

GOVERNMENT OF SIERRA LEONE

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Press Release

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Announcing New Arrangements for Naturalization of Qualifying Foreign National Investors & Sierra Leonean Ancestral Citizens

The Sierra Leone Immigration Department announces today groundbreaking measures aimed at facilitating the naturalization of qualifying high-net-worth foreign national investors and individuals of Sierra Leonean heritage. These measures represent a strategic intent to significantly enhance the nation's economic and social development.

Chief Immigration Officer (CIO) **Alusine Kanneh** emphasized the transformative potential of these new arrangements, stating:

“The Sierra Leone Immigration Department is implementing significant innovations and system improvements to align with global best practices. Our goal is to emulate smaller nations that have successfully harnessed their national institutions, natural resources and human talent to achieve modernization and growth. The land beneath our feet and the human capital of our people are abundant with wealth, and these new pathways to citizenship are designed to unlock that wealth for the benefit of all Sierra Leoneans.”

This ambitious vision is rooted in the priorities of **President Julius Maada Bio**, who is determined to leave a lasting legacy during his final term in office. By enhancing immigration frameworks to attract talent and investment, the President aims to strengthen Sierra Leone's economic diversification, bolster its regional influence, and position the nation as a leader in leveraging its national resources for the collective benefit of all citizens.

“President Bio envisions a modern Sierra Leone that stands apart from its challenging past. Today, the country boasts a thriving democracy, a British Common Law legal system, functional and well-established institutions, a robust banking infrastructure, a highly educated and professional diaspora, a young and ambitious population, and English as its lingua franca. These attributes form the foundation of a nation ready to welcome those who seek to contribute to its growth and prosperity,” said Hon. Kanneh.

Under Hon. Kanneh's leadership, the Sierra Leone Immigration Department has already undertaken significant initiatives to enhance national security and improve migration management. Notable achievements include:

- The signing of a **Memorandum of Understanding with the Belgium Immigration Office** in December 2023, reinforcing international collaboration.
- The introduction of **new security uniforms** for immigration personnel in November 2024, symbolizing modernization and professionalism.
- The launch of the **GO-FOR-GOLD residency program** in December 2024, promoting investment-based residency opportunities.

Recent reforms to passport application processes further reflect the government's commitment to streamlining immigration services. These include:

- Renovating facilities and enhancing customer care.
- Integrating the **National Identification Number (NIN)** into application procedures.
- Decentralizing application centers, with new offices set to open in **Kenema** and **Makeni** shortly.

The **Ordinary Passport** remains the standard travel document for general citizens and exemplifies broader efforts to provide streamlined and accessible services for all Sierra Leoneans. As CIO Kanneh noted:

"Our passport reforms not only improve access for our citizens but also symbolize Sierra Leone's commitment to modernization and inclusivity, ensuring that every citizen feels connected to the nation's progress."

By appealing to high-net-worth foreign nationals and those who have ancestral connections to the country, these new measures underscore Sierra Leone's commitment to fostering an inclusive, progressive, and economically vibrant society. By attracting talent and investment through enhanced immigration processes, the country is paving the way for a prosperous future for all of its people.

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