

23 September 2016

Sierra Leone and Kenya Side Event

on

“Peer-Learning among Fragile and Conflict-Affected Countries on Sustaining Peace and Sustainable Development”

Vice Minister of Finance and Economic Development, Sierra Leone; On behalf of Chair of the g7+; and co-Chair of the International Dialogue

Your Excellencies, Distinguished Participants and g7+ colleagues, Ladies and Gentlemen, all protocols observed....

It gives me great pleasure, to be here today, as the co-host of this High-Level panel on ‘Peer-Learning Among countries affected by Conflict-and fragility on Sustaining Peace and Sustainable Development’. I am delighted to share the floor with my fellow host, the Government of Kenya, and also with the Peacebuilding Commission, whose efforts we truly complement, in building peace and sustainable development in Conflict-affected Countries. We certainly have much that is truly worth sharing.

Let me at this point, convey the apologies of the H.E, Momodu Kargbo, Minister of Finance and Economic Development of Sierra Leone, who I am representing, in his capacity as Chair of the g7+ and Co-Chair of the International Dialogue on Peacebuilding and Statebuilding. He has asked me to convey the commitment he shares with you to building sustainable peace, particularly in g7+ group of countries He looks forward to being able to follow up on the outcomes of this esteemed event.

Distinguished participants, we are all too aware that protracted crisis and violence are becoming the major threats to global stability and development. While the ambition is to eradicate extreme poverty by 2030, estimates show that 75% of the poorest will be living in countries affected by conflict and fragility. This dichotomy between aspiration and the reality is one we need to address as we implement Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development.

Such challenges are too difficult to be addressed on individual basis. We need regional and global alliance to address the root causes of these development challenges. The g7+ is one of such alliances that brings together countries affected by conflict and fragility as serves as platform to voice the concerns that are of particular to its members.

Distinguished participants as Chair of the g7+ group of countries that have been through recent experiences of conflict and fragility, I wish to make three quick points.

Firstly let me remind this audience that the g7+ is today a voluntary intergovernmental association of 20 countries from diverse background, yet share one main thing in common; they are in fragile situation, and they are committed to become more resilient. The binding force of the g7+ is **Solidarity, voluntarism and cooperation**. They know how it feels and understand their challenges and the ways to address them and thus willing to share their experiences. In addition, the g7+ has aimed at contributing to the international **wisdom** and efforts at peace and statebuilding through documentation and sharing of relevant experiences that have proved to be useful. More importantly peer learning that is, in fact, peer to peer solidarity, has been relevant to each other. This is South-South cooperation in action, for and by countries affected by conflict and fragility. **One** recent example illustrates how this

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Comment [1]: I would say wisdom as later we are speaking of experiences

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Comment [2]: I moved it here as this part speaks about peer learning and solidarity.

might work. There was a recent g7+ High- Level mission to the Central Africa Republic, led by the g7+ Eminent Person, current Minister of Planning and Strategic Investment of Timor Leste, former Prime Minister, H.E. Xanana Gusmao who is present today with us. The g7+ invited other members of the International Dialogue to take part in this mission. The Co-Chair of the International Dialogue, who is the Minister of International Cooperation and Deputy Prime Minister of Sweden, was represented so that they share with us, first-hand how Fragile to Fragile co-operation works in practice.

Our colleagues in the Government of the Central African Republic described to us the challenges they face. We shared with them our experiences and offered advice, not because we know more than they know, but because we have lived through what it means to rebuild a country after war, when the country is at its most fragile stage. We invited our friends from the international community to witness our conversations, and identify ways in which they could support this kind of learning and exchange.

Secondly, the g7+ has been instrumental in systematizing the learning of what works and what does not in these contexts and promoting best practice. As many of you know, the g7+ group, along with donors and civil society counterparts in the International Dialogue on Peacebuilding and Statebuilding, agreed on the New Deal. Inspired by the living experiences of countries in fragile situation regarding peace, statebuilding and development effectiveness, the New Deal prioritizes country-owned peacebuilding and statebuilding. The New Deal insists on inclusive, country-owned and conflict-sensitive planning processes as well as enabling state institutions through the application of basic aid

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Comment [3]: Minister Xanana will also speak about the visit to CAR. So maybe adding, "as g7+ eminent person will further speak about it".

effectiveness principles. The New Deal has helped in providing a new narrative to Peace and statebuilding- a narrative that speaks to the heart of country context and ownership.

The New Deal principles and g7+ processes are meant to manifest reforms in the ways development and humanitarian intervention works in fragile situation, yet progress in this regard needs to be fast enough to witness changes. Recently in Stockholm, and before that in Kabul, the g7+ together with other members of the International Dialogue, reaffirmed their commitment to the New Deal which is now more relevant than ever as a means of realizing the SDGs in fragile situation. We in the g7+, as countries coming out of conflict, know what you have to do first, before you can even begin to embark on a development path.

The success of the agenda 2030 lies in how it is contextualized to the unique context of each country. Thus, we in the International Dialogue have laid out that the New Deal principles should guide integration of SDGs in the national planning and monitoring. In addition, countries experiences and sharing of the same will be really helpful in this regard.

The g7+ will also set up its own online SDG portal, to monitor progress on selected key indicators, across all g7+ countries. The results will enable the g7+ to advocate for particular attention to be paid to the challenges that fragile and conflict affected countries face in realizing the Sustainable Development Agenda.

My third and last point is about how other actors can engage, align with and support g7+ efforts for the sake of complementing the global efforts. This is a way of building sustainable peace and ensuring that

people in fragile and conflict-affected states are not “left behind”. We provide countries’ perspective that have learnt this the hard way; we have successful stories and practices that we want to promote and unsuccessful cases of peacebuilding and statebuilding that we want to warn against. We do this out of solidarity with the world as peaceful world is our common objective.

We are ready to work with you on this. With these, your Excellencies, Honoured Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen, I would like to thank you for honoring our invitation and wish us all very fruitful, productive and action-oriented discussions.

THANK YOU FOR LISTENING