

THE UNIFIER MAGAZINE

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The Year That Was 2024

Word of the Year
KAKISTOCRACY

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SUFFERATION

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Reward-Centered, Responsibility-Centered,
and Fun-Centered Leadership

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Dr. Richard Konteh

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WELCOME TO THE

THE UNIFIER MAGAZINE



ISSUE 9

Inspire Inclusion

Dear Readers,

As we approach the close of 2024, we take a moment to reflect on the year's significant events, the triumphs, the challenges, and the lessons learned. This edition of *The Unifier Magazine* encapsulates the complexity of Sierra Leone's journey over the past twelve months—both the difficulties we continue to face and the resilience that defines our spirit.

Our Word of the Year is Kakistocracy, a term that has gained relevance in light of the challenges we have seen in our political landscape. In a year marked by turbulence, we examine how poor governance and mismanagement continue to affect the lives of ordinary Sierra Leoneans. The state of the economy remains a point of suffering as rising costs and economic instability affect households across the nation. Yet, in the midst of these hardships, our collective resilience has remained unwavering, and the conversation around leadership continues to evolve.

In this issue, we dive deep into the different leadership motives in Sierra Leone. From reward-centered leadership, which often prioritizes personal gain over the collective good, to responsibility-centered leadership, focused on service and progress, and even fun-centered leadership, which seeks popularity over substance—we explore how these motives shape the political and social fabric of our nation. These differing approaches to leadership have had profound effects on the country's development, and our analysis seeks to shed light on their implications for our future.

In this issue, we also take a nostalgic look back at the forgotten Christmas traditions of Sierra Leone. Christmas used to be a time of joy, community, and abundance, but economic challenges have changed the way we celebrate this season. Through the stories of families across the nation, we examine how Christmas has evolved and what it means today, as we strive to preserve the essence of this cherished holiday amidst our ongoing struggles.

As we wrap up 2024, it is clear that Sierra Leone's journey is far from over. The challenges remain, but the hope for change and growth is as strong as ever. We hope this edition serves as both a reflection and a call to action—reminding us all of the importance of unity, accountability, and resilience as we move into the new year.

Thank you for your continued support of *The Unifier Magazine*. We wish you a **Merry Christmas** and a **Happy New Year in 2025!** We look forward to bringing you more stories of progress, change, and hope in the coming year.

Warm regards,

Editor



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KAKISTOCRACY

The Unifier Magazine's Word of the Year

In a small village nestled among the hills of a country known for its rich natural resources, people lived simple, hardworking lives. The sun rose early over fields that once thrived with crops, and the aroma of fresh bread filled the air. However, beneath the surface of this seemingly peaceful life was a slow, suffocating poison that no one could see – the rise of kakistocracy.

Kakistocracy, the rule of the worst, where leaders are chosen not for their wisdom or capability but for their selfishness and corruption, began to seep into the village like an invisible fog. The first signs were subtle – funds meant for schools vanished, and the small clinic that had served as a lifeline for the villagers became abandoned and dilapidated. Yet, the leaders who were meant to serve them kept smiling, assuring everyone that things would improve.

As time passed, the effects of kakistocracy grew more apparent. Promises made in speeches echoed in the air like empty words. Roads remained broken, schools remained underfunded, and healthcare became a distant dream. The farmers, once able to support their families with their harvests, now struggled to even pay for basic necessities. The corrupt politicians, however, grew wealthier, their pockets lined with the resources that should have gone to the people. The gap between the rulers and the ruled widened, and with it, hope began to erode.

In the heart of the village, a young mother named Amina could no longer afford the medicine her son needed. She had walked for miles to the nearest clinic, only to find it locked up with a sign that read, "Out of Service."

She had no choice but to watch her son, feverish and frail, grow weaker each day. Tears welled in her eyes, but she did not cry. There was no one left to turn to – the leaders had failed her. In a kakistocracy, even the most basic rights – food, healthcare, education – became privileges that only the wealthy could afford.

As the years went by, the villagers began to notice the cruel irony: the leaders who had promised change and prosperity to all, now enjoyed luxury and excess while the people sank deeper into poverty. Children who once dreamed of becoming teachers, doctors, or engineers now saw their futures as little more than surviving the day. For Amina, and many others, hope was a distant memory. In a system ruled by those who did not care, the lives of the people were worth less than their leaders' greed.

Kakistocracy isn't just an abstract term – it's a silent plague that eats away at the heart of a nation, leaving nothing but despair in its wake. In poorer countries, where resources are already scarce, the consequences are even more devastating. Without capable leadership, the country falters, and the most vulnerable are the ones who suffer the most. Amina's story is just one of many, a reflection of countless lives touched by the indifference and corruption of

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those who should be leading with integrity.

As the sun set over the village, casting long shadows over the fields that once brought prosperity, Amina made a silent vow: to fight for her son's future, and for the future of all the children who deserved a chance at a better life. She knew that change would not come easily, but she also knew that the battle against kakistocracy, though daunting, was a fight worth taking on.

In the end, it is the strength of the people, not the indifference of their leaders, that will decide whether hope can survive in a country ruled by the worst.

"Kakistocracy," as defined by the Cambridge Dictionary, refers to a form of government in which the ruling power is held by the least qualified or most corrupt individuals. The term comes from the Greek words kakistos, meaning "worst," and kratos, meaning "rule" or "power." It describes a system where leaders are chosen based on their incompetence or corruption rather than merit. This often results in inefficiency, poor decision-making, and widespread societal harm.

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2024

A YEAR THAT WAS...



As the curtain closes down on the year 2024, Sierra Leoneans can look back with mixed feelings of either hope or trepidation. For some, it was a year of significant challenges but also one of remarkable resilience and the promise of a brighter future.

Economic Volatility

The year began with economic anxieties. Global inflation and the lingering effects of the pandemic continued to weigh heavily on our nation. The cost of basic necessities, like rice and fuel, soared, making life difficult for ordinary families. Many struggled to put food on the table and to afford basic necessities.

Political Landscape: Unity and Reform

The political scene was dominated by the aftermath of the June 2023 elections. The opposition's initial refusal to participate in the legislature, citing concerns about the election's credibility, created tension. However, the signing of the national unity agreement in

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October 2023 marked a turning point.

Social Progress and Challenges

On the social front, 2024 was a year of both progress and setbacks. The passing of the Prohibition of Child Marriage Bill in July was a landmark achievement. It outlawed a practice that had robbed far too many young girls of their childhood and potential.

However, the scourge of drug abuse, particularly the rise of kush, continued to plague communities. The government's declaration of a state of emergency in April underscored

the seriousness of the problem. While efforts to combat drug trafficking and provide treatment to addicts were stepped up, the issue remained a significant concern for many families.

A Year of Mixed Emotions

As 2024 draws to a close, Sierra Leoneans are left with a mix of emotions. There is pride in the country's resilience and the steps taken towards a more stable and prosperous future. There is also anxiety about the economic challenges that persist and the social issues that continue to demand attention.

Yet, there is also hope. The spirit of unity demonstrated by the political parties, the commitment to fighting corruption, and the landmark legislation against child marriage all point towards a brighter future.

As we step into the new year, let us hold onto this hope, working together to build a Sierra Leone where every citizen has the opportunity to thrive.



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RELAX REFRESH REPEAT



LEADERSHIP MOTIVES IN SIERRA LEONE

Reward-Centered, Responsibility-Centered, and Fun-Centered Leadership

As Sierra Leone's political climate begins to heat up in anticipation of the 2028 elections, the All People's Congress (APC) party finds itself at a critical crossroads. A plethora of flag bearer aspirants are emerging by the dozen every day, each vying to lead the party into a contest that could redefine both the party and Sierra Leone's future. The motivations driving these contestants reveal a spectrum of reward-centered, responsibility-centered, and fun-centered leadership styles that reflect the broader dynamics of leadership within the party and the nation.

Reward-Centered Leadership: The Quest for Power and Prestige

Within the APC, some aspirants are clearly motivated by the rewards that come with political leadership. These individuals view the flag bearer position not as a platform for national service but as a stepping stone to wealth,

power, and influence. These reward-centred leaders often go around promising grand changes during their campaigns, but their actions betray a deeper focus on personal gain.

The hallmarks of reward-centered motives are visible in the lavish spending that has characterized the campaigns of some of these contestants. From handing out cash and material goods to flooding social media with paid endorsements and importing or shuttling cheerleaders from one town to another, their strategies prioritize visibility and influence over substantive policies. For many Sierra Leoneans, this approach is all too familiar. "They give us rice and money during campaigns," says one disillusioned voter, "but once they're in power, we never see them again."

Reward-centered leadership within the APC is not without its consequences. It exacerbates internal divisions, as aspirants

focus on building personal loyalties rather than uniting the party. Moreover, it undermines the party's credibility among voters who are increasingly frustrated with leadership that prioritizes self-enrichment over public service. For the APC to reclaim its legacy as a party of progress, it must confront this culture of reward-centered politics.

Responsibility-Centered Leadership: A Vision for Service

In stark contrast to the reward-centered aspirants are those motivated by responsibility-centered leadership. These individuals see the flag bearer position as a solemn duty to serve the APC and Sierra Leone. They are driven by a vision for unity, institutional reform, and sustainable development, and they understand the challenges facing both the party and the nation.

Responsibility-centered leaders within the APC have often been vocal about the need to rebuild

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trust among the party's supporters. They emphasize inclusive governance, ensuring that all regions and demographics within Sierra Leone feel represented. Their campaigns focus on addressing systemic issues such as corruption, unemployment, and education reform.

For example, responsibility-centered aspirants are more likely to prioritize grassroots engagement, spending time in rural communities, and risking their lives going to those remote villages to understand the concerns of ordinary Sierra Leoneans. They advocate for strengthening internal party structures to ensure transparency and accountability. "We need leaders who will build the APC into a party that serves the people, not just the elite," says a young party supporter. This approach resonates with a growing segment of the electorate that is tired of politics as usual.

Fun-Centered Leadership: The Quest for Popularity

The third category of leadership motive within the APC is fun-centered leadership. These aspirants thrive on the excitement of campaigning and

the adoration of crowds. Their campaigns are often characterized by high-energy rallies, catchy slogans, and a focus on personality over policy. While their charisma can attract a large following, their lack of substantive plans raises questions about their ability to govern effectively.

Fun-centered leaders often rely on their natural charm to connect with supporters. They use humour, loud music, and theatrics to create a sense of camaraderie and optimism. However, their campaigns are often short on specifics, leaving voters wondering how they plan to address the country's pressing challenges.

These fun-centered aspirants are very dangerous for the APC. The party risks reducing the flag bearer race to a popularity contest rather than a serious evaluation of competence and vision. "We've seen leaders like this before," says a seasoned APC supporter. "They're great during campaigns, but when it's time to lead, they fall short."

The Stakes are High for the APC Party

The abundance of flag-bearer aspirants reflects both the

APC's internal vibrancy and its challenges. On one hand, the diversity of candidates underscores the party's resilience and ability to attract leadership talent. On the other hand, it exposes deep divisions within the party and raises concerns about its ability to present a united front in the 2028 elections.

The motivations of these aspirants will play a crucial role in shaping the APC's future. Reward-centered leaders and flag-bearer aspirants risk perpetuating the cycles of corruption and inefficiency that have hindered Sierra Leone's progress. The Fun-centered flag-bearer aspirants may energize the party in the short term but lack the depth required to navigate the complexities of governance. The Responsibility-centered leaders and flag-bearer aspirants, however, offer a path to redemption and renewal, focusing on unity, accountability, and sustainable development.

A Call for Reflection and Accountability

As the flag-bearer aspirants contest gets crowded by the day, and as the APC slowly moves forward to prepare to select its flag-bearer in 2026, the party faces a defining moment. The choice is not just about who will lead the APC into the 2028 elections but about the kind of leadership the party—and Sierra Leone—needs. Will the APC prioritize leaders who seek personal rewards, those who thrive on

popularity, or those who are willing to shoulder the heavy burden of responsibility?

For party delegates and supporters, the responsibility is clear. You must look beyond charisma and short-term gains. You must demand accountability and a vision from these candidates. The APC's ability to reclaim its position as a force for positive change depends on its willingness to embrace responsibility-centered leadership.

The Future of Leadership in Sierra Leone



The leadership motives within the APC mirror the broader challenges facing Sierra Leone's political landscape. As the nation grapples with economic hardships, social divisions, and governance deficits, the need for visionary and principled leadership has never been greater. The decisions made in the APC's flag bearer race will not only shape the party's future but also set the tone for Sierra Leone's political direction in

the years to come. The people of Sierra Leone deserve leaders who prioritize their welfare, embrace accountability, and are committed to building a brighter future. For the APC, this moment offers a chance to rise above past shortcomings and present a leader who embodies the values of service, integrity, and unity. The road to 2028 begins now, and the choices made today will define the destiny of both the party and the nation.

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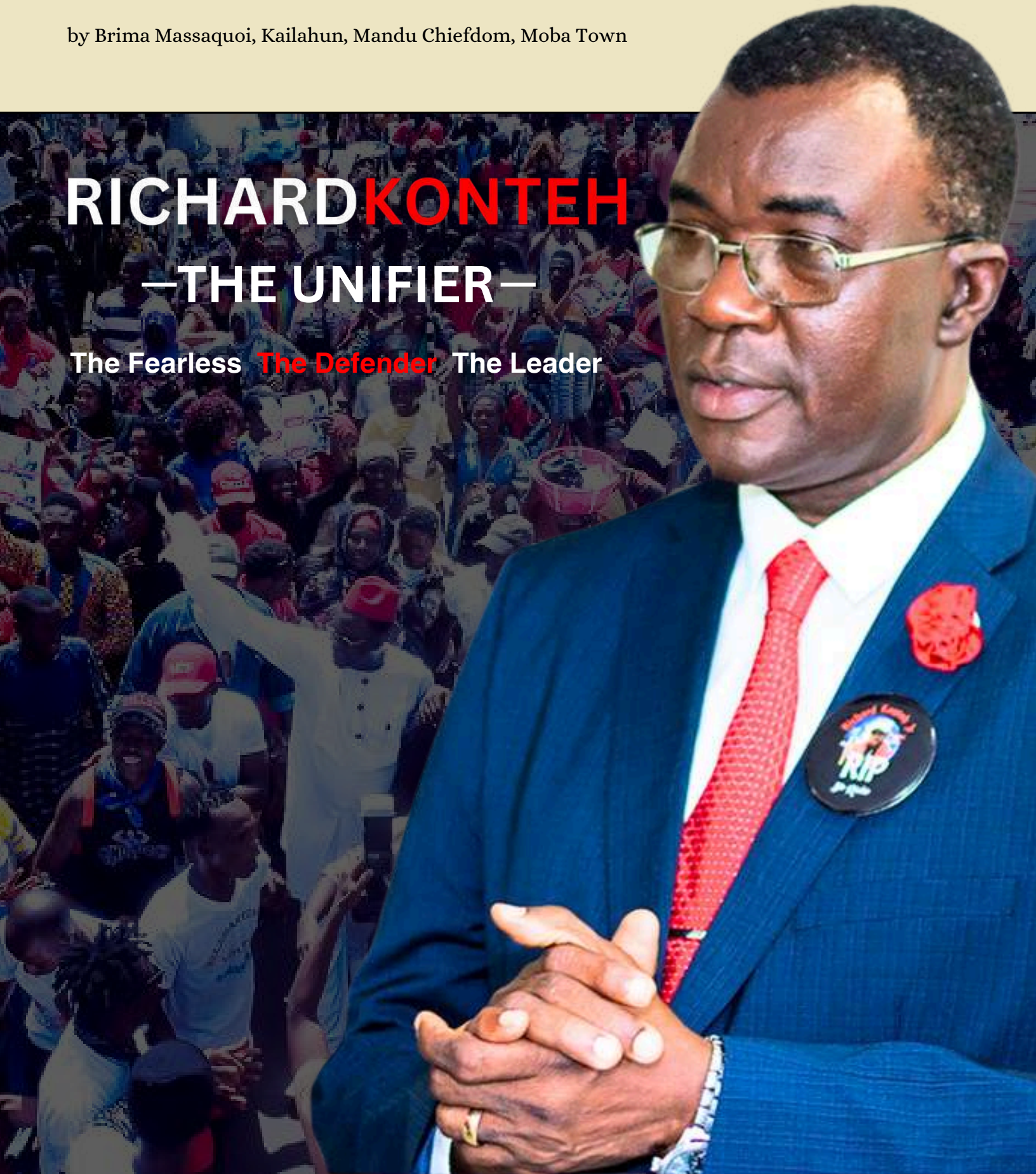
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POSITIVE PROGRESS AND POSITIVE CHANGE THE UNWAVERING COMMITMENT OF DR. RICHARD KONTEH

by Brima Massaquoi, Kailahun, Mandu Chiefdom, Moba Town

RICHARD KONTEH —THE UNIFIER—

The Fearless The Defender The Leader



In Garama, a quiet village in Kailahun, a young mother named Nasu stood by a dusty road, holding her toddler as she waited for the Okada (a motorcycle taxi). For years, her life had been defined by struggles—poor access to healthcare, inconsistent schooling for her children, and a relentless cycle of poverty. Recently, a small community initiative in the village has brought a sense of optimism to Nasu. A new hand pump was installed, providing the village with clean and safe drinking water. At the heart of this small but positive transformation was Dr. Richard Konteh, a leader widely recognized for his efforts and commitment, earning him the moniker "The Unifier."



Dr. Konteh's journey as a leader has been one of action and impact. His vision for Sierra Leone is rooted in unity, responsibility, and sustainable development. In a country often divided by politics, tribal affiliations, and economic disparities, Dr. Konteh has risen as a symbol of hope, embodying the principles of positive progress and change.

The Catalyst for Positive Progress

Positive progress, as Dr. Konteh defines it, is not just about large-scale infrastructure projects or political promises. It's about tangible improvements in the lives of ordinary Sierra Leoneans. From the bustling markets of Freetown to the remote villages of Kailahun, his work has left a mark on countless communities.

Uniting a Divided Nation

In a country often torn apart by political rivalry and tribal divisions, Dr. Konteh has consistently emphasized the importance of unity. Known affectionately as The Unifier, he has worked tirelessly to bridge divides and promote a sense of collective identity among Sierra Leoneans. His behind-the-scenes role, before, during and after the 2023 elections is a positive testament to his fight for national unit.

"National Unity is not just a word," Dr. Konteh often says. "It is the lifeblood of our progress. Together, we can achieve more than we ever could apart."

Sustainable Economic Development

Positive progress cannot happen without a strong economy, and Dr. Konteh understands this well. He has been instrumental in promoting policies that foster economic growth, attract foreign investment, and support local industries.

A Leader Who Listens

What sets Dr. Konteh apart is his genuine connection with the people. Unlike many leaders who remain distant, he takes the time to visit communities, listen to their concerns, and work alongside them to find solutions.

"Dr. Konteh made us feel seen," says Sia - a resident in Kailahun, and an election violence victim. "He gave us hope when we thought all was lost."



The Vision for Positive Change

For Dr. Konteh, positive change is about creating a future where every Sierra Leonean has the opportunity to thrive. His vision includes:

- **Strengthened Institutions:** Building systems of governance that are transparent, accountable, and people-focused.
- **Health for All:** Expanding access to quality healthcare, especially in rural areas.
- **Equality and Inclusion:** Empowering women, youth, and marginalized groups to participate fully in the nation's development.

He has consistently demonstrated that leadership is not about power but about service. His ability to inspire trust and deliver results has solidified his reputation as a transformative leader.

A New Chapter for Sierra Leone

As Sierra Leone faces numerous challenges, from economic hardship to political uncertainty, the need for leaders who prioritize progress and unity has never been greater. Dr. Richard Konteh's work serves as a beacon of hope, reminding Sierra Leoneans that positive change is possible when



leadership is driven by compassion, integrity, and vision.

For Nasu, Sia, and countless others whose lives have been touched by his initiatives, Dr. Konteh represents more than just a politician. He represents a brighter future. Through his relentless efforts, The Unifier continues to pave the way for a Sierra Leone where progress is not just a dream but a reality for all.

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THE FORGOTTEN CHRISTMAS IN SIERRA LEONE!



The faint scent of jollof rice and the melody of Christmas carols filled the many streets of the towns and villages of Sierra Leone in the 1980s. Children ran around in excitement, their faces glowing with joy as they held new toys, and parents beamed with pride as they prepared festive meals. It was a time of simplicity, yet one overflowing with warmth, happiness, and togetherness. Christmas in Sierra Leone wasn't about wealth; it was about community, shared love, and creating memories that would last a lifetime. Today, those cherished moments feel like remnants of a forgotten past—a Christmas that no longer exists.

The Golden Days of Christmas

Christmas was the highlight of the year for many Sierra Leoneans who grew up in the 1980s or earlier. It wasn't just a day—it was a season filled with anticipation and joy.

Preparations began weeks in advance, with families saving up to buy "Christmas dresses" for their children. Communities came alive with lantern processions, masquerade parades, and the sweet sound of "Silent Night" sung in Krio.

"I remember how my mother would bake bread and fry fish," recalls Alimatu, a grandmother from Bo.

"We didn't have much, but there was always enough to share with our neighbours. On Christmas Day, we'd gather as a family, go to church, and come home to jollof rice and chicken. We felt rich because we had each other."

Even the poorest families found ways to celebrate. The affordability of food and basic necessities allowed people to experience the magic of the season without breaking the bank. Children eagerly awaited their gifts, often small but meaningful—a plastic car, a doll, or a set of crayons. There was laughter, there was love, and there was hope.

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The Reality of Today: A Shadow of the Past

Fast forward to today, and the spirit of Christmas in Sierra Leone feels like a distant memory. The streets of Freetown are no longer adorned with festive lights and decorations. Instead, they are filled with weary faces and voices whispering about rising costs and unpaid bills. Parents who once delighted in surprising their children with gifts now dread the season, knowing they can't afford even the basics.

Amadu, a father of three and a mechanic in Makeni, shares his struggle. "When I was a boy, Christmas was a time of joy. My father would buy us new clothes, and my mother would cook a big feast. Now, I can't even buy a bag of rice. How can I make Christmas special for my children?"

The cost of living has spiraled out of control. A bag of rice that cost a few Leones in the 1980s now requires a month's salary for many families. Chicken, once a staple of Christmas meals, is now a luxury item. The simple act of buying new clothes for children has become an unattainable dream for many.

The Loss of Community Spirit

In the 1980s, Christmas was a time of togetherness. Families,

neighbours, and friends would come together to share food, exchange gifts, and celebrate the season. But the economic hardship of today has eroded this sense of community. People are too burdened by their own struggles to extend a hand to others.

"I used to cook extra food for my neighbours on Christmas Day," says Aminata, a widow from Kenema. "Now, I can barely afford to feed my own family. It hurts to see how much we've lost."

The once-vibrant masquerade parades and carol nights have dwindled, replaced by an air of resignation and despair. Children no longer roam the streets with homemade lanterns, and the sound of fireworks that once lit up the night sky is a rare occurrence.

A Glimmer of Hope Amidst the Hardship

Yet, amidst the gloom, there are still glimmers of hope. Churches across Sierra Leone are seeing larger congregations during Christmas services as people turn to faith for solace and strength. For many, the spiritual essence of Christmas remains a source of comfort.

"Christmas is about the birth of Christ," says Pastor Joseph in Kono. "Even in our hardship,

we can find joy in the message of hope and salvation."

Some communities are also finding ways to revive the spirit of Christmas through small acts of kindness. In a village outside Freetown, a group of women has started a savings club to help each other buy food and clothes for the season. "It's not much," says Fatmata, one of the organizers, "but it reminds us that we are not alone."

The Call to Remember and Rebuild

The forgotten Christmas in Sierra Leone is a painful reminder of how much the country has changed. The economic struggles, inflation, and societal challenges have stripped away the simple joys that once defined the season. But while the material aspects of Christmas may have faded, the heart of the holiday—a time for love, hope, and togetherness—can still be rekindled.

As Sierra Leoneans, we must ask ourselves: What can we do to bring back the spirit of Christmas? It starts with small gestures—a shared meal, a kind word, a moment of gratitude. It requires communities to come together, not just to celebrate, but to support one another through these difficult times.

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A Message for the Future

To those who remember the golden days of Christmas, let us hold onto those memories as a source of inspiration. And to the younger generation, let us show them that Christmas is not just about what we have, but about who we share it with.

The forgotten Christmas may not return overnight, but with resilience, unity, and faith, Sierra Leone can once again find its way back to the joy and happiness that once defined the season. As we look ahead to this Christmas, let us remember the past, face the present, and hope for a brighter tomorrow.

As the carols say, "Joy to the world!"—a joy that, despite the hardships, Sierra Leoneans continue to strive for.





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SUFFERATION

SIERRA LEONE'S STATE OF THE ECONOMY



If they are the future of Sierra Leone, then this future is very bleak.

In a bustling market in Freetown, Mariatu Kamara adjusts her stall as the morning sun rises over Sierra Leone's capital. Her small table, laden with fresh vegetables and a few packets of imported rice, tells a story that resonates with millions across the country—a story of survival in an economy struggling to find its footing.



Every day, Mariatu grapples with rising prices. The cost of a bag of rice, a staple for Sierra Leonean families, has nearly doubled in the past year. The little money she makes from her sales barely covers her family's needs. "Everything is expensive," she says, shaking her head. "It's like the prices rise every day, but my income stays the same."

Mariatu's struggles are not unique. They reflect the broader challenges Sierra Leone's economy faces—rising inflation, a depreciating currency, and deep structural issues that weigh heavily on the nation's ability to recover and grow.

The Struggles of the Everyday Citizen



Down the road from Mariatu's market, Ibrahim Sesay, a recent university graduate, sits in his modest room scrolling through job postings on his phone. Like many of Sierra Leone's youth, Ibrahim is highly educated but unemployed. "I've sent out over 50 applications this year," he says. "No one is hiring. I don't know how I'll ever start my life."

Ibrahim's frustration is mirrored by countless young people across Sierra Leone. The country's unemployment rate, especially among youth, is alarmingly high. Despite their potential, many young Sierra Leoneans face a future of uncertainty, with limited opportunities to contribute to the economy or build meaningful lives.

In rural areas, farmers like Alhaji Koroma contend with a different but equally harsh reality. Alhaji wakes up before

dawn to tend to his small plot of land, where he grows cassava, rice and bananas. The rains, once predictable, have become erratic due to climate change, threatening his harvest. Without access to modern tools or affordable loans, Alhaji's farm yields just enough to feed his family, with little left to sell. "Farming used to be a way to survive," he says. "Now it feels like a gamble."



And then there's Agnes. A government employee in Freetown, Agnes earns a monthly salary of just 7,000 NLE—a sum that vanishes almost as quickly as it arrives. Every month, she is forced to choose between paying for her daily commute to work, buying a bag of rice to feed her family, or covering her daughter's school expenses. "I work hard every day, but it feels like I'm running in circles," Agnes laments. "How can I send my daughter to school if I can't even afford the basics?"

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Agnes's plight highlights the struggles of many civil servants in Sierra Leone, whose salaries have not kept pace with the rising cost of living. Despite working for the government, she finds herself sinking further into debt, borrowing from friends and family just to make ends meet.

The Weight of Economic Challenges

The challenges faced by Mariatu, Ibrahim, Alhaji, and Agnes stem from larger issues that have plagued Sierra Leone's economy for years. The country's reliance on mining exports, such as diamonds and bauxite, makes it vulnerable to global price fluctuations. Meanwhile, inflation continues to erode the purchasing power of everyday citizens, and the national currency, the Leone, struggles to hold its value.

The government's rising debt burden complicates matters further. With much of the country's revenue going toward debt servicing, there's little left to invest in critical areas like healthcare, education, and infrastructure. This reality is felt acutely in communities where roads are crumbling, schools lack basic supplies, and hospitals are understaffed and under-equipped.

Corruption and weak governance exacerbate these issues. Funds meant for public services often disappear, leaving citizens to bear the brunt of inefficiency and neglect. For people like Mariatu, Ibrahim, Alhaji, and Agnes, this lack of accountability deepens their sense of frustration and disillusionment.

What is the Path Forward?

Sierra Leone's economy, like its people, is marked by resilience and potential. To unlock this potential, bold steps must be taken:

- **Diversify the Economy:** By investing in sectors like agriculture, manufacturing, and technology, the country can reduce its reliance on volatile mining exports and create more stable sources of income.

- **Support Small Businesses:** Programs that provide affordable credit and training can help entrepreneurs like Mariatu expand their businesses and contribute to the local economy.
- **Empower the Youth:** Vocational training programs and job creation initiatives are critical to ensuring young people like Ibrahim can build meaningful futures.
- **Invest in Infrastructure:** Reliable roads, electricity, and clean water are essential for both urban markets and rural farmers to thrive.
- **Combat Corruption:** Strengthening institutions and enforcing transparency will ensure that public resources are used effectively to benefit all citizens.
- **Build Climate Resilience:** Supporting farmers with tools, education, and infrastructure will help mitigate the effects of climate change on agriculture.

We Have a Shared Responsibility

As Sierra Leone navigates its economic challenges, the burden

cannot rest on the government alone. Civil society, private sector actors, and international partners must come together to create a sustainable path forward. Most importantly, the voices of ordinary citizens like Mariatu, Ibrahim, Alhaji, and Agnes must be heard and included in the country's development agenda.

Sierra Leone's story is one of struggle, but it is also one of hope. With collective effort and determination, the nation can transform its economic reality, ensuring that the next chapter is one of growth, opportunity, and shared prosperity.



DR. RICHARD KONTEH

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