



**Speech of H.E. Kay Rala Xanana Gusmão (g7+ Eminent Person)
g7+/PBC Side Event during UNGA
New York, 23 September 2016**

Excellences, ladies and gentlemen,

I thank the chairing mission of PBC, Kenya and chairing mission of g7+, Sierra-Leone for organizing this important meeting, which enables us to share our experiences, in a clear desire to change the current world disorder and put people at the core of the development agenda.

I just came back from Bangui, Central African Republic, where I led a g7+ mission at the invitation of Prime Minister Sarandji.

Like many of us, CAR has been struggling to restore peace, law and order after a legacy of conflict.

On descent into the airport, one can see green and untouched plains, a mighty and beautiful river indicating the rich nature of this country. But as you descend closer, the view is dominated by the machinery for the humanitarian actors and international NGOs.

And yet surprisingly, when you come out of the airport, you face a different world that resembles to nothing you saw from the airplane. It is the world of displaced people, staring at the passing convoys with despair, but you feel hope in their eyes. You see mothers with their babies, focused on finding food for their families. You see MINUSCA's posts and tanks but no National police or military posts.

I saw one thing common among the people and government; that was resilience, courage and hope. Being ready and committed to close the chapter of the bitter past, hoping to live in peace and harmony.

Ladies and Gentlemen, this is a snapshot of a country that is affected by conflict and fragility. The Government of CAR is preparing for the Brussels Pledging Conference in November. I urge those of us, champions of peace and development, to help mobilize support to CAR.

In line with the g7+ Fragile to Fragile Cooperation, I am pleased to announce that **the Government of Timor-Leste has recently approved a donation of USD 1.5 million to the Government of CAR to assist the resettlement of IDPs in the Bangui Airport.**

Ladies and Gentlemen, as home to nearly 1.4 billion people, the g7+ countries are endowed with natural resources; But regrettably, most of them have become a playing ground for regional and global politics, a lab for peacekeeping, humanitarian and development experiments, and a breeding ground for multi-billion dollar corporations exploiting their resources.

Agenda 2030 promises a poverty-free globe. Can we achieve this vision without pursuing peace and stability? **The answer is No.**

Has the international community been able to prove the effectiveness of imposed solutions? **The Answer is No.**

General Assembly and Security Council resolutions have recognized the importance of sustaining peace and the need for a comprehensive approach that looks at all stages of conflict, with a focus on prevention, and the need to address the root causes of conflict.

Within the g7+, we have first hand experience of this. We have seen some of our countries successfully overcome a bitter past, through solutions based on the wisdom and courage of the states and their people. That wisdom materializes when it is supported comprehensively at all stages, rather than a fragmented approach that is externally imposed!

Ladies and Gentlemen, I come from a small country that having emerged from a prolonged conflict **opted for dialogue, tolerance and reconciliation.**

We undertook a difficult and lengthy process to achieve true reconciliation

within our own society, which led to the establishment of a Commission of Truth, Mutual Acceptance and Reconciliation, where victims of repression could testify without fear.

The testimonies of human rights violations are now sealed in the Office of that Commission, which produced its report called “Enough!” reminding everybody of our commitment not to repeat the conflict of the past.

Following this internal process, we established a Commission of Truth and Friendship with Indonesia to put an end to our painful past, with a solemn agreement that the Timorese and Indonesian people will never again be harmed.

I must say, to uphold this policy of reconciliation, we needed to fight against pressure from the international community that demanded trials in the International Court of Justice, in accordance with a principle of “no impunity,” for the “perpetrators of crimes against humanity.” I learnt that, although the perpetrators of the genocide in Rwanda were condemned by the International Court of Justice, President Kagame applied the same process of reconciliation amongst communities like we did in Timor-Leste, because the population was not totally living in social harmony. This was because peace is **not only the absence of war, but peace of mind**.

We fought against this hypocrisy in the mind-set of the world leaders that, even today, are supporting other conflicts and wars, without any sense of responsibility, just as they supported the war in Timor-Leste.

Both Timor-Leste and Indonesia wanted to clear the way for true and genuine reconciliation and tolerance amongst communities and people, rather than feed hatred and revenge that would only destroy the country and impede the efforts to improve the living conditions of the people.

As a result of this forward-looking policy, **Indonesia and Timor-Leste now enjoy a solid relationship between people and between states, based on cooperation, friendship and a collective vision for the future.**

Peace and reconciliation is an ongoing process. Unfortunately we learnt this by bitter experience, when in 2006 we again fell into crisis. We need to be aware this is very common in a post conflict country. Our crisis was a wake-up call for every Timorese citizen. Remembering our vow not to

engage again in conflict, we tried our best to solve this crisis by renewing our commitment and assuming the national motto at all levels of society of “Goodbye Conflict and Welcome Development”.

It is against the same reality that we, the g7+ have consolidated our collective wisdom. We have framed that wisdom in the form of our New Deal principles.

Yet as members of the international development community, we all have a long way to go.

I thank you.