



## **Welcoming Remarks**

**Dr. Helder do Costa**

*General Secretary of g7+*

### **Senior Official Meeting, 05 February 2024 (Zoom)**

Her Excellency, Madam Kenyeh Barlay, Minister of Planning and Economic Development of Sierra Leone and Chair of g7+

Colleagues Focal Point and Secretariat staff. Thank you for taking your time to attend this Senior Official Meeting.

On behalf of the g7+ secretariat team, I extend our profound gratitude to members for their active engagement and, the government of Timor-Leste for its continuous support.

At the outset, I would like to introduce you all to the New Chair of g7+, H.E. Kenyeh Barlay who has assumed the position as the Minister of Planning and Economic Development, following a successful General Election that was held in Sierra Leone in June 2024. I had the pleasure of briefing Chair in persons in Sierra Leone in September before the UN General Assembly. We thank the Government of Sierra Leone for the continued support and leadership in chairing the g7+.

I also would like to welcome the new Focal Point of Burundi, Somalia and Timor-Leste to this group. I look forward to further strengthening our collaboration.

Since we met February Last year, we have made several milestones that my deputy, Mr. Habib Mayar will share with you in a while. Despite the current geopolitical dynamics shaping international cooperation, the g7+ pursued its mission with even more compassion. I thank our

leadership, the chair, eminent person, special envoy and very importantly every member country for contributing to this collective progress.

However, given the scale of challenges we are facing and our own success, we are bound by the responsibility to do even more. We need to set up even higher ambition to achieve the cause of pursuing peace and stability in our member countries. We are expected to play an even more proactive and effective role in addressing the crises we are facing.

It is in this context that the G7+ secretariat took the deliberation to propose the strategic priorities that are responsive to the contemporary challenges we are facing.

Today's meeting aims at mobilizing our consensus on the strategic priorities for the year 2024. I hope that we will benefit from your insight and feedback.

We hope that the discussion culminates in further strengthening our conviction that together we can help in pursuing stability in this turbulent time.

I thank you for your attention.