



**ADDRESS BY  
MANAGING DIRECTOR FOR AFRICA  
OF EUROPEAN UNION EXTERNAL ACTION SERVICE  
Ms. RITA LARANJINHA  
ON THE COMMISSIONING OF THE EU FUNDED  
INVESTMENTS IN KAMBIA DISTRICT**

**Wednesday 17 April 2024**

*Check Against Delivery*

**Hon. Minister of Local Government,  
Hon. Chairman of the Kambia District Council,  
Hon. Members of Parliament,  
Hon. Paramount Chiefs and Chiefs,  
Salone fambul dem,  
Please allow me to stand on existing protocol.**

I am honoured to be here today, joining forces with the Government and the people of Sierra Leone, to celebrate the EU supported investments in Kambia District.

For me it is the first time in Sierra Leone. I thank you for the warm welcome. I feel extremely well received by our Sierra Leonean friends.

Especially I am very happy to see so many active women, working for the future of their country. This is encouraging.

The European Union has been a longstanding partner of Sierra Leone. The EU has been supporting Sierra Leonean initiatives to develop the future of the country for many decades. Here in Sierra Leone, the EU has funded road projects to connect the countries of the region. Together with you in Salone, on the Praia-Abidjan connection, we have built the Global

Gateway in your country. We are proud of the good cooperation with Sierra Leone! This is exemplary.

In the same spirit, the EU firmly believes that Sierra Leonean initiatives for local governance play a crucial role in promoting good governance and fostering inclusive economic development. Effective governance requires a system that acknowledges and values the unique needs, priorities, and contributions of local actors.

As EU, we recognise that local councils are in a unique place to respond to most of the pressing challenges we face today, and that will characterise the world of tomorrow, be it climate change, digitalisation, urbanisation, sustainable growth, or stability.

I am here today to highlight the EU's unwavering dedication to continue EU support to Sierra Leone.

We are pleased that the Government's Medium-Term National Development Plan 2024-2030 emphasises local government empowerment and decentralisation for efficient service delivery. This realisation is essential for inclusive government at all levels.

The EU is pleased for having supported Sierra Leone's decentralisation through the 11th EDF Programme, Support to Civil Society and Local Authorities for Local Development, which provided 25 million euros to six local councils and civil society organisations.

Given Kambia's role as a trading gateway and tourist hub, it is pleasing to note the positive impact of the EU-supported programme implemented by the Kambia District Council in fostering the prosperity of rural communities.

Glad to note that working alongside Civil Society Organisations like Action Aid Sierra Leone and Kambia District Development and Rehabilitation Organisation (KADDRO) further contributed to enhancing agricultural output and household incomes through microgrants and other income-generating activities. Local governments must collaborate with civil society organisations and private partners to address community demands and economic development objectives.

We are pleased that private operators will strengthen public-private partnerships, particularly locally, and will manage the investments. This is in line with the Government Big-5 initiative and with the EU Global Gateway offer to Africa.

My dear Sierra Leonean friends,

I am confident that due to your dedication, existing initiatives funded by the EU will be maintained and utilised to improve lives. This will advance communal, financial, organisational, and economic development.

I am happy to meet during my mission to your country representatives of the Government, of the opposition, of civil society, of religious communities, women and men, youth and elders, people of Sierra Leone.

Plenti tenki una ol.