

STATEMENT

by

Hon. Mr. Momodu Lamin Kargbo
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at the

**High Level Consultation on the Roadmap for Peaceful Just
and Inclusive Societies**

New York

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Good Afternoon, Ladies and Gentlemen. It is a pleasure and an honour to address you at this High-Level Consultations on the Roadmap for Peaceful Just and Inclusive Societies. This event, as you are all aware, is co hosted by the Permanent Missions of Brazil, Switzerland, and my own country Sierra Leone, in association with the New York University's Center on International Cooperation. I will preface my remarks by highlighting the key messages for this event and then; I will highlight what Sierra Leone has done and is doing to promote a peaceful just and inclusive society.

The Pathfinders for Peaceful Just and Inclusive societies, a group of member States, international organisations, global partnerships, and other partners; have begun to build the foundations and alliances to turn the ambition of the SDG targets for Peaceful Just and Inclusive societies into reality.

The roadmap document before us today provides for the first time, a shared vision for how these targets can be delivered. It covers SDG 16 and related targets from other goals. It is an ambitious, but practical document that will act as a docking station to bring many different partners and initiatives together.

The initial focus is on 2019 when the High Level Political Forum will have the theme "Empowering People and Ensuring Inclusiveness and Equality" SDG 16 will be reviewed that year along with other relevant goals such as SDG 8, 10 and 13. Heads of State and Government will also review implementation across the agenda as a whole.

During the next two years, the Pathfinders will act as a platform for political advocacy for ambitious action. We will use the roadmap to inform implementation in countries, including countries that are vulnerable due to violence, insecurity, injustice and exclusion. We will support international and regional strategies that relate to areas covered by the roadmap.

We will also set a policy and learning agenda by focusing on three grand challenges providing-access to justice for all: increasing Political Social and Economic inclusion; and achieving a significant and measurable reduction in all forms of violence.

The Pathfinders is an inclusive group, providing a platform for countries that wish to lead one or more aspects of SDG16+. We work closely with other partnerships, both those focused on SDG 16+ (e.g. the Global Alliance on Reporting Progress on Peaceful Just and Inclusive societies) and those dedicated to particular challenges (the Open Government Partnership, the Global Alliance to end violence against children, Alliance 8.7 etc.)

The Pathfinders will also set up a justice task force to campaign for increased justice and legal empowerment. Sierra Leone is proud to be associated with such a venture.

Coming closer to home, my country; Sierra Leone had been hit by the Ebola epidemic and an extreme drop in commodity prices while on the path to recovery from a 10-year civil war. The main causes of the war were related to

citizens being disadvantaged and excluded. This is why we welcome Agenda 2030's focus on peaceful, just and inclusive societies offering an opportunity to tackle the root causes that can lead to instability and conflict.

Despite the setbacks, Sierra Leone has already begun to take concrete measures to implement Agenda 2030, with the SDGs well aligned to its Agenda for Prosperity (2013-2018). A Presidential Board on the SDGs, chaired by the President, has prioritized the SDGs at the highest level and the government has taken steps to commit the financial resources needed to bring peace, justice and inclusion to its people. Implementation must benefit all citizens, but particularly the most vulnerable parts of the population, such as women and minorities.

Sierra Leone has increased its efforts to build a justice system that would meet the needs of the people and underpin the country's future development. It has targeted excluded groups through the establishment of a Legal Aid Board, the use of mobile courts in areas without permanent legal structures, and by strengthening non-formal justice systems. Delays in the justice system have been cut and the Government is committed to ensuring that people understand their rights and how the legal system works. However there is still the need to finance these activities and this is why it is important for countries and organizations to work together to improve access to justice.

With these few remarks I hope that the discussions today will be fruitful and the outcome results oriented.

I thank you for your kind attention.