



H.E. MILTON MARGAI
Prime Minister of Sierra Leone

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President Miltom Margai conveyed to his fellow Heads of State that the vision of African Unity is a deep-rooted aspiration for the people of Sierra Leone. He articulated that Sierra Leone has always embraced the belief in the possibility of a united Africa, nurturing the hope that the visible differences leading to various factions or coalitions across the continent are merely fleeting. He expressed his satisfaction in recognizing that this hope is indeed justified and urged his fellow leaders to capitalize on this moment to forge an agreement dedicated to promoting unity among African nations. He stressed that if they were to conclude the Conference by reaffirming the vital principles of Unity and committing to collaborate wholeheartedly in the economic, social, educational, scientific, and cultural progress of the continent, their meeting would be celebrated as a success.

Questions for consideration: What does Margai mean when he says that African Unity is a “longstanding” aspiration of the peoples of Sierra Leone? What are the obstacles to African Unity, according to President Margai? What does Margai mean when he says that “The appearance of creating different groups or blocks on our continent were only temporary differences”? Does Margai agree or disagree with the views that African Unity project is unrealistic in the short-term, why? According to President Margai, what must happen to make Addis Ababa meeting a success, and why? What does President Margai mean when he said that “The whole world is watching us and eagerly listening for the good news from Addis Ababa?” What does it mean for a group of nations to be independent and united?

In Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, May 1963

Your Imperial Majesty; Your Excellencies

I must first of all join in the expressions of thanks to Your Imperial Majesty and to your Government and people for the warm welcome with which we have been received in this lovely city, for the gracious and generous hospitality which has been provided for us, and for all the care and thoroughness with which preparations have been made for this historic Summit Conference of independent African States. We in Sierra Leone have never believed that Africa could not be united, we have always held the hope that the differences of approaches which seemed to have the appearance of creating different groups or blocks on our continent were only temporary differences. Now we are happy that we did not hold this hope in vain. We are happy that, by the simple fact that we are reeling here from over thirty independent states have been able to prove to ourselves and to show to those outside Africa, for their own recons, would like to see us divided, that there is only ONE Africa, and that in this one Africa, we are all brothers.

I would like also to express our thanks to our foreign ministers and their delegations, who have worked patiently and well this past week to prepare out Agenda. It is my view, Your Majesty and Your Excellencies, that if we were to go home from this Conference having reaffirmed the fundamental basis of Unity and having set in motion the machinery for the structural aspect of Unity, and having declared that we WILL, stay united and WILL cooperate in every way towards the full economic, social, educational, scientific cultural development of this our potentially great continent. It is then our meeting will have crowned with success. I am prepared to enter our discussions with a spirit of understanding of sympathy with views which may be different from my own views, and with willingness to reach through honorable compromise.

Your Majesty; Your Excellencies: The whole world is watching us and eagerly listening for the good news from Addis Ababa, that: United AFRICA is ready to lead in the path towards peace and security.

Thank you.