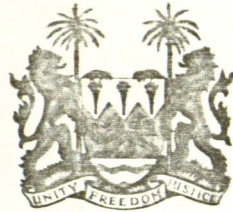


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PRIME MINISTER'S

PERSONAL MESSAGE

SERIAL No. T 191A/82

Office of the President  
State House  
Freetown

12th October, 1982.

My dear Prime Minister,

Over the last twenty years, our national airlines, Sierra Leone Airways, enjoyed a very cordial co-operation and was in fact managed by British Caledonian Airways. However, in the last few months, the Government of Sierra Leone decided to introduce an independent airlines to operate services to and from London Gatwick, and firm arrangements have been concluded for the new Sierra Leone Airlines to commence scheduled operations on 15th October, 1982.

In accordance with the terms of the Air Services Agreement concluded between our two Governments on the 5th April, 1982, we have informed Her Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom, through normal diplomatic channels, of the intention of Sierra Leone Airlines to operate a twice weekly flight from Freetown through Paris on to London Gatwick and sought appropriate permission from the aeronautical authorities for landing rights in the United Kingdom.

In response to that request, the Civil Aviation authorities despatched a working delegation to Freetown in early September, and after some negotiation the British High Commission here, confirmed in a formal note that Her Majesty's Government welcomed our idea to introduce Sierra Leone Airlines flights to London. The note, however, stipulated that before the necessary permit could be issued, the authorities in the United Kingdom demanded some satisfaction with regard to remittances of funds due British Caledonian. Such remittances have slowed down because of our present foreign exchange difficulties.



*Office of the President  
State House  
Freetown*

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The Ministry of Transport and Communications has given every assurance to the British High Commission that current consultations between Government and the Board of Airlines Representatives which includes other European Airlines will provide the medium for resolving this question of remittances.

Furthermore, I wish to confirm that contrary to the view held in some quarters, Sierra Leone has not effected any payments to the management of the new Airlines - this will only be considered after we have collated and reorganised the assets of the now defunct Sierra Leone Airways.

I trust that Sierra Leone's right to enjoy reciprocal landing facilities in accordance with the Air Services Agreement, will not be contingent on the transfer of these outstanding balances. Sierra Leone Airlines is ready to commence operations on 15th October, 1982, and other European Governments have already communicated their consent to Sierra Leone Airlines landing on and overflying their territory, notwithstanding the fact that there are outstanding remittances of funds for some of their carriers.

In the light of the very cordial relations which have always existed between our two countries, I hope you will give this matter your most urgent consideration so that the scheduled services we have agreed on will proceed as planned on 15th October, 1982.

Please accept, my dear Prime Minister, the assurance of my highest consideration and esteem.

*Siaka Stevens*