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We also closed the year 2020 with a meeting of Focal Points of g7+ member states to discuss our strategic priorities for 2021.

Let me also acknowledge the strong moral support from H.E. Kay Rala Xanana Gusmao, the Eminent Person of g7+ and Dr. Jose Ramos Horta, the Special Envoy of g7+.

Despite the COVID-19 pandemic that affect the whole world in 2020, the g7+ continued to promote the sharing of experience and peer learning with member countries through active engagement with a number of different international organizations in various forums and events. These includes IDPS constituencies meetings and other events organised by UNOSSC and UNICEF.

The g7+ also stayed engaged with its member states through virtual meetings. A g7+ Technical Meeting was organised, where country experiences in dealing with the COVID-19 pandemic among our member countries.

In responding to COVID-19, and jointly with our international partners, we issued a statement with big 4 asks, which include call for global ceasefire, invest in health sector, care for displaced people due to border closures and call for economy recuperation.

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We also closed the year 2020 with a meeting of Focal Points of g7+ member states to discuss our strategic priorities for 2021.

Therefore, I am happy to present our annual report for 2020, highlighting progress that we have made against the three g7+ strategic priorities.

I would like to take this opportunity to appreciate the government of Timor-Leste for the support to the work of g7+ in 2020. I also extend my appreciation to all g7+ member states for the continued collaboration to promote the mission of g7+ on peacebuilding and statebuilding and to all our international partners for their support.

Let me also acknowledge the strong moral support from H.E. Kay Rala Xanana Gusmao, the Eminent Person of g7+ and Dr. Jose Ramos Horta, the Special Envoy of g7+.

Finally to Dr. Helder da Costa, General Secretary of g7+ and the entire team at the g7+ secretariat in Dili and the Hub in Lisbon, many thanks for your dedication and hard work and for making the g7+ more visible at the global level.
1. Introduction

The year 2020 was marked by the outbreak of pandemic of COVID-19; an unprecedented event in the century. It affected all countries in the world directly and/or indirectly. The severity of the impact has depended on the relative strength of the countries’ “immune system”, i.e. the institutional and economic resilience. The impact of the novel corona virus in conflict-affected countries such as those in g7+ has been even more severe and long lasting. The global measures such as lock downs and restrictions have had adverse social and economic impact on these countries where survival has already been threatened by conflict, poverty and institutional fragility.

The g7+ secretariat was busy consulting with members and partners on how best to operationalize the observer status that the group attained in 2019, when COVID-19 was declared as pandemic. It severely affected most of g7+ activities in 2020. However, the secretariat continued pursuing the group’s mission.

The g7+ group issued a joint call as part of its advocacy and collective response to curb covid-19 pandemic. It included four asks on how to address the pandemic in the world’s poorest countries such as those in the g7+ and how to sensitize the global response.

Under the g7+ fragile-to-fragile cooperation, the secretariat continued to facilitate sharing of experience and peer learning in dealing with COVID-19 pandemic among members and non-member countries. Recognizing the impact of pandemic on every aspect of life, the g7+ engaged on various platforms to advocate for the g7+ priorities. This has included collaboration with partners on trade for peace, and socio-economic development.

Most of activities such as engagement at the UN, Ministerial meetings, and peer learning missions in 2020 were affected due to restrictions on travels. However, the g7+ continued to hold virtual meetings with members and partners, thanks to the virtual technology. This included Ministers of Foreign affairs level meeting of g7+ during the 75th Session of UN General Assembly and meeting with member states’ senior official meeting in December 2020.

This annual report summarizes progress made against the g7+ strategic priorities namely (1) Policy Advocacy (2) Fragile-to-Fragile Cooperation and (3) Strengthening g7+. 
While COVID-19 was novel in nature, it hit conflict affected countries even harder. The number of positive cases (direct impact) of corona virus in conflict affected countries might not match with that in developed and other developing countries. This could also be due to weak testing capacity in the fragile and conflict affected countries where the actual number of positives cases could be higher than reported. However, what did not get measured in time, has been the indirect impact of covid-19 in countries in fragile situation. COVID-19 and the globally adapted countermeasures were compounded by humanitarian crisis in some countries in fragile situation. Public institutions such as health and education got overwhelmed due to their limited capacity and resources.

Against the expectation and despite the global call for ceasefire, violence continued to rise in some countries already in conflict. This further complicated the work of peacebuilding and humanitarian actors. Displaced persons and immigrants got stranded across borders which doubled the human suffering and tragedies. National authorities imposing countermeasures such as confinement and lockdowns were faced with violence by mobs in many countries; further exacerbating lawlessness and conflict.

Border closures badly affected flow of trade and businesses and this further resulted in rising unemployment and hence extreme poverty. Cash-strapped governments in conflict affected countries struggled to help people and businesses to survive. Vulnerable people such as women continued to suffer the most.

During the g7+ technical meeting on 26 August 2020, the g7+ member countries raised their concerns in regards to impact of pandemic on peace and stability. A representative from Solomon Island talked about the fall in revenue from tourism sector since there were no visitors due to the implementation of lockdown. Afghanistan experienced a decline in real GDP to -3%, decrease in their industry by 5.2% and services by 6.1%, the unemployment rate increased to 40% from only around 11% in 2019, poverty increase from 55% to 70%, and domestic revenue expect to decline of around USD 722 million (around 26.5%). Similarly, South Sudan experienced economic downfall due to reduction in oil prices while Timor-Leste lost USD$1.8 billion (60%) in its petroleum fund due to fall in the oil prices globally. Furthermore, Central African Republic and Togo face economic difficulty. Other member countries such as Haiti experienced increase in risk of food insecurity and high inflation.

2. COVID-19 and its implications

Data on total case of COVID-19 from 6 January to 28 December 2020

All of g7+ member countries have reported for COVID-19 cases. According to WHO (2021)[1], out of total positive cases of 148,229 for g7+ member countries, 36% were in Afghanistan while Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) who has the highest population among g7+ member countries but only accounted for 12%.

Other countries such as Sao Tome and Principe who has the lowest population among g7+ member countries, has 1,024 cases (0.6%) compare with Solomon Island with only 17 cases (0.07%). The total number of cases are different from one country to another may be contributed by the coverage of testing and collaboration from community at the country level.

3. Progress against Strategic Priorities

3.1. Policy Advocacy

Curbing COVID-19 in conflict affected countries

With the onset of COVID-19 pandemic, the g7+ undertook robust advocacy to help containing the spread of the virus and mitigating its impact in conflict affected countries. With the “me-first” approach widely adopted by the world’s developed nations, the fragile and conflict affected countries did not get the needed attention. Therefore, it was imperative to the g7+, as the only inter-governmental group of conflict affected countries, join hands, and raise the voice of more than a billion people.

The g7+ group issued a joint statement, “A call for concerted support in our efforts to curb COVID19”. The statement highlighted the challenges facing the conflict affected countries in addressing the impact of COVID-19. It called upon the international community and the members to:

1. Support the UN Secretary General call for global ceasefire so that energy can be concentrated on addressing the pandemic

2. Invest in public health institutions to strengthen them to respond to needs of people in conflict affected countries.

3. Care for displaced people stranded due to closure of borders to avoid a humane tragedy.

4. Support economic recovery and self-reliance and hence sustaining peace agenda through debt relief and timely and effective assistance.

The joint statement proved to be impactful mounting peer pressure in debates around issues such as debt relief for the poorest countries, vaccination and pursuing peace through reconciliation and dialogue. It was used as reference throughout the group’s discourse at the global and national level on the matters. It was officially circulated as a common position of the g7+ and was, subsequently sent to the United Nations, World Bank, IMF and other partners and international organizations. The components of the call were reiterated by leaders of g7+ on forums such as the 75” session of the UN General Assembly including the g7+ Ministers of foreign affairs meeting.

The Co-Chairs of International Dialogue on Peacebuilding and Statebuilding (IDPS), H.E. Francis Kai Kai, Minister of Planning and economic development of Sierra Leone and chair of g7+ and H.E. Karina Gould, Minister of International Development of Canada also issued a joint statement on safeguarding peace during the COVID-19 pandemic. The statement called for all relevant actors including private sectors to support countries in responding to the pandemic and to promote peace. The statement also calls for consideration to gender issues in the global response against COVID-19 pandemic.

The priorities highlighted in the joint statement by the g7+ were raised and reiterated on various forums the g7+ and its members engaged in. The objective was to pursue a wider recognition of the challenges, conflict affected countries faced and to advocate for addressing the long-lasting impacts of the pandemic.
Representing Afghanistan as the deputy chair of g7+, Deputy Minister for Finance of Afghanistan, H.E. Abdul Habib Zadran participated at CSPPS Annual Conference on “COVID-19: Civil Space in Crisis – Polylateral Partnership in Times of a Pandemic” in December 2020 where he emphasized that international engagement in conflict affected countries needs to be contextualised to country’s context. He raised the importance of institutional resilience for stability and addressing crisis such as COVID-19.

The General Secretary of g7+, Dr. Helder da Costa represented g7+ in the high-level roundtable on the “impact of Covid-19 and Conflict prevention” at Stockholm Forum on Peace and Development in May 2020 where he called on international community not to leave conflict affected countries behind and hence provide them timely support during this difficult time.

Globally adapted counter measures such as lock downs and restrictions, though necessary, have had severe adverse impact on the conflict affected countries and communities. In many places, such measures proved counterproductive in containing the virus and pursuing peace. Therefore, the g7+ always advocated for tailored approach to curb the pandemic. Mr. Habib Mayar, Deputy General Secretary of g7+ secretariat and Ms. Celine Monnier, Senior Program Officer of Center on International Cooperation(CIC) co-authored an article, “Making Sure Peace Isn’t a Casualty of COVID-19 in Fragile States” that was published in the World Politics review in May 2020. They highlighted how the global measures have challenged the survival of people in fragile countries. Using examples of good lessons in some countries, and reminding of the New Deal Principles, they proposed innovative ways of curbing the pandemic in a way that doesn’t reverse the gains made painstakingly.

The g7+ group has emphasized on the need to pursue peace during the tragic outbreak of COVID-19. Its leadership and members believed that this natural crisis should induce human solidarity and hence encourage resolving differences through peaceful means in countries in conflict. The outcome of the g7+ Ministers of foreign Affairs noted that, “We join the UN Secretary General in his continued call for a global ceasefire. Welcoming the ongoing peace process in Afghanistan, South Sudan, Yemen and elsewhere we call upon parties to conflicts to observe a complete and permanent ceasefire.”

Recognizing that the resources dedicated to tackling the pandemic, Mr. Habib Mayar in an interview with Devex, emphasized that efforts be made to promote peace and stability in conflict affected fragile counties where peace and stability is threatened due to the impact of COVID-19. He reminded that conflict affected countries need continued support to endure or stand the adverse impact of such natural crisis.

Better engagement in and with Fragile States

The g7+ continued advocating for better and effective international engagement in countries in fragile situation; founded on national ownership and vision for lasting peace and stability. According to State fragility report 2020, OECD-DAC members alone spent USD 60.3 billion – 63% of their ODA on fragile countries and contexts in 2019. Therefore, aid effectiveness remained high on the agenda of g7+.

The government of Finland was one of the countries that conducted - “Evaluation Report for Change Country Strategy in Fragile Contexts”, an assessment in 2020 to review their country strategy for conflict affected countries that include two of g7+ member countries (Afghanistan and Somalia) as part of improving their support to fragile and conflict affected countries.

The leadership and the secretariat of g7+ engaged on various platforms and with partners to advocate for principles of New Deal. Such advocacy has resulted in the recognition of these principles and needs of fragile countries by international community and donors. Development partners are increasingly recognizing the principles of the New Deal in their country strategies and commit to align their engagement to the vision of g7+.

The g7+ members and secretariat together with the Global partnership for Effective Development Cooperation (GPEDC) advanced the cause of effective development cooperation in fragile countries in the 19th Steering Committee Meeting of the Global Partnership in May 2020.

In addition to discourse on the effective development cooperation, the g7+ has also engaged with the United Nations on how best to improve the effectiveness of the peacebuilding work in conflict affected countries. This includes providing collective inputs and perspectives from the g7+ regarding the peacekeeping operations. In particular, the g7+ secretariat in partnership with the CIC (Centre for International Cooperation) and UNDP undertook the second phase of a study on host nations’ view on UN peacekeeping operation. The summary of the initial findings was shared with the UN Peacebuilding commission through the UN Peacebuilding Support Office (UNPDSO).

An important aspect of peacebuilding and stability which is less often spoken is the issue of mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS). Among other long-lasting effect of decades of war and conflict are the adverse impact on people’s mental and psychological health. The g7+ supported the initiative undertaken by the government of Kingdom of Netherlands to call on the UN to recognize MHPSS and include it in the UN peacekeeping Architecture Review. Given its relevance to g7+, the members and the secretariat supported the initiative and emphasized that mental and psychological wellbeing is imperative for long lasting peace and stability.

The g7+ secretariat also facilitated the participation of member countries at a high-level side event on “COVID-19 and the role of Mental Health and Psychosocial Support in building resilience and sustaining social cohesion and peace” during the 75th UN General Assembly on 24 September 2020. Co-organized by the Kingdom of the Netherlands, and the Center on International Cooperation (CIC), the session was co-chair by H.E. Sigrid Kaag, Minister for Foreign Trade and Development Cooperation of the Netherlands and Ms. Amina Mohammed, the UN Deputy Secretary.
Speaking at the launch of the report, Dr. Helder Da Costa, General Secretary of g7+ secretariat emphasized that ending active conflicts and wars should be the number one priority. Ongoing conflicts and crisis have been the fundamental factors for fragility. National dialogue and reconciliation are the most affordable means to stop wars and make peace. The grievances that cause wars remain a risk for future conflicts and can best be addressed through reconciliation that is founded on the contextual reality, national means, and culture. The Minister of Foreign Affairs of Timor-Leste, H.E. Adaljiza Alberna Xavier Reis Magno also spoke to the launch event, and she shared the perspective from Timor-Leste and how her country could achieve the milestone that exclude it from the OECD list of fragile countries.

State of Fragility and Violence

Regardless of co-relation between fragility and conflict, violence remained concentrated in fragile states or contexts. Fragility provides breeding ground for violence of different forms. According to the OECD State of Fragility report released in 2020, 79% of deaths from violent conflict and 96% of deaths from state-based armed conflict occurred in fragile contexts in 2019. This shows that conflict and fragility are mutual reinforcing each other.

Accordingly, OECD-DAC members spent USD 5.1 trillion on containing violence in 2017. The report further highlights 57 contexts that are ranked to be more fragile, including 13 classified as being extremely fragile. Almost a quarter of the world’s population, and more than three-quarters (76.5%) of those already extremely poor before COVID-19, live in one of these 57 fragile contexts in 2020 and 9 of the extreme fragile countries are members of g7+.

Inclusive World Trade System

Trade has been an important source of pursuing stability in conflict-affected countries. The fair participation of conflict affected countries in global trade depends on how inclusive the world trade system is. The g7+ WTO accession group is founded with the aim of pursuing inclusive trade system; one where poorest and conflict affected countries can benefit from it. Mr. Habib Mayar, Deputy General Secretary of g7+ secretariat attended virtual meeting of the g7+ WTO Accession group where he reminded the participants of the challenges such as social unrest, fragility and lack of resources conflict affected countries are facing. He highlighted the potential, g7+ countries have for pursuing stability through trade. He recommended that the g7+ WTO accession group continues to raise the group’s collective voice to pursue reform in the international trade so that it becomes even more inclusive and fair.

3.2. Fragile-to-Fragile Cooperation

Sharing lessons on managing natural crisis like COVID-19 Pandemic.

The secretariat facilitated peer learning under the Fragile-to-Fragile cooperation among members and with non-member countries. The focus in the year 2020 was on facilitating sharing of lessons in managing the pandemic of COVID-19.

The g7+ secretariat organized meeting with senior officials from the Ministries of public health and other related entities in August 2020. The objective of the meeting was to facilitate a peer-to-peer engagement and sharing of experiences. Participants from member countries share their progress on tackling COVID-19 and the challenges they faced.
One of the objectives of the g7+ WTO accession group is to facilitate sharing of tangible lessons on how trade has been a source of stability in g7+ countries and how it has helped in sustaining peace. The g7+ regularly engages with the WTO and other actors supporting trade for peace initiatives. It participates in the Trade for Peace week every year. In the year 2020, H.E. Francis Mustapha Kai-Kai, Minister of Planning and Economic Development of Sierra Leone and g7+ Chair, and H.E. Dr. Jose Ramos Horta, Nobel laureate, Former President of Timor-Leste and Special Envoy of g7+ represented the group at the Trade for Peace week to share the collective perspective of the g7+. They reiterated the need of sharing inspiring lessons among countries on how to make trade effective for peace and stability.

The g7+ secretariat collaborated with the United Nations office of South-South Cooperation (UNOSSC). The secretariat was granted access to the South-South galaxy of the UNOSSC, a repository of good lessons from the countries in the global south. The g7+ is also able to share success stories and lessons in the galaxy for the benefit of others. In addition, the secretariat facilitated the participation of member countries in several workshops organized by UNOSSC that focused on sharing lessons on the management of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Trade for Peace; g7+ WTO accession group:

The g7+ secretariat engaged with organizations and other countries to seek their support in facilitating sharing of inspiring lessons. The secretariat established a partnership with "The Foundation for Post Conflict Development (FPCD)". One of the areas that the g7+ and FPCD will work on is facilitating sharing of inspiring lessons in peacebuilding and statebuilding among the g7+ and other conflict-affected countries.

In collaboration with youth organizations and local authorities, the g7+ secretariat conducted outreach activities in districts of Timor-Leste to create awareness on the work and role of g7+ in promoting peace and stability. These activities also aimed at seeking feedback from representatives of communities on the work of the g7+.

In addition, the g7+ secretariat also conducted talk show programs, through local television to discuss the impact of COVID-19 on peace, stability and Economy of Timor-Leste with Dr. Ramos Horta, Special Envoy of g7+ as one of the main speakers. Other episodes focused on the role of youth in contributing to Sustainable Development.

Support vulnerable families in Timor-Leste during COVID-19

The months-long lockdown in Timor-Leste deprived many vulnerable families of the means to livelihood. As part of the moral obligation the g7+ has had to the people of Timor-Leste for hosting and supporting the Headquarters, the g7+ Secretariat undertook the initiative of providing support to the communities. 300 families across different locations including in the capital city were supported with basic need assistance.
The g7+ Secretariat organized a meeting among the senior officials of the g7+ on 26 August 2020 to share progress and result of g7+ work at the global level. Representative from each of member country shared suggestion on how best to position the g7+ in the global efforts to curb the pandemic and access to free vaccine.

The g7+ secretariat represented by Mr. Habib Mayar, Deputy General Secretary conducted a mission to New York in March 2020 to explore ways on how to operationalize the g7+ Observer Status at the United Nations (UN). Following the discussion with the UN Headquarters, the g7+ was granted registration at the UN protocol office. The g7+ secretariat was enrolled in the e-registration portal of the UN. With the access to the portal, the secretariat can attain entry badge to the UN premises for its delegation and guests. In addition, secretariat met with the UN Treaty section to register the charter of the g7+. During the mission, Mr. Habib Mayar engaged with the members to discuss the group’s collective priorities at the UN and the modalities of representation at the UN as a group.

The g7+ secretariat organised a meeting of Ministers Foreign Affairs from the member countries in the margins of 75th session of UNGA on 30 September 2020.

The objective of the meeting was to identify and agree upon strategic priorities of g7+ group at the United Nations. This included agreement on collective position of the group in the global debate on curbing Covid-19 pandemic. Chaired by H.E. Mrs. Nabeela E.Tunis, Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation of Sierra Leone, the meeting was attended by Chair of g7+, Special Envoy of g7+ and Ministers of Foreign Affairs from Central African Republic, Guinea-Bissau, Liberia, Sao Tome e Principe, South Sudan, Timor-Leste and Ambassadors of the Permanent Representatives in New York. Members agreed to have regular meetings of this level. An outcome statement was issued after the meeting that summarized agreement on the collective priorities of the g7+.

“Alone we go fast but together we go far”.

H.E. Mrs. Sylvie Baipo-Temon,
Minister of Foreign Affairs of Central African Republic
at the g7+ Ministerial meeting on 30 September 2020
Outcome Statement
Meeting of the g7+ Ministers of Foreign Affairs
Safeguarding Peace and Stability in a Changing Global Arena
73rd Session of UN General Assembly, 30 September 2020

We, the Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the g7+ member states, have met virtually on the margins of the 73rd session of the United Nations General Assembly.

We share our profound solidarity with the victims of COVID-19 pandemic. We reiterate the g7+ joint Statement of Solidarity and Cooperation: A call for concerted support in our efforts to curb COVID-19 issued in May 2020.

We observe in our countries, who are already challenged by being in conflict situations, emerging from conflict or experiencing degrees of fragility, the direct and indirect impact of the COVID-19 pandemic which includes, in addition to loss of precious lives, the weakening of basic services delivery, loss of income due to lockdowns and closure of borders, fall in commodity prices, reduction in aid, disruption of trade and investment and increasing unemployed. Therefore, we call upon the international community including the UN agencies, multilateral organizations, International Financial Institutions and regional actors to recognize the specific needs of conflict-affected countries in their efforts to curb the pandemic.

We appreciate the recent briefing by the UN Under-Secretary General of Humanitarian Affairs to the UN Security Council where he highlighted that the pandemic’s indirect consequences will disproportionately impact fragile contexts with threats of increased poverty, child deaths, conflict, forced displacement and starvation. We call on other senior UN leaders and entities to maintain a spotlight on the plight of fragile contexts and work closely with g7+ member states to support our resources for resilience.

We are encouraged to see the development of a vaccine for COVID-19. Cognizant of the economic and social stress in conflict-affected countries, we call for the vaccine to be declared a global public good that should be accessible to every individual, free of cost. Believing in the notion of “no one is safe until everyone is safe”, ensuring universal access to the vaccine will ensure the safety of all and also ensure that our citizens are not left behind.

We join the UN Secretary General in his continued call for a global ceasefire. Welcoming the ongoing peace process in Afghanistan, South Sudan, Yemen and elsewhere we call upon parties to conflicts to observe a complete and permanent ceasefire. We remain committed to supporting country-owned dialogue and reconciliation, including through concerted advocacy and peer-learning.

We express our sincere appreciation to the member states of the United Nations, for granting the g7+ observer status in the General Assembly. We believe that our observer status will contribute to and inform global discourse in matters related to peace, the prevention of conflict, development and stability. Therefore, we commit to optimize the use of this opportunity through increased coordination to advance our collective cause at the UN. We commit our Permanent Missions to the UN in New York to work together and help the g7+ Secretariat to ensure visibility and representation of the g7+ at the UN.

We register our appreciation to the Government of the Democratic Republic of Timor-Leste for its continued support to the g7+. We commit and encourage fellow members to join hands and provide the necessary support for a robust and well resourced g7+ Secretariat.

We commit to continue to convene on the margins of the High Level Segment of the United Nations General Assembly to be preceded by regular meetings of our Permanent Missions, to review our progress, consolidate our membership and identify priorities for consideration at the UN.

The End
The secretariat conducted training programs for its staff. Four members of g7+ secretariat participated in a capacity building program in Jakarta, Indonesia at the beginning of 2020. The training helped them improve skills and knowledge in finance and administration.

**4. Financial contribution**
The g7+ secretariat received USD $1 million from the government of Timor-Leste and USD $291,000 from the government of Finland in 2020.

The financial audit for 2019 was conducted by Delloite in September 2020. A copy of the report was shared with the government, National Parliament, and the office of President of Republic of Timor-Leste.

**5. Challenges and Recommendations**

**5.1. COVID-19 Pandemic**
The outbreak of COVID-19 remained the fundamental challenge for the world and in particular the conflict affected countries such as those in g7+. While this crisis is not permanent and will soon be over, its impact on conflict affected fragile countries will last even longer.

Therefore, it is imperative that the g7+, as the only inter-governmental platform of conflict affected countries, continue pursuing concerted and collective efforts to mitigate those impacts. The group should advocate for fair distribution of COVID-19 vaccine. It needs to remain active on global forums such as the UN to voice the perspective and priorities of conflict affected countries.

**5.2. Making Impact at the United Nations**
The privilege of having an observer status at the UN unleashes numerous opportunities for the g7+ that open more avenues for advocacy and partnership. The expectations on part of the g7+ as a group has increased. However, the optimal use of the status will depend on the ability of g7+ secretariat to establish its presence in New York. This will further help in enhancing members’ coordination on related matters under discussion at the UN.

Therefore, considering the cost associated to establishment of office in New York, the g7+ should reach out to partners and seek their support in hosting of the g7+ representative at the UN.

**5.3. Addressing conflicts**
The increasing numbers of violent incidents in some g7+ countries call for scaling up efforts to pursue reconciliation and dialogues. While some of these conflicts maybe attributed to factors that are exogenous, the g7+ has potential to play a role in fostering national unity and peace.

The g7+ council of eminent person is a suitable form that can play mediation role in countries experiencing active conflict. The council should further be strengthened by inviting even more influential figures from around the world to join.

**5.4. Consolidation of g7+**
With the increasing recognition it has achieved globally, the g7+ membership needs to be even further consolidated and strengthened. This will require political and financial support of the members. The ratification of g7+ Charter by members is crucial. So far, four member countries (Afghanistan, Sao Tome and Principe, Sierra Leone, and Timor-Leste) have ratified the Charter as in 2020. Its ratification by other member countries will further consolidate the group.

In addition, members are encouraged to financially support the operation of the g7+ secretariat. Minimum contribution as stipulated in the charter, can strengthen the function of the g7+.

**5.5. Heads of State Summit**
With the potential that the g7+ has in making impression at the global level, the group should regularly convene at the highest level. This will help in positioning the g7+ group even more profoundly at the global level and will enhance the weight of its collective advocacy.

It is recommended that the g7+ convene a summit of heads of states/governments from the g7+ countries during the upcoming UN General Assembly. The agenda can focus on the post pandemic recovery, peace and stability and effective engagement in conflict affected countries.
GOODBYE CONFLICT AND WELCOME DEVELOPMENT

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