



ALL PEOPLES CONGRESS (APC)
MOTTO: ACTION PROGRESS COMMITMENT
INTERIM TRANSITIONAL GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE (ITGC)

<u>Headquarters & Western Region</u>	<u>Eastern Region</u>	<u>Northern Region</u>	<u>North/West Region</u>	<u>Southern Region</u>
We Yone House 11A Old Railway Line, Freetown.	Victor Brima Street R.T.I. – Kenema	12, Field Road Makeni Bo	1 Falaba Road Port Loko	7 Baiima Lane Off Baiima Road
Tel: +23288782686/+23276121211				
Our Ref:	Your Ref:	13th August 2022		

PRESS STATEMENT

The All Peoples Congress (APC) Party have received the address of H.E. the President Dr. Julius Maada Bio delivered to the nation on the 12th August 2022, with shock and utter disappointment.

This statement was issued following the events of August 10th 2022 which saw the killing of both civilians and security personnel.

In particular, we wish to refer to paragraph two(2) of the address in which H.E. the President directly accused the APC and our membership of been financiers and/or supporters of the protesters (PPP), even before an independent investigation is conducted. We believe that such and similar accusations have also happened in the past which contributed and continue to contribute to the political divide in this country.

The public will recall that prior to the events and incidences of August 8th-10th 2022, the Party issued and circulated our position with regards social media crazed audios shared by certain individuals. We unequivocally and in no uncertain terms, disassociated our party and all our well-meaning members who have always been law abiding from such postings. The public will further note that at all material times since the election of President Bio, our party and our members have remained law abiding, peaceful and respecters of the constitution of Sierra Leone. We maintained a pacific posture even at the height of unprecedented provocation.

Furthermore, the APC Party have as usual, come out to the public by press statements and radio interviews without doubt to disassociate the Party and its members from the violent protest that took the precious lives of our compatriots on August 10th. We also condemn the carnage that ensued in clear terms.

It is also public knowledge that social media has been carrying toxic, unwarranted and inciting propaganda messages and videos against individuals including senior members of our party ;

and our party directly, as well as leaders of other political parties. As such, all of us have in some way, been targeted by social media messages at home and abroad.

It is no secret that protest of August 10th was well within the knowledge of the government, the public and security forces. The security forces had warned against it but also manifestly planned for it. They put out statements warning what they called "faceless organizers" of the protest. Despite our disclaimer and consistent with the practice of this government, our senior members were being picked up from their homes before and after protest period and locked up in undisclosed locations. Hundreds of our members who did not participate in the protest have been picked up during curfew hours and their whereabouts are still unknown. These abducted members are reported to have no contacts with family members since these unidentified armed men picked them up from their homes. This is without doubt chilling new threat to the rights of citizens. The government should now stop using state apparatus against our members across this country simply because they chose to be members of the APC. The President and his government should stop blaming the APC for the "faceless demonstration" and learn to take responsibility by addressing the cries of citizens.

Our expectation of the Presidential address was a message that would empathize with victims, calm the heightened tensions in the country in the midst of acute hunger, financial hardship and suffering. We hoped that it would have been one that attempts to unify the nation after four(4) years of divisiveness.

It is our hope that the promise of an investigation will be an impartial and independent one. Such an independent committee should delve into the violent protest, the loss of lives and destruction of property in many places around the country.

Through this independent and impartial investigation their pattern of unsubstantiated and relentless accusations against our party will be discredited.

We are therefore of the opinion that the baseless accusations and statements being made against us will undoubtedly undermine the credibility of any investigation. The President's statement has the proclivity to expose our members and sympathizers of our party to vitriol and hate among other harm. We believe that recent videos making rounds on social media pointing fingers at security forces and members of government in clandestine so-called arrests and brutality could be hugely consequential in any further investigations. We believe that criminal conduct should not be decorated in political identity solely to make the APC look bad and we maintain that our party cannot therefore be blackmailed.

We call for publication of the names and addresses of all those arrested in connection with this incident and the immediate and unconditional release of all our members and possibly the hundreds of other presumably innocent citizens in the custody of law enforcement agencies.

The APC Party stands prepared to support government in a transparent, credible and impartial process at all levels.

We continue to send heartfelt condolences to all the bereaved relatives and family members including those of the security personnel ; we commiserate with those who suffered loss and ask the government and the security forces to exercise restraint when pursuing the members of the public.

Signed


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Hon. Abdul Kargbo

Secretary and Head of the Secretariat (ITGC)