

Her Excellency Madam First Lady,

It is a real pleasure and great honour for me to have this opportunity to introduce myself to you after I took office in Sierra Leone three weeks ago; and I am very grateful to you for your time.

I want to cease this opportunity to thank the President and through him all the national authorities to give me the opportunity to work in this great country; Madam, I thank you personally for your support to my predecessors and to UNAIDS Country Office.

At my first meeting with the Director of NAS when I came, I kindly requested him to arrange a meeting with Her Excellency, Madam First Lady. This shows the willingness of the institution I am representing to pay tribute and also to contribute to your effort, your initiatives and the tremendous work you are doing to alleviate the suffering, to empower the women and girls and to reduce the maternal mortality in your population.

Her Excellency, Michel Sidibe, The Executive Director of UNAIDS instructs me for this first visit, to convey his warm greetings, his appreciation for your passion, your commitment and your personal engagement to achieve the elimination of HIV transmission from mother to child in Sierra Leone.

The Executive Director wants me to thank you for your active and fruitful participation for both OAFLA meeting in Addis Ababa early and the high level meeting in New York last year. Just to remind, the side meeting of First Ladies in New York ended up with a roadmap and targets for the elimination of HIV transmission to a child in each country. I received firm instructions from Michel Sidibe to support your endeavor, your initiative and your office in implementing that agenda in Sierra Leone.

The EXD asked me also to use your voice to thank the President of the republic for his active and personal involvement in the fight against HIV and AIDS which take the response at high political level with high performance in Sierra Leone. This justifies the well-deserved nomination of the country to seat at the Programme Coordinating Board which is the governing body of UNAIDS. The country has a lot of experiences and best practices to take to that forum and

share worldwide.

Her Excellency, I am here today to gather your advise your expectations and your guidance for the best way for UNAIDS Country Office to support your effort and initiatives.