

**KEYNOTE ADDRESS BY HIS EXCELLENCY THE PRESIDENT, DR ERNEST BAI KOROMA,
ON THE OCCASION OF THE BUMBUNA HYDROELECTRIC POWER PLANT
COMMISSIONING 6TH NOVEMBER, 2009**

We are all gathered here today to witness and celebrate the completion of a project that has been over 30 years in the making. For over 30 years, the people of this country have waited for this day. When we assumed power in 2007 we vowed to end this waiting period. Today, my government has delivered on this vow; the waiting period is over. Bumbuna light don be ma! E don be tiday!

For many years, the non-completion of Bumbuna led many to lose faith in the commitment of leaders in this country to improving the lives of our people. Our determination to complete it was to renew our people's faith in government as a power for good.

Ladies and gentlemen, I believe that government is a power for good. It is that belief that gave me the courage to seek elective office; it is that conviction that made me firm up our people's aspiration in an Agenda for Change. We prioritize energy in our Agenda because we know it is a foremost concern for our people. It is the basis for wealth creation, employment, and improvement on social services delivery. We shall leave no stone unturned to implement what our people want. We shall not tire; we nor go tire.

The residents of Freetown and its environs have been receiving electricity from Bumbuna on a daily basis. Let me assure the people of Bumbuna Town, Makeni, Magburaka and Lunsar that they will also receive electricity from Bumbuna very soon. My Government and our development partners have already approved funds for the rehabilitation of the transmission and

distribution networks in Freetown, Makeni and Magburaka to ensure that the residents in these Cities and Towns will indeed receive electricity from Bumbuna. Lunsar will be added to this list shortly. We shall not tire, we nor go tire.

Now that Bumbuna phase one is complete, we are putting in place modalities to start phase two, which will be seven times bigger than the current phase one. We shall not tire; we will ensure that once we commence work on phase two, it should be completed within six years.

Ladies and gentlemen, my government will harness our country's huge potential for renewable energy. We will not stop at Bumbuna We will soon commence the development of mini-hydro-electric plants between one to ten megawatts in Bankasoka and Makali in the Northern Province, Charlotte in the Western Area and Moyamba in the Southern Province. We are also strengthening the Dodo project to double its supply of electricity to Bo and Kenema.

Ladies and gentlemen, with dedication we will provide the energy to light up our homes, give uninterrupted electricity to our businesses, hospitals, and colleges, and ensure optimum use of information and communication technology. We shall not tire in our efforts to make our people believe that my government is a government of infrastructural development.

Ladies and gentlemen, the completion of Bumbuna is a testament to the fact that development is a partnership between the government, investors, friendly nations, multi-lateral institutions and the people. First we salute the leader of the APC who started this project, Dr. Siaka Stevens, for his foresight and wisdom. Many workers sustained injuries or lost their lives during the course of this project. We will forever remember their sacrifices for this nation. We also salute the courage of soldiers who during the war put their lives on the line to secure Bumbuna. Had it not been for their gallantry, Bumbuna would have suffered irreparable damage. My appreciation and gratitude also go to the present and past Paramount Chiefs, Landowners and descendents of the Chieftdoms in the project area-

especially the people of Kalansogoia Chiefdom. In addition to giving up their land and sacred sites for the realization of the Bumbuna project, they have consistently demonstrated unwavering support to Government and the project's contractors and consultant, throughout the project implementation period.

My government also applauds the contribution to this project by the Italian Government, Salini Costottori, the African Development Bank, the World Bank, the United Kingdom Department International Development and our other international partners. Without their support we would not have reached this stage today.

Most significantly, I salute the resilience of the people of Sierra Leone. I know there were times when the delays in completing this project sapped the spirit of our people and disturbed their faith in government. On behalf of successive governments of this country, I apologize for the pain of waiting so long. My government will ensure that we never again have to wait that long. That was why when I assumed office I moved with great urgency to complete Bumbuna. That is why I visited this site many more times than all past presidents put together. In just one meeting with donor partners after my first visit, I raised \$42 million to complete this project. Two years after you elected me President we have done it, and are ready to move on to other programs for meeting the energy needs for our country's transformation. We will not tire, we nor go tire.

Ladies and gentlemen, the sustainability of our efforts requires continued commitment and vigilance. We must be vigilant in deterring saboteurs; we must be committed to paying our electricity bills; we must be resilient in safeguarding our collective achievement. My government will do its own part of the bargain, and I trust the good people of this country will partner with us in delivering Our Agenda for Change in Energy. We will not tire; we nor go tire.

Mr. Chairman, distinguished ladies and gentlemen, let me take this opportunity, on behalf of every citizen of Sierra Leone to officially

commission the Bumbuna Hydroelectric Power Plant on behalf of every citizen of Sierra Leone.

I thank you all for your attention and may God bless us all.

2. Speech by Christian Capitanio, Area Manager of Salini

**HIS EXCELLENCY THE PRESIDENT, HONOURABLE VICE PRESIDENT,
HONOURABLE MINISTERS AND MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT OF THE REPUBLIC
OF SIERRA LEONE, MEMBERS OF THE DIPLOMATIC CORP, PARAMOUNT CHIEF
OF BUMBUN, DISTINGUISHED LADIES AND GENTLEMEN**

This is a very special day for my company, Salini Costruttori, and in particular for me. What was considered an impossible dream has now become a reality.

Since its inception, Bumbuna has constantly suffered from lack of funding but my company never gave up and never abandoned the Project even during the terrible days of the civil war during which we defended all the built Structures.

Today, I am also very proud to say that we won the battle against all those who were skeptical about the positive conclusion of the Project.

In this regard, a special acknowledgement should go to my Managing Director, Pietro Salini, who made always available the necessary funds to pre-finance the works during the various stages of the project implementation.

I have also to acknowledge the Italian Government and in particular the Department of the Italian Cooperation under the Ministry of Foreign Affairs which came to rescue the financial situation of the project, through subsequent grants, made available in different occasions, the last of which in October 2007, when they were the Prime Mover for the final financing package in which DFID (the UK Department for International Development), the African Development Bank and the Government of Sierra Leone were co-partners.

Thanks to Salini's tenaciousness and perseverance now you may admire the Bumbuna Dam, which stands in front of you, in its imposing and impressive view.

The Dam, 88 m high, creates a Reservoir with a surface Area of twenty five square Km, at its maximum water level, with a volume of water of 420 million cubic meters which make it possible to produce up to 50 MW in the Power House, through two separate generating units, with an average annual energy production of 315 GWh..

At this point, I have to emphasize that all Sierra Leoneans should be conscious and proud of the fact that the Project carries two technical peculiarities.

The **First** is that the dam is one of the highest in the world amongst those with an u/s impervious Asphalt Concrete Face and the **Second** is related to the 2 Morning Glory Spillways, presently submerged under water, which with their **36 m** diameter are amongst the largest in the world.

After all these technicalities I must now express my deep gratitude to the Paramount Chief and the people of Bumbuna for their continuous support and participation both in terms of work force and making available those land resources necessary for the execution of the works.

Our relationship has always been extremely cordial and I wish – for this to occur – in all the parts of the world where Salini is engaged in construction works.

A particular appreciation is now reserved to Studio Pietrangeli, the Consulting Engineer and Designer of the Power Plant, the Project Implementation Unit and its Director, as well as the Ministry of Energy and Water Resources and the Ministry of Finance and Economic Development for their continuous assistance and efforts which have been more than instrumental to the completion of the project.

Your Excellency the President, now it is your turn.

Your determination and continuous push to the early completion of the project deserve my full respect and admiration even though – if I may be allowed to add – you at times put me on serious fire for situation **not** caused by my Company.

Now, I would like to mention something that came out during the recent negotiations for the Operation and maintenance Agreement of the Bumbuna Power Plant where Salini was asked – by one of the participants – not to abandon the Project since Bumbuna is our BAMBINO. An Italian word meaning “child”.

Well, I want to make clear that Bumbuna is no longer a child but it is a well grown up and educated boy as everybody can witness today.

The boy is now looking for a wife and he has already made his choice, the name of this choice is YIBEN (that is the second stage of the project).

Let me conclude, Your Excellency the President, by saying that Salini will be more than happy to celebrate together with you and your Government that wonderful marriage.

Now, I wish everybody the best on this important day in the history of Sierra Leone and before leaving the work to the next speaker let me say:

UNA ENJOY the Bumbuna Light. TENKE TENKE