



**STATEMENT BY HIS EXCELLENCY DR JULIUS
MAADA BIO, PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC
OF SIERRA LEONE, AT THE HANDING OVER OF
15 WATER BOWSERS AND 2 FIRE ENGINES
DONATED BY THE GOVERNMENT OF THE
PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA, FREETOWN,
TUESDAY 26 APRIL 2022**

WATER BOWSERS AND FIRE ENGINES 2

Ministers of Government present,
The Ambassador of the People's Republic of China in Sierra Leone, His
Excellency Hu Zhangliang
Members of the Diplomatic and Consular Corps,
Service Chiefs
Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen,

Good morning:

1. I want to start by thanking the Government and people of the People's Republic of China for their unstinting support to the development of this nation. Sierra Leone will continue to work with China in the spirit of mutual trust and cooperation for the benefit of our two friendly nations.
2. They claim to have left in place a sustainable water supply for every Sierra Leonean. They did not. Instead of tackling the real problem, they played politics.
3. My government has focused on providing real solutions to the problems and especially appealed to and worked with our international partners.
4. Guma was constructed to serve only 500,000. Freetown now has a population of 1.5 million. In the last four years, this is what my Government has done about Guma:
 - a. Rehabilitated Guma Dam
 - b. Upgraded the Guma Main Treatment Works
 - c. Replaced 3.2Km of the transmission pipeline from Mile 13 to Hamilton
 - d. Guma Valley Water Company is extending the distribution network in the Western Area with support from several partners in various communities in Freetown
 - e. It is also working to reduce water wastage and to extend services to unserved communities
 - f. Guma Valley is also installing water meters across parts of the city

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5. The Green Belt is what helps fill the dam. People have been cutting down and burning trees around the area of the dam so less water has been getting into the dam every year. People have illegally constructed houses around the catchment area. On Saturday, I visited the dam myself to see firsthand what is going on.
6. But we are also working on other water projects – work that no government has done in the last four years: Constructing new gravity water systems in Waterloo and Hamilton. Upgrading of the treatment facility at Barbadori in Regent and extending the water distribution network by 4.2Km into nearby communities. As a result of this project, this year, communities in Regent, Gloucester, and parts of Hill Station and Kamayama are being served with pipe-borne water supply, even at the height of the dry season.
7. In the provinces, my Government is putting in place the following:
 0. Water supply systems for district headquarter towns and Bonthe
 1. Developed over 200 solar-powered boreholes
 2. Installed gravity water systems in dozens of towns and villages
 3. We have also drilled industrial boreholes to serve dozens of communities across the entire Sierra Leone.
8. So, my Government has indisputably done more to expand the existing water supply infrastructure and to make it more resilient.
- 9. Both WHO and UNICEF have stated that my Government has improved access to safe drinking water and sanitation over the last four years: 24% in the provinces; 6% in the Freetown area. They have also confirmed that my Government is making great progress on what they set out to do – increase access to potable water.**
10. We are now working on Freetown, where water supply is most in need. And that is why I am here this morning.

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11. Low access to water can cause children to go fetch water and lose study time and that will expose them to social risks. This government's focus is on human capital development.
12. To address this problem, My Government has secured, from the Chinese Ambassador to Sierra Leone, a total of fifteen (15) bowsers and 2 fire engines donated by the Government of the Peoples Republic of China. The 15 water bowsers will be used to enhance water service delivery to low-income communities in the Western Area.

FIRE ENGINES

13. In the past, the International Civil Aviation Organisation (ICAO) safety audit expressed concerns about the safety of our airport.
14. My Government has maintained three rescue and fire fighting vehicles at the airport, but ICAO said that was not enough. They wanted two additional firefighting vehicles to be in compliance.
15. This is exactly what we have done this morning. The two fire engines will be deployed at the Lungi International Airport, thus improving our safety standards ratings with the International Civil Aviation Organisation.
16. It also means that once we are certified, bigger passenger aircraft can now land at the airport. Add this to the ongoing \$270 million airport project.
17. Sierra Leone has recorded great progress and my Government will continue working hard to make the lives of citizens better – expand access to more potable water and open up the country to the world.