



**STATEMENT BY HIS EXCELLENCY
PRESIDENT JULIUS MAADA BIO AT THE
OFFICIAL COMMISSIONING OF 30 GARBAGE
COLLECTION TRUCKS. STATE HOUSE,
FREETOWN. 15 FEBRUARY 2019**

His Excellency, the Ambassador of the People's
Republic of China,
Ministers of Government Present,

Members of Parliament,

The Mayor, Municipality of Freetown,

Development Partners,

Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen

Good morning:

It is with great pleasure that I formally commission 30 garbage collection trucks this morning provided with a generous grant from the People's Republic of China.

On behalf of the Government and people of Sierra

Leone, Your Excellency, the Ambassador, kindly

transmit our collective gratitude to the Government and

people of the People's Republic of China. This valuable

strategic partnership continues to reinforce the strong

ties of friendship between our two countries.

This intervention helps my Government deal with the critical issue of solid waste collection and management.

One of the very first directives of my Government required citizens to use part of the first Saturday of each month to clean their immediate environs. The rationale for that were twofold: 1) we recognized that the past government had never bothered put in place a functional and effective waste management policy especially for urban areas, and 2) we also recognized that the uncontrolled dumping of garbage in our living spaces with no planned manner of collection and disposal had been associated for years with increased disease outbreaks and deaths (especially from malaria, typhoid, cholera, and diarrhoea). It had also led to elevated risks of urban flooding, property loss, and

deaths during the rainy season. The unsanitary placement of landfills and the unregulated public burning of garbage also posed significant health and environmental hazards to our citizens. Sierra Leone deserves better. Sierra Leoneans deserve better.

When I was elected, I made a commitment that every Sierra Leonean life matters. I made a commitment that the most valuable resource we have as a nation is the human capital. To enrich and develop human capital, we must invest in feeding the brain (through free quality education and skills training), the stomach (through food security initiatives) and take care of the whole of the body (through investing in and providing access to quality healthcare, water, public sanitation and

disease prevention, primary healthcare, and health education).

These 30 garbage collection trucks that I commission today will help the government and the people of Sierra Leone to plan for and implement a sustainable waste collection and management plan especially for the urban areas. This will reduce the human health and environmental impacts of indiscriminate waste dumping in our living spaces

As a Government that prides itself on transparency and corruption-free transactions, here are the details. In response to my Government's appeal, the Government of the People's Republic of China offered a grant of \$1.5 million for garbage collection trucks in order to mitigate the real problem of urban waste management.

The garbage collection trucks were bought and shipped to Sierra Leone by the Government of the People's Republic of China. Through an MOU signed, the Government of the people's Republic of China will be responsible for the maintenance of the garbage collection trucks for two (2) years. The Government of Sierra Leone has taken up responsibility to pay all freight clearance charges for the trucks, spare parts, and all related equipment from the Quay. The Ministry of Local Government and Rural Affairs will be responsible for selecting and training drivers and the Ministry has duly informed Local Councils to provide drivers and operators for the training exercise. Soon, the ministry will finalize a fleet management and operations policy for the garbage collection trucks.

These garbage collection assets will be factored into a wider garbage collection and management policy framework that is being developed by my government.

This will take into consideration strong collaborative partnerships with local councils, communities, and MDAs that handle health and the environment. Our target is clear – purposeful planning toward meeting sustainable development goals and improve the quality of life for citizens of this country. This improvement in the quality of human capital will have a multiplier effect on national development.

Ultimately, PAOPA, our living spaces will be clean.

PAOPA our citizens will get good public health and sanitation. PAOPA, the lives of Sierra Leoneans will be better. I thank you all.