



Newsletter

April 2017

Welcome to the 2017 first quarter newsletter



H.E. Momodu Lamin Kargbo

Minister of Finance and Economic Development of Sierra Leone and Chair of the g7+

I am pleased to share with you some of the milestones we achieved since September 2016. I am proud to say that the g7+ group together with the Peacebuilding Commission (PBC) organised a successful side event on Sustaining Peace at the 71st United Nations General Assembly (UNGA).

I personally thank the former PBC Chair, held by the Kenyan Government and wish g7+ to continue the collaboration with the new Chair of PBC, South Korea, in the upcoming UNGA. I congratulate the people of Cote d'Ivoire, Haiti and Liberia for their remarkable progress as they stand ready to say goodbye to their UN peacekeeping Mission. Under fragile-to-Fragile Cooperation, we would like to offer them a sharing of experience

Peaceful and Successful Presidential election in Timor-Leste – A test of its resilience

Timor-Leste held its Presidential Election on 20 March 2017. The election was held peacefully and successfully. The last presidential election was held in the presence and support of the UN Peacekeeping mission. Thus the successful and peaceful conducting of 2017 election was a real test for the resilience of the State and its democracy.



The Presidential election was held by the Technical Secretariat for Electoral Administration (STAE) and supervised by Timor-Leste's National Election Commission (CNE). There were eight candidates who ran for president, including one woman. Six out of eight Candidates were independent. Mr. Francisco Lu-Olo was elected as the president by winning 57.1 % of the votes. The new President will be sworn in on 20th May 2017.

Under the Fragile-to-Fragile Cooperation, the government of Timor-Leste invited the Comoros President of the Election and member of the Commission for Electoral Transparency and

post UN transition from Sierra Leone and Timor-Leste. I express my deepest sympathy to the people of Somalia, South Sudan and Yemen who are suffering from famine. I urge our development partners and donors to immediately help these countries to prevent many victims, particularly innocent children, from dying of starvation every day.

I also share my sympathy with many other g7+ countries that are still facing active conflict and violence. In a spirit of solidarity, we stand ready to assist you to recover and restore a lasting peace. I commend the work of the Secretariat as they marked another major milestone by signing a Memorandum of Understanding with the World Bank Group (WBG). We hope it will set a concrete plan for the two institutions to work collectively to achieve peacebuilding and statebuilding goals in g7+ member countries.

Let me also, on behalf of my fellow g7+ ministers, thank our development partners, particularly UNDP, to facilitate the task of the g7+ Secretariat in conducting fragility Assessments in Afghanistan, Democratic Republic of Congo and Guinea Conakry recently and in supporting the implementation of Sustainable Development Agenda in Liberia and Timor-Leste. Thank you and I hope you enjoy reading our newsletter.**

Ethics from Comoros, one of the g7+ member states, Mr. Mohamed Farouk Ali, to monitor the election day. The g7+ Secretariat along with Mr. Farouk participated in the monitoring of the Election and visited six voting centres in Dili and 5 voting stations in Maliana district. The monitoring was followed by meeting with CNE, STAE and European Union (EU) representatives to exchange views on the election process.



71.16% out of 734.150 registered voters turned up at the polling centres to cast their vote. This is a slightly higher rate compared to its closest neighbour, Indonesia Presidential election in 2014 with 70.59% voter turnout and 68.5% in Cambodia General Election in 2013. It shows people's belief in democracy and a sign of resilience. In addition, it was the first time for Timor-Leste to apply 'out of country voting' (OCV) to 1,393 citizens who live in Lisbon, Darwin and Sydney. In a press conference on 22 March 2017, the EU Election Observation Commission (EOM), praised the Timorese people, the Candidates, STAE, CNE, CSO and political parties to have run a peaceful election without...

international assistance. A national CSO, Fundasaun Mahein, highlighted that the key contribution to the peaceful election was the collaborative role between National Police (PNTL) and Military (FDTL) during the campaign and election day to ensure a safe and secure environment for voters to participate.

The g7+ Secretariat intends to invite other g7+ country members to monitor the legislative election which is planned to be held in July 2017. ***

The g7+ Secretariat visits Sao Tome e Principe



Sao Tome is situated in the gulf of Guinea, off the coast of Central Africa, and is the second smallest African country after Seychelles. Sao Tome and Principe (STP) joined the g7+ group in 2014 and has received 2 g7+ missions since then – the latest one on 25-27 January 2017.

The g7+ delegation was comprised of the Minister of Finance of the Democratic Republic of Timor-Leste (RDTL), H.E. Santana Viegas Cardoso, the General Secretary of g7+, Dr. Helder Da Costa, and the Vice Minister of State Administration of RDTL, H.E. Tomas Cabral.

This mission, which took place following an official invitation by the Minister of Finance and Blue Economy of Sao Tome e Principe, H.E. Americo d'Oliveira dos Ramos, aimed to strengthen the engagement of the new government of STP in the g7+. Under the Fragile-to-Fragile Cooperation, the government of STP expressed its appreciation for the assistance provided by another g7+ member country, Timor-Leste, during the electoral registration for the 2016 Presidential Elections.

The new government of STP is committed to advancing its agenda for transformation 2016 – 2030, which emphasises the following four key pillars:

1. Consolidating peace, resilience and security
2. Strengthening international networks through infrastructure development (Airport and Deep Sea Port)
3. Revival of productive sectors, particularly cocoa.
4. Ensuring development needs are addressed via delivery of basic social services, Public Finance Management, and Tourism.

The main development partners active in STP are the World Bank and Portugal. The government of STP is currently approaching the Nordic countries, the Arab countries and China in order to mobilise support to implement the agenda for transformation.

The g7+ delegation met with the Vice President of the Republic, Cabinet Ministers, Development Partners and Civil Society Organisations, and discussed the progresses made in implementing the New Deal and the SDGs.

STP has created a National Committee composed of Government Officials and Civil Society representatives to coordinate and advance the implementation of the New Deal and the SDGs agenda. The Government of STP also intends to conduct a Fragility Assessment later this year, and a budget proposal was recently submitted to the UNDP headquarters in New York in that regard. The government has additionally prioritised five SDGs in the national context, namely SDGs 1, 8, 9, 14 and 16. A sensitization workshop will be organized in early 2017.

During the visit, Minister Santana Cardoso shared some experiences in relation to managing the Timor-Leste sovereign wealth fund as well as on human resource development.



Moreover, given that the Government of STP is committed to bringing about necessary reforms within the Central Bank, the experience of Timor-Leste seemed to be relevant and thus officials expressed their willingness to arrange for a visit to Dili to learn more about similar reforms undertaken in Timor-Leste.

STP has a population of around 197,000. Like many other g7+ countries, STP is rich in term of natural resources. Cocoa is the primary export, and is mostly destined for Portugal and France. However, STP still faces many challenges when it comes to implementing its agenda for transformation. The government recognises that the country remains fragile both institutionally and in terms of human capacity, which challenges the delivery of basic services to the community. STP also has a huge potential for tourism and the government is in process of undertaking various measures to attract additional tourists from overseas.

The mission resulted in the deepening of the ties between STP and a fellow g7+ country, Timor-Leste, particularly in the domain of peer learning. As a result, officials from STP will visit Timor-Leste in the future to learn more about different areas relevant to their own context. ***

g7+ Sign MoU with the World Bank Group

The g7+ Secretariat signed a MoU (Memorandum of Understanding) with the World Bank Group during the Annual Meetings of the WB/IMF in October 2016.



The MoU between the g7+ and the WBG is intended to enhance cooperation and collaboration between these two institutions in areas such as supporting the implementation and monitoring of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), supporting the effective mobilization of development financial resources and supporting peer learning.

As indicated in the MoU, the g7+ will now develop some concrete proposals for the WB to provide support in the areas of peer learning and Fragile-to-Fragile cooperation. The g7+ Secretariat and the FCV (Fragility, Conflict and Violence) Unit of the WB are working together on detailed proposals, with a view to materializing the MoU and attaining the deliverables established therein. ***

Union of the Comoros willing to host 5th g7+ Ministerial Meeting



The Union of the Comoros is an archipelago of three islands, located to the east of Mozambique and to the north of Madagascar. A delegation from the g7+ Secretariat visited Moroni, the capital of the Union of the Comoros, from 29 January to 1 February 2017.

Comoros has been an active member of the g7+ since it joined the group in 2012. This was the first g7+ mission to the Comoros and it proved to be very successful in terms of strengthening the political buy-in of the authorities of the Comoros regarding the agenda of the g7+. The objectives of the mission were to:

- Assess and discuss the progresses made in implementing the New Deal and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) agenda.
- Discuss with senior officials what they expect from the g7+ in terms of supporting the national agenda for resilience.
- Discuss the government of the Comoros' availability to host the 5th g7+ Ministerial meeting.



During the three-day visit, the delegation met with the Vice President in charge of the Ministry of Economy, Planning H.E Djaffar Ahmed Hassani, the Secretary General of the Government, the President of the National Assembly as well as with the Minister of Finance, the Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation,

the UNDP country office, and National Civil Society Organizations. During this visit, the Government expressed its willingness to host the next Ministerial Meeting of the g7+. In addition to affirming its commitment to the cause of g7+, the Government of Comoros sees this as an opportunity to promote and showcase the progress and development challenges facing the country.

The Government of Comoros conducted a fragility assessment in 2013, and its findings have been integrated in the National Strategic Plan. In addition, the Government is very committed to implementing the 2030 Agenda 2030 in order to eradicate the problem of extreme poverty affecting 40% of the population.

The Government is committed to the Principles of the New Deal and has reiterated its call for development partners to abide by the same principles.

Comoros is a democratic country and has achieved a lot of progress, as demonstrated by the peaceful elections and the rotation of the power among the three islands. The main challenges facing the country consist of reducing poverty and strengthening its fragile economy.

There are several domains in which Comoros can share lessons with other g7+ countries, as well as areas in which it can learn from others. In this context, the Government of the Union of the Comoros is willing to engage even more actively in peer learning, particularly in the areas of Public Finance Management and Natural Resources Management, with a view to diversifying the sources of revenue and tackling poverty***

The g7+ launches joint monitoring of 20 SDGs indicators



The g7+ held a Technical Meeting in Dili, Timor-Leste, from 23 to 25 November 2016, with the aim of agreeing on a monitoring mechanism at the country level for 20 selected indicators of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). This technical meeting took place pursuant to the political commitment to implement the SDGs made during the 4th Ministerial Meeting in Kabul.

In the spirit of the “country-owned and country-led” principle, the monitoring in each country will be managed by and through that country’s institutions. Each member country has appointed an SDGs focal point in its statistical office/department. The first draft of the report is expected to be ready in April 2017 and the final consolidated report will be presented at the 5th g7+ Ministerial Meeting.

The report will be a major reference point for the g7+ in its advocacy work during the upcoming High Level Political Forum, which will seek to call the attention of the development community to the unique challenges facing the countries in fragile situations in terms of realizing the agenda 2030.

The technical meeting also focussed on how to advance the New Deal principles through policy discourse. This included reviewing the Fragility Spectrum, which is intended as a guide for countries conducting their fragility assessments. The discussions addressed issues such as how to best incorporate and address the new dimensions of fragility.

During this meeting, the representatives of the g7+ member countries also agreed to be even more proactive in the use of country systems, which is an important principle of aid effectiveness and a critical aspect of peacebuilding and statebuilding. Despite commitments made at the international level to enhance the use of country systems, there has been very little progress so far.



Consequently, the g7+ members agreed to unify their position on the use of country systems through a g7+ Policy Note on this topic as well as to share some relevant innovations undertaken in member countries where the ambition to make greater use of country systems has been materialized.***



Newsletter

Special Edition May 2017

Welcome message from the g7+ Chair



H.E. Momodu Lamin Kargbo

Minister of Finance and Economic development of Sierra Leone and Chair of the g7+

On behalf of the g7+ family I welcome readers to our special newsletter edition, which covers some of the main issues the g7+ have been working on in recent months. I call it 'special edition,' as we are excited to share with you some of the most important milestones we have achieved during our mission to Portugal, as well as g7+ outreach conducted in the margins of the World Bank and IMF Spring Meetings in Washington, DC.

Especially notable has been the continued efforts in both Copenhagen and Washington, DC to take forward the 'New Way of Working' agenda, which emerged from the 2016 Global Humanitarian Summit. I commend our development partners and civil society that have shown their interest and commitment to work with g7+ countries in our quest to exit fragility by seeking to overcome the humanitarian-development divide.

I would like to take a moment to congratulate our brothers and sisters from Afghanistan who have demonstrated their desire to achieve sustainable peace through holding a successful national peace process agreement in Kabul. At the same time, we keep in our thoughts those living in Somalia, South Sudan and Yemen, who are experiencing famine and extreme food insecurity. We look to our development partners to redouble efforts to assist these countries at this devastating time.

Thank you and I hope you enjoy reading our newsletter. I also wish those of you attending the Global Conference on Implementing the SDGs in Fragile States, taking place in Dili, Timor-Leste, every success. Let's work harder to bring to bear our collective efforts in realizing the SDGs in our member states.

The g7+ opens European branch office in Lisbon, Portugal

The g7+ visits to Lisbon in early April resulted the Lisbon Municipality in granting an office space in central Lisbon, which will become the g7+ hub in Europe. This office will help serve our members better and remain actively engaged with development partners in Europe. It is will to be inaugurated in the summer of 2017.



The g7+ delegation including the g7+ Chair H.E. Momodu Lamin Kargbo, the g7+ Eminent Person H.E. Xanana Gusmão, the Minister of Finance of Timor-Leste H.E. Santana Cardoso and the g7+ General Secretary Helder da Costa travelled to Portugal for high-level meeting with the Portuguese authorities and other meetings.

The delegation met with the President of the Republic of Portugal, H.E. Marcelo Rebelo de Sousa, the President of the Portuguese Parliament, H.E. Eduardo Ferro Rodrigues, the Portuguese Minister of Foreign Affairs, H.E. Augusto Santos Silva, the Mayor of Lisbon, H.E. Fernando Medina, representatives of the Ministry of Finance of Portugal and members of the Parliamentary Group for Friendship between Portugal and Timor-Leste.

The meeting provided an opportunity for the g7+ to raise awareness of its global advocacy work and for the Portuguese authorities to express their political support to the activity of the g7+ and the cause of peacebuilding.

The delegation also travelled to Coimbra, in central Portugal, to meet with representatives of the University of Coimbra. The meeting led to agreement to co-host an international conference on the challenges of peacebuilding and statebuilding in late May, which will be following with a signature of a Memorandum of Understanding to support future collaborative research initiatives on peacebuilding and statebuilding.

From a 'new way of working' to 'our way of working': Supporting the role of State in overcoming the humanitarian-development divide

On 22 April, the g7+ together with the WB, UN and Denmark, co-organized a high level meeting on the margin of the World Bank Spring Meetings on the Role of National Stakeholders in the Implementation of the New Way of Working (NWOW) that aim to support and strengthening state role to tackle humanitarian development. The NWOW is adopted on the outcome of the World Humanitarian Summit (WHS) in Istanbul, which recognized the need to reduce risk and strengthen resilience in the face of numerous challenges.

CAR closed down Refugee Camp in Bangui Airport

Bangui - 28.000 refugees at the Bangui International Airport have now been resettled in their former house. According to the g7+ Focal Point, Bienvenu Herve kovoungbo informed that everything is slowly moving smoothly and the Airport is now free. Voice of America (VOA), in December 2016, reported that the Government of CAR begun closing the IDPs Camp at Mpoko International Airport, Bangui. To mark the occasion, the Government symbolically handed out "return kits" to about 30 families.

In the spirit of solidarity, the Government of the Democratic Republic of Timor-Leste has donated USD 1.5 Million to the Central African Republic to support the resettlement of Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) at Mpoko Airport, in Bangui, CAR. The Minister of Planning and Strategic Investment of Timor-Leste and g7+ Eminent Person, H.E. Xanana Gusmão, announced that the Government of Timor-Leste, through its Council of Ministers in November 2017 has approved this donation to the Government of CAR within the context of Fragile-to-Fragile Cooperation.



This pledge follows a g7+ mission to Bangui, CAR, in early September 2016, led by H.E. Xanana Gusmão, which witnessed first-hand the challenges that the CAR government and people currently face when it comes to restoring peace and stability.

Upcoming events:

- IDPS Working Group and Steering Group Meeting, 19 - 20 April 2017
- Spring Meetings of the World Bank Group and IMF, 21 - 23 April 2017
- Stockholm Forum on Security and Development: Building Peace, 03 - 04 May 2017
- UN Financing for Development Forum, 22 - 25 May 2017
- The 5th g7+ Ministerial Meeting, late June 2017 (TBC)

South Sudan to hold a National Dialogue in March: President Salva Kiir "I will not allow this country to fall apart"



Photo Credit: Geeska Africa Online

The President of the Republic of South Sudan, H.E. Salva Kiir Mayardit, announced the holding of a National Dialogue in March 2017. The dialogue is intended to address a broad range of issues that the country is facing, including Conflict and Famine. On 16 December 2016, President Salva Kiir Mayardit publicly announced a national dialogue that will bring together all the country's rival political parties and groups. During the announcement, the president stated that "I will not allow the suffering of our people to continue and I will also not allow this country to fall apart" The South Sudan national dialogue will be led by eminent statesmen that are "trusted, genuine and credible." The national dialogue committee will work with independent experts from Juba-based think tanks such as the Ebony Center, the Sudd Institute and the Centre for Peace and Development.

These three institutions will also perform the secretariat functions for the committee. The process will adopt a bottom-up approach, with the first phase consisting of a "grass-roots consultation" aimed at mapping out grievances unique to each community and the region. The second phase will consist of the convening of regional peace conferences, while the final phase will consist of a National Conference, to take place in Juba. The Committee is looking at ways to learn from the experiences of other g7+ member countries in the settlement of political crises and in relation to how the reconciliation and healing process took place.

The President believes that the National Conference will tackle any remaining issues that are not addressed in the sub-national processes and which have a direct bearing on national cohesion. The resolutions adopted will assist in the writing of a permanent national constitution.

South Sudan joined the g7+ in 2010 and has endorsed the New Deal. A fragility assessment was completed in 2012, leading to New Deal Compact negotiations, but the process has been suspended until a lasting peace agreement is in place. South Sudan hosted the first g7+ ministerial meeting in 2011.***

Mr. Arop Nuoi - g7+ Focal Point from South Sudan.

IDA 18 doubles financing to address fragility: what does this mean for g7+ countries?



The financial resources allocated to countries affected by fragility by the World Bank Group's fund for the poorest countries, known as International Developing Association or IDA, will double in the period 2017-2020 to more than \$14 billion. The agreement to significantly increase the financing allocated to tackling fragility was reached in the context of the negotiations around the 18th replenishment of the IDA fund, which were concluded in December 2016.

The doubling of the financial allocation to these countries comes about mainly through adjustments to the IDA country allocation formula, particularly the reduction in the weight given to the Country Policy and Institutional Assessment rating, which tended to penalise countries affected by fragility. The increase in the annual minimum base allocation, from around \$5m to around \$20m, will also be of benefit to smaller countries, some of which face fragility situations. In addition, a small number of countries, including Guinea and South Sudan, will have access to exceptional turn-around or risk mitigation arrangements.

The total financing to be mobilised by IDA in the coming three-year period amounts to \$75 billion, of which \$23 billion consist of donor grant contributions while a significant part of the remainder is to be leveraged through capital markets – a major innovation of IDA18. In addition to the \$14 billion allocated to countries in fragility and conflict-affected situations, IDA18 also includes \$2 billion in financing for refugees and their host communities, as well as a crisis response window in the amount of \$2.8 billion to assist countries to respond to severe natural disasters, epidemics and economic crises. 75 low-income countries, including all the g7+ countries, are eligible to benefit from IDA18 in the form of grants and zero- or low-interest loans. The IDA18 Replenishment Final Report and press release may be accessed at <http://ida.worldbank.org/financing/replenishments/ida18-replenishment>.***



Timor - Leste will host a Global Conference on the 2030 Agenda:

A Roadmap for **SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS** in Fragile and Conflict-Affected States

Dili, 22 - 23 May 2017

Visit: timor-leste.gov.tl

From the desk of the General- Secretary



Dr. Helder da Costa
General Secretary of the g7+ Secretariat

Dear readers,

I hope you will enjoy reading the first news letter of the year 2017. The g7+ secretariat started the year with high note of its discourse. We continue supporting our members and our chair in the pursuit of our collective advocacy.

We try to facilitate the collective voice and concerns of our member states heard on every regional and international forum. This is quite a task particularly in such an evolving dynamism of development cooperation.

The Secretariat just launched its monitoring of key SDG indicators in g7+ countries. We will be excited to publish the report. At the same time, the Secretariat is working on the g7+ policy of the Use of country system. This will help in unifying the collective stance of the g7+ on the use of country system and will be part of the advocacy.

I thank the government of Sao Tome e Principe and Comoros for hosting a successful g7+ mission. I hope to meet the g7+ Ministers of Finance and Focal Points during the World Bank Spring Meetings in April 2017.

I also commend our Focal Point s for continuing their support to the g7+ agenda. They have been our National champions in their countries. I would also take this opportunity to thank our development partners and think thank organizations for their valuable support to the g7+ work.***