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President Bio re-elected



Dr. Samura Kamara is not happy with the outcome of the election

Samura Kamara rejects result



By Yusufu S. Bangura

President Bio taking oath of office

VIP's massive rice disbursements to police officers nationwide prior to elections was a big boost



The Electoral Commission for Sierra Leone has declared the presidential candidate of the Sierra Leone Peoples Party (SLPP), Julius Maada Bio as the winner of the 2023 presidential elections. The Chief Electoral Commissioner, Mohamed K. Konneh declared President Bio the winner at exactly 4.28pm on Tuesday 27th June, Bintumani hotel, Aberdeen in Freetown.

By that declaration, President Bio would be the president of Sierra Leone from 2023 - 2028. The incumbent president polled a total votes of 1,566,932 representing 56.17% to defeat his closest rival and the presidential candidate of the main opposition All People's Congress, Dr. Samura Kamara who scored 1,148,262 representing 41.16% votes.

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Ecobank, UBA, others embrace PAPSS New Settlement Model

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INSIGHT

By Ishmael Dumbuya

The Electoral Commission for Sierra Leone has on the 27th June announced President Bio as the winner of the June 24th presidential election in the country. The announcement sent a devastating signal to a significant number of Sierra Leoneans who are already faced with an appalling economic difficulty over the past five years. The past five years of President Bio's reign has been fraught with hike in the prices of food commodities, unemployment and an increase in the foreign exchange rate, which made it very difficult for local entrepreneurs and the general public.

President Bio himself admitted that the economy is in shamble after casting his vote on June 24th, but he however, urged Sierra Leoneans to be patient with him, noting that the current economic

President Bio's re-election and the way forward for the economy

mishap is a global problem.

In his manifesto launched couple of months ago in Kenema, he promised to fix the already crippled economy, if given another mandate to rule.

Economic mishap affects every Sierra Leonean regardless of one's party affiliation or sentiments, as every Sierra Leonean purchases food commodities at the same rate. Now that he has been re-elected for another five-year term as the president of Sierra Leone, so going forward, there are a range of modalities he needs to put in place to salvage the crippling economy. First and foremost, the newly elected president needs to build and maintain national cohesion. That is, bringing everyone on board regardless of party

affiliation to institute their expertise in running the country. Secondly, the President should ensure that the tax rates on imported commodities such as rice and other condiments be reduced so that we can have a price reduction of such commodities in the market.

In the area of unemployment, he should ensure that the National Youth Service Scheme be strengthened and monitored so that graduates can be employed. Honestly, the current Youth Service Scheme is a sham and a political gimmick and doesn't serve its intended and mandated purposes.

Also, the new president must see to it that the ministries charged with the responsibility of maintaining

and stabilising the economy be thoroughly scrutinised and monitored, as a lot of them are bent on their selfish gains.

In my opinion, the Labour Ministry and the Public Service Commission are inefficient and ineffective, and thus, needs scrutiny, as they don't serve their purposes and are hell-bent on catering for their people, leaving the general populace to languish. Finally, the new government must ensure that there is a firm price legislation in order to stable and affirm a uniform price control across the country. If the newly elected president can address some of these challenges, I'm sure of his success in their renewed term.

REFLECTION

By Alhaji Haruna Sani

PART 1

The Electoral Commission of Sierra Leone (ECSL) declared the Presidential candidate of the Sierra Leone Peoples' Party (SLPP), Julius Maada Bio as the winner of the 2023 presidential elections, which means President Bio would be the President of Sierra Leone from 2023 to 2028.

According to results announced by ECSL's Chief Electoral Commissioner, Mohamed K. Konneh, the incumbent President polled total votes of 1,566,932 representing 56.17 defeating his closest rival and the presidential candidates of the All People's Congress, Dr. Samura Mathew Wilson Kamara who scored 1,148,262 representing 41.16% votes.

"It is a sad day for our beloved country. My compatriots, we have heard the unfortunate announcement of the elections results for the June 24 elections by Mr. Konneh. It is a frontal attack on fledgling democracy. These results are NOT credible and I categorically reject the outcome announced by the electoral commission," Samura twitted immediately after the results were announced.

I know, the average APC supporter will say the results were rigged in favour of the SLPP, yes, there were irregularities and transparency deficit in the electioneering process but that is an argument for another day. Almost, all local and

international observers raised red flag on the transparency and irregularities in the process. Those irregularities would have been prevented should the APC had put its house in proper order.

The APC started getting it wrong during its court matters, especially the Alfred Peter Conteh case against the party. When the party's erstwhile executives was dissolved by the court, the party was spearheaded by the Interim Transitional Government Committee (ITGC) under the leadership of Alfred Peter Conteh who served as the chairperson of the Committee. It was during the ITGC era that ECSL commenced registration of eligible voters for the 2023 elections. At that point the party failed to provide efficient leadership because of conflict of interest by members of the ITGC. Hence, the registration process by ECSL was marred by irregularities which favoured the governing SLPP led by President Bio.

The Adebayor factor: the Adebayor factor was a major actor in the loss of the APC. I know the grassroots supporters of the APC who were his largest followers admirers will vehemently disagree with me for obvious reasons. Yes, no one could deny outright that Adebayor was not a distraction to the SLPP government, but his activities went beyond disturbing the SLPP to creating more harm than good for the APC. Adebayor was seemingly protecting few APC stalwarts while attacking majority of the party's

loyalists whom he thought were not operating in line with those few that debatable shaped him to protect their interest.

The Fight to reinstall Dr. Samura Kamara as APC flagbearer: the APC also got it entirely wrong when certain faction of the party where striving to reinstall Dr. Samura Kamara as the party's flagbearer during the lower level elections that were held after the APC's court delayed National Delegate Conference. During the lower level elections, Adebayor propagated the term team A and team B representing those supporting Dr. Samura Kamara and his contestants respectively. APC compatriots tagged team B were not only intimidated but ostracized and rejected by Adebayor and his grass majority APC grassroots supporters. Despite receiving the maximum amount of motherly invectives which the Sierra Leonean culture highly forbids, the APC members termed as team B were also rejected.

The APC capitalized on the woeful economic performance of the SLPP government and failed to do properly do their homework: the APC was overzealous about the performance of President Bio to the extent of forgetting a moral tale in our local parlance 'Respect pas Belly full', which approximately means respect, is better than food. Factions of the APC strongly believed Sierra Leoneans will

have no option than to vote for their party because of the poor economic performance of the SLPP. Instead of organizing a formidable and united campaign team, the APC took for granted the woeful economic performance of the SLPP government, hence the party careless about unity and a forming a formidable campaign team. Factions of the party continue to ignore other members of the party even after the election of Dr. Samura Kamara as the flagbearer. Even the campaign chairman was never the kind of popular choice expected.

The APC Executives did not meet national palate: During the APC National Delegate Conference (NDC), the APC elected an executive that was highly criticized for not meeting national flavour. Most of the party's executives were elected from Northern Region, especially from the Kerene District where the party flagbearer, Dr. Samura hailed from. That was unsatisfactory to some strong members of the party from another districts and regions.

Those are some of the areas where the APC got it wrongfully wrong. I hope leading members of the party will go back to the drawing board and make necessary corrections as soon as possible. In less than three years the party would be holding its National Delegate Conference and all necessary corrections are expected to made ahead of the next general elections.



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LOCAL NEWS

By Alhaji Haruna Sani

Samura Kamara rejects result

Samura Kamara, the leader and presidential candidate of the main opposition party, All People's Congress (APC), has vehemently rejected the results of the June 24 Presidential elections in Sierra Leone.

In a post shared on social media, Kamara denounced the outcome of the June 24 elections and described it as a frontal attack on the country's emerging democracy and deemed the results lacking credibility.

On Wednesday, June 27, the Chief Electoral Commissioner, Mohamed Konneh, declared the incumbent President Julius Maada Bio as the winner of the election, securing a second term in office. According to ECSL, President Bio obtained 56.17 percent of the votes cast, while Kamara trailed behind with 41.16 percent.

Addressing his compatriots, Kamara expressed his disappointment and called the day a sad one for Sierra Leone.

"It is a sad day for our beloved country. It is a frontal attack on our fledgling democracy. These results are NOT credible and I categorically reject the outcome so announced by the electoral commission," he stated.

He rallied against what he perceived as a

travesty and pledged to continue the fight for a better future for the country.

Kamara extended his gratitude to his supporters, emphasizing their trust and confidence in his leadership.

Furthermore, Kamara acknowledged the efforts of both local and international partners who championed transparency and democracy throughout the election process.

Despite his rejection of the announced results, he assured his commitment to rising above this setback and pursuing his vision for a stronger Sierra Leone.

"My compatriots. We have heard the unfortunate announcement of the elections results for the June 24 Presidential elections by the Chief Electoral Commissioner Mr Konneh. It is a sad day for our beloved country. It is a frontal attack on our fledgling democracy," he said

The elections, which took place on June 24, were closely watched by citizens and international observers alike. The victory of President Julius Maada Bio marks his second term in office, while the opposition leader's refusal to accept the results has set the stage for potential political tensions in the coming days.



VIP's massive rice disbursements to police officers nationwide prior to elections was a big boost



President Bio re-elected

From cover



Konneh said the accredited voters for the election was 2,800,691 representing 83% of registered voters and he put the total valid votes at 2,789,808, while total rejected votes were 10,883.

"Therefore by the power vested in me, as the national returning officer by Section 57, 51 (2) and 92 (4) of the Public Election Act 2022 and pursuant to Section 42 (2e) of the constitution of Sierra Leone 199, Act No 6 of 1991, I hereby certified that Bio, Julius Maada, having pulled 1,566,932 of the valid votes cast, representing 56.17% of the total valid cast, in the 24th June 2023 presidential

elections, duly elected president of the Republic of Sierra Leone," he declared.

Immediately after the declaration of president Bio, the Swearing-in ceremony of the president-elect took place at in Parliament which was performed by the Honorable Chief Justice of Sierra Leone, Justice Desmond Babatunde Edwards.

Justice Edwards administered the Presidential Oath of Office to President Bio Pursuant to Section 46, subsections 4&5 of the Constitution of Sierra Leone, Act No. 6 of 1991.

Members of the public, particularly the security sector, are full of praises for the Sierra Leone Police Rice Supplier, VIP Trading Company, headed by a dynamic and results-oriented young man, Ahmed H. Hashim.

Before the just concluded June 24th multi-tier elections, Ahmed Hashim, through his VIP Trading Company, ensured a massive nationwide disbursement of rice to the Sierra Leone Police, the military among other security sector personnel.

This according security sector stakeholders and members of the public, serves as a big morale booster to security forces who were very much

dedicated, happy and pro-active in manning the security of the state throughout the electioneering period.

With a full ship load of VIP Premium Parboiled rice, each Police officer in Sierra Leone received in total of six(6) bags while the Republic of Sierra Leone Armed Forces were also able to get their supply through VIP Trading Company.

"Had it not been for the massive morale booster from VIP's rice supply, our effective delivery towards our job would have been difficult" security personnel stated adding that VIP Trading Company under the leadership of Ahmed Hashim has been a big blessing to them.

LOCAL NEWS

By Alhaji Haruna Sani

ECSL lacked clear, timely and comprehensive communication

- EU EOM

Chief European Union Elections Observer, Evin Incir, has noted that the Electoral Commission for Sierra Leone (ECSL) lacked clear, timely and comprehensive communication with the broader public during the conduct of the 2023 elections.

In a press conference on Monday, Incir expressed her admiration for voters who queued in the early hours to cast their votes despite the many challenges that they faced from the ECSL.

She said, "Voters' committed to a democratic process challenged by violence and lack of transparency at critical stages of the elections. We commend voter's dedication and resolve to exercise their democratic right and to cast their ballots."

She went on to state how citizen observers deployed their teams to all polling centers on elections day, contributing to the transparency of the elections.

Incir noted that the Electoral Commission for Sierra Leone (ECSL) appeared operationally prepared until delays and omissions in the delivery of sensitive materials occurred on Election Day with reasons not being properly explained.

"Throughout the electoral process, the ECSL lacked clear, timely and comprehensive communication with the broader public, creating uncertainties and reducing stakeholders' trust. Considering the highly polarized political environment, it is crucial to ensure all transparency and unimpeded access of observers to critical stages of the tabulation of results," the Chief said.



Journalist Escapes Death at Railway Line on Sunday



On Sunday, June 25th, 2023, an incident involving armed military men and Operational Support Division (OSD) personnel occurred during an All People's Congress (APC) party press conference in Brookfields.

Ibrahim Alusine Kamara, Managing Editor of Salone Compass Newspaper, attended the

event with other journalists. As the conference proceeded, men in military fatigues, believed to be presidential bodyguards, emerged and began firing tear gas canisters and live bullets, causing panic and chaos. APC party supporters were celebrating outside the party office building during this time.



Kamara and several other journalists took refuge in a nearby private residence until the situation calmed down. Upon attempting to leave, Kamara found his car severely damaged, allegedly by the armed military personnel and OSD officers. Despite receiving permission from a security officer to move his car, Kamara was subsequently stopped, threatened, and assaulted by two military officers and one OSD personnel. The Deputy Leader of APC, Hon. Chernor Maju Bah, intervened, potentially saving Kamara from further harm. The Managing

Editor is currently recovering from the ordeal, which has left him in severe pain and his family and friends deeply affected. As a result of this incident, Kamara has informed the Inspector General of the Sierra Leone Police about the events and the consequences. The case has also been brought to the attention of the Sierra Leone Association of Journalists (SLAJ), Chief of Defence Staff, National Coordinator of the Office of National Security, All Peoples Congress (APC), and the Media Reform Coordinating Group.



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LOCAL NEWS

Ecobank, UBA, others embrace PAPSS New Settlement Model

PAPSS, the Pan-African Payment and Settlement System, is delighted to announce the signing of Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs) with five African multinational commercial banking groups: Access Bank Group, Ecobank Group, KCB Group, Standard Bank Group, and UBA Group. These significant partnerships aim to revolutionise the settlement of cross-border transactions across Africa, leveraging on the vast network of subsidiaries and representative offices across major economic centres across Africa.

These MOUs were signed on Monday, 19 June 2023, at the opening ceremony of Afreximbank's 30th Anniversary Celebrations and 30th Annual Meetings held in Accra, Ghana, in the presence of Heads of State and Prime Ministers from Africa and the Caribbean, Heads of continental policy and governance institutions as well as international institutions.

The signature of these Memorandums signifies a monumental step forward

in the pursuit of seamless cross-border trade payments throughout the almost 40 countries covered by these Banks. The broad collaboration between PAPSS and African commercial banks will pave the way for enhanced efficiency, transparency, and reliability in intra-African settlement. The adoption of PAPSS's cutting-edge settlement model will streamline operations and empower businesses by providing a secure and technologically advanced platform for cross-border transactions.

As part of this partnership, Access Bank Group, Ecobank Group, KCB Group, Standard Bank Group, and UBA Group will collaborate closely with PAPSS to ensure seamless integration of PAPSS into their existing systems. This collaborative effort will include opening up all their African footprints for PAPSS, facilitating settlement of transactions, encouraging the participation of Fintech in PAPSS via the banks and expanding PAPSS to all the banks' current digital channels such as mobile app banking and e-banking.

Commenting on the signing, Professor Benedict Oramah, President of Afreximbank, said: "the signature of these MoUs marks a remarkable step towards the realisation of the aspirations of Africa's foreleaders, who envisioned the creation of a payment and clearing union about six decades ago. It also draws us closer to domesticating cross-border payments by enabling payments for cross-border trade in African currencies while strengthening African currencies. By leveraging on the vast continental coverage of these African commercial banks, PAPSS will seamlessly facilitate cross-border trade and payments and boost intra-African trade and investments".

Also commenting on the signing, H.E. Wamkele Mene, Secretary General of the AfCFTA, said: "the introduction of the new PAPSS Model for onboarding African Commercial Banks and the signing of the MoUs with the five African Commercial Bank Groups signifies a bold step towards the full operationalisation of PAPSS for the benefit of African traders and SMEs in the implementation of the AfCFTA

Agreement."

The Chief Executive Officer of PAPSS, Mr Mike Ogbalu III, expressed enthusiasm about these collaborations, stating that "these partnerships with Access Bank Group, Ecobank Group, KCB Group, Standard Bank Group, and UBA Group mark a significant milestone in the journey toward a more integrated and efficient African banking landscape. By embracing PAPSS' Commercial Bank Settlement Model, these banks are helping build a robust continental platform for fostering cross-border payments, thereby paving the way for financial inclusion and substantial continental economic development."

These MOUs will be put into effect gradually in partnership with central banks in the countries where the 5 Group Banks operate. Customers of the banks in Africa will be informed through the usual channels of communication as soon as the service becomes available in their countries. PAPSS and the banks will be working towards making this service available towards year-end.

Sierra Leone capital calm after contested election outcome

The streets of Sierra Leone's capital were quiet on Wednesday, a day after President Julius Maada Bio was sworn in for a second term following an election his main rival slammed as "not credible."

Many people in central Freetown said they were relieved at the peaceful atmosphere as they went about their business at the start of Muslim festival of Eid, a public holiday.

Some women were selling food at market and commercial drivers of motorcycles and tuk-tuks were out in rain-soaked streets scouting for customers.

"I'm happy, not even because of the result, but I'm happy with the way everything came and went, because our expectations were really high that it was going to be like a catastrophe", said Amanda, 40, a hotel employee who did not want to give her last name.

TRENDING

Trevor Phillips: Meghan had to learn to be black when she became royal.

"(...) We can have the votes but if we don't have the peace it doesn't make a difference."

"Everyone is cool, everyone is doing well, everyone is happy. Everyone is going on with its normal business," said Abu Kailesie, a 24-year-old student and Bio supporter. "We are OK."

But Alpha Kaloko, a 20-year-old bike rider, said, "I'm not happy about these results, because I think this election is not right. It's not fair... We need changes."

Bio, 59, who leads the Sierra Leone People's Party (SLPP), was sworn in at State House on Tuesday immediately after the Electoral Commission announced he had narrowly won outright victory in the first round of voting, with 56.17 percent of the ballot.

Presidential candidates need 55 percent of the vote in the first round to avoid a run-off.

Since the end of Sierra Leone's 1991-2002 civil war, no incumbent has failed to secure a victory in the first round.

Sierra Leone has a two-term presidential limit.

-Tense rematch-

The vote on Saturday was a rematch of a 2018 race that saw Bio, a former coup leader who campaigned on progressive policies, edge out Samura Kamara of the All People's Congress (APC).

But he took the helm just before the West African state was pummelled by the Covid-19 pandemic, followed by crippling levels of inflation.

EU observers denounced violence by security forces at the APC headquarters in Freetown on Sunday night, in what the police said was an effort to disperse opposition supporters, which left one woman dead.



Kamara, an ex-minister and economist, does not appear to have conceded defeat.

"I categorically reject the outcome so announced by the electoral commission," the candidate -- who won 41.16 percent of the vote, according to the Electoral Commission -- said on Twitter on Tuesday evening.

He has not given a speech since the results were announced. But shortly before the announcement of results, he denounced a "total lack of transparency and accountability" by the election overseer.

National Election Watch, a coalition of civil society organisations, issued a statement late Tuesday pointing to alleged irregularities in the electoral commission's data.

It said that, based on its own calculations, turnout was between 75.4 and 79 percent, not 83 percent as the electoral commission announced.

It also said that Bio should have received between 47.7 and 53.1 percent of the vote, while Kamara should have received between 43.8 and 49.2 percent.

Cameron Hume, a former US ambassador who headed an observation mission by the Carter Center, told AFP on Wednesday that there had been some flaws in the process.

"The voting seemed to take place in a credible manner," Hume said.

"But when it came to the delivery of ballots and the opening of ballot boxes at tabulation centres, there were numerous incidents where we saw a break in the chain of credibility."



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NEWS AROUND AFRICA COMPILED BY GABRIEL BENJAMIN

The maad, a wild fruit, delights Senegal



A man prepares a compote made from maad, from the Saba Senegalensis - Copyright © africanews SEYLOU/AFR or licensors

In the hustle and bustle of a market on the outskirts of Dakar, men unload three 60-tonne trucks that block the roadway long enough to deliver their cargo of maad, a delicate and sought-after fruit. Sandika, in Pikine, is the largest fruit market in Senegal. It's the place to be for maad, the star of the moment. From here, the fruit is redistributed throughout the capital and the interior of the country, where men and women, young and old, revel in its juicy, tangy, sweet yellow pulp.

The season lasts four months, from May to August. The fruit is fragile and must be picked quickly. Among the workers who toil in the heat around the trucks, some sort the fruit according to its condition, others fill baskets with it, while the last dump it in piles on the ground.

"The unloading will be finished by the end of the day", assures Dame Sarr, one of the owners of the merchandise. The young merchant and his uncle have invested six million CFA francs (9,130 euros) in the load. They hope to make a profit of 700,000 CFA francs (1,062 euros).

All around, maad is to be found on almost every stall. The fruit of the Saba Senegalensis, whose globular shell contains seeds coated with edible flesh, grows on wild lianas in West Africa. The maad is known by other names in Côte d'Ivoire, Mali, and Guinea.

- Popular fruit - It's especially popular in Senegal. It is sold on almost every street corner in Dakar. It is eaten with salt, sugar or chili. Some have created their own brand, which they promote on social networks. It's a local source of income for those who harvest, transport, sell or process it.

Maad is rich in fiber and vitamins," says nutritionist

Ndeye Khady Dia. She advises against swallowing the hard-to-digest kernels and warns against the risk of choking in children.

A few customers crowd around Dame Sarr's stall, bucket or basin in hand. "The customers are here today, and that's good for me. If I don't sell all the merchandise, I'll have to slash the price tomorrow, as the maad loses a little of its quality with each passing day", he

explains, seated under a makeshift umbrella tent. Dame, aged 28, has separated his merchandise into the finest specimens, which he sells for at least 4,200 CFA francs (six euros) a bucket of 40 fruits, and the others, which he sells for 2,200 CFA francs (3 euros). As for the 20 kg box, it can cost from 20,000 to 25,000 CFA francs (30 to 38 euros).

- Risky investment - "Maad is a high-risk investment. It can't stand the sun or the rain, and transporting it is perilous", warns Djiby Sandika, market delegate and seller. "It's more profitable for small retailers, who make big profits", assures Dame Sarr.

Senegalese maad comes from Casamance (south), where it grows on lianas wrapped around tall trees in dense forests, which serve as snake dens. Harvesting is unrestricted, by hand or with long sticks.

According to the NGO Économie, territoire, développement et service (ETDS), which brings together 55 women's groups to promote local products, around 1,500 tonnes of maad are harvested each year in the Ziguinchor, Kédougou, and Kolda regions. This quantity represents only 30% of the potential, due to the inaccessibility of certain areas, assures Mariama Diémé, in charge of the Casamance maad labeling project.

These women buy the fruit and then transform it into jam, juice, or syrup. Part of the production is exported.

Interviewed by AFP on the phone, Fatou Binetou Ndour, a Senegalese living in Paris, says she buys a 300-gram jar for 25 euros from a seller on Instagram. The resource, however, is under threat, warns Ms. Diémé, due to "overexploitation", and "numerous bushfires" in Casamance.

Vote on future of UN mission in Mali postponed until Friday

The Security Council vote on Mali's request to end the UN mission in the country (Minusma) has been postponed from Thursday to Friday, due to ongoing discussions, diplomatic sources said on Tuesday.

On June 16, taking everyone by surprise, Malian Foreign Minister Abdoulaye Diop had demanded the "immediate withdrawal" of Minusma, denouncing its "failure".

While the consent of the host state is one of the principles of peacekeeping, the draft resolution proposed by France, which is at the forefront of the Malian dossier at the Security Council, proposes to end the mission, while allowing a period of six months for the withdrawal of the more than 12,000 soldiers and police deployed, according to diplomatic sources.

But due to ongoing discussions between Council members, the UN, and Mali, the vote scheduled for Thursday has been postponed until Friday, the last day of Minusma's current mandate, according to one of the diplomatic sources.

Another diplomatic source told AFP that Mali had asked for the six-month period to be shortened.

A shorter period would raise the question of the practical conditions of the withdrawal.

"Moving thousands of peacekeepers, along with their



UN peacekeepers secure a section of the airport on August 12, 2014 ... - Copyright © africanews SAMIR BOL/AFR

equipment, facilities, and support staff, takes time", Farhan Haq, deputy spokesman for the UN Secretary-General, said on Monday, calling for a "reasonable timetable".

The United States, which regretted Mali's decision, called for an "orderly and responsible withdrawal". Immediately after the Malian minister's statements, the head of Minusma, El Ghassim Wane, declared that the continuation of the mission, created in 2013 to help stabilize this state threatened with collapse under jihadist pressure and to protect civilians, had become "almost impossible".

Relations between Bamako and Minusma have largely deteriorated since the military came to power in 2020.

Unfair EU rules to hit SA orange exports, say growers

South African orange exports to the European Union (EU) are predicted to decline by 20% this year as a result of what the CEO of the Citrus Growers Association of South Africa (CGA) calls "unfair" regulations.

Justin Chadwick warns that approximately 80,000 tonnes of oranges may not reach European supermarket shelves due to the stringent pest control measures introduced in 2022.



A general view of oranges for sale at a citrus stall on the N4 outside - Copyright © africanews PHILL MAGAKOE/AFR or licensors

Sudanese gather for Eid-al-Adha prayers in Port Sudan

Muslims gathered for Eid-al-Adha prayers in Port Sudan on Wednesday as fighting raged on in Khartoum and West Darfur.

RSF paramilitary commander General Mohamed Hamdan Daglo announced on Monday a two-day unilateral truce in advance of the Muslim holiday.

Daglo expressed hope the holiday would provide an opportunity for reconciliation among the Sudanese people, acknowledging the challenging humanitarian conditions caused by the war.

In a televised address on Tuesday, General Abdel Fattah Al-Burhan also called for a unilateral ceasefire and called on young men to defend the country by joining the armed forces.

In recent days, fighting has intensified after a series of ceasefire deals agreed at talks led by the United States and Saudi Arabia in Jeddah failed to stick.

According to the United Nations, the conflict is worsening to "alarming levels" in Sudan's west, with Western nations condemning "widespread human rights violations, conflict-related sexual violence, and targeted ethnic violence in Darfur".



Sudanese Muslim worshippers who fled violence in Khartoum, gather for Eid al-Adha morning prayers on June 28, 2023, in the region of Jazira, south of Khartoum. - Copyright © africanews -AFP or licensors

Eid al-Adha, or the Festival of Sacrifice, is one of the most important Muslim holidays, marking the culmination of the annual Hajj in Saudi Arabia. The raging war, scarcity of humanitarian aid and the refugee crisis make for dire celebrations.

Failed Wagner revolt leaves a question in Africa: Will the ruthless mercenaries remain?



Russians and Malian flags are waved by protesters in Bamako, during ... - Copyright © africanews MICHELE CATTANI/AFR or licensors

The Russian mercenary group that briefly threatened President Vladimir Putin's authority has for years been a ruthless force-for-hire across Africa, protecting rulers at the expense of the masses.

That dynamic is not expected to change now that the group's founder, Yevgeny Prigozhin, has been exiled to Belarus as punishment for the failed rebellion.

The Wagner Group brutalizes civilians in the Central African Republic, Mali, and elsewhere to crush dissent and fend off threats to their leaders' power. In exchange, Russia gains access to natural resources and ports through which weapons can be shipped, and receives payments that enrich the Kremlin and help it fund operations elsewhere, including the war in Ukraine.

Neither Russia nor the African leaders dependent on Wagner's fighters have any interest in ending those relationships. But many questions linger in the aftermath of Wagner's stunning revolt, such as who will lead its thousands of fighters stationed across many African nations and whether Moscow will absorb these fighters into the Russian army.

"The situation is extremely volatile," said Nathalia Dukhan, senior investigator at The Sentry, a U.S.-based policy organization that published an investigative report Tuesday accusing Wagner of carrying out various human-rights abuses in African countries. "But what we have learnt from investigating and analyzing Wagner in Africa in the past 5 years is that the group is resilient, creative, fearless and predatory, so it is less likely that the Wagner empire will instantly fall like a house of cards."

Beyond the financial rewards, Putin has also sought to use Wagner fighters to help expand Russia's presence in the Middle East and Africa. He seeks out security alliances with autocrats, coup leaders, and others who have been spurned or neglected by the U.S. and Europe, either because of their bloody abuses or because of competing Western strategic interests.

Asked whether Wagner's weekend mutiny could erode Russia's positions in Africa, Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov told a state-run TV network that security assistance to African countries would continue.

He specifically mentioned the Central African Republic and Mali and noted that Russian government officials have maintained contact with leaders there.

Lavrov told RT he has not seen "any sign of panic or any sign of change" in African nations over the revolt against Moscow. But amid the uncertainty, there is at the very least some confusion about what exactly

comes next.

In Mali, where at least 1,000 Wagner fighters replaced French troops brought in to fight Islamic extremists, the U.S. alleges that the Kremlin uses the country as a way-station for arms shipments to Russian forces in Ukraine. But the Malian government has denied using Wagner for any purpose other than training.

An officer in the Malian Air Force who spoke on condition of anonymity, because he was unauthorized to comment publicly, said Russian fighters play an important combat role.

"At the moment we don't have enough pilots, and most of our military aircraft and combat helicopters are flown by Wagner's men. If Russia asks the Malian government to stop cooperating with Wagner, we'll be obliged to do so, because we have a greater interest in the Russian government than in Wagner," the officer said.

As part of a deal to end the rebellion, Putin has presented Wagner fighters with three options: either join the Russian military, go to Belarus like Prigozhin, or return home. It was not clear if those options also applied to Wagner fighters in Africa.

In the Central African Republic, a statue in the capital, Bangui, pays tribute to Russian mercenaries who have helped keep President Faustin-Archange Touadera in power. Lavrov told RT that hundreds of Russian fighters would remain there.

Regardless of who ultimately oversees the Wagner fighters in the Central African Republic, the source of their authority remains clear, said Jordy Christopher, a special adviser to Touadera. "Prigozhin is nothing more than a pawn in the handling of the art of war, moreover he is only the tip of the iceberg," he said.

Wagner operates in roughly 30 countries, according to the Center for Strategic and International Studies, and it faces numerous human rights violations, including extrajudicial killings. Its fighters are most influential in African countries where armed conflicts have forced leaders to turn to Moscow for help, such as Libya and Sudan.

"The African leadership of these countries need them," said Federica Saini Fasanotti, a senior Fellow at Brookings Institution's Center for Security, Strategy, and Technology.

Still, some experts said the revolt against the Kremlin will force African countries reliant on Wagner to pay closer attention to how they engage with Russia, where Putin faces the gravest threat to his authority since coming to power more than two decades ago.

"Developments in Russia will likely render many African countries more cautious in their engagement with Russia moving forward," said Ryan Cummings, director of Africa-focused security consulting company Signal Risk.

Any unexpected turn of events domestically in Russia poses potential threats to African leaders who have become dependent on its foreign fighters to stay in power, such as those in Mali and the Central African Republic.

"Any withdrawal could readily be exploited by non-state groups challenging the authority of the government in these countries," said Cummings.

Credit: Rédaction africanews with AP

These regulations require exporters to subject their citrus fruits to special cooling treatments, intended to combat the false codling moth and citrus black spot.

The new rules mandate that oranges be cooled below 2 degrees Celsius for 20 days before shipping.

Chadwick argues that the regulations are discriminatory and unjust, imposing an estimated \$75

million (£60 million) investment in new technology and storage on citrus growers.

The CGA intends to raise concerns regarding these regulations at the upcoming African Union-European Union Agriculture Ministerial Conference in Rome, fearing a potential \$26 million (£20 million) blow to South Africa's orange industry, along with their

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Sierra Leone Agribusiness & Rice Value Chain Support Project (SLARIS)
Ministry of Agriculture (MOA) Building
Moyamba, Sierra Leone



Invitation for Bid

(National Competitive Bidding - NCB)

1. **Requirement:** Supply & Delivery of Office Supplies & Related Items for SLARIS

2. **Bid & Contract No:** MAF/SLARIS/OFF/NCB/002/2023

3. **Date of Issue:** 23 June 2023

4. The Sierra Leone Agribusiness and Rice value Chain Support Project of the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry (MAF) has received a Grant from the African Development Fund (AfDB) towards the Sierra Leone Agribusiness and Rice Development Project (SLARIS) and it is intended that part of the proceeds of this grant will be utilized for the procurement of Office Supplies & Related Items for SLARIS Moyamba as summarized below:

5. Description of Goods:

No.	Description	Qty	Bid Security Amount (SLL)	Estimated Delivery Period After Award
1	Multi-purpose Colored printer	Lot	6,000.00	Within two (2) weeks
2	Assorted Office Cleaning Materials			
3	Rain Gear (Raincoat and Boot)			
4	Dust Resistant Ceiling Fan			
5	Garden Items (Hoe, Cutlas, Wheelbarrow) Et al			
6	A4 Papers & Hard Drive (External- SSD)			
7	Florescent bulb & Stater			

6. Bidding is open to all competent National Contractors with all valid business registration documents issued by the Government of Sierra Leone.

7. Interested bidders may obtain further information and inspect the bidding document at the office of the Project Manager, Sierra Leone Agribusiness and Rice Value Chain Support Project (SLARIS), MoA Building, Moyamba, between 9.00AM and 3PM on week days (**Monday to Friday only – excluding public holidays**). Email: kakuaboy@gmail.com; chriskebbie84@gmail.com; Tel: +232 76 364800, +232 79 453004.

8. Bidding documents shall be purchased upon payment of a non-refundable fee of **SLL 800,000.00** (eight hundred thousand Leones). All payments for the purchase of the Bidding document should be made to the SLARIS Bank Account with details below:

Bank Name:	Rokel Commercial Bank
Account Name:	Sierra Leone Agribusiness and Rice value Chain Support Project (SLARIS)
Account No:	02-01-1011970
BBan No:	002001002101197079
Address:	25/27 Siaka Stevens Street, Freetown, Sierra Leone
Ref:	MAF/SLARIS/OFF/NCB/002/2023 – Office Supplies for SLARIS

9. SLARIS upon receipt of proof of payment, shall provide both printed and electronics copies to the purchaser as may be required.

10. Every Bidders is required to quote for all items or none.

11. Bids MUST be clearly marked and delivered to the address below on or before **12 Noon of Tuesday, 1 August 2023 – Sierra Leone Time**.

The Project Manager

Sierra Leone Agribusiness and Rice Value Chain Support Project (SLARIS)
Ministry of Agriculture Building, Moyamba, Sierra Leone.

Ref: **Supply & Delivery of Office Supplies & Related Items for SLARIS, Moyamba**
Tel: +232 76364800/+232 79 453004

12. The Bidder shall submit with its bid the following additional documents:

- Bid Security amount of SLL 6,000.00
- Completed Bid Form and Price Schedule;
- Technical specification of each item offered to include, **brand name/make and country of origin** as may be applicable;
- Compliance with Delivery Schedule
- Evidence of at least two (2) same/similar contracts successfully completed in the last five (5) years in a form of copy of signed Contracts or certification letter from the Contracting institutions.
- Audited Financial Statement for the past three (3) previous years
- Business Registration Certificate;
- Valid Council Registration Certificate;
- A Certified True Copy of Valid Tax Clearance Certificate from the National Revenue Authority (NRA)
- A Certified True Copy of National Social Security and Insurance Trust (NASSIT) Clearance Certificate

13. Bids will be publicly opened on **Tuesday, 1 August 2023 – Sierra Leone Time at 12:15 PM**, in the presence of the bidders' designated representatives and anyone who chooses to attend, at the address below. Please note, Late bid (s) will be rejected and returned unopened by SLARIS.

Sierra Leone Agribusiness and Rice Value Chain Support Project (SLARIS) Ministry of Agriculture Building, Moyamba, Sierra Leone. Tel: +232 76364800/+232 79 453004

Sierra Leone fails to meet US Department of States fiscal transparency requirements

By Alhaji Haruna Sani

Despite its significant progress in fiscal transparency, Sierra Leone has failed to meet US Department of State Fiscal transparency requirements.

The Department's Fiscal Transparency Report, mandated by Congress, evaluates countries based on their adherence to fiscal transparency standards and their efforts to make budget documents and government contracts publicly available.

Out of the 140 countries and the Palestinian Authority assessed in the report, Sierra Leone was among the 69 nations that did not meet the minimum fiscal transparency requirements.

However, it is worth noting that Sierra Leone was recognized for its notable advancements in this area.

A total of 25 countries, including Sierra Leone, demonstrated significant progress toward meeting the minimum requirements of fiscal transparency during the review period of January 1 to December 31, 2022.

Fiscal transparency plays a crucial role in effective public financial management as it informs citizens about how government revenues are utilized. It fosters accountability, empowers citizens, and promotes market confidence and sustainability. The Fiscal Transparency Report serves as a tool to identify


deficiencies in fiscal transparency and support necessary changes to enhance accountability and good governance.

The Office of Macroeconomic Affairs (OMA) within the Bureau of Economic and Business Affairs (EB) at the Department of State, in collaboration with the Bureau of Energy Resources (ENR) and the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), prepares the annual Fiscal Transparency Report.

This report evaluates the fiscal transparency data collected by U.S. diplomatic posts in 141 countries eligible to receive U.S. foreign assistance.

The governments of 72 countries were deemed to have met the minimum requirements of fiscal transparency for the year 2023. Notable among these countries are Argentina, Brazil, Colombia, India, Israel, Mexico, Nigeria, Peru, the Philippines, Thailand, Turkey, and Uruguay, among others. These governments have demonstrated a commitment to transparency by making key budget documents available to the public in a timely manner and adhering to transparent processes for awarding government contracts, particularly in the natural resource extraction sector.

While Sierra Leone may not have met the minimum requirements, its progress in fiscal transparency is commendable.




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The advertisement features a woman with dark curly hair wearing a purple sweater, standing at an ATM and holding a smartphone to the screen. The background is a light blue wall with a yellow horizontal stripe. In the top left corner, there is a white sign with a blue icon of a smartphone and the text "UNION TRUST BANK LTD". In the top right corner, a dark blue rounded rectangle contains four bullet points, each preceded by a yellow diamond. To the right of this rectangle, the words "Cardless Withdrawal" are written in a white, cursive font. At the bottom, the title "ATM Cardless Transaction" is displayed in large, bold, yellow letters with a blue outline.

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Freetown International Airport

7th June 2023

PUBLIC NOTICE

Freetown International Airport wishes to inform the public and passengers travelling through the Freetown International Airport (FNA) that, its newly installed Car Parking System will start commercial operations effective 1st July 2023, using the Under mentioned tariffs for all categories of vehicles.

In this respect, our valid customers are expected to be in full compliance with this publication, as we wish to assure all users of this facility (Car Park) of a specific duration, quality, and effective service.

Time Duration	Price
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REQUEST FOR EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST (CONSULTING SERVICES – FIRM SELECTION)



COUNTRY: Sierra Leone

NAME OF PROJECT: Sierra Leone Land Administration Project (P177031)

Grant No.: E0600-SL

Procurement Title: Hiring of a consulting firm for the Coordination of the Recording and Registration of Land Tenure Rights

Reference No: SL-MLHCP-364429-CS-QCBS

Date of Issue: 27th June, 2023.

The Ministry of Lands, Housing and Country Planning (MLHCP) through the Sierra Leone Land Administration Project (SLLAP) now invites eligible Consulting Firms, (“Consultants”) to indicate their interest in providing the Services. Interested Consultants should provide information, demonstrating that they have the required qualifications and relevant experience to perform the Services.

The shortlisting criteria are: **Relevance of Core Business and years in business, relevant experience as a firm, technical and managerial capability of the firm. The Qualifications and Experience of Key Experts shall not be included in the shortlisting criteria. Key Experts will not be evaluated at this stage (shortlisting stage).**

The Ministry of Lands, Housing and Country Planning (MLHCP), through the Ministry of Finance *has received* financing from the World Bank towards the cost of the Sierra Leone Land Administration Project (SLLAP), and intends to apply part of the proceeds for consulting services.

The consulting services (“the Services”) include “Coordination of the Recording and Registration of Land Tenure Rights”. *The estimated level of effort (professional staff-months) for this assignment is Forty-Eight (48) months. Implementation is expected to commence on the 4th of September, 2023 and ends on the 4th September, 2027.*

The detailed Terms of Reference (TOR) for the assignment *can be requested via email, using the following email address: sllaprocmnt@gmail.com, copying joejoe7787@yahoo.com, copying alphajocham@yahoo.com and jobosamba@yahoo.com.*

Or
Can be obtained at the address given below:
The Project Coordination Unit
Sierra Leone Land Administration Project (SLLAP)
3rd Floor –West Wing, Youyi Building
Brookfields, Freetown.
Attn: The Procurement Specialist
Tel: +23279629390

The attention of interested Consultants is drawn to Section III, paragraphs, 3.14, 3.16, and 3.17 of the World Bank's “Procurement Regulations for IPF Borrowers” November 2020 (“Procurement Regulations”), setting forth the World Bank's policy on conflict of interest. In addition, please refer to the specific information on conflict of interest related to this assignment *as per paragraph 3.17 of the Procurement Regulations.*

A Consultant will be selected in accordance with the **Quality and Cost Based Selection (QCBS)** Method set out in the Procurement Regulations.

Further information can be obtained at the address below during office hours: – (09:30 to 1700 hours Sierra Leone Time.

Expressions of interest must be delivered in a written form to the address below (in person, or by e-mail) **by or before 2:00pm on Wednesday the 12th July, 2023.**

Sierra Leone Land Administration Project (SLLAP) – Ministry of Lands, Housing and Country Planning (MLHCP)

*Attn: The Procurement Specialist
West Wing of 3rd Floor, Youyi Building
Brookfields, Freetown*

Tel: +23279629390

E-mail: sllaprocmnt@gmail.com

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Population Services International- Sierra Leone

Job Description

Monitoring, Evaluation & Learning (ME&L) Specialist (EpiC Sierra Leone)

Job Type: Consultancy/Independent Contractor

Location: Freetown, Sierra Leone

Start Date: To be determined.

End Date: To be determined.

Reports to: Country Project Manager- EpiC SL

Grade: TBD

Background Introduction

Population Services International (PSI) is a network of locally rooted, globally connected organizations working to achieve consumer-powered healthcare — people-centered health systems that ensure quality, affordable care wherever and whenever it is needed. Our origins in sexual and reproductive health have grown into a broader mission. Today, we work with the public and private sectors as well as local communities, prioritizing people's voice and choice and developing solutions to meet their essential health needs. Over the past five decades, we have helped push boundaries, break taboos, set trends, and develop innovative solutions to complex global health challenges.

There are over 9,000 "PSI'ers" around the world. It's a diverse group of entrepreneurs and professionals with an unusually wide range of backgrounds - from the medical industry to the music business - all with unique skills we bring to the job.

PSI Sierra Leone seeks to recruit, on an "independent contractor basis" the services of an M&E Specialist to assist with, amongst other pieces of work, data management for the Meeting Targets and Maintaining Epidemic Control (EpiC) Project activities which are aimed at increasing the coverage of COVID-19 Vaccination in Sierra Leone.

Meeting Targets and Maintaining Epidemic Control (EpiC) is a five-year global project funded by U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID). EpiC receives COVID-19 funding to bolster health systems necessary to address COVID-19 and reduce cases of reemergence.

Currently, EpiC and its consortium members implement COVID-19 activities in more than 45 countries worldwide. The project delivers high-quality technical assistance at the community, facility, district, regional and national levels and builds relationships with relevant partners working to address COVID-19.

In Sierra Leone, EpiC works hand in hand with Sierra Leone's Expanded Program on Immunization (EPI) to identify and address gaps that are not currently covered by other partners throughout the country but more especially in the 7 districts that have the lowest COVID-19 vaccine uptake.

General Objective of the Position

Reporting to the EpiC Sierra Leone Country Project Manager and working closely with the M&E Coordinator for the organization, the MEL Specialist will take a leadership role in developing and supporting EpiC Sierra Leone project's data management, utilization and reporting through the EpiC Global Infolink's database platform. The support will include data collection, cleaning, validation and visualization, co-leading administration of the project's activity data base. The MEL Specialist will also work with the global EpiC M&E team on co-design and oversight of implementation of new components of routine data collection (by adding to existing database).

The MEL Specialist will lead the ongoing capacity building and skills maintenance in data management and utilization for program quality improvement among the EpiC Sierra Leone country project team. The position will contribute to consolidating and building EpiC project's evidence and knowledge resources and showcasing the impact of our covid-19 vaccination work both internally and externally. The MEL Specialist will also support the EpiC project team and its implementing partners in oversight and guidance on Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning (MEL) activities. The position will work very closely with the Impact Malaria program M&E team, and when needed, also provide guidance to other program colleagues within the country office.

The specific job functions are as follows:

Leadership on routine & periodic activity data collection and management

Provision of routine covid-19 vaccine management information system backstopping to the EpiC SL team

Technical ME&L assistance to the EpiC project team
Contribute to the learning agenda of the project.

Key Responsibilities

Work with the Project Manager (EpiC) and the M&E Coordinator to contribute to strengthening the EpiC Project MEL systems.

Manage routine data, including data cleaning and entry in the global EpiC Infolink's software platform to ensure timeliness, completeness, consistency and quality.

Leading the design and testing of data collection, data entry and supervision tools

Creating data analysis plans and effectively implementing them

Undertake critical review of existing data collection forms & reporting tool to identify gaps and feed this to the EPI M&E team for further action.

Liaise /coordinate with the central DHIS2 unit of the MOHS and other partners to share with them critical and relevant covid-19 vaccine data-related findings from the field aimed at strengthening the overall system.

Ensure timely and complete reporting and feedback of routine data system, including data quality review, relying on support from the EpiC program Team.

Provide technical leadership for the development, validation and implementation of data collection tools and processes, including the adaptation and improvement of the existing suite of quantitative monitoring tools for EpiC Sierra Leone.

Coordinate regular review of data at national and district levels to identify any trends, patterns or unexpected changes, and to support data for decision making with the rest of team.

Implement processes for tracking progress of routine monitoring (new data tracker detailing reporting elements and their periodicity for tracking, monthly deadlines for receiving data and estimated processing time at country level)

Coordinate EpiC Sierra Leone project team's ongoing skills building and provide in-house guidance on the appropriate use of the database.

Contribute to evidence generation, documentation and information-sharing on covid-19 vaccine integration by working with the EpiC Project Communications Officer to co-author articles and success/ change stories.

Presenting at conferences and meetings evidenced-based data for internal and external stakeholders.

Maintain active involvement/ participation in external technical MEL working groups, and other technical bodies, as appropriate, based on the project's needs.

Carry out additional tasks, as delegated by the Project Manager and PSI Sierra Leone Country Representative.

Qualification and experience

A Masters' degree in a relevant field mainly public health, epidemiology, statistics/demography, etc.

At least 3 years of proven experience in monitoring and evaluation in reproductive, maternal child health, or a related field

Quantitative and qualitative data collection and analysis management skills, specifically with database management (preferably in DHIS2) and survey instruments development (preferably in Kobo Toolbox or ODK)

Experience conducting monitoring, evaluation and research in a global public health setting.

Solid technical background in Reproductive, Maternal and Child Health and other related aspects.

Competence in qualitative and quantitative analysis software programs (SPSS, Epi-Info, SAS, etc.)

Ability to guide, coach and oversee others to produce accurate, timely results and products collaboratively.

Technical writing and strong presentation skills to both internal and external audiences

Willingness to travel to the field.

Must be able to work in a dynamic and complex environment.

Excellent written and verbal English language skills

Interested candidates should submit CV, professional certificates and cover letters indicating the position they are applying for and submit online to the email recruitment@psi-sl.org before the 30th June 2023.

Population Services International is an Equal Opportunity Employer, promoting gender, equity and diversity.

PSI is an Equal Opportunity Employer and encourages applications from qualified individuals regardless of actual or perceived race, religion, color, sex, age, national origin, disability, sexual orientation, marital status, personal appearance, matriculation, political affiliation, family status or responsibilities, gender identity or expression, pregnancy, childbirth, related medical conditions or breastfeeding, genetic information, amnesty, veteran, special disabled veteran or uniform service member status or employment status.

Request for Proposals UNICEF Sierra Leone Admin Services (Re-advertisement)

The United Nations Children's Fund invites individual tenders for the services listed below through a Long-Term Agreement for an initial period of 24 months with possible extension for another 12 months.

Please visit the United Nations Global Market (UNGM) Website and download the tender documents. ***The submission deadline for each Tender is Thursday 6th July at 10.am.***

1. Provision of Air Conditioners Maintenance Services for UNICEF Offices in Freetown and Kenema and the Warehouse at Ferry Junction, Freetown
2. Servicing of Closed-Circuit Television (CCTV) for Freetown CO, Ferry Junction Warehouse and Kenema Field Office and Biometrics for Freetown Country Office
3. Servicing of Fire extinguishers for Freetown Country Office, Warehouse at Ferry Junction, Freetown, and Kenema Field Office.

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