



Welcoming Remarks

Dr. Helder da Costa, General Secretary

Signing of Memorandum of Understanding between the g7+ and the Institute of Economic and Peace (IEP)

Date: 17 October 2024

Excellency, Kenyeh Barlay, the Minister of planning and economic development of Sierra Leone and the Chair of g7+

Mr. Mr. Steve Killelea, Founder and Executive Chairman of the Institute for Economics and Peace

Ambassador Pierre Prosper, the president of g7+ foundation

Distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen

It is my great honor to welcome you all to the g7+ Lisbon hub. Thank you for attending this important occasion, the signing of the Memorandum of Understanding between the g7+ and the Institute for Economics and Peace (IEP).

The g7+ has been among the major consumer of the IEP's flagship report, the "Global Peace index". We are inspired by this remarkable work as this demonstrates IEP's commitment to promote peace. Today's event marks a significant step forward in our shared commitment to fostering peace, stability, and sustainable development in fragile and conflict-affected countries.

The g7+ has long championed the idea that peace is not merely the absence of

war, but the presence of institutions that are capable to provide justice, pursue dialogue, and inclusivity and deliver on development needs of the people. This belief aligns strongly with IEP's work, particularly through their research into Positive Peace, which emphasizes the structures, attitudes, and institutions that sustain peaceful societies. Together, we aim to transform these ideals into actionable frameworks that will benefit more than a billion people living in the so called fragile states.

IEP's expertise in measuring peace and its contributing factors through tools such as the Global Peace Index (GPI) has provided invaluable insights into the state of peace worldwide. For us, this partnership represents an opportunity to bring those insights into the specific contexts of our member countries, which often face challenges that go beyond what global metrics can capture. This MoU will allow us to collaborate on research tailored to the realities of our nations—research that will inform policies designed to build lasting peace and resilience.

But beyond data and research, the real power of this partnership lies in our shared belief in the importance of empowering people through data and analysis. Whether it's government officials, civil society, or the next generation of youth leaders, we must ensure that the tools and knowledge produced by our collaboration directly benefit those who can create and sustain peace on the ground. By working together, we aim to strengthen our capacities to facilitate peer learning and collective advocacy

This partnership also provides us with the chance to shift the narrative around fragile and conflict-affected countries. Too often, these nations are defined by their past struggles rather than their potential for future success. Through this collaboration, we will highlight the stories of resilience and recovery that demonstrate how countries can, and have, transitioned from conflict to peace.

These stories serve as both inspiration and practical lessons for others who face similar struggles and our Fragile to fragile cooperation is a suitable avenue for the peer learning.

Once again, I thank the IEP for their collaboration, and I thank all of you for your continued support for the cause of peace. Together, we will make peace not just a dream, but a lived reality for those who need it the most.

Thank you.