

# SIERRA LEONE LABOUR CONGRESS

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## **SIERRA LEONE LABOUR CONGRESS MAY DAY STATEMENT 2020**

His Excellency, the President, as the number one worker in the Republic of Sierra Leone, fellow workers, our esteemed employers and fellow citizens, on behalf of the Sierra Leone Labour Congress I bring you greetings of Solidarity.

Another May Day is here and we join our compatriots the world over to commemorate the numerous sacrifices of workers - most often under great difficulties - for economic prosperity and the advancement of humanity.

Ladies and Gentlemen, this year's May Day theme is "***Ensuring Universal Healthcare and Livelihood in the Fight Against COVID-19***". Our usual flamboyant commemoration of May Day has been disrupted as a result of the global COVID-19 pandemic which has affected persons from all walks of life in almost all countries across the world.

In Sierra Leone, the economic consequences of the outbreak of COVID-19 are far reaching. Some businesses have closed down while major companies such as those engaged in tourism, mining, construction, banking, and fishery are experiencing a reduction in operations and have significantly scaled down activities. This has led to joblessness and reduced income generation among the economically viable groups especially those engaged in the informal Sector.

The Informal Sector workers have been hard hit as their sustenance is dependent on daily activities. The COVID-19 restrictions of movement and convergence of large groups pose a big blow on income generation and livelihood for these category of workers.

The Sierra Leone Labour Congress commends H.E. Brigadier Rtd. Dr. Julius Maada Bio and his government for a number of achievements since his assumption of office and for the mechanisms put in place so far to combat COVID-19 outbreak in the country. The Labour Congress appreciates Government for the provision of funds to businesses by way of loans as stimulus for the importation of essential goods in the country.

We therefore dedicate this day to healthcare workers in recognition of their sacrifices in the fight against COVID-19. The Labour Congress cannot thank you enough for this show of bravery during this crisis period. For this we call on Government to pay special attention to the welfare of healthcare workers.

We thank the Sierra Leone Employers Federation and all employers who have borne the brunt of keeping workers on salaries even when their businesses are doing poorly in this crisis period.

As we observe the international Workers Day today in low key, we mourn the passing away of our President Comrade Jennings A. B. Wright and as we put our efforts towards combating this global pandemic, we call on government to put mechanisms in place for greater investment in our healthcare system which is a human right provision.

On behalf of the Sierra Leone Labour Congress, let me conclude by thanking and congratulating the leadership and membership of our affiliate unions, our international partners, employers, the Government and people of Sierra Leone for the support and collaboration with the Labour Congress over the years.

**Long Live Workers' Solidarity!**

**Long Live the Republic of Sierra Leone!!**

  
Mohamed Salieu Bangura  
Acting President  
1<sup>st</sup> May, 2020