
“Let’s do it Right and do it Well”: NMA Director General Inspires Staff



The incoming Director General of the National Minerals Agency (NMA), Mr. Julius Mattai, called on staff to give their best to ensure that they achieve the objectives for which the Agency was established; which is to ensure that Sierra Leoneans derive maximum benefit from its mineral wealth. Addressing a cross-section of staff, Board members and officials of the Ministry of Mines and Mineral Resources, during a formal handing over ceremony held at the Agency’s office at New England on 14th February 2019, Mr. Mattai maintained that “there is a new driver behind the wheels to move the minerals sector in the right direction, and that it is no longer business as usual.”

The NMA Director General pointed out that the minerals sector is critical to national development, and pledged his commitment to ensure that Mineral Right Licenses are given to credible and not ‘fly by night’ or briefcase investors. He noted that the NMA has a responsibility to ensure that mining makes significant contribution to Government revenue, and that mineral right holders take adequate steps to mitigate the environmental and social impacts of their operations, compensate owners and legal occupiers for land used for mining, and promote the welfare of communities affected by their operations. “This is our responsibility”, he went on, “and let’s do it well, and do it right”.

Mr. Mattai expressed appreciation to his predecessor, Mr. Sahr Wondai, for the level to which he has raised the NMA, and called on staff to work with him to raise it to an even higher level. He assured staff that he strongly believes in mentorship, and that he will motivate, inspire and empower them.

In his statement, the Hon. Minister of Mines and Mineral Resources, Dr. Morie Manyeh, noted that President Rtd. Brigadier Julius Maada Bio has clearly outlined his agenda for moving the country forward under the New Direction, with particular focus on plugging leakages and maximizing revenue collection to improve the socio-economic welfare of all Sierra Leoneans. He said that the mining sector is expected to play a critical role in generating revenue for Government, and that it is up to staff to work as a team to support Government and ensure that Sierra Leoneans derive maximum benefits from their mineral wealth.

Chairman, NMA Board of Directors, Ms. Michaela Kadijatu Conteh, in her statement, thanked the Former Director General, Mr. Sahr Wonday, for steering the ship and congratulated the incoming Director General and wished him success in his duties. She noted that one major challenge in the mining sector is the steady decline in the contribution of the sector towards GDP, from 27% in 2014 to 5% in 2017. She described this as unacceptable, and said that the NMA must work relentlessly to reverse the trend.

Earlier, in his handing over statement, the outgoing Director General, Mr. Sahr Wonday congratulated the NMA for appointing a very worthy and more than capable successor; stating that he had no doubt in his expertise, professionalism, integrity and in-depth knowledge of the mining sector in Sierra Leone and that he would take the NMA to a higher height. Mr. Wonday pointed out that the NMA has made significant progress in achieving its mandate since its inception in 2013, but there are still many challenges. He explained that his handing over note outlines the opportunities and challenges of the mining sector and wished the NMA success as they continue with the difficult and challenging tasks of ensuring that Sierra Leoneans derive maximum benefit from our mineral wealth.

Director General, Mr. Julius Mattai has a wealth of experience in the minerals sector, having previously served the NMA as Geodata and Information Manager, and provided consultancy services to mining companies and other organizations. Prior to his appointment, he was the Founder/Managing Director of Integrated Geo-information and Environmental Management Services (INTEGEMS) (2011-2019), a multi-disciplinary consultancy firm that provides integrated geo-information; remote sensing; research, monitoring & evaluation; and environmental management services and solutions to various mining companies, private businesses and governmental and non-governmental organizations, including the World Bank, UNDP, UNOPS, UNICEF, etc.

He is well versed in mining and related disciplines, including Geology and Mineral Exploration; Mining; Environmental and Natural Resources Management; Geographic Information Systems (GIS) and Remote Sensing; Management Information Systems (MIS); Research, Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E); Climate Change (Mitigation and Adaptation); Disaster Risk Reduction and Management; and Health Information Systems (HIS). His appointment has been widely acclaimed as putting square peg in square hole.

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