



**Welcome Remarks**

***Dr Helder da Costa, General Secretary, g7+ Secretariat  
Opening Session, Global Conference on the 2030 Agenda***

***22 May 2017***

- ***H.E. Dr Francisco Guterres Lu Olo, President of Democratic Republic of Timor-Leste (and Spouse Madam Cidalia Guterres).***
- ***H. E. Mr. Aderito Hugo da Costa, President of National Parliament***
- ***H.E. Dr. Rui Maria de Araújo, Prime Minister***
- ***H.E. Mr Deolindo dos Santos, President of the Court of Appeal***
- ***H.E. Dr Jose Ramos-Horta, Former President of Democratic Republic of Timor-Leste and Nobel Peace Laureate.***
- ***H.E. Dr Mari Alkatiri, Former PM and President of the Authority of RAEOA and ZEEMS TL.***
- ***H.E. Kay Rala Xanana Gusmão, Minister Counsellor, and g7+ Eminent Person.***
- ***Excellencies Ministers of VI Constitutional Government of Timor-Leste.***
- ***H.E. Momoh Vandi, Deputy Minister of Finance and Economic Development of Sierra Leone, representing the Chair of g7+... Excellencies Ministers, Deputy Ministers and delegations from g7+ countries (Afghanistan, CAR, Liberia, SL, South Sudan, Somalia, Solomon Islands, and Yemen).***
- ***Special Acknowledgement to Mr. Haoliang XU, UNDP Regional Director for Asia and Pacific, who represents UNSG H.E. Antonio Guterres.***

- *Excellencies, Heads of Regional and International Organizations (CPLP, PIDF, UN/ESCAP, ) Members of Diplomatic Corp, Heads of Agencies, Representatives of Development Partners from Asia, the Pacific, Africa, Middle East, Europe and North America.*
- *Excellencies, Representatives of Religious Faith*
- *Excellencies Military and Police Authorities*
- *Excellencies Speakers and Panellists, Representatives of CSOs, Private Sector, Academia, National and International Media.*
- *Distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen ...*

On behalf of the g7+ Secretariat, in partnership with the host Government of Timor-Leste, under the leadership of SDG Champion Prime Minister, H.E. Dr. Rui Maria de Araújo and the entire Cabinet Members, **allow me to warmly welcome Your Excellencies** to the Dili Convention Centre, after travelling from many miles away to honour the invitation of the Government of Timor-Leste.

I would like to express our gratitude to the Government of Timor-Leste for hosting this **Global Conference on the 2030 Agenda: 'A Roadmap for SDGs in Fragile and Conflict-Affected States'**. I hope you will be able to see for yourselves the progress achieved in Timor-Leste, as well as the daunting challenges of development that face this country – a post-conflict country – 15 years after restoring independence. **Timor-Leste** is determined to move towards resilience. I would also like **to recognise the valuable support of our partners** that has made this Conference possible: the Governments of Sweden and New Zealand, the European Commission, the Islamic Development Bank, UNDP, the United States Embassy in Timor-Leste and the Timor-Leste Chamber of Commerce and Industry. Thank you for your partnership !

**Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen...**

Four years ago, in February 2013, we met in this same place, to discuss how the post-2015 development framework **could be responsive to the needs of countries affected by conflict**

**and crisis.** We were alerted by the limited progress these countries had made in achieving the MDGs **due to a lack of peace and effective institutions.**

We came together from across the Asia Pacific, CPLP , g7+ and civil society, private sector and development partners to raise our voices in support of our countries that have so often been forgotten and left behind. This is part of the continuous advocacy of the g7+ for **peacebuilding and statebuilding** to be part of Agenda 2030.

**Now, four years later,** we can proudly say that those efforts **paid off.** We succeeded in securing the inclusion of Goal 16 on Peace, Justice and Effective Institutions in the Agenda 2030. The g7+ believe that **“There can be no Development without Peace, and no Peace without Development”.** The Goal 16 is universal in nature, **but it is critical for people and communities in countries at the greatest risk of being left behind.** The reversals we experience in development gains – ***caused by conflict, disease, natural disaster and climate change*** – must be acknowledged.

The focus of our efforts to achieve resilience, stability and development needs **to legitimately prioritise peace.** These messages remain critically important as we keep in our thoughts, **our brothers and sisters who are experiencing conflict, famine or food insecurity** in Afghanistan, Burundi, Central African Republic, Iraq, Palestine, Somalia, South Sudan, Syria, Yemen and elsewhere.

**Of course, now the real work begins.** We must deliver on the SDGs! **This is no easy task.** The World Bank has estimated that by 2030 extreme poverty will be concentrated in countries in fragile situations. **For the SDGs to succeed, we, the countries in conflict and fragility, must succeed.** This should act as a reminder that these countries **need to take charge** for the next 15 years **if they do not want to be left behind.**

**Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen...**

I would like to congratulate the Government of Timor-Leste for its strong political endorsement of the 2030 Agenda. **Timor-Leste’s National Parliament was one of the first in the World to ratify the 2030 Agenda** and Prime Minister, H.E. Dr Rui Maria de Araújo, is a member of the **High Level Champions Group**, set up to ensure political commitment and share lessons on advancing the SDGs.

I wish to thank our g7+ countries, who have demonstrated commitment to realizing the SDGs. Members reiterated their commitment to the Agenda 2030 in our 4<sup>th</sup> Ministerial meeting held last year in Kabul, Afghanistan. This will require rigorous monitoring to identify the unique challenges faced in particular countries. We will frequently remind the world of our particular progress and challenges in this regard.

The same goes for the members of **International Dialogue on Peacebuilding and Statebuilding**, who prioritized Agenda 2030 at the Global Meeting held in Stockholm last year. The success of Agenda 2030 will depend on **how it is contextualized at the country level**.

### **Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen ...**

When we look around the world, it is easy to become **disheartened by the situations** many of our g7+ family and other countries face. Conflict and fragility have proved to be the most difficult challenges of the century. **We welcome the United Nations Secretary General's Sustaining Peace Agenda, recognising the importance of conflict prevention and sustaining peace.** The only way to end the suffering and ensure prosperity for all is **by building and sustaining peace through nationally-owned, inclusive dialogue and reconciliation.** As the UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres also makes clear, we therefore need to ensure that our organisations are **fit for purpose to make and sustain peace.** We fully support the Secretary General's reform agenda and, in particular, efforts to overcome the humanitarian-development divide.

Indeed, we must leverage all our collective efforts to support countries affected by conflict and crisis. For our own g7+ members, it is about providing leadership and inclusiveness to ensure our efforts benefit all of our people. This can be complemented by deepening our **fragile-to-fragile cooperation (F2F) in the spirit of solidarity.** We can share our experiences with each other to inform **locally-led responses.** An important part of this Peer to Peer support has been facilitating dialogue and reconciliation in Guine-Bissau and CAR, with the help of **Champions of Peace such as H.E. Minister Kay Rala Xanana Gusmão, g7+ Eminent Person, and Dr. Mari Alkatiri, both are former PMs of Timor-Leste.**

Going forward, in 2017 and 2018, we seek to expand this cooperation and invite others to join us in this innovative endeavour.

For development partners, supporting countries affected by conflict means remaining steadfast to the commitments made in the **New Deal for Engagement in Fragile States**, by aligning to **country-led and owned development and context-specific approaches**.

For the private sector, we look to you for greater engagement with us in realizing the economic potential in our countries and providing employment opportunities for our citizens.

And for civil society, we will continue to collaborate with you to ensure that our policies and programs are informed by the voices of all our citizens.

#### **Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen...**

We are delighted to **host this global conference** which be officially opened by the President of Democratic Republic of Timor-Leste, **H.E. Dr. Francisco President Lu Olo** and engage in discussions with you over the coming days.

We look forward to hearing your views and experiences on how to realize Agenda 2030 in the most difficult situations. Together, we will issue the **Dili Communique at the end of today as an Outcome of this Global Conference, emphasizing the Political Commitment for realizing Agenda 2030 in Countries affected by Conflict.**

To conclude, I would like to remind all of us, that we, the countries affected by conflict and fragility are home to 1/3 of the World population. **It is high time for us to decide if we want to be left behind in the pursuit of this global ambition....OR.... to take decisive Political Action to ensure we follow the path of Sustained Peace, and Prosperity.**

**Ladies and Gentlemen.....** I would like to thank **H.E. Dr. Francisco Guterres Lu-Olo, who was sworn-in as the President of Timor-Leste on 20 of May**, and to wish him the greatest success in leading this nation to Prosperity..... **May I now invite you to give outstanding ovation in honour of President's presence [applause] ...**

**Thank you** and I wish you happy deliberations and a productive conference !