

Opposite Bottom Sir Siaka Stevens (second left, second row) at a Commonwealth Heads Of Government Meeting in Edinburgh in 1968



like Brazil, Russia, India and China (BRICS).

In this transformed international context, Sierra Leone should in multilateral forums and through bilateral negotiations, aspire to amend the rules formulated in the past by specific interest groups, whether political or institutional. This approach does not imply a confrontational stance towards the major economic powers of the world or toward international organisations such as the World Trade Organisation (WTO), the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the United Nations. Instead, it implies engaging them, with the active participation of other interested nations, in a thorough analysis of the systems and the rules created over time. This approach must not take the dimensions of an ideological struggle between the North and South, but should be an honest search for equitable solution to the problems of the present global situations. To sum up, Sierra Leone needs to develop a pro-active foreign policy approach within its means, to achieve strategic objectives, which benefit the people and the country in general as much as possible. Given the multi-dimensional nature of foreign policy, there needs to be greater recognition of the importance of increasing the stock of useful knowledge in formulating a new strategic concept of Sierra Leone's place in the world. What is missing is a think-tank or a Council of Foreign relations, composed of ambassadors and high commissioners, permanent secretaries, judges, members of parliament, academics and other eminent persons with relevant expertise and experience who can determine Sierra Leone objectives clearly and design implementation measures which are cost-effective and beneficial.

In a post-modern rules-based multilateral system of global governance, a more sophisticated, pro-active approach is an essential ingredient in



enhancing Sierra Leone's diplomatic and economic engagement, recognising that this is a long-term project, but that the rewards should be mutually beneficial and reinforcing.

The only thing that can be certain is that Sierra Leone, as ever, will play its hand pragmatically and always with the aim of achieving the maximum benefit for the country and its citizens. Experience and history have shown us that this is likely to be so.

Above Presidential candidate (soon to be President), Ernest Bai Koroma relaxes during the election campaign 2007

Below Sierra Leonean police officers on an exchange visit to Burundi




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Sierra Leonean Culture

A varied and beautiful landscape featuring verdant hills and valleys, surging rivers, spectacular beaches, intimate coves and one of the world's finest natural harbours strategically placed on the trade routes between four continents. An ethnic melting pot nine centuries and more in the making: migrants from 12th century West African empires, Fulani nomads from the Sahel, emancipated Africans from North America's revolutionary wars, rebelling Maroons en route to the New World, Portuguese traders, ethnic Lebanese fleeing Syrian pogroms, and of course the officers, adventurers and servants of the British Empire. All with their own rich heritage in food, music and dance, dress and beliefs.

A uniquely, strong tradition of religious tolerance and ethnic inter-marriage. An education system with a heritage unrivalled in sub-Saharan Africa, leading to the once oft-used sobriquet, the Athens of West Africa.

Is it any wonder that the result of all these ingredients is a vibrant, open and beguiling culture that is perhaps the best-kept secret on the West coast of Africa? And Freetown, gloriously energetic, bustling Freetown, nestling ribbon-like about the ankles of the "Lion Mountains" from which the country gets its name is a feast for the senses. From its markets to its marching bands, its beaches to its peaks, its clapboard houses to its churches and mosques, Freetown and its surrounding villages combine historical legacy with a modern African go-getting mindset.

MUSIC

The story of Sierra Leone's musical heritage begins with the story of outsiders. Settlers, seafarers and soldiers have all strongly contributed to our nation's musical heritage. The key reason for this is the nation's location on West Africa's Grain Coast, straddling both the Sahel (West Africa's grassland belt) and the tropical forest region. This has resulted in a wide variety of instrumentation and vocal styles that have been exported to other parts

of West Africa. Sierra Leone, along with its sister Anglophone countries Ghana and Nigeria, has been at the forefront of the transatlantic musical feedback cycle involving West Africa, the Americas and the Caribbean.

Temne, Mende, Susu and other people groups began moving into Sierra Leone from the 12th century onwards bringing with them the music styles now described in Sierra Leone as traditional "country" music (that is as distinct from 'city or urban music'). The traditional music of Sierra Leone is highly syncopated and rhythmic and relies heavily on percussion and "call and response" singing. Call and response singing helps facilitate storytelling through music and helps the community re-emphasise core values. Susu music culture in particular, relies heavily on the djalleba or griot, the traditional praise singer/poet/storyteller.

In the 15th century, Portuguese sailors searching for a route to the East and its spices, introduced the first guitars to Sierra Leone. With the commencement of the transatlantic slave trade, West African styles of drumming and music-making were taken to the Caribbean and the Americas where they evolved into new forms of music. In the Caribbean, one of these new forms of music was gumbay or goombay music. Gumbay originally referred to the



Left A stilt-walker at the National Stadium on 1 January 2011

Right Women at a Creole wedding, wearing ashobi in the form of prints



Below Members of a Freetown Band take a breather as they await the commencement of "March Past"

large frame drum played between the legs and used in mystical dances. In 1795 descendants of runaway slaves known as the Maroons rebelled in Jamaica. About 550 of them agreed to take the British up on their offer to relocate to Sierra Leone. They came in 1800 and - in an interesting example of the African music feedback cycle - brought Goombay music with them. In Sierra Leone, Goombay quickly evolved into an earthy, grassroots driven music form with a reputation for scandalous lyrics. The bands quickly became part of the weddings and wakes circuit. Typically a gumbay band consists of an ensemble of four or five drummers, a "saw" player (a serrated metal rod used to scrape a curved piece of metal) and a singer. These singers usually had powerful voices and sang in a declamatory style. Goombay turned out to be one of Sierra Leone's most successful exports as it was carried out to other parts of West Africa, reaching as far afield as the Congo.

Sierra Leone became a Crown Colony in 1808 and as a consequence Freetown became a major



British naval port and military base. From around 1819 onwards, five companies of the British West India Regiment were stationed in Sierra Leone. They played European songs and hymns to the public and in the latter part of the 1800s featured prominently in public Sunday concerts. These bands most notably influenced the rise of marching brass bands and early 20th century big band music in Freetown. As many of the citizens of the British Colonies of West Africa grew prosperous through trade, there was a strong demand from the westernised elite for ballroom-style dance music, especially those played by large "orchestras" and Sierra Leone was no exception. In the 1920s and 30s this saw the rise to prominence of groups such as the Triumph Orchestra, the Dapa Jazz Band and the African Comedy Group of Freetown. These played not just westernised music but also African influenced genres. By 1926, a Sierra Leonean, Asadata Dafora Horton, was the first African to give a performance at the Madison Square Garden.

By the late 19th century to early 20th century the genre that ultimately came to be known throughout West Africa as "high life" was emerging, based on the big band brass music enjoyed by the coastal elites and grassroots folk music such as Palm Wine music for the general masses. The interesting feature of this period is that Freetown, being a port city and the focus of repatriation of liberated slaves from all over West Africa, facilitated a fascinating musical exchange, featuring the Caribbean, Black America, and West Africa.

Around the 1940s Sierra Leonean Palm wine music and Highlife began to evolve in different directions. In countries like Ghana and Nigeria,

big dance orchestras featuring brass instruments playing swing and jazz influenced music continued to dominate. And Sierra Leone too, also had wartime bands such as the Mayfair Jazz Band, Melody Swingers and Cuban Jazz. However at this time, Palm Wine music became increasingly fused with goombay, Meringue and Calypso and this resulted in a new music form: Maringa. Although he was the undoubted tar of this music, Ebenezer Calendar did not have the stage to himself: between the end of the Second World War and Independence in 1961, many musicians came to the fore: some like Calendar came from a Palm Wine music background and had started off singing at events like weddings, wakes and funerals. These included musicians like Peter nar Lepet (literally 'Peter is a Leopard') - who popularised the song Yahwo Mammy Heavy So, Famous Scrubbs with "Poor Freetown Boy" and Waking Profit (so called as he made a good living from performing at wakes). Others were musicians like Ali Ganda and Tejan-Sie who had bands that were heavily influenced by Calypso. There was one thing that united these musicians though - in the run-up to Independence they all felt a responsibility to contribute by helping to foster a strong sense of national identity and unity. In fact, Ali Ganda wrote a calypso song called "Freedom, freedom Sierra Leone" and Bliff Radie Byne recorded "Victory for Sierra Leone / Independence Merengue". From Segbwema in the Southern Province emerged a poet and minstrel, Salia Koroma who wrote evocative songs about his homeland, including "Fishing for my father", "Yohmie" and "Mende Gendei".

Sierra Leone still had a healthy music industry, in the 70s and in to the late 80s and was dominated by the likes of Afro National and Sabanoh 75. By the end of the civil war however, the country's music industry lay devastated. Recording artists were few and far between and many of the most talented musicians had to leave the country in order to carry on recording.

In 1999, however, one of them came back. James Bangura popularly known as Jimmy B established Paradise Records, built a digital recording studio and signed up budding local talent. The initiative and sense of mission demonstrated by this one patriotic Sierra Leonean has been widely credited with setting the stage for the phenomenal growth experienced in the Sierra Leone music scene over the past five years, with artists he supported like Emmerson and DJ Saj coming to the fore.

Sierra Leone's music industry today is vibrant and highly productive. The challenge for the industry is now to maintain quality even as output increases. One group serves as a shining example on this front: The Refugee All Stars. Perhaps Sierra Leone biggest musical export of the 21st century, the Refugee



All Stars came together in the camps of Guinea - whence they had fled to escape the civil war. They have built on the success of their debut album, Living Like a Refugee (and the award winning accompanying documentary) to release a second critically acclaimed album "Rise and Shine".

That they have overcome adversity to finally get the recognition their music deserves is no doubt an inspiration to countless others desperate to emulate their success. Though easy going roots Reggae is their signature style, just a few minutes listening to their work demonstrates their commitment to instrumentalism and the legacy of the street music that Sierra Leone exported so successfully to other parts of Africa. They are totally grounded in the indigenous instruments and music most Sierra Leoneans would recognise - Gumbay drums, Kongomah, etc. In an environment where so many youths are hoping to make it rich quick, their hard work and discipline is truly an inspiration for the next generation.

WEDDINGS

Underpinning the Sierra Leonean wedding is the very strong idea of support. In other cultures, traditionally the family of either the bride or groom would bear most of the costs of the wedding. In Sierra Leone it is a bit different as the two families seemingly compete to "show themselves", i.e. give a good account of themselves. This approach dates back to the days when wedding parties would be hosted solely in private homes on both sides. Nowadays wedding receptions and parties are hosted at hired-out public venues but the culture of the marade ose (literally "marriage house") remains. In order for the family to have a successful wedding, the wider extended family and friends have to be rallied to support the cause. The prospective bride and groom would also nominate "godparents". These would be three of the most eminent men in the family (or father's circle) of the groom and three of the most eminent women

Above One of the many school bands that took part in a march-past at the National Stadium on 1 January 2011

Below Bethel Temple Nursery and Preparatory School at a thanksgiving march past

After Page Wilbefore Street, central Freetown in 1967



in her family or mother's circle for the bride. The godparents are effectively sponsors of the wedding and are expected to provide strong moral and financial support for the couple. In return, they have the honour of signing the wedding register as witnesses.

Weddings in Sierra Leone are practically two or three day affairs. The first day is the day before the wedding and is known as "Bachelor's Eve". Despite the name, both the bride and groom and their families celebrate Bachelor's Eve. If anything it is a much more poignant event for the bride's family as they are losing their "rose" - traditionally both bride and groom would move in to the house of the groom's parents after the wedding. Whilst the bachelor's eve is ostensibly to mark the last day of "freedom" for the couple, it is also the culmination of the logistical effort both sets of families have been involved in. The two sets of families will gravitate towards both marriage houses to help with last minute preparations of food, music, decorations and other practicalities. If either or both families can afford it, a whole cow, goat or sheep would be slaughtered in the morning (typically by Fulani herdsmen). The bride and groom themselves are not allowed to see each other. Loud music is played and a beautiful sense of togetherness and camaraderie permeates proceedings as the extended family pull together, catch-up on each other's news and reinforce their sense of familial identity. In the late afternoon and evening, a Gumbay ensemble might strike up. This is to formally announce to the local neighbourhood that "marade dey ya!" ("there is a wedding here") and that the Marriage House has started its "show". Even though it is not a formal ceremony, a lot of food and drink is available. The Gumbay performers are

encouraged with generous tips (in addition to their fee) and are plied with food and local firewater like sassman and omole.

MARCHING PAST

The March Past is an intriguing part of Sierra Leone's culture with roots probably in the British West India Regiments stationed in the country in the 19th century. It brings together three important aspects of Sierra Leonean culture: schooling, music and thanksgiving. Many Sierra Leoneans identify themselves first of all by their name, their school and then their age - schooling is the "tribal allegiance" for Sierra Leoneans and in Sierra Leone's cultural calendar, the dry season, October - May, is naturally "march past" season, with February and March particularly busy. Virtually every secondary school worth its motto now has its own brass band. The all girls and mixed schools are energetic latecomers to what was the preserve of the heavy hitting all-boys' schools. On a Sunday afternoon in February or March, kids, young and alone would rush out of their house at the approaching sound of the drums and trumpets and line the streets to "batoe" (vocally support) the marchers. The drummers in turn will put on a show and switch from European style marching music to playing rumba or soca. The drum major would delight onlookers by throwing his staff in the air and catching it. Alumni are also expected to turn out in numbers and one of the most endearing sights is seeing septuagenarians keeping up with the youngsters. Senior political figures including Presidents, past and present attend these ceremonies.

However, it's not just schools that have thanksgiving ceremonies and marches. Sierra





Above Dancers at the National Stadium launch the Golden Jubilee on 1 January 2011

Leoneans enjoy being members of societies and every one of these would often have an annual “Thanksgiving service” that may also feature marching. As you will see later, funerals often feature brass bands, as citizens of note would be sent off with a brass band leading a procession singing “Now Praise we great and famous men”.

FUNERALS & WAKES, 40 DAYS AND ONE YEAR

As Sierra Leone is a majority Muslim country, the deceased are usually buried within 24 hours. They will be washed and oiled, then dressed in their best clothes, ready for prayers. After that they will be buried. In Sierra Leone’s Western Area, and on its islands, however, funerals are community events with involved and drawn-out rituals to go through.

Traditionally one of the first actions is for mirrors to be turned towards the wall or covered with cloths at night.

Regardless of religion or standing the first major task for the bereaved is to arrange for the news of their loved one’s passing to be read over the radio. Every day, after the evening news, a show called ‘The Obituaries’ airs on radio featuring the reading through of a list of the recently deceased, including their family, close relatives and family friends. Depending on the time that has elapsed since the event, funeral arrangements will be announced. No detail of their career or achievement is read out however. If they are Christian the service is usually on the Sunday or Thursday that’s closest to a week after the death. It cannot be over-emphasised

how universal the ritual of sitting round the radio listening to the obituaries are, especially in the days when SLBS radio was the only broadcast entertainment available. By announcing the funeral on national radio, everyone is generally invited to join in the mourning, and, as can be expected, there are serial mourners who greatly ‘enjoy’ being around the bereaved.

As well as the typical arrangements, the bereaved also have to decide whether to go through a period of official mourning. If they do they will have to pick the mooning (mourning) colour, that is, the colour of the clothes they will wear in public during the period of mourning. The usual colours are white, grey, dark blue or black. Mourning periods range from 40 days or a year. Before the funeral service, the family will announce their choice of colour, and close family will wear that colour for at least 40 days.

DRESS OF SIERRA LEONE

Gara

Gara is one of the strongest and most evocative of shared symbols in a diverse nation. Everyone wears Gara, irrespective of ethnicity. Gara itself is the Mandingo word for the indigo dye found in traditional Sierra Leonean cloths. It is believed Gara was introduced into Sierra Leone’s Northern Province in the 19th century by Mandingo and Susu traders, passing their knowledge to the Temne – the largest ethnic group in the North and encouraged women take up the skill. The vast majority of 3,000 or so Gara practitioners are women. The Temne then spread the art to other parts of Sierra Leone.

Right A collection of Sierra Leonean faces reflecting some of the diversity and beauty of Sierra Leonean women



Below Traditional drummers at the Madengn Festival in Freetown on 1 January 2011

strong thread known as gara. Of course complex patterns may take days to sew into place. Some of the patterns are named (e.g. suru suru) while others are gender specific. Once this is complete sections of the cloth may be dipped into the combination of dyes, before the entire fabric is placed in the dye. This can be a tedious process. The excess liquid is then squeezed out, the stitches holding the patterns in place are cut and the cloth rinsed in cold water before being ironed with starch.

When Gara was first introduced to Sierra Leone, it was mainly used by chiefs and warriors for their ceremonial dress, wall hangings, burial cloths and gifts. With the passage of time however, everyone now wears Gara if they can afford it. It can be found as dresses, shirts, bedspreads, tablecloths and office uniforms.

The Gara itself is produced using an iterative process. The leaves are cut from the tree, washed thoroughly and pounded. They pounded leaves are then rolled into balls, dried in the sun and stored. The sight of Gara balls drying in the sun is quite a common sight in Sierra Leone.

Two dye baths or drums are then “set”. The pounded leaves are added to the first and various ingredients, such as the bark and roots of various trees (including the Mango and Broomstone trees) and a generous amount of caustic soda is added to the second drum, filled with water and boiled for six hours. The resulting brownish liquid is poured over the gara leaves into the first drum and left for three days until the liquid turns indigo blue. The process of “resist” dyeing the fabric can be quite complex, involving techniques like sewing, knotting, binding and applying different patterns using special dye. Many times the process starts with hand sewing patterns onto the fabric using a large needle and

Masks, Masqueraders and Devils Gara

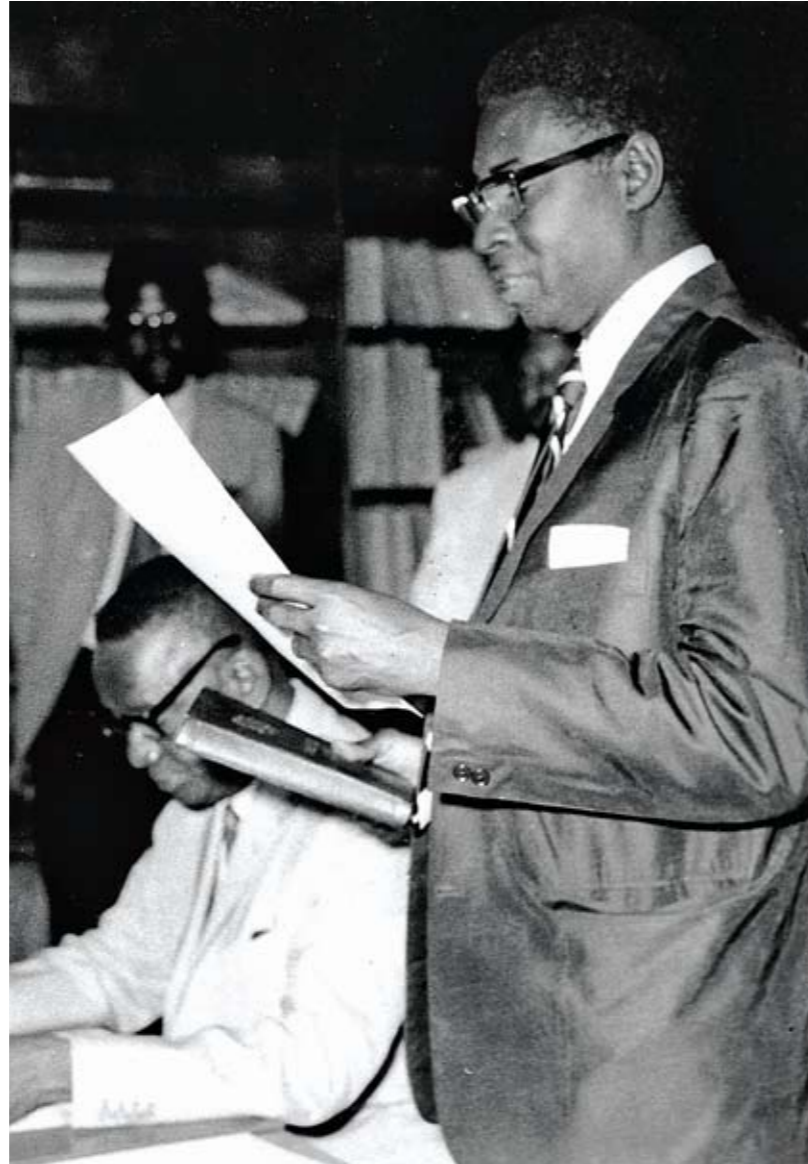
Masks symbolise Sierra Leone. They symbolise the mysticism of its culture and portray the values that diverse communities hold dear. They facilitate the exercise of certain rites, by helping the wearer play a dual role, straddling as it were the physical world and the mystical.

One of the interesting things about Sierra Leonean masks is that many of the most expressive and beautifully carved are for women, especially women leaders in the female secret societies, Bundu (or Sande as it is known in the South). The delicately carved features emphasise humility, modesty and wisdom and also help the wearers celebrate through dancing, the structures they have been initiated into.



Sierra Leonean Media

Sierra Leone could be said to be a nation that has always had a fascination with the media. Long before newspapers came to the country, the government publication *The Gazette* (which, in its time went through several name changes) contained news of official government business but was nevertheless very popular, particularly in the western area, where the emerging, educated elite wanted to be up-to-date with the inner workings of government.



Above Minister of Information and Broadcasting, Alpha Kanji Daramy (standing) takes the oath of office as Prime Minister Siaka Stevens (seated) listens

Africans. Although there was a great appetite for the newspapers, there was an insufficient audience to sustain them based on sales alone. Advertisements were not common at the time and so sales were the lifeblood of every publication.

When Bannerman's brother Edmund was given a custodial sentence for embezzling funds from a local magistrate in Ghana, he used the paper to defend his brother arguing

The country had an early start in this regard with the introduction of a printing press in the early part of the 19th century. By the 1860s just as Sierra Leone was becoming the education hub of British West Africa, so too were journalists drawn to the country.

The Sierra Leone Company, established by merchants, brought the first printing press from England to Sierra Leone in 1794. This was at a time of great competition among Europe's trading and seafaring nations. This first press, along with various buildings was destroyed in one of many raids by the French. Six years later, the Sierra Leone Company brought another press, which was used to publish what became the *Sierra Leone Gazette and Advertiser*.

As Sierra Leone's reputation as a place of sophistication grew, it attracted journalists from across Africa and the world. In particular, the founding of Freetown and the reasons for its existence (as the 'Province of Freedom') attracted writers from the worldwide African Diaspora. So it was that William Drake, a West Indian founded the *New Era* newspaper. F.A Belgrave was publishing the *African Interpreter and Advocate* and Charles Bannerman the *Sierra Leone Weekly*. Bannerman, was a Scottish-Ghanaian (his father Scottish, his mother Fanti). At this time newspaper publishers felt emboldened to be politically outspoken and covered topics such as racism, colonialism and the rights of

that had he been a white man, the case would never have come to court. One of the greatest of Sierra Leonean patriots, Isaac Theophilus Akuna Wallace-Johnson (I.T.A Wallace-Johnson) who had started the West African Youth League, joined the fray by starting *The African Standard*, in 1939, the same year the government-run *Daily Mail* was started. The latter paper certainly outlasted *The Standard*, though it too, had to bow out around 1998.

It has always surprised those from outside Sierra Leone that a country with a supposedly low literacy rate should have so many newspapers. At its height, there were up to 40 newspapers registered throughout the country. This figure is deceptive, however as many had irregular publication schedules and would sometimes not be published for weeks.

In the 1950s and 1960s, the press continued to be outspoken and vibrant. This continued until the mid-to-late 60s, when journalists started to feel the weight of government bearing down on them when they proved to be too critical. For a long time, this had the effect of blunting the pens of all but the bravest journalist. Political cartoonists, used to lampooning those in power, seemed to vanish overnight.

Below A typical local radio station set-up



NEWSPAPERS

In keeping with the information age, most of the larger newspapers have an Internet presence, allowing them to reach out to Sierra Leoneans across the world. There follows a list of the regular and not-so-regular newspapers in the country:

- African Champion
- Aureol Times
- Awareness Times
- Awoko
- Christian Monitor
- Cocorioko
- Concord Times
- The Democrat
- Evening Scoop
- The Exclusive
- The Focus
- ForDiPeople
- Independent Observer
- Kallone
- New Citizen
- The News
- New Storm
- New Vision
- The Patriotic Vanguard
- Peep
- The Pool Newspaper
- The Post
- The New People
- Salone Times
- Sierra Herald
- Spectator
- Standard
- Standard Times
- The Trumpet
- Unity
- We Yone

ON-LINE PUBLICATIONS

- The Critique Echo Newspaper : critiqueecho.com
- Freetown Daily News : freetowndailynews.com
- The New Daily Nation : thenewdaily.com
- The Sierra Leone Telegraph : thesierraleonetelegraph.com
- Sierra Update: sierraupdate.col.uk

If you walk the streets of the capital in 2011, you would get a deceptive picture of the state of newspapers in the country as you are accosted by young men with what looks like 15 or so newspapers draped across their arms for sale. It is still the case that there are newspapers with affiliations to particular political parties but there are many that remain politically neutral. So outspoken has the press been at times that Sierra Leoneans are always surprised to see the country at the wrong end of data about lack of press freedom. At times, it is difficult to see how much freer they could be!



Above A selection of magazines on sale at a street-side vendor in Freetown

RADIO

Wired radio (requiring an aerial and as distinct from 'wireless' radio) was introduced into the country in 1934 with the founding of the Sierra Leone Broadcasting Service (SLBS). At its founding, it was the first English language radio broadcaster in what was then known as British West Africa. From those early times, radio carried a large dose of foreign news, making the Sierra Leonean listening

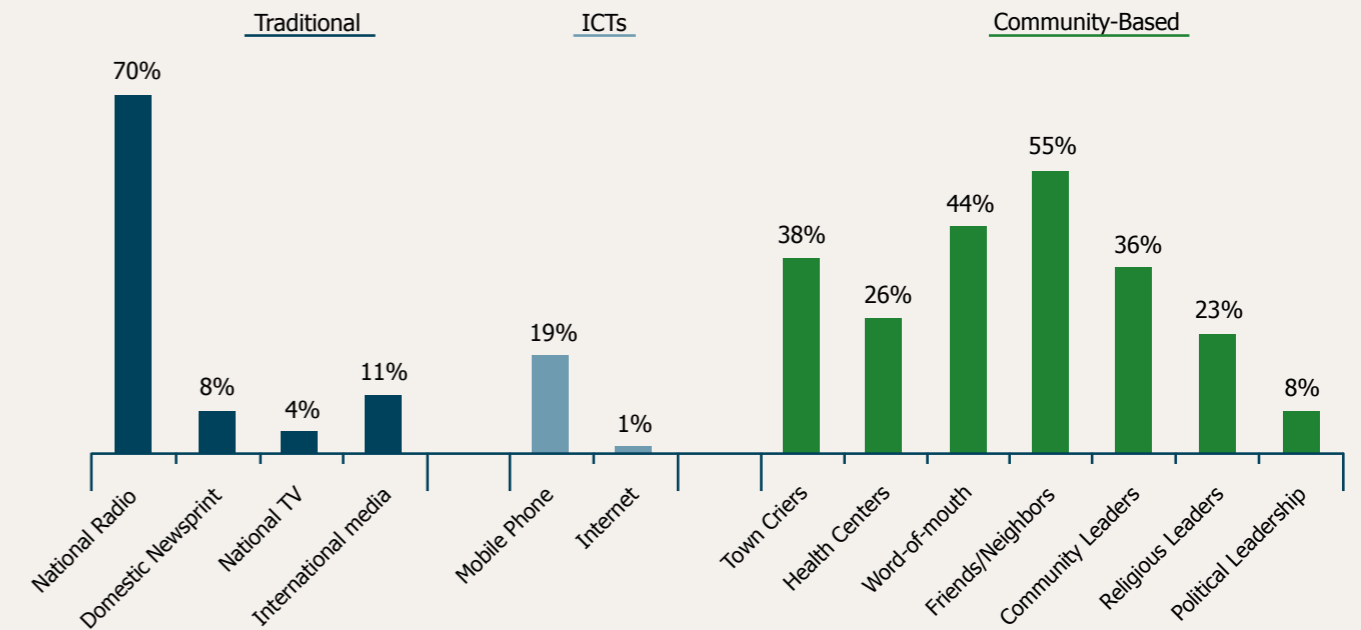
RADIO STATIONS

- SLBC-the government-run national radio station, based in Freetown and which has nationwide coverage
- Capital Radio 104.9 – private station in Freetown
- Believer's Broadcasting Network (BBN) FM93.0 – private station in Freetown
- Sky FM106.6 – private station in Freetown
- Radio Democracy 98.1 – private station in Freetown
- Voice of the Handicapped - private-run radio station for disabled but attracts audience nationwide
- UN Radio 103.0 - UN-run private station in Freetown
- Radio Tombo 96,0 - private station in Freetown
- Radio Citizen 103.7 private station in Freetown
- Radio Freetown 90.6 private station in Freetown
- Kiss FM 104 - private station in Bo (and the first of the independent broadcasters)
- Radio New Song 97,5 - private station in Bo
- Eastern Radio 101.9 - private station in Kenema
- Radio Mankneh 95.1 - private station in Makeni
- Radio Gbap 91.0 - private station in Kenema
- Koidu Radio Station private station in Koidu
- Radio Bintumani 93.5 - private station in Kabala
- Radio Modcar 93.4 - private station in Moyamba
- Radio Moa 101.5 - private station in Kaihahun
- Radio Kolenten 92,4 - private station in Kambia
- Radio Bontico 96-private station in Bonthe

Bottom Left Prime Minister, Siaka Stevens (right) on his return from a foreign trip, shakes hands with Minister of Information and Broadcasting Alpha Kanji Daramy, as deputy Prime Minister, S.I. Koroma (left) looks on (1968)



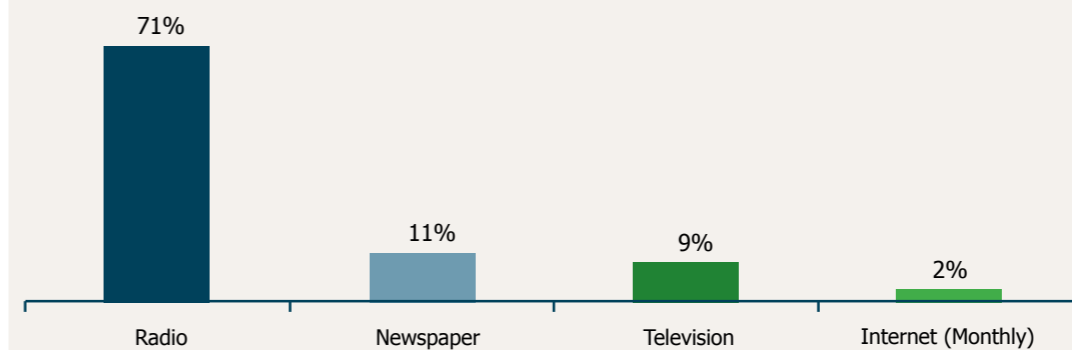
Sierra Leone: Most Important Sources for information
Percent who said that this source is their most important for information



Sierra Leone 2008: survey of adults (15+) n=2009

Sierra Leone: Media Use

Percent of those who said they used the following media devices/technologies in the previous month.



Sierra Leone 2008: survey of urban adults (15+) n=2099

Above and Left Graphs – media use in 2008



Above Relaxing in a traditional hammock

audience one of the most well-informed anywhere.

The BBC World Service remains popular in the country. For many years, although there was officially one broadcaster within the country, Sierra Leoneans had always been able to listen to radio stations broadcasting out of neighbouring Guinea and Liberia.

Whereas for many years, listeners in the country had to be content with listening to programmes in English or the occasional Krio broadcast, the scope widened to the point where, by the 70s and 80s there were broadcasts in all the major local languages.

Today, there are radio stations that broadcast exclusively in almost all the main local languages.

The majority of stations are independent and there are also many with a religious bent, others that see themselves as leading the fight against corruption and others that see their remit as pure entertainment. There is something for everyone!

A 2007 survey showed that 85% of the nation had access to a radio and a staggering 72% said they listened on a daily basis.

TELEVISION

With the introduction of television in 1963, only those in and around Freetown were able to benefit from the signal. Television was run by the state broadcaster SLBS and the TV 'franchise' was eventually extended nationwide 15 years after it was first introduced in the western area.

In the early days of television, there was a mix of local and imported content, mainly from the UK and USA. It was with some amusement and not a little annoyance that, in the late 1960s, Sierra Leoneans in the UK found out that had already seen the end of the series 'The Fugitive', weeks before it was seen in England!

It has to be said that for many, foreign satellite channels remain the most popular fare of their TV diet.

Independent TV channels have tried but none have managed a sustained presence as yet.

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L I M I T E D

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Tourism and Leisure

Sierra Leone, Africa's hidden gem, has surprised and beguiled visitors travelling "off the beaten track" for centuries. Since welcoming its first accidental European visitors, the 15th Century Portuguese, Sierra Leone is one of those countries that still confers on first-time visitors the wonderful sense of adventure and of being the first time "discoverer". "How is it that nobody else has been here?", is the typical response of today's discoverers.

During its tourism hey day in the late 1970s and 80s, Sierra Leone typically welcomed about 40,000 visitors a year, which though small compared to numbers attracted by other countries in the region, suited the nation's profile very well. Sierra Leone has never really had an appetite for mass tourism, preferring instead discerning visitors who want to visit because of a genuine interest in Sierra Leone. Perhaps this explains why visitors are often so struck by the attitude of the typical Sierra Leonean to foreigners: it's not just that they're friendly - other nations are friendly as well - Sierra Leoneans feel it is their responsibility to spoil foreigners and treat them as they would their personal guests. And as good hosts they will go the extra mile to ensure that their guests have a great time in the country. Sierra Leoneans also have a genuine curiosity about guests that may not always be apparent in so-called mass tourism destinations. Add to all this the natural charm and cheeky wit, visitors are made to feel quickly at home.

In addition to the vibrancy of its people and culture, Sierra Leone's unique selling points include its ecological diversity and its historical heritage sites. Even as the country exploits its potential to greatly increase earnings from tourism, the emphasis is on earnings rather than visitor numbers in order to balance the impact of infrastructural development with the necessity for preservation and conservation.

It cannot be emphasised how much Sierra Leone has to offer beyond Freetown and its fabled beaches. A few hours' journey from Freetown, inland or along the jagged coast, yields great rewards. There are lush forest and game reserves teeming with a wide variety of wildlife including



Above Passenger boats pull in to Government Wharf, Freetown

hippos, pygmy hippos, leopards, crocodiles, buffalo elephants and hundreds of species of exotic birds and butterflies. Many of these are either threatened or near-unique to Sierra Leone. The seas off the coast are among the most under-fished in the world, yet are also home to threatened species of turtle and wading birds. For those who have never associated Sierra Leone with tropical islands, off its coast lie romantic castaway islands with intriguing names like Turtle, Plantain, Sherbro and Banana. Island hopping in Sierra Leone combines aquatic sports like diving and snorkelling with the opportunity to discover the rich history and cultures of the islands and their fishing communities. Sherbro Island, Sierra Leone's largest is the sports fisherman's dream: the tarpon and other game fish that have been landed there have broken several world records. Sierra Leone's islands are not just in the Atlantic however: many islands are tucked away in the middle of its broad rivers. These include Tiwai Island, one of the most significant and ecologically diverse wildlife sanctuaries in the world, and Bunce Island, fought over by maritime powers for centuries and whose slave castle, poignantly, was featured in the genealogy of many North Americans. Inland, there are picturesque villages showcasing traditional African crafts unique to Sierra Leone such as Gara

Right One of the many species of butterfly to be found around Sierra Leone

Below Bureh Beach on the Freetown Peninsular

dying and country cloth weaving. In the east, the Bintumani Mountains, West Africa's highest, provides great hiking and breathtaking views.

Yet, the joys of the Freetown Peninsula are not to be sniffed at. Freetown is funky and vibrant, with a great nightlife, bustling markets, colonial era architecture and of course, 40 kilometers of pristine, palm-fringed beaches, which, in stark contrast to packaged holiday destinations are often almost empty, with only weather-worn fishermen and exotic birds for company. The very definition of that oft-overused term, "unspoilt", Sierra Leone in every way is the tropical paradise with something for everyone.

Bounded by the Republics of Guinea and Liberia to the north, east and south respectively and the Atlantic to the west, the West African nation of Sierra Leone is barely six hours flying time from London or about five hours from Paris or Brussels. It comprises of provinces, simply named: Northern, Southern, Eastern and the Western Area. Sierra Leone has four physical regions. Travelling east from the Atlantic coast, the country features a belt of coastal mangrove swamps, broken up by the mountainous Sierra Leone Peninsula. The Mountains which gave Sierra Leone its name are volcanic in origin and rise almost straight off the beaches - the only place on the west coast of Africa where mountains are close to the sea. The coastal swamp itself gives way to a plain about 60 -100 miles wide. Further east there is an upland plateau rising to the mountainous East which is dominated by two mountain ranges, the Sula and the Loma Mountains. The Loma Mountains contain West Africa's highest peak, Mount Bintimani, also known as Loma Mansa.



The climate is tropical and humid and features two main seasons: the Dry/winter season lasts from November till April and the Rainy/summer season from May till October.

The main entry point and gateway to Sierra Leone is Lungi Airport. Using the airport can be quite a challenge, but facilities have improved significantly in the past decade and more development and a comprehensive facelift project are earmarked.

The airport is on the north side of the extremely wide Rokel estuary (also known as the Sierra Leone River) which forms one of the largest natural harbours in the world. This avails dramatic views of Freetown and its mountain backdrop for incoming air passengers. Getting passengers from the airport to the mainland in reasonable time and comfort has been a logistical and transportation challenge over the years, in fact, this used to be a white-knuckle adventure in its own right. These days there are a lot more choices in getting across.



The ferry and helicopter services to Kissy Ferry Terminal and Aberdeen Heliport in the east and west of Freetown respectively have improved and in addition, there are now water taxi services offering very comfortable, high speed crossing of the estuary to terminals on the Freetown bays.

The seaside suburb of Aberdeen features a concentration of large hotels and resorts and is within a stone's throw of Lumley beach. As a result it has its own dedicated heliport and water taxi terminal. For those opting to cross the estuary by helicopter, the view of Aberdeen and Lumley Beach, at sunset, with Freetown cascading over multiple hills to the east is indeed a sight for sore travellers' eyes and is a welcome that has to be experienced.

There is currently a programme of road building and improvement underway in both the Peninsula and the Provinces, and many roads are in the process of being upgraded or yet to be upgraded. For independent travellers therefore, perhaps the most flexible and versatile method of travel to the interior from Freetown remains a hired 4x4 and a local guide. There are regular Government Bus services to the Provinces from

the Bus Station on Wallace Johnson Street. To visit one of the islands off the coast, a boat can be hired from the Aqua Sports Club in Murray Town, just across Cockle Bay from Aberdeen. There are also shuttle speedboat services between Kent Village, at the southern most point of the Peninsula and Banana Islands.

The past 10 years have seen a flurry of construction in the sector, with many new hotels and guest houses. The majority of these are located in the Freetown Peninsula. Overall, demand for beds is strong, with hotels being over-subscribed in December and April and under-subscribed during the rainy season months of July, August and September.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR SIERRA LEONE TOURISM

As Sierra Leone reaches its 50th anniversary, the opportunities now exist for it to truly capitalise on its considerable tourism assets.

The global economy is undergoing a period of recession and re-alignment, including the tourism

Below A man enjoys the famous Charlotte Falls, near Freetown



Right The hills on the approach to Makeni, Northern Province



sector, where increases in fuel duty will impact fare prices. In spite of this, tourism will remain one of the largest sectors of the global economy and the number of countries for whom revenue from tourism is vital will increase.

In this environment, a small, compact country like Sierra Leone with its huge diversity in fauna, flora, vegetation and terrain combined with a strong historical heritage puts it in prime position to take advantage of several niche sectors of the industry. The main niche tourism sectors Sierra Leone could exploit include:

Heritage/Roots/Genealogical

Genealogy is currently of major interest in many countries of the world, particularly in the West, which has seen major population shifts over the past three - four centuries. Many people from all walks of life are fascinated with their ancestry. In North America, many African Americans and Afro-Canadians want to retrace their ancestors' journeys back to Mother Africa. Sierra Leone has been shown to be the most likely origin for the ancestors of African Americans, and in fact shows up in DNA testing more often than any other African country. This is due to the fact that rice planters from Sierra Leone were much in demand in South Carolina and Georgia and from there spread all over the Southern United States and beyond. The Gullahs, a uniquely homogenous group in South Carolina and Georgia share so many traits with today's Sierra Leoneans that then President Momoh visited in 1988, after which there have been three "homecoming" tours by the Gullahs that have captured media attention.

However, due to the richness of Sierra Leone's

national archives and other heritage sites, British, Caribbean and other Europeans interested in their nations' colonial history will be attracted to Sierra Leone. For example, many Caribbean soldiers, especially from Jamaica and Barbados served in the British West Africa Regiment and made Sierra Leone their home after retiring from the Regiment.

Finally, it is not just the Gullahs and other African Americans that will be interested in homecoming. As transportation and the cost of travel to Sierra Leone improves, first, second, and third generation Sierra Leoneans will be interested in coming back and renewing links with country.

Eco-Tourism

In terms of biodiversity, Sierra Leone is second to none. Eco-tourism and sustainable tourism are now firmly on the Sierra Leone Government's agenda, and the sanctuaries and wildlife reserves at Gola, Tiwai, Outamba Kilimi and Tecugama add variety and interest. Further development is planned for other reserves and new sites are being currently being investigated. The strategy definitely involves an increase in beds and consequently visitor numbers, but with an emphasis on the right mix of development so that fragile ecosystems are not harmed.

High End Tourism

This speaks for itself. Mass tourism does not quite appeal in Sierra Leone, and given the fragility of the environment, does not score high enough on the sustainability test. The focus of the Ministry of Tourism is therefore on earnings rather than numbers.



Gap Year/Volunteer Tourism

This is an increasingly popular sector of the industry. Many gap year students and full time workers wanting to do something different are now looking to combine travel with using their skills in development or eco-tourism projects. As a developing nation, Sierra Leone has plenty of these sorts of projects and would benefit immensely from what can be more accurately described as 'win-win tourism'.

Adventure/Active Tourism

The appeal of this form of tourism is that it can happen during the Rainy Season and in parts of the country that have little or no infrastructure. In addition, Sierra Leone's terrain is suitable for tourism products designed around mountain biking, canoeing, scuba diving, mountain climbing and sports fishing. By designing creative products, tourists who want to "do something different" or venture off the beaten path will be more deliberately catered for.

Conference Tourism

This will require sustained investment in improved conferencing facilities. Given the assets boasted by Sierra Leone's tourism, there is an incredible opportunity for overseas investors.

Sustainable tourism

This is not just about attracting visitors from overseas. The key is to encourage the 5.5 million resident Sierra Leoneans to travel around and discover more of their own country. Many Sierra Leoneans have not even heard of places like Turtle Islands, let alone visit there. As domestic tourism develops, the country would be less reliant on the ebb and flows of the global tourism economy.

THE CHALLENGE FOR THE NEXT 50 YEARS - CONSERVATION, PRESERVATION AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

Conservation goes hand-in-hand with ecotourism and Preservation goes hand-in-hand with Roots tourism. Conservation and Preservation are therefore two priorities for Sierra Leone society and Government that have been attracting a lot of focus, especially with the remedial action that was necessary after the widespread damage and destruction caused by the Civil War.

Conservation is a relatively new concept since the country's primary conservation organisation, the Conservation Society of Sierra Leone, was only formed in 1986. However the Society with its partners and friends have done a superb job

Above The replica of the ship 'La Amisat' on its visit to Sierra Leone in 2007



Above Bumbuna Falls Hydroelectric Power Plant – Largest Hydro Dam in the world: Commissioned by President Koroma on Nov 6th 2009

Right Masiaka-Bo Highway Project – Commissioned by President Koroma; to improve access between Freetown and the Southeastern part of Sierra Leone

The Bumbuna Falls Hydroelectric Power Plant

The Bumbuna Falls Hydroelectric Power Plant is located on the Seli River, some 200 Km northeast of the capital city Freetown. It is the first major hydropower development in the country's history. The dam, intake, multipurpose tunnels, spillways and power house are the main project components of this hydroelectric generation scheme at Bumbuna Falls with a first phase installed capacity of 50MW and a 161kV transmission line, 200 Km long, connecting Bumbuna to Freetown.

Thanks to the dedication of HE, the President, the completion of the Bumbuna Hydroelectric Power Plant in October 2009 was an important moment for Sierra Leone, where only five percent of the population are on the grid. The lack of power has in the past represented a major impediment to Sierra Leone's economic growth, particularly in the industrial and service sectors. The completion of the first phase of the project brought a reliable supply of more affordable power to Sierra Leone in an environmentally and socially sustainable manner, reducing reliance on a multitude of expensive and polluting private generators. Future hydropower generation on a large scale, under Bumbuna 2, could see electricity supplied to neighboring countries,



generating export earnings for Sierra Leone, and fostering regional integration.

The Masiaka-Bo Project

The Masiaka-Bo Project was funded by the European Union and the Government of Sierra Leone. It consisted in the rehabilitation of 168 Km of Road connecting Freetown to Bo through Masiaka and was completed in March 2010. The Masiaka – Bo Highway is a Class 1 Road, part of the Trans-West African Highway which will link all West African States allowing free and easy movement of goods and people. This infrastructure will boost many activities located along the road corridor, especially in the field of agriculture, carpentry, furniture makings etc. opening sales and marketing opportunities as well as facilitating imports by making it possible to swiftly reach the port and the airport.

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to be demonstrably linked with the benefits of eco-tourism to enable buy-in from local communities. For example a tree felled may have immediate transient material benefits in terms of charcoal or commercial logs, but maintaining the forest cover attracts visitors with foreign currency on an ongoing basis and preserves real treasure that can be passed on to the next generation. In some parts of Sierra Leone, Tiwai being a good example, the local communities took the lead in lobbying Government to protect their forests.

For a rather small country, Sierra Leone is blessed with rich biological treasures and a mix of diverse ecosystems in close proximity to each other. Sierra Leone presents the discerning traveller with the ability should they wish to combine different holiday experiences not normally associated with each other into uniquely memorable trips. This will mean for example that trips to sites associated with pirates and shipwrecks can be combined with African culture or safaris.

Acquiring the funding and investment in the current global economic climate is a challenge, however the aspiration is for investment into sustainable development projects to be channelled in now, so that when the outlook for the global tourism market improves, Sierra Leone will be in a prime position to fulfil its potential as a top 10 global holiday destination.

Above A young boy plays on a fishing boat in Kent Village

Left A woman fish-seller carries wares on her head

in repairing much of the damage done to many of Sierra Leone's most sensitive ecosystems. The organisation rightly prioritises work with local communities and schools to reffinforce values necessary for Sierra Leoneans to be a responsible custodians of fragile ecosystems of such global significance. However the cost of conservation has

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Leading the World

Sierra Leoneans and the world have long become used to decades of reading that Sierra Leone only comes first at being last (e.g. most internationally published standard-of-living statistics). These claim that the country is riven with corruption from top to bottom, that cheating in schools and universities is the norm, or that the country's civil war was probably the most brutal on the African continent in the latter part of the last century. With all of that it is almost impossible to imagine that there was time in the not-too-distant past when Sierra Leone led the world in something that was good and positive.

In spite of all the claims and the groaning shelves full of books that have been written claiming that 1967 was the most important year of the 1960s, a much more valid claim could be made for 1964 being a pivotal year in that decade or even in that century.

For anyone who considers him or herself to be a serious historian of the last century, 1964 ranks as a pretty special year; in politics, in sport, music and popular culture generally; for example? Well, In 1964 Kwame Nkrumah declared Ghana a one-party state. Remember, this was the man and the nation to which almost the whole of Black Africa looked for inspiration and guidance in the new, post-colonial world. He was to set a most unwelcome precedent that continues to plague the continent to this day. In that same year, the Palestinian Liberation Organisation (PLO) was formed. For students of popular culture, as if the year was not special enough, one particular month was to see events that defined the 1960s, again, some would say that defined the century.

It was on 9th February 1964 that The Beatles appeared on America's Ed Sullivan show, a date and an appearance that by common consent marked the real beginning of the 'British Invasion' of America and the date on which The Beatles went from being stars to superstars. On the 25th February 1964, Muhammad Ali (then still called Cassius Clay) defeated Sonny Liston to capture the World Heavyweight crown for the first time. Is there a person alive who still needs convincing or who would argue with the significance of these epoch-defining

events? And yet, there is one anniversary from that same February, buried in the mists of time, that in the humble opinion of this writer deserves to stand alongside those already mentioned.

Almost 40 years ago, an event happened that sent ripples of pleasure throughout the world of Philately especially: for it was in February 1964 that Sierra Leone issued THE WORLD'S FIRST EVER SELF-ADHESIVE STAMPS. No, this is not a 'typo' and you may read that last sentence again just to make sure. I deliberately typed that sentence in capital letters because the achievement is one worth shouting about.

In keeping with all things Sierra Leonean, the stamps were not issued to mark any event of national significance but to commemorate something happening somewhere else; specifically, that year's New York World's Fair. The stamps were a worldwide hit with stamp collector's clamouring to get their hands on these beautiful and oh-so-practical stamps. Somebody somewhere must have decided that surely, licking stamps was becoming passé in the 20th century.

Where Sierra Leone led, it seemed the world would follow; it's just that no one thought it would take so long for that to happen.

To put the achievement into sharper context,



Left Early Sierra Leonean stamps with the head of King George VI



Above Postcard announcing Sierra Leone's place in history as the first country to produce self-adhesive stamps

the Sierra Leonean stamps were issued a full 10 years before the Americans made a first attempt at doing the same. The 1974 issue by the U.S postal authorities was so plagued with problems and complaints, especially by collectors (the adhesive used caused discoloration of the stamp design), that they were soon discontinued. The U.S then shied away from issuing these again until 1992 when they finally got the formula right: if only they had asked the Sierra Leoneans! The British only began to issue self adhesive stamps in the 1990s, some 35 years after the Sierra Leonean editions. It seems inconceivable that in the 21st Century anyone would still want to lick their stamps. All one had to do with these was peel off and stick on; none of that licking and sticking and your tongue having to get used to an unwelcome taste.

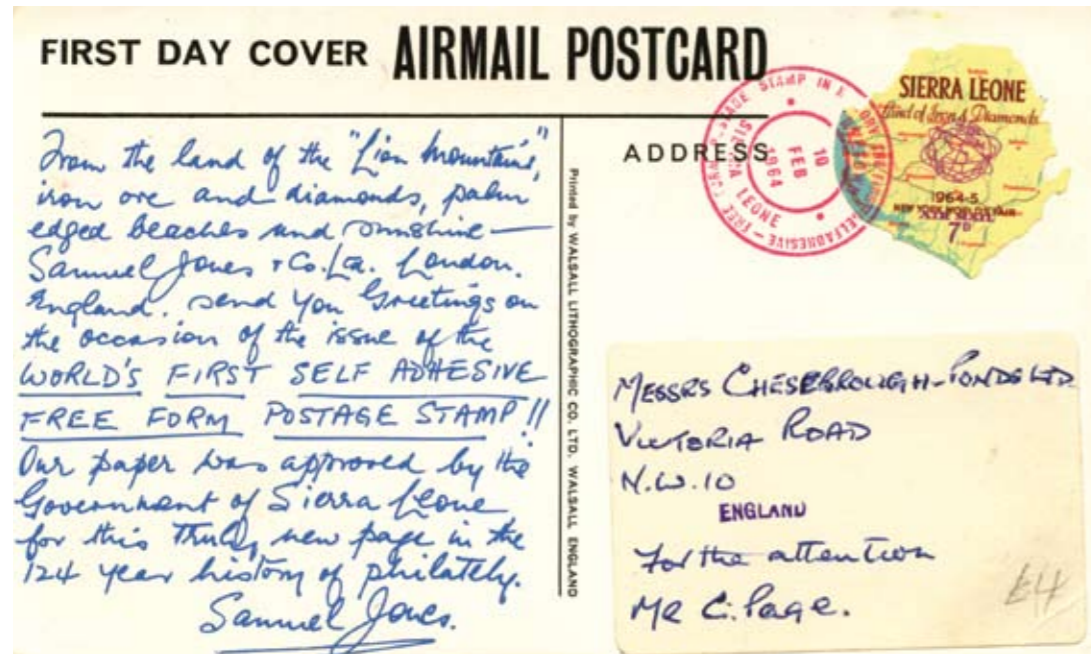
In 1964, we Sierra Leoneans could walk with chests puffed out and heads held high. We had achieved something on the world stage that could never be taken away from us. Rather like being born, it can only happen once. Of course, this did not happen in a vacuum; at the time, the country was newly independent and full of bold men and women with bold ideas. Many had studied abroad and had returned with visions of putting this small but important country on the map. This was an age when cynicism did not rule the land, when a PhD did not stand for Pull Him/Her Down. This, after all, was the country that had given Africa other things to be

proud of including The CMS Grammar School and Fourah Bay College. It was time before coup d'etats and civil wars; not just in Sierra Leone, they were rare events across the African continent. In short, it was the period of our country's and continent's greatest optimism. In truth, the whole of Africa celebrated with us and suddenly, we schoolchildren were getting pen pals from across the continent and from across the globe, eager to get their hands on these extraordinarily historic stamps. The year before the introduction of these stamps, 1963, had seen the government launch the country's television service.

Unfortunately, for Sierra Leoneans there was a sadder but equally notable event: the death of the country's visionary first Prime Minister, Sir Milton Margai; the man who had spearheaded the movement for independence from the British.

One remarkable fact regarding the stamps, especially in the light of the rather late British conversion to the idea of self-adhesives, is that the company commissioned by the Sierra Leone government to deliver the designs, Samuel Jones and Co. Ltd, happened to be a British Company.

Even today, as we approach that momentous 50th anniversary of their launching, these stamps are stunning and beautiful to behold. The designs are as extraordinary and eye-catching now as they were then. The design company had taken the opportunity not only to design self-adhesive stamps but had also seized the opportunity to open up a



Left Reverse of postcard from the CEO of the company responsible for producing the world's first self-adhesive stamps on behalf of the Government of Sierra Leone

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bold, new chapter in stamp design. These were not just plain-looking stamps that you did not have to lick. They were of different shapes and sizes and employed bold uses of colours never previously seen on stamps. Not just vivid reds, blues, greens and yellows but embossed gold and silver, too. There were stamps in the shape of a map of the country, of an eagle with outspread wings, a lion's head, stamps shaped like diamonds. When you bought your first one, you spent an age just staring at this radical, new concept in stamp design. It seemed almost a waste to append it to a letter or postcard. As the quality of the stamps grew, so too, other innovations were added. Eventually, some of the stand-alone stamps were designed to carry advertisements for local businesses on the reverse of the base from which one peeled the stamps.

Of course, the drop from those heady heights is mirrored in the decline in almost every sphere of life in Sierra Leone. So much so, that the events of that time seem to have happened on another galaxy, let alone the same country in another age. It probably does not need to be spelled out that as the rest of the world catches up to where Sierra Leone was nearly 50 years ago, that country has gone back to licking its stamps!

I mention this not as an implied criticism of any of the past or present governments; a lot has happened to the country in that time. The changes wrought by time, corruption and civil war are well-documented, and could never have been foreseen in those halcyon days.

Unfortunately, the company that was so innovative in designing and producing those stamps has also fared less well. After being in business for

over 200 years, Samuel Jones & Co. Ltd went into administration and then liquidation in December 2003, just months short of what would have been the 40th anniversary of that momentous event. As with visionaries in many fields, their ideas were met with opposition, especially in their own country. Amazingly, the strong philatelist lobby in Britain at the time opposed the introduction of self-adhesive stamps on the grounds that, once stuck on they would be difficult to remove for collectors!!! As one who has come to realise that anything that is about to be built in Britain is just as likely to have a committee or association opposed to it, I was not surprised to learn of this. This is a country where seemingly someone will probably form an action group against you if you tried to build anything. When scanning of the post was introduced, it was also decided that the optical brightness of many of the early self-adhesives were not suited to this technology.

After America's failed experiment with self-adhesive stamps and their successful adoption in 1992, the rest of Europe (and Britain) has now seen the light and self-adhesive stamps are the order of the day. And, are very much here to stay.

As the 50th anniversary approaches, perhaps its arrival can act as a spur to the whole country to not only celebrate a time when it led the world but also to act as an inspiration to the present and future generations to be daring and to innovate. Most of all, celebrate, celebrate that brief stand atop one positive Everest.

1964 really was a special time to be alive in Sierra Leone as with elsewhere in the world.



Regimanuel Gray: Devoted to the development of Sierra Leone



A Bright Future

Today Sierra Leone is a constitutional republic with a directly elected president and members of parliament. Legislative powers are vested in that parliament and judicial power resides within the judiciary (of which the Chief Justice is head).

Supreme executive authority rests in the President and members of his cabinet. This constitutional structure has provided a stable base from which the country has been able to develop and to begin to take its place on the international stage. For example, Sierra Leone is now a member of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), has joined the World Trade Organisation and, together with Liberia and Guinea, formed the Mano River Union (MRU). Sierra Leone is also strengthening its historic ties with Cyprus, Denmark, Greece, Norway, Portugal, Spain and Sweden in order to promote trade, tourism and investment.

MAKING THE MOST OF NATURAL MINERAL RESOURCES

Rich mineral resources, most notably gem-quality diamonds, continue to support Sierra Leone's economy and form the country's main foreign export. Indeed, Sierra Leone remains among the world's top 10 diamond producing nations. In the past, the country did struggle to maintain legitimate diamond exports, but in October 2000, a UN-approved diamond export certification system was put in place and led to a dramatic increase in legal exports, which continues to this day. In addition, in 2001, the government created a mining community development fund, which now returns a portion of diamond export taxes to diamond mining communities. Both these initiatives have ensured that revenues from diamond mining can be used to fund economic growth and the country's growing welfare state.

Aside from Diamonds, Sierra Leone has one of the world's largest deposits of rutile - a little-known titanium ore that is used as paint pigment and for welding rod coatings.

Although relatively unknown to most of the world, mining of this ore in Sierra Leone has led to substantial investment by European and American investors. In fact, the country's largest mine was one of the largest non-petroleum US investments in West Africa. Today it exports as much as 88,000 tonnes per year, equivalent to \$75 million in earnings. The country also has rich bauxite deposits, from which aluminum is most commonly extracted. In addition, Sierra Leone has rich gold reserves, much of which are currently accessible in river channels and shallow streams. This resource has yet to be fully exploited by the government on a commercial basis, but many small-hold farmers across the country are turning to ad-hoc gold panning in the streams close to their fields to generate a regular income.

SPORT, MUSIC & CULTURE

The spread of the Internet, increased social mobility and improved communications over the last decade have set in place greater freedom of information and a drive by the younger generation to challenge many traditional values and aspects of their culture. Newspapers and publications in general across the country have greater freedom and the Government is working hard to ensure that these freedoms continue

Below Hauling in the day's catch on Lumley Beach, Freetown



Above Aerial shot of the day's catch being hauled in on Lumley Beach – a great sight for the beach tourist

to thrive. Sport continues to unite the country and, of all the sports played and viewed, football is the most popular. The national team, known as the Leone Stars, has yet to qualify for the FIFA World Cup but has successfully represented the country in international competitions including the African Cup of Nations. Cricket is the next most popular sport across the country and the national team prides itself on being amongst the best in West Africa.

As communications continue to open up, the younger generation has access to shared digital information in a way that wasn't previously possible. One of the consequences of this is that the country's music scene is evolving rapidly. Rap, Reggae, R&B, Dancehall and even Grime1 are influencing and sometimes replacing the traditional Palm Wine music. This new music provides Sierra Leone's young people with a way to comment on politics, social trends and aspirations for their own future in a way that wasn't possible or permissible before. One of the newest artists to emerge out of Sierra Leone is iGniTer (also known as "Lj") who has achieved considerable international

underground fame. The 2008 film, "Sweet Salone" offers an insight into this world of post-war aspiring artists and a flavour of the country's developing urban music scene.

IMPROVED EDUCATION & HEALTH

Like every forward-thinking country, the officials governing Sierra Leone know that the key to successful long-term and sustained economic growth has its roots in a good education for its children and sound social care infrastructure for the population as a whole. All children are legally required to attend school for six years (from six -12 years old) at primary level and three years (between 13 and 18 years old) of secondary education. The government has achieved great success in this area with primary school enrolment doubling between 2001 and 2005.

Sierra Leone has two universities - Fourah Bay College, which was founded in 1827 and is the oldest university in Sub-Saharan Africa, and Njala University. The latter was established as the Njala Agricultural Experimental Station in



Left Typical scenes on some of the hundreds of beautiful Sierra Leonean beaches



1910 and became a university in 2005. There are also a number of teacher training colleges and religious seminaries located around the country.

Today the government, with the support of foreign aid packages, provides healthcare services to the population. Its latest achievement during the first half of 2010 was to introduce the Free Health Care Initiative which delivers services for pregnant and breastfeeding women - and children under five years old. This policy has been supported by aid from the United Kingdom and is recognised as a progressive move that other African countries may follow in order to decrease death during childbirth and infant mortality rates.

THE DAWN OF ECO-TOURISM

Sierra Leone boasts over 250 miles of unspoiled beaches along its Atlantic coast and the peninsular surrounding the capital, Freetown.



Above Looking up at the top of West Africa's highest point, Mount Bintumani

Heading inland, there are low-lying mangrove swamps and then a mountainous plateau to the east, where Mount Bintumani rises to nearly 7,000 feet. Other destinations of note include the Banana Islands, which offer snorkelling, fishing and canoe excursions, Bunce Island, Lumley Beach and Tokeh Beach. With such natural beauty, Sierra Leone hopes to emulate its near neighbour, Gambia, in attracting tourists and creating a growth industry. At present, the tourist industry is in its infancy and, although it is likely to become a more commercial destination in the future, the country's status as an unexplored and uncharted destination is certain to attract eco-tourists, backpackers and trailblazing travellers over the next few years.

The government has also created Sierra Leone's first community conservation programme on Tiwai Island - preserving one of the last remaining tracts of the Upper Guinean Congolese Rainforest. As well as the potential to offer a unique eco-tourism destination, the wildlife sanctuary is of profound global ecological importance. The sanctuary is home to 11 primate species, over 135 different kinds of birds, numerous butterfly species - some

of which have only recently been named and identified - and around 630 known plant species.

In the past few years, hotels, guesthouses and holiday huts have started to appear around the country but are mainly concentrated around Freetown. In general, the 'high-end' label applied to the best hotels in the country is equivalent to a three-star international rating. Direct flights from Europe - taking around six hours - are currently available from London and Brussels. Direct flights also leave from Ghana, Liberia, Banjul, Dakar, Lagos and Monrovia - all of which arrive at Freetown International Airport. Tourist visas can be obtained either directly from The High Commission in London or through a tourist operator - in either case, they can be supplied within two to three working days.

A BRIGHT FUTURE

Sierra Leone is a vibrant country with friendly, welcoming people and a huge amount of potential to contribute to the global community in terms of valuable mineral resources,

Top & Middle Right Faces of young Sierra Leoneans

Below Young children watch the waters at Bumbuna Falls, near the hydroelectric power plant



an emerging popular culture, eco-tourist destination and environmentally significant sites. As the country celebrates the 50th anniversary of its independence, Sierra Leone can look forward optimistically to a brighter future with more social mobility, better social infrastructure and steady economic growth.

The history of Sierra Leone since independence it would be fair to say has been mixed. The All People's Congress (APC) was overthrown in 1967 by a military coup but, when restored the following year, it instituted a one-party constitution.

A further military coup in April 1992 led to more years of chronic instability including a civil war instigated by the Revolutionary United Front (RUF). A brief period of civilian rule followed in 1996 before the Armed Forces Revolutionary Council (AFRC) overturned the government of President Kabbah in 1997.

In December 1999 UN Peacekeepers arrived in Sierra Leone who attempted to disarm the RUF in Eastern Sierra Leone. However it was the intervention of an 800 member British force to secure part of Freetown and evacuate Europeans and British passport holders that proved to be



the turning point. A British raid against a group of rebels who styled themselves the West Side Boys, and who had taken several British military hostages, was devastatingly effective. It proved to be the watershed which allowed the UN peacekeepers to make headway in disarming the various factions, so that by January 2002 most of the estimated 45,000 rebels had surrendered their weapons.

Elections were held in May 2002 when President Kabbah was reelected. Further elections in 2007 were judged by official observers as a success.

Progress since 2002 has been solid. The peace process, as in Northern Ireland, must be worked at. But the people have tasted the good times and there is no going back now.

Britain can be proud that it came to Sierra Leone's aid at its time of need. Having invested in a peaceful Sierra Leone, it is very much in Britain's interest now to ensure that the peace holds. And there is every sign that it will. On the occasion of the 50th Anniversary of its independence, Sierra Leone stands at the dawn of a new age. One can only wish her God speed.



Above Aerial shot of mangrove swamps typical of those found across the country – a haven for the eco-tourists

Left Members of Sierra Leone's Amputee National Team line up before an international match at the National Stadium in Freetown



Left Bottom A dragonfly – a symbol representing the country's rich fauna

London Mining

Celebrating today, investing in tomorrow

London Mining is proud to stand together with the people of the Republic of Sierra Leone to celebrate the country's Golden Jubilee – and to help lay the foundations for a prosperous, sustainable future for us all.

We strongly believe that the future of our business and of this dynamic country are tightly intertwined, and have therefore made a series of deep, long-term commitments to driving economic growth and social advancement across the Republic.

A mining powerhouse reborn

April 2010 will see the Republic of Sierra Leone celebrate 50 years of independence, coinciding with the historic reopening of London Mining's flagship Marampa iron ore mine near Lunsar in the Port Loko District.

For almost half of the twentieth century, Marampa was the cornerstone of a thriving national iron ore industry and a symbol of the powerful alliance between Sierra Leone and the United Kingdom.

Now, 35 years after the mine's closure, London Mining is working closely with the government and people of Sierra Leone to drive the rebirth of this crucial asset and deliver the first iron ore production from the country in three decades. We are cementing our commitment by delivering jobs, millions of dollars of investment, infrastructure improvements, tax revenues and a plethora of other benefits.

The first phase of Marampa represents an initial investment of more than \$160m from London Mining, creating a far larger and more efficient operation than ever before. Indeed, with production expected to peak at 10 million tons per annum, the mine will be a major contributor to Sierra Leone's economy.

In this Golden Jubilee year, Marampa's revival sends a timely and powerful message to the world that Sierra Leone is truly open for business and ready to stand as a major player in west Africa's fast emerging iron ore industry.



A lasting commitment to the people

London Mining will bring tangible, enduring benefits to the communities in which it operates – on both a local and national level.

We have committed to investing in Sierra Leone through local and national projects bringing real educational, healthcare and environmental benefits to the Republic and its people.

Our corporate social responsibility programme aligns with the National Planning Committee's own ambitious social and environmental sustainability strategy – maximising the benefits that our activities can deliver.

Key projects for 2010 include the roll-out of new libraries to more than 50 schools in Lunsar and Port Loko, sponsoring 200 local schoolchildren through a scholarship programme, building a youth community centre in close collaboration with local young people and providing public amenities in the Lunsar and Port Loko region.

Above CEO of London Mining, Graeme Hossie meets the president of Sierra Leone, Ernest Bai Koroma



Above Construction of Marampa processing plant

Right Stockpiling of first Marampa Ore

Creating jobs at the heart of the community

London Mining is working hard to maximise local employment in Lunsar and Port Loko and pass on crucial skills to people in these communities because we recognise that such opportunities are the lifeblood of any community. Indeed, 96 per cent of people working at Marampa are from the Lunsar area. We look forward to welcoming many more local employees in the months and years ahead as we add to the more than 900 jobs we have already created.

Looking forward to a bright future

2011 will be a year to remember for the people of the Republic Sierra Leone and for all of us here at London Mining. Together, we can ensure that the next half-century installment in our nation's history will be a happy, healthy and prosperous one for us all.



Circa 1400	The Baga, Temne and Yalunka arrive in Sierra Leone;		London's leading regulated overseas merchants start operating in Sierra Leone				
1446	Coast of Sierra Leone sighted by Portuguese expedition led by Alvaro Fernandes	1631	A royal Charter is given to Sir Richard Young and his companions (The 'Adventurers') to trade in Sierra Leone	1800	550 Maroons arrive as does a detachment of the King's Regiment	1820	Banana Islands acquired by Britain
1448	Dinis Dias, a Portuguese passes Cape Verde and reaches Sierra Leone	1662	The Adventurers build a fort a Tasso Island	1801	The Temne and Bullom attack the new colony; Publication of the first Sierra Leone Gazette	1821	The Gambia and The Gold Coast (present day Ghana) are made dependencies of Sierra Leone, together forming British West Africa. The Governor for the territory being resident in Freetown
1462	Pedro Da Cintra (Sintra) reaches Sierra Leone and maps the capes, rivers and surrounding islands – and names the area Serra Lyoa	1663	A factory is built on Sherbro Island by the Company of Merchants	1802	The Temne and Bullom launch a second failed attack on the colony	1822	The walls and roof of the Maroon church are completed
1466	Portuguese Royal Charter establishes administrations in nearby Cape Verde and Guinea	1664	Dutch Admiral de Ruyter attacks and destroys the fort at Tasso Island. He carves his name on a rock at the water's edge	1804	The first Church Missionary Society (CMS) missionaries arrive – Rev. Melchior Renner and Rev. Peter Hartwig.	1824	The Governor, Sir Charles McCarthy is killed in the Ashanti War in the Gold Coast. Britain acquires Bunce, Tasso and Tombo Islands
1482 1517	Portuguese build a fort on the Sierra Leone River Portuguese authorities prohibit trade between their traders in Cape Verde and Sierra Leone	1672	The English build a fort on Bunce Island by the Royal African Company, as the Royal Adventurers now call themselves	1807	The British Parliament outlaws slavery. The territory West of Freetown is 'acquired' by the Sierra Leone Company. All rights of the company are transferred to the British Crown	1825	A series of deals with native chiefs allows Britain to acquire parts of the Gallinas River, Bacca Loko (or Port Loko) and the island of Matabele.
1550s	1500 Slaves are shipped annually to the Portuguese colonies from the Guinea Coast. In the same period, Mane invaders from the south move northwards deeper into the country	1683	A French pirate, Jean Hamlin, disguises his ship as an English man-of-war and captures 17 English and Dutch ships off the coast of Sierra Leone	1808	Sierra Leone is made a British Crown Colony.	1826	Governor Turner sets out on an expedition to Sherbro but dies in Freetown
1562	Sir John Hawkins, a British slaver visits Sierra Leone, picking up 300 slaves – supposedly the precursor of the trans-Atlantic Slave Trade	1688	The Royal African Company build a factory on York Island off the coast of Sierra Leone	1808–1815	About 6,000 slaves recaptured by British naval squadrons are set free in Sierra Leone	1827	New settlements re opened at Allen Town, Calmont and Grassfield. Kaffu Bullom is acquired by Britain. The Christian institution founded in 1814 is refounded at Fourah Bay as Fourah Bay College, the oldest in sub-Saharan Africa.
1565	Sir John Hawkins makes his second visit to Sierra Leone; lands at Tagrin	1699–1701	Baptism and catechism made compulsory for all slaves shipped from the Guinea coast	1809	Leicester is founded as the first village for recaptives. The Sierra Leone Gazette changes its name to The African Herald	1828	St George's Cathedral opens for services
1567-8	Sir John Hawkins makes his third visit, taking part in a battle for supremacy between 2 Mane kings. He takes away 250 slaves	1750	The Company of Merchants Trading To Africa start operating in Sierra Leone	1811	The first census of Freetown is taken. The population is recorded as 1900. The first Chief Justice, Robert Thorpe, appointed in 1808 finally arrives. The first Wesleyan Missionary arrives – Rev. George Warren The current Wilberforce village is founded and named Cabenda (sometimes New Cabenda)	1829	Murray Town and Aberdeen villages are founded
1580	Sir Francis Drake lands in Sierra Leone and carves his name on a rock at the water's edge	1758	Bai Samma, King of North Bullom signs a treaty to provide timber and slaves to three London trading partners	1812	Regent village (formerly Hogbrook Village) and Kissy Village are founded	1831–1841	A long war between the Temne and the Loko
1582	Edward Fenton, an English navigator spends several weeks in Sierra Leone on his way to Brazil. His destination had been China. Interestingly, part of the reason he got no further was due to quarrels aboard ship with William Hawkins, a nephew of Sir John Hawkins.	1766	The Yalunka, having been pushed out of Futa Jalon build a fortress town at Falaba	1814	Sir Charles McCarthy becomes Lieutenant Governor. The CMS found an institution to train local teachers and missionaries	1832	The Cobolo War or expedition against the Akus at Cobolo on the Ribi River
1592	Patent of special licence granted to Englishmen Thomas Gregory, Thomas Pope and others to trade in Sierra Leone	1787	11th May - 400 freed slave colonists and 60 Europeans arrive from England. King Tom grants them land and Granville Town is established	1815	The Temne try to recover Port Loko from Susu chief Brima Konkuri	1837	The first recorded export of groundnuts from Sierra Leone is recorded; value: £13
Circa 1600	The Temne, Bullom and Mane come together. The Susu lose Port Loko to the Temne	1788	King Naimbana ratifies the land granted by King Tom	1816	Gloucester Village is founded	1840	Bai Bureh believed to have been born in Kasseh in this year.
1606	Dutch, Flemish and Portuguese traders are recorded as doing business in Sierra Leone	1790–1791	The St George's Bay Company, later The Sierra Leone Company is formed	1817	The colony is split into parishes; Leopold village is founded. In August, a new version of the Gazette is published under the title 'The Royal Gazette and Sierra Leone Advertiser'	1842	Some recaptives leave Sierra Leone to settle in Abeokuta, Nigeria
1607–1608	Captain Richard Keeling arrives off the coast of Sierra Leone. His diaries record a historic 'first' – his men on board ship, off the coast of Sierra Leone, perform Shakespeare's Hamlet and Richard II for the local chiefs. The first recorded instance of Shakespeare being performed outside of England	1792	Arrival of 1190 Blacks from Nova Scotia and 119 Europeans from England leads to the founding of Freetown	1819	The Court of Mixed Commission is set up in Freetown to try slave cases. The arrival of 85 men from Barbados is recorded. The villages of Kent, York, Wellington and Hastings are founded. Three companies of Royal African Corps are disbanded. West Indian troops arrive.	1845	William Ferguson, the first Governor of African descent is made Governor of Sierra Leone. In the same year, the CMS Grammar School is founded
1618	The Company of Merchant Adventurers of London,	1793	The first Kru men arrive in Freetown			1847	Loko Masama and Kafu Bullom are acquired by Britain
		1794	The first printing press sent by the Sierra Leone company is set up in July. Later that year, Freetown is attacked by the French			1849	The CMS opens the first institution for educating females
		1796	The Governor Moves his residence away from the waterfront inland to Fort Thornton			1850	The Gold Coast gets its own legislative and executive councils and is no longer administered from Sierra Leone
		1799	Sierra Leone Company granted a Royal Charter. Governor-in-Council given legislative powers; Freetown is designated a corporation with			1852	Sierra Leone constituted a diocese in communion with The Church of England. The first Anglican Bishop, The Rt Rev. O.E. Vidal arrives in Freetown. St George's Parish Church is made a cathedral

1854–1855	The American United Brethren in Christ come to Sierra Leone		Madam Yoko crowned Paramount Chief of the Kpa - Mendes. The boundary between Sierra Leone and Liberia is defined The Yoni attack the Government House at Songo. Madam Yoko crowned chief of Kpa Mendes.
1858	The Apostolic Vicariate of Sierra Leone is established under Monsignor de Marion Bressilac, the founder of the Society of African Missions		
1859	In an expedition up the Great Scarcies River, Kambia is destroyed by the British	1886	Direct telegraphic communications established between Freetown and London. Bai Bureh crowned chief of Kasseh.
1860	The first Royal visit: Prince Alfred, Queen Victoria's son lands in Freetown. The Yoni attack Magbele and destroy the CMS mission there.	1887	Celebrations are held in Freetown for Queen Victoria's Golden Jubilee. The Wilberforce Memorial Hall is opened in Freetown. The British lead an offensive against The Yoni; Robari is captured and destroyed
1861	The Native Church Pastorate is established		
1863	A Charter establishes executive and legislative councils in Sierra Leone. The 'Blackhall Constitution – named after the Governor, CW Blackhall. John Ezzidio is elected the first African member of the Legislative Council.	1888	Governor Hall goes on a mission to Krim country. Major Festing goes on a mission to meet Almami Samodu, King of the Sofas
1864	Samuel Adjayi Crowther is consecrated Bishop of the West African countries under British jurisdiction. Father Blanchet arrives to found the Holy Ghost Fathers missin in Sierra Leone	1889	Anglo-French convention agrees boundaries between Sierra Leone and Guinea
1865	The First Industrial Exhibition is held in the country	1890	The Sierra Leone Frontier Force is established. A local mail service is established. A steamer service to Sherbro Island is started. British jurisdiction is imposed in Imperrri country
1866	West African Settlements are re-established with the Governor in Sierra Leone; Nuns OF St Joseph Cluny arrive in Freetown. St Joseph's Convent founded	1890s	Marks the arrival of the first Syrian traders in Sierra Leone African Methodist Episcopal missions opened in Mange and Magbele
1870	In January, a news series of the Gazette, now the Sierra Leone Royal Gazette is published	1891	The Department of Native Affairs is established
1872	Dr Edward Blyden leads a diplomatic mission to Falaba	1893	Freetown Municipal Council created. British impose their sovereignty on Port Loko. Little Scarcies area comes under British jurisdiction
1873	Blyden goes on diplomatic mission to Timbo. Gbanya, the Kpa-Mende chief sends a contingent to help the British in the Ashanti War	1895	Sir Samuel Lewis becomes the first Sierra Leonean to be knighted.
1874	Wesleyan Boys High School opens in Freetown	1895–1914	Construction of the Sierra Leone Railway, reaching the Pendembu terminal in 1908 and beyond in 1914.
1875	Governor Rowe goes on an expedition to Sherbro	1896	The hinterland of Sierra Leone is named a British Protectorate
1876	Fourah Bay College is affiliated to the University of Durham	1897	Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee is celebrated with commencement of the building of Victoria Park in Freetown
1877	The CMS institution for females opened in 1849 is renamed Annie Walsh Memorial School	1898	A Hut Tax is imposed across the country. There is insurrection against it led by Bai Bureh; A West African Regiment is formed in Sierra Leone. St George's Cathedral is disestablished from the Church of England. Bai Burch captured and exiled to The gold Coast.
1880	A Wesleyan female institution is opened in Freetown	1899	The Sierra Leone Government Railway begins operations. The Muslim School is opened in Foulah Town
1880–1884	Trade wars rage in the hinterland	1900	Harford Girls School is opened in Moyamba
1882	A Board of Education is established in the country. The Gallinas territory is acquired by Britain. There is an Anglo-French convention on a northern rivers boundary. Matabele Island is ceded to the French	1901	An Ordinance is passed constituting The Sierra Leone Battalion of The West Africa Frontier Force
1883	The Administrator, F.F. Pinkett goes on an expedition to Sherbro. Krim country is annexed by the British.	1904	Anglo French agreement is signed on the boundary with Guinea. Albert Academy School for Boys is opened in Freetown by the Evangelical United Brethren in Christ
1884	The Leopold Educational Institute is opened in Freetown		
1885	Bai Bureh crowned Paramount Chief of Kasseh.		

1905	Bai Bureh returns from exile in The Gold Coast.	1946	The first District Councils and Protectorate Assembly is set up. The Chief Commissioner of the Protectorate is appointed
1906	Bo Government School is opened. Madam Yoko dies.		
1907	An Ordinance creates the Court Messenger Service	1947	Governor, Sir Hubert Stevenson publishes his constitutional proposals. The first recorded earth tremor in Sierra Leone is reported
1910	The Duke of Connaught visits Sierra Leone		
1911	Collegiate School founded in Freetown. Border with Liberia finally agreed	1949	The Sierra Leone Produce Marketing Board (SLPMB) Is formed. A Department of Co-Operatives is formed
1916	Railway Workers Union formed. Sierra Leone sends troops to Cameroon	1950	A National Council of the Colony Of Sierra Leone's (NCCSL) Colony Rural Area is formed. The Catholic Vicariate becomes the Diocese of Freetown and Bo with Ambrose Kelly as the first Bishop.
1918	End of First World War and an influenza epidemic is reported across the country		
1919	Anti-Syrian riots break out. Railway workers strike for the first time. The Sierra Leone Bar Association is formed	1951	The Sierra Leone People's Party (SLPP) is formed in a merger of the Protectorate Education People's Union (PEPU), The Sierra Leone Organisation Society (SOS) and The People's Party. The country's new constitution (the third) is introduced and general elections are held for the first time. Double Decker buses make an appearance on the streets of Freetown.
1920	The first motor car is recorded in Freetown		
1922	St Edward's Secondary School opens. The first agricultural produce show is held in Kenema.	1953	Dr Milton Margai becomes leader of Government Business. Six Sierra Leoneans are appointed to the Government. Christ the King College (CKC) opens in Bo
1923	A new constitution for Sierra Leone is proposed (the second)	1954	Queen Elizabeth II Quay is formally opened. Government House, Fort Thornton is rebuilt. Dr Milton Margai becomes First Minister
1924	The first three members of the Legislative Council take their seats alongside the 11 official and seven nominated unofficial members. Second constitution (The Slatter Constitution) is adopted.	1955	Labour dispute leads to violence in the capital
1925	Edward, Prince of Wales visits Sierra Leone. The Government open the Prince of Wales School	1956	The Legislative Council is renamed The House of Representatives. The franchise is extended and representation increased. The United Progressive Party (UPP) is formed
1926	A geological survey of the country is undertaken. Railways workers strike again	1957	General Elections take place. The Catholic Diocese of Makeni is established
1927	Domestic slavery is formally abolished in Sierra Leone	1958	Further constitutional change ushers in an All-African Executive Council. The People's National Party (PNP) is formed
1929	Haidara Kontorfilu, the warrior crosses into Sierra Leone from Guinea	1959	Dr Milton Margai is knighted. Bo Town Council is created
1930s	Ordinances introduce Native Administration in the Protectorate	1960	Sir Milton Margai is appointed Prime Minister with an all-Sierra Leonean cabinet. Fourah Bay College becomes the University College of Sierra Leone. The All People's Congress (APC) is formed. The Constitutional Conference on Sierra Leone is held in London.
1931	Diamonds are discovered in Sierra Leone. The Haidara Kontorfilu War rages. A census is taken of the country; population – 1, 768, 840	1961	April 27th - Sierra Leone achieves independence and membership of the Commonwealth. The Queen and The Duke of Edinburgh visit the country.
1934	A wired broadcasting service is introduced. Haidara Kontorfilu is killed in Kambia District		
1937	The Ahmadiyya missionaries open a mission		
1939	The first Sierra Leonean Roman Catholic priest is ordained – The Rev. E.J. Hamelberg. An airport is built at Hastings		
1941	The popular Rev Corneius Mulcahy dies		
1941–1942	Sierra Leoneans among West African troops serving in the war in Burma		
1943	The first two African unofficial members are appointed to the country's Executive Council		

O Lord, I beseech thee favourably to hear the prayer of him who wishes to be thy servant, and pardon him for presuming to address thee from this sacred place. O God, I know my own infinity and unworthiness, and I know thine abundant mercies to those who wish to be guided by thy will. Support me. O Lord, with thy heavenly grace, and to enable me to conduct myself through this earthly life that my actions may be consistent with the words I have uttered this day. Thou knowest that I am now about to depart from this place, and to leave the people whom it has pleased thee to entrust to my care. Guide them, O merciful God, in the paths of truth and let not a few wicked men among us draw down thy vengeance upon this Colony.

In graft into their hearts a proper sense of duty, and enable them through thy grace to conduct themselves as Christians, that they may not come to thy house without that pleasing emotion which every grateful man must feel when paying adoration to the Author of life. But I have a great reason to fear, O Lord, that many who frequent thy church do not approach thy presence as becomes them, and that they may partly be compared to the Scribes, Pharisees, and hypocrites. Pardon, O God, their infirmities, and as thou knowest their weakness from the manner in which they have formerly been treated, and the little opportunity they have had of knowing thy will and getting acquainted with the merits of thy Son, our saviour Jesus Christ, look down upon them with an eye of mercy and suffer them not to incur thy displeasure, after they have had an opportunity of being instructed in the ways of thy commandments.

Bless, O Lord, the inhabitants of this vast continent, and incline their hearts towards us that they may more readily listen to our advice and doctrines, and that we may conduct ourselves towards them as to convince them of the happiness we enjoy under thy almighty protection. Banish from this Colony, O Lord all heathenish superstition and let the inhabitants know that thou art the only true Lord in which we live and move and have our being. If these people who protest thy religion will not be assured of thy superior power, convince them. O God, of Thine anger for their profession without their practice, for thou knowest I brought them here in hopes of making them and their families happy, both in this world and to all eternity.

But I fear they may not be governed by my advice, and that they themselves and their

children forever by their perverse and general behaviour. I entreat thee not to let their evil example ruin the great cause in which we have embarked, but I would rather see that place in ashes and every wicked person destroyed, than that the chance we have now an opportunity of bringing to the light and knowledge of thy holy religion should, from the wickedness of a few individuals will continue in their accustomed darkness and barbarism. They know that I have universally talked of their apparent virtue the goodness, and have praised thy name for having permitted me to be the servant employed in so great and glorious a cause. If I have been deceived, I am sorry for it, and may thy will be done; but I implore thee to accept the sincerity of my intentions and my best endeavours to improve the talent committed to my case. Only pardon the intuition of my nature, and I will trust to thy mercy. Should any person have a wicked thought in his heart or do anything knowledge to disturb the peace and comfort of our Colony, let him be rooted out O God, from off the face of the earth; but have mercy upon him hereafter.

Were I to utter all that my heart now indicates, no time would be sufficient for any praise and thanksgiving for all the mercies. Thou has vouchsafed to show me, but as thou art acquainted with every secret of my heart, accept my thoughts for thanks. I have no words left to express my gratitude and resignation to thy will. I entreat thee, O God, if nothing I can say will convince these people of thy power and goodness, make use of me in anyway thou pleasest, to make an atonement for their guilt. This is an awful and I fear too presumptuous, a request; yet if it should be thy will that I should lay down my life for the cause I have embarked in, assist me, O Lord with thy support, that I may resign it in such a manner as to convince these unbelieving people that thou art God indeed. May the heart of this Colony, O Lord, imbibe the spirit of meekness, gentleness, and truth; and may they henceforth live in unity and godly love, following as far as the weakness of their mortal natures will admit, that most excellent and faultless pattern which thou hast given us in thy Son our Saviours, Jesus Christ, to whom with thee and the Holy Spirit be all honour and glory, now and forever. Amen.

This prayer was written by Sierra Leone's first governor-general and is still invoked by Sierra Leoneans today.

Location:

Western Africa, bordering the North Atlantic Ocean, between Guinea and Liberia

Nationality:

Noun: Sierra Leonean(s)
Adjective: Sierra Leonean

Population:

5,245,695 (July 2010 est.)

Country name:

Conventional long form: Republic of Sierra Leone
Conventional short form: Sierra Leone
Local long form: Republic of Sierra Leone
Local short form: Sierra Leone

Government type:

constitutional democracy

Capital:

Freetown

Executive branch:

Chief of state: President Ernest Bai KOROMA (since 17 September 2007); note - the president is both the chief of state and head of government

Head of government: President Ernest Bai KOROMA (since 17 September 2007).

cabinet: Ministers of State appointed by the president with the approval of the House of Representatives; the cabinet is responsible to the president (For more information visit the World Leaders website)

Elections: president elected by popular vote for a five-year term (eligible for a second term); election last held on 11 August 2007 and 8 September 2007 (next to be held in 2012)

Election results: second round results; percent of vote - Ernest Bai KOROMA 54.6%, Solomon BEREWA 45.4%

UN Membership:

27 September 1961

Legislative branch:

Unicameral Parliament (124 seats; 112 members elected by popular vote, 12 filled by paramount chiefs elected in separate elections; members to serve five-year terms) elections: last held on 11 August 2007 (next to be held in 2012)

Election results: percent of vote by party - NA;

Seats by party - APC 59, SLPP 43, PMDC 10

Judicial branch:

Supreme Court; Appeals Court; High Court

Political parties and leaders:

All People's Congress or APC - Ernest Bai Koroma;

Sierra Leone People's Party or SLPP [Vacant];
People's Movement for Democratic Change or PMDC [Charles Margai]; numerous others

Constitution:

1 October 1991; amended several times

Geographic coordinates:

8 30 N, 13 15 W

Coastline:

402 km

Land boundaries:

Total: 958 km

Border countries: Guinea 652 km, Liberia 306 km

Administrative divisions:

3 provinces and 1 area*; Eastern, Northern, Southern, Western* (Includes the capital, Freetown)

Independence:

27 April 1961 (from the UK)

National holiday:

Independence Day, 27 April (1961)

National anthem:

Name: "High We Exalt Thee, Realm of the Free"
lyrics/music: Clifford Nelson-Fyle/John Joseph Akar
note: adopted 1961

Suffrage:

18 years of age; universal

Flag description:

Three equal horizontal bands of green (top), white, and blue; green symbolizes agriculture, mountains, and natural resources, white represents unity and justice, and blue the sea and the natural harbour in Freetown

Ethnic groups:

Temne 35%, Mende 31%, Limba 8%, Kono 5%, Krio 2% (descendants of freed Jamaican slaves who were settled in the Freetown area in the late-18th century; also known as Krio), Mandingo 2%, Loko 2%, other 15% (includes refugees from Liberia's recent civil war, and small numbers of Europeans, Lebanese, Pakistanis, and Indians) (2008 census)

Religions:

Muslim 60%, Christian 10%, indigenous beliefs 30%

Languages:

English (official, regular use limited to literate minority), Mende (principal vernacular in the south), Temne (principal vernacular in the north),

Krio (English-based Creole, spoken by the descendants of freed Jamaican slaves who were settled in the Freetown area, a lingua franca and a first language for 10% of the population but understood by 95%)

Legal system:

Based on English law and customary laws indigenous to local tribes; has not accepted compulsory ICJ jurisdiction

Sex ratio:

At birth: 1.03 male(s)/female
 Under 15 years: 0.98 male(s)/female
 15-64 years: 0.92 male(s)/female
 65 years and over: 0.81 male(s)/female
 Total population: 0.94 male(s)/female (2010 est.)

Infant mortality rate:

Total: 80.16 deaths/1,000 live births
 Country comparison to the world: 13
 Male: 89.06 deaths/1,000 live births
 Female: 70.99 deaths/1,000 live births (2010 est.)

Life expectancy at birth:

Total population: 55.69 years
 Male: 53.27 years
 Female: 58.18 years (2010 est.)

Total fertility rate:

4.97 children born/woman (2010 est.)

Literacy:

Definition: age 15 and over can read and write English, Mende, Temne, or Arabic

Total population: 35.1%
 Male: 46.9%
 Female: 24.4% (2004 est.)

School life expectancy (primary to tertiary education):

Total: 7 years
 Male: 9 years
 Female: 6 years (2001)

Environment - international agreements:

Party to: Biodiversity, Climate Change, Climate Change-Kyoto Protocol, Desertification, Endangered Species, Law of the Sea, Marine Life Conservation, Ozone Layer Protection, Ship Pollution, Wetlands signed, but not ratified
 Natural resources: Diamonds, titanium ore, bauxite, iron ore, gold, chromite, Marine Resources

Elevation extremes:

Lowest point: Atlantic Ocean 0 m
 Highest point: Loma Mansa (Mt. Bintimani) 1,948 m

Geography - note:

Rainfall along the coast can reach 495 cm (195 inches) a year, making it one of the wettest places along coastal, western Africa.

International organization participation:

ACP, AfDB, AU, C, ECOWAS, FAO, G-77, IAEA, IBRD, ICAO, ICCT, ICRM, IDA, IDB, IFAD, IFC, IFRCS, ILO, IMF, IMO, Interpol, IOC, IOM, IPU, ISO (correspondent), ITU, ITUC, MIGA, NAM, OIC, OPCW, UN, UNAMID, UNCTAD, UNESCO, UNIDO, UNIFIL, UNMIS, UNMIT, UNWTO, UPU, WCO, WFTU, WHO, WIPO, WMO, WTO.

High we exalt thee, realm of the free;
 Great is the love we have for thee;
 Firmly united ever we stand,
 Singing thy praise, O native land.
 We raise up our hearts and our voices on high,
 The hills and the valleys re-echo our cry;
 Blessing and peace be ever thine own,
 Land that we love, our Sierra Leone.

One with a faith that wisdom inspires,
 One with a zeal that never tires;
 Ever we seek to honour thy name
 Ours is the labour, thine the fame.
 We pray that no harm on thy children may fall,
 That blessing and peace may descend on us all;
 So may we serve thee ever alone,
 Land that we love our Sierra Leone.

Knowledge and truth our forefathers spread,
 Mighty the nations whom they led;
 Mighty they made thee, so too may we
 Show forth the good that is ever in thee.
 We pledge our devotion, our strength and our might,
 Thy cause to defend and to stand for thy right;
 All that we have be ever thine own,
 Land that we love our Sierra Leone.

Sierra Leone's National Pledge

I pledge my love and loyalty to my country Sierra Leone;
 I vow to serve her faithfully at all times;
 I promise to defend her honour and good name;
 Always work for her unity peace, freedom and prosperity;
 And put her interest above all else.
 So help me God.

O Lord, I beseech thee favourably to hear the prayer of him who wishes to be thy servant, and pardon him for presuming to address thee from this sacred place. O God, I know my own infinity and unworthiness, and I know thine abundant mercies to those who wish to be guided by thy will. Support me. O Lord, with thy heavenly grace, and to enable me to conduct myself through this earthly life that my actions may be consistent with the words I have uttered this day. Thou knowest that I am now about to depart from this place, and to leave the people whom it has pleased thee to entrust to my care. Guide them, O merciful God, in the paths of truth and let not a few wicked men among us draw down thy vengeance upon this Colony.

In graft into their hearts a proper sense of duty, and enable them through thy grace to conduct themselves as Christians, that they may not come to thy house without that pleasing emotion which every grateful man must feel when paying adoration to the Author of life. But I have a great reason to fear, O Lord, that many who frequent thy church do not approach thy presence as becomes them, and that they may partly be compared to the Scribes. Pharisees, and hypocrites. Pardon, O God, their infirmities, and as thou knowest their weakness from the manner in which they have formerly been treated, and the little opportunity they have had of knowing thy will and getting acquainted with the merits of thy Son, our saviour Jesus Christ, look down upon them with an eye of mercy and suffer them not to incur thy displeasure, after they have had an opportunity of being instructed in the ways of thy commandments.

Bless, O Lord, the inhabitants of this vast continent, and incline their hearts towards us that they may more readily listen to our advice and doctrines, and that we may conduct ourselves towards them as to convince them of the happiness we enjoy under thy almighty protection. Banish from this Colony, O Lord all heathenish superstition and let the inhabitants know that thou art the only true Lord in which we live and move and have our being. If these people who protest thy religion will not be assured of thy superior power, convince them. O God, of Thine anger for their profession without their practice, for thou knowest I brought them here in hopes of making them and their families happy, both in this world and to all eternity.

But I fear they may not be governed by my advice, and that they themselves and their children forever by their perverse and general behaviour. I entreat thee not to let their evil example ruin

the great cause in which we have embarked, but I would rather see that place in ashes and every wicked person destroyed, than that the chance we have now an opportunity of bringing to the light and knowledge of thy holy religion should, from the wickedness of a few individuals will continue in their accustomed darkness and barbarism. They know that I have universally talked of their apparent virtue the goodness, and have praised thy name for having permitted me to be the servant employed in so great and glorious a cause. If I have been deceived, I am sorry for it, and may thy will be done; but I implore thee to accept the sincerity of my intentions and my best endeavours to improve the talent committed to my case. Only pardon the intuity of my nature, and I will trust to thy mercy. Should any person have a wicked thought in his heart or do anything knowledge to disturb the peace and comfort of our Colony, let him be rooted out O God, from off the face of the earth; but have mercy upon him hereafter.

Were I to utter all that my heart now indicates, no time would be sufficient for any praise and thanksgiving for all the mercies. Thou has vouchsafed to show me, but as thou art acquainted with every secret of my heart, accept my thoughts for thanks. I have no words left to express my gratitude and resignation to thy will. I entreat thee, O God, if nothing I can say will convince these people of thy power and goodness, make use of me in anyway thou pleasest, to make an atonement for their guilt. This is an awful and I fear too presumptuous, a request; yet if it should be thy will that I should lay down my life for the cause I have embarked in, assist me, O Lord with thy support, that I may resign it in such a manner as to convince these unbelieving people that thou art God indeed. May the heart of this Colony, O Lord, imbibe the spirit of meekness, gentleness, and truth; and may they henceforth live in unity and godly love, following as far as the weakness of their mortal natures will admit, that most excellent and faultless pattern which thou hast given us in thy Son our Saviours, Jesus Christ, to whom with thee and the Holy Spirit be all honour and glory, now and forever. Amen.

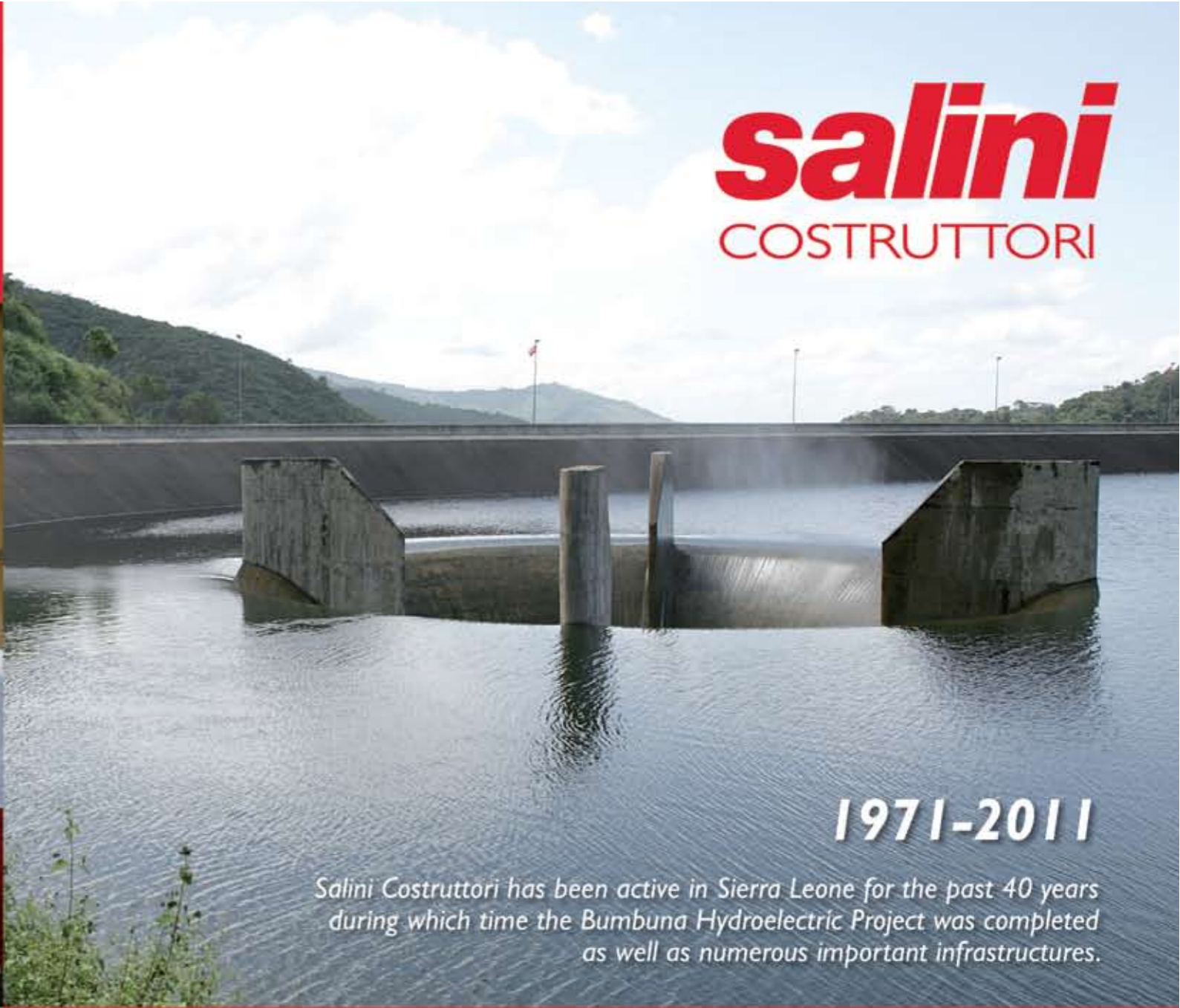
This prayer was written by Sierra Leone's first governor-general and is still invoked by Sierra Leoneans today.



Congratulations! SIERRA LEONE

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1971-2011

Salini Costruttori has been active in Sierra Leone for the past 40 years during which time the Bumbuna Hydroelectric Project was completed as well as numerous important infrastructures.

As Sierra Leone celebrates fifty years of independence Salini Costruttori rejoices with the President and all the people of Sierra Leone and all friends of the nation on this great occasion



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50th

Independence Anniversary Celebrations

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