

# Nectar Sierra Leone Bulk Terminal

*Vessel calls at NSBT's new third berth.*

vital gateway for imports and exports



## With the arrival of first vessels, NSBT celebrates the launch of its new third berth in Freetown

Nectar Sierra Leone Bulk Terminal (NSBT) is celebrating the operational launch of a new third berth with the arrival of its first vessels, marking a significant milestone at QEII Terminal in Freetown, Sierra Leone's principal commercial port and one of West Africa's international trade gateways.

The boosted capacity and modernization at the port is a significant source of Sierra Leone's economic prosperity, serving as a vital gateway for import and exports.

NSBT welcomed its inaugural vessel, the *Safi Nalfi*, to its deep-water berth on Friday, 20 December 2024, carrying bagged rice. This critical piece of infrastructure now accommodates vessels of 225 metres and 12 metres operational draught (design draught of 13m), increasing the port's capacity to handle larger vessels and bulk cargo.

With the steady arrival of vessels this year, the new berth has increased capacity

at the port by more than 30%, strengthening customer supply chains with enhanced global connectivity, increased reliability, and quicker turnaround times. Cargo movements have contained shipments of bagged rice, flour, crude oil and aggregates.

Siamba Kamara, General Manager at NSBT commented, "Cargo handling at the terminal has been exceptionally efficient and well-coordinated. The team ensures smooth operations, from careful loading and unloading, minimizing delays and ensuring the safe handling of all types of cargo. The team's expertise and commitment to quality service make for a seamless and reliable operations."

### IMPROVEMENTS TO FREETOWN'S PORT OPERATIONS

Recent improvements at the QEII Terminal have proven to be instrumental in attracting recognized global players. The

third berth's capacity opens new avenues for trade, strengthens the logistics network and increases regional economic growth. Port enhancements are in line with the government's medium-term national framework 2024–2030 (A Transformative Acceleration Agenda for Food Security, Human Capital Development and Job Creation).

NSBT and Nectar Group have committed to addressing the region's shipping challenges by strengthening port performance, efficiency, and resilience through increased investment in infrastructure, technology, and digitalization. A rolling programme of developments have been addressing key issues, including:

- ❖ Upgrades to existing port equipment and the commissioning of new equipment to enable faster, versatile and safer cargo handling.
- ❖ Traffic management has been greatly





NSBT: all berths.

improved to minimize bottlenecks and waiting times for vessels and to reduce the carbon footprint associated with each shipment.

- ❖ Improved storage/warehousing facilities with enhanced space optimization.
- ❖ Improvement to quayside/port lighting, more informative signage and utilization of solar power.
- ❖ Technology and communication investments with real-time cargo updates, efficient scheduling, and transparent pricing structures.

Through the integration of technology, enhanced efficiency, safety and sustainability, the dry bulk industry in Sierra Leone has a great opportunity for transformative change.

### RENEWED DYNAMISM IN WEST AFRICA'S PORT SECTOR

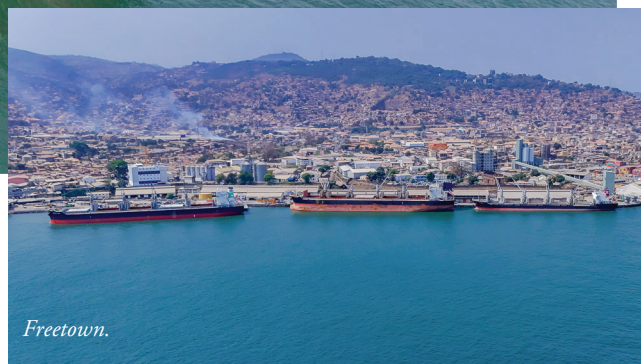
Over the past 15 years, Nectar has

witnessed significant growth in the African dry bulk industry and has adapted to this demand through investment, port equipment, terminal technology and quayside expansion.

"Having been present in Sierra Leone for many decades, beginning operations in the 1980s by handling discharge and bagging activities for the World Food Programme, we are very pleased to make this significant investment and construction project as a vote of confidence in the future economy of the country," says Christopher Boughton, Managing Director, Nectar Group.

"We believe that the port expansion goes hand in hand with the country meeting its ambitious growth targets, and we are proud to be a part of this journey."

The project has played a part of the government's strategy to develop easier



Freetown.

access infrastructure in Sierra Leone and has supported to revitalize the economy after Covid that has worsened the country's health and economic conditions. According to 2024 IMF figures, Real GDP growth is set to reach 4.5% in 2025, as part of the expected rebound following the post-pandemic global economic recovery where the country hit -1.3% GDP.

Growth is projected to improve largely driven by higher mining, construction and agribusiness exports on the demand side and by iron ore production and recoveries in agriculture and boosting agricultural productivity, manufacturing, and tourism sectors on the supply side.

In 2025 and beyond, Sierra Leone, like other African nations, will largely see maritime trade patterns shaped by the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) and the growing importance of maritime security to intensification trade with foreign markets, as well as regional collaborations boosted by intra-African trade. This demand for increased trade has accelerated port infrastructure investments and modernization of transport solutions including cargo handling and connectivity.

Nectar Group's Commercial Director, Guy Wilkes remarked "The Group's ongoing dedication to Sierra Leone is unwavering, with its continued development efforts aimed at enhancing the port's competitiveness and supporting the country's economic and growth strategies."



Aerial view of the port before the new development.