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## **President Ernest Koroma Launches the NMA**

His Excellency the President of the Republic of Sierra Leone, Dr. Ernest Bai Koroma, formally launched the National Minerals Agency (NMA) on the 7th of March 2013, at an impressive ceremony held at the Miatta Conference Hall in Freetown. The ceremony attracted Government Ministers, parliamentarians, Representatives of diplomatic missions and Development Partners, Mining Companies, civil society organizations and Sierra Leoneans from all walks of life.

In his keynote address, the president reiterated his determination to use the country's mineral resources to improve the standard of living of all Sierra Leoneans. He highlighted reforms made by his government in the Minerals Sector, including the enactment of the Mines and Minerals Act in 2009; launching of one of the World's first online database of Mining Licenses and payments; and drafting of Environmental and Social regulations. The establishment of the new NMA, a professional and regulatory body that will implement Mining Policies, is a key element of this transformation.

Minister of Mines and Mineral Resources, Hon Minkailu Mansaray, assured all Sierra Leoneans and foreign companies in Sierra Leone that the NMA will be challenged to conduct effective implementation of government's mining policies, and generally ensure World Class regulation of the Mining industry in SL. Rising up to the challenge, the Director General of the NMA, Sahr Wondray, gave assurances on behalf of all staff of the Agency that they will be resolute and will not let up in their mission to play a critical, energetic and determined part in ensuring that all Sierra Leoneans derive maximum benefit from the country's wealth of minerals. Representatives of the World Bank, DFID, GIZ and other development partners all made statements pledging continued support for the new NMA and the development of the minerals sector.

The highpoint of the ceremony was the cutting of the tape at NMA's Head office at 13 Wilkinson Road in Freetown, by His Excellency the President, Dr. Ernest Bai Koroma.