Official Visit of the g7+ to the Democratic Republic of Congo (D.R.C) and Central African Republic (C.A.R) Report

DOCUMENT FOR DISCUSSION ONLY
g7+ MISSION

Official visit of Hon Kay Rala Xanana Gusmão, Eminent Person of the Advisory Council of g7+, to the Democratic Republic of Congo (D.R.C) and Central African Republic (C.A.R)
Context

Following the model of “South to South Cooperation”, the g7+ has recently developed their own framework of cooperation amongst its member countries called “Fragile to Fragile Cooperation” (F2F), founded on the principles of voluntarism, solidarity and cooperation. This framework is structured around three thematic areas; (i) Supporting member states in the Implementation of the New Deal (ii) Supporting member states in dealing with acute and emerging situations of crisis (iii) Peer learning/Knowledge sharing (Natural Resources & Public Finance Management, and Peace/reconciliation). This new framework of cooperation, along with the g7+ Natural Resources Management publication, is going to be officially launched in Brussels, end of March 2015 during a joint g7+/ILO workshop on “Youth Employment for Resilience”, which will be followed by g7+ first Technical meeting of 2015.

It is in the spirit of F2F that the g7+ Secretariat has mobilized a high level delegation to visit our two fellow g7+ member states, at the invitation of the Government of both countries, led by Hon. Kay Rala Xanana Gusmão, Eminent Person of the Advisory Council of the g7+, accompanied by Madame Emilia Pires, g7+ Special Envoy, and Dr. Helder Da Costa, General Secretary of the g7+.

The purpose of this official visit was to exchange experiences in the Implementation of the New Deal, in Natural Resources/Public Finance Management, and Reforms in the private sector. Additionally the delegation was there to support the peace-reconciliation process & national dialogue for peace and, to mobilize the endorsement of the Charter by both countries whilst strengthening the bond between the government of D.R.C, C.A.R and Timor-Leste.

D.R.C and C.A.R are both g7+ member countries and are part of the original 7 volunteers to pilot the first phase of the New Deal Implementation. They are geographically close and yet, they are at two very different stages in their transition towards resilience.

D.R.C played a pivotal role in the inception of the g7+ amongst a handful of countries, including Afghanistan, Somalia, South Sudan, C.A.R, Sierra Leone and Togo, as they were the first ones to chair the group under the leadership of H.E Minister Kamitatu. In 2012 the country successfully completed their Fragility Assessment. The report has not yet been publically launched as the final step, which is the political appropriation and sign off from all stakeholders involved in the New Deal implementation still needs to be finalized.

C.A.R, on the other hand, has undergone a serious crisis since 2012, with the rise of the internal conflict between the rebel groups, Séléka and Anti-Balaka, resulting in a coup d’état and a transitional government struggling to ensure the security and to mobilize enough
resources to conduct their elections and close the gap in the deficit of their national budget. In November 2014, UNDP collaborated with the government to have a preliminary fragility evaluation which aim was to feed into the National Roadmap to Development. The Fragility Assessment, has been postponed as it is solely relying on the political climate which is still in transition with elections that are still considered a far-fetched goal.

Ironically, despite the fact that both countries possess an immense source of National Resources that could secure their sustainable development and the future of their generations to come; they are both suffering from a highly pronounced level of poverty.

The aforementioned dynamic is one of the defining symptoms of fragility, including lack of security, donor fragmentation, unequal justice, a volatile political economy and scarce delivery of services from the state, which is what has brought together the g7+ in the first place.

Visit to the Democratic Republic of Congo (22 – 25/2/2015)

Objectives of the mission

The objective of this mission was to support the efforts of the D.R.C government in its task of peacebuilding and statebuilding in order to recreate propitious conditions for development and for progress in the years to come. More specifically:

- An evaluation of the present state of D.R.C in its capacity of member state of g7+;
- A strengthening of the links between the two member countries of g7+;
- A sharing with all stake holders of a successful experience of dialogue in a fellow country;
- A promotion of fragile to fragile cooperation between our two countries;
- A discussion with people responsible for the private sector in D.R.C;
- The organization of an exchange with the main stake holders involved in the process of application of the New Deal in its international engagement in order to assure recognition of the political instances in D.R.C;
- A discussion about the establishment of a Liaison Office in Kinshasa;

Expected results

- The links between the two friendly members of the g7+ are reinforced following political discussions about development, security and cooperation between fragile countries;
- The promotion of fragile to fragile cooperation is assured in the midst of g7+ countries;
The basis of partnership with the Congolese private sector is established;

The process of setting up a g7+ Liaison Office in D.R.C is accelerated;

The discussions with the main stake holders in the process of application of the New Deal for an international engagement are organized in order to assure a recognition of the political instances in D.R.C;

The capacities of the team are strengthened due to the exchange of experience between the two countries.

Mission Day 1 (22/02/2015)

Upon arrival, our delegation was received by a welcoming committee in N’Djili Airport, Kinshasa, including Minister of Plan and Modernization, H.E Kamitatu. A short press conference was set up for Hon Gusmão Xanana and H.E Kamitatu to explain together the purpose of his visit, including expected results.

As an introduction for the implementation of the mission objectives, the delegation was taken on a tour of Kinshasa organized by the Ministry of Plan and Modernization, aimed at showing various examples illustrating, service delivery from the state, including public health and capacity building for the future national work force, local entrepreneurship, job creation and inclusive urban/rural development. In this regard we had the opportunity to see the following:

- **Hopital Pediatrique, de Kalembe-Lembe**
  The Hospital was showed to us as an illustration of services provided by the National Health Sector, including challenges and opportunities.

- **Kin Oasis**
  A Chinese owned apartment complex offering the local population flexible payment plans.

- **Cite du Fleuve**
  A Congolese owned apartment complex built on the Congo River, offering the local population a higher standard of living, with affordable prices and flexible payment plans.

- **Women Technology Development Center**
  This center offers women the opportunity to learn and be trained to become engineers. Established and run by a young woman entrepreneur, she has pioneered an automated system to regulate traffic by placing robots in strategic areas of Kinshasa. This new technology was aimed both at creating jobs (35 employees per robot) and decreasing traffic fatalities (WHO released a report in 2014 stating that in Kinshasa, every hour 27 people die from traffic accidents.)
The Institut National de Préparation Professionnelle (INPP) RDC
This center offers vocational training to the young population to become the future workforce of D.R.C. The president of this center stated that his primary motivation was to give opportunities and alternatives to a young population that would otherwise be easily influenced to go astray from their civic sense and responsibility, which has been identified as a potential driver for conflict. In this regard, the president of the center was formally invited to join us in Brussels for our joint g7+/ILO workshop on “Jobs for peace and resilience in the framework for F2F cooperation” 30-31 March 2015.

**Action point**

- Send invitation to president of Institut National de Préparation Professionnelle (INPP) RDC for Brussels event 30-31 March 2015.
- Explore exchange programs between the institute for professional development, Kinshasa and IPG in Timor Leste.

**Mission Day 2 (23/2/2015)**

The concrete examples of country programs on the first day showcased to us tangible indicators of progress in building pathways towards resilience. On the second day, the delegation visited various stakeholders involved in the implementation of the National Development Plan of D.R.C. The work plan for day two, was built to present the national vision for us to evaluate its inclusiveness, it’s alignment with the New Deal and lastly the efficiency of national/international coordination of aid and as well as country implementation.

The first meeting of the day was with Prime Minister of D.R.C H.E. Matata Ponyo, in his office of the Primature, in Kinshasa. The Prime Minister took this opportunity to outline to
the delegation the national development vision of D.R.C which includes the development of mining, infrastructure, agriculture, forestry and fostering social cohesion in the country.

Both leaders discussed about the challenges faced by D.R.C with a population of almost 80 million people, in four areas, agriculture, forestry, mining and infrastructure development in the context of strengthening national cohesion. Hon. Gusmão proposed to D.R.C to consider setting up a Mineral Fund for future generations, following the experience of Timor-Leste, in view of the natural resources abundance in D.R.C. In the same occasion, the g7+ draft charter was discussed for endorsement by D.R.C. The Prime Minister of D.R.C agreed in principle to pursue the subject matter.

The next stop on the schedule was a visit to the offices of the Ministry of Planning, where H.E Kamitatu mobilized key technical civil servants to deliver to us a series of presentation, outlining the milestones achieved in public finance management, aid transparency and coordination, statistics and capacity building. The various presentations covered the last 10 years, emphasizing concrete achievements and an overall substantial progress, including, their accession to IETI, the development of their own aid portal management software, and the training and certification of their civil servants using global standards.

Following the presentations at the Ministry of Planning, the delegation met with the Congolese Employers Federation (Fédération des Entreprises du Congo-FEC), in Kinshasa. The delegation was able to gain an insight into the active contribution and alignment of FEC to the development plan of D.R.C. The Federation showcased a high level of efficiency in coordinating and consolidating their efforts across provinces, demonstrating a highly inclusive dynamic. Hon Xanana Gusmão encouraged the establishment of a strong cooperation between Timor-Leste and D.R.C’s private sector for the near future. "The government can’t provide jobs to the people, only the private sector able to do that. I appreciate the contribution of the FEC in D.R.C, and I encourage cooperation between the private sector in my country and the D.R.C as soon as possible ". The meeting ended with a formal proposal to send experts of Timor-Leste’s Private Sector Development to D.R.C to exchange experience and share knowledge.

The last stop for the delegation on the second day was at the Community of the Church of Christ in Congo (ECC - Eglise du Christ au Congo). The delegation met with the community of the Congolese civil society who gave us an in-depth overview of their structure, their active engagement in the country implementation of the New Deal and their challenges in regards
to resources and recognition. We were pleased to see that their organogram is built on the 5 PSGs. Hon Xanana Gusmão, strongly encouraged their efforts and motivated them to work hand in hand with the D.R.C government, and not be fully dependent on foreign aid. This meeting was also used to brainstorm on the best approach for the New Deal presentation scheduled for the following day on the 24/02/2015.

**Action point**

- Send a delegation of experts from Private Sector Development of Timor Leste to share experiences and work closely with FEC in Kinshasa.

**Mission Day 3 (24/2/2015)**

After having visited each stakeholder involved in the **ONE VISION ONE PLAN** For D.R.C, on the second day, the work plan for the final day was built on two main goals. The first one was to discuss the launch of the position of g7+ Regional Liaison officer in Kinshasa supported by UNPD Support Facility. In this regard, a small workshop was organized to brainstorm with national stakeholders who will be working directly with the g7+ Regional Liaison Officer, to be funded by the UNDP on how they can all contribute to the success and impact of establishing this post and how they can all benefit from it. The second one was to attend a half–day workshop on the New Deal organized by the Ministry of Plan which brought together key stakeholders, government representatives, development partners and civil society.

On the final day Minister Kamitatu took Hon. Xanana Gusmão on a site visit to the biggest Hydropower in Africa, INGA (24 February 2015), located at the border between D.R.C and Angola, which potentially could supply electricity to millions of people in D.R.C and beyond. The purpose of this short stop over was to show the potential of national infrastructures and the way they can contribute to the development of the country.
The second and final goal was the presentation of the New Deal implementation in D.R.C by H.E Kamitatu, bringing together local actors, including government authorities, civil society, donors and development partners of the international community. The General Secretary of the g7+ and his policy officer were given an opportunity to deliver a presentation on the impact of the New Deal as a tool for post-conflict recovery, touching on the role of the g7+ and the crucial link to the post-2015 Development agenda as well as the importance of Sustainable Development Goal 16. Ultimately, the purpose of this meeting was to cease this galvanizing opportunity to strengthen the political appropriation of the New Deal amongst all stakeholders which is the last step before the official report of the Fragility Assessment of D.R.C can be launched officially. Minister Kamitatu, also ceased this opportunity to officially launch to all participants the g7+ Regional Liaison Officer position in Kinshasa.

This event was a prime example how the New Deal can be supported politically with the presence of government officials, development partners and civil society representatives in the context of D.R.C.

**Action point**

- The draft Charter will be sent by the office of Minister of Planning to the office of Prime Minister of DRF for official endorsement.
- The g7+ liaison officer has been announced officially. The UNDP will follow up with the official recruitment process following the rules and regulations of the UNDP.
**Objectives of the mission**

The objective of this mission is to support the efforts of the Government of Transition in its consolidation of a dialogue for peace and the preparation of the national forum of reconciliation in February 2015.

More specifically, it intends to:

- Appreciate with the transition authorities the level of progression in the dialogue and the preparation of the forum with all stakeholders (civil society, public government, anti Balaka, Ex Séléka, political parties, religious groups) and identify the contribution of the g7+

- Share with all stakeholders the successful experience of dialogue in a fellow country of the g7+

- Possibly meet the different armed groups (Anti Balaka and Ex Séléka) to make them aware of an efficient and civic participation in the Bangui Forum while convincing them to:
  - Submit to the patriotic and civic spirit in order to emerge from the crisis definitively
  - Accept to engage in a definitive cessation of hostilities;
  - Register in the dynamics of a restoration of peace and security at the national level
  - Adhere to reconciliation between different community groups

**Expected results**

- The level of progression in the dialogue is examined, all the different armed factions are engaged to participate in the Forum and the contribution of g7+ is identified.
- The stakeholders in the process of dialogue and reconciliation have benefited from the successful experience in a fellow country
- The group of countries of the g7+ from the International Dialogue is implicated in an inter Central African dialogue
The different armed groups (Anti Balaka and Ex Séléka) are made aware and recruited in the dynamism of a constructive citizenship for the definitive cessation of hostilities.

Mission

In March 2014 in Dubai, the g7+ and the delegation of C.A.R had a “closed-door meeting” to discuss how the g7+ can provide support to the government of C.A.R in exiting from the acute crisis that the country was undergoing. During this meeting, the g7+ pledged to provide support in mobilizing the international community to fund the country election as well as budget deficit. A work plan was formulated as a result, with division of labor between the g7+ and the government of C.A.R.

Amongst the different action points, the g7+ committed to organize high level official country visit to provide support and share experiences in areas such as peace and reconciliation, as well as to reinforce the call to the international community to provide effective aid in line with country priorities.

Since the Dubai talks, the transitional President, H.E Catherine Samba-Panza, has made several efforts to plead for the international community support. Their response has been heterogeneous in their priorities: On one hand there was no hesitation to dispatch 10 000 UN Peacekeeping forces throughout the territory to bring in a level of security and to conduct disarmament campaign. On the other, the response for aid to develop the country and to close the budget deficit has revealed to be less conducive and with more reticence.

The Transitional Government has attempted several initiatives to ignite a peace and reconciliation process, such as the Brazzaville Peace Agreement and the Popular Consultations across the various districts in the country. The opposing armed groups also led an initiative to meet in Nairobi, Kenya and discuss peace. Yet just like the government’s attempts, the impact has been scarce and hostilities are resumed.

It was in the aforementioned context and in the spirit of g7+ Framework of Fragile to Fragile Cooperation that the Eminent Person of the Advisory Council of the g7+, Hon Gusmão Xanana accepted to lead a delegation to help the country, in response to the invitation of
Prime Minister H.E. Mahamat Kamoun, by sharing Timor-Leste’s experience in the process of reconciliation.

During this mission Hon Xanana Gusmão met with:

- Prime Minister
- Ministers (Defence, Foreign Affairs, Reconciliation and Planning)
- International Community (French Ambassador, EU, World Bank, IMF) at a working lunch.
- The President of the transitional assembly
- Leaders of the religious leader platform: The Archbishop of Bangui and an Imam representing the Muslim community.
- The national army high ranked official
- Anti-Balaka representatives
- Séléka representatives

The delegation led by Hon. Xanana Gusmão had the opportunity to meet with the above individuals and institutions to listen to their aspirations, grievances and expectations on the ongoing political crisis in Central African Republic.

The Hon Xanana Gusmão’s strategy and approach was to meet all the stakeholders involved in the country current situation, and carefully listen to all they had to say so that he could devise a comprehensive strategy on to how to best deliver his message on the 2nd of March, in front of the Parliament for the Transitinal Assembly, and identify in what form he could provide his help for the reconciliation process of the country and align the public opinion on the essential pre-conditions to conduct a successful election.

In the ensuing days, everyone gave their perspective and opinion on the current political situation in this transitional period in an open atmosphere of exchange ideas. Under the banner of the g7+, Hon. Xanana Gusmão described that the future of the country lies in the hands of the people of C.A.R themselves, which requires strong leadership, an atmosphere of peace to set the development Agenda. Ultimately he urges Central Africans to work towards peace, stability and regain confidence through dialogue and reconciliation.
Initially the delegation was meant to stay from the 26 – 28 of February 2015 but ended up extending their mission until the 3rd of March 2015. This was decided during the meeting with the President of the Transitional Council, when he was exposed to Hon Xanana Gusmão’s understanding and analysis of the current situation, which was fully in line with the message the president has been trying to disseminate: The conflict is not a religious one, contrary to public portrayal and elections cannot go forward without a solid transition to peace and reconciliation. The President invited Hon Gusmão to stay in order to come and deliver a speech at the opening session of the Transitional Assembly at the Parliament on the 2nd March 2015 (speech attached). And so, Hon. Gusmão did deliver the speech in front of a 200- audience in the chamber of Transitional Council, which was attended by Members of Parliament, Government, Development Partners and Civil Society representatives.

The climate in Bangui during our stay was volatile due to the renewed disarmament campaign causing tension in the city. This dynamic directly impacted our mission as schedules and meeting kept on being reshuffled in the last minute.

For the peace/reconciliation process in C.A.R, he shared the Timor-Leste experience reconciliation with Indonesia and the Timorese Pro Indonesian militia. He explained about the importance of conducting a commission and a dialogue to document and addresses all grieving from both factions. This is done in the hope that having a frank “eye-to-eye” interaction would enable them to put everything on the table and together move forward towards a united vision feeding into the Bangui Forum. The initial idea was to bring both Séléka and Anti Balaka to a neutral place so that these interactions could be conducted in a peaceful environment away from the pressure of the public eye. In principle, both factions showed a true will to participate in this initiative. That said the government showed a level of resistance as they prefer for this meeting to happen in Bangui.

For the elections in C.A.R, Hon. Xanana Gusmão shared the Guinea Bissau experience, where the international community imposed sanctions on Guine-Bissau but was reluctant to provide financial support to conduct elections. Similar to the situation in C.A.R, he explained how the country (Guine-Bissau) was also in transition and how there was a big international pressure to conduct the elections, which ended up being successful but has put the country into a strenuous financial position which has created a handicap for the long run. He urged in his speech on the 2nd of March and throughout the meetings, for the government and the international
community to be patient (don’t rush for elections) as the country still needs a reconciliation process as a basic ingredient for successful elections. To support his argument he underlined the importance of spreading out presidential election, legislative elections and municipal elections in a phased stage subject to the security situation on the ground.

Lastly for the development of the country, Hon. Xanana Gusmão stressed that the country is “too rich for being so poor”, in relation to the natural resources available in the country such as uranium, gold, diamonds and copper. He underlined this contrast as a technique to wake everyone up about the potential of C.A.R to secure a sustainable future for the generations to come, which cannot come without peace.

Overall there seems to be a consensus on what are the priorities in the country: the shaky grounds for an election, the crucial need for a reconciliation/peace process as a precondition for development, the mislead media perception about this conflict portraying it as a religious one and lastly the importance of a ONE VISION ONE PLAN to feed into the Bangui Forum.

**Action point**

- HE Kay Rala Xanana Gusmao will return to Bangui, C.A.R in the next two months to begin a dialogue with both factions Séléka and Anti Balaka. This dialogue is aimed at setting up the pre-conditions for the two factions to build their united vision and present it at the Bangui Forum.
- HE Kay Rala Xanana Gusmao will be a guest of Honor at the Bangui Forum.
Conclusion

Overall, the mission was a great success. The presence of the Eminent person of the Advisory Council of the g7+ accompanied by the g7+ Special Envoy and the g7+ General Secretary has rallied in both countries the political buy-in at the highest level, involving the respective Prime Ministers and echoing our work to their respective Presidents.

In both countries, our presence served as a momentum to galvanize the inclusiveness of the political appropriation of the New Deal, providing local stake-holders an opportunity to come together and discuss issues affecting them individually under a uniting over-arching vision structured around the PSGs.

In D.R.C, for example the aforementioned enthusiasms was apparent with the local press being very active in covering our mission and with the strong will of all stakeholders in accommodating our schedule and mobilize their participation at the highest level. From the civil society, to the international community, all the way to government authorities, we were exposed to an inspiring level of dedication.

Similarly in C.A.R, the political buy-in was extended to both factions that have been opposed during this crisis, who have expressed to us that they consider our presence as “their last hope” for a constructive peace/reconciliation dialogue and an opportunity to turn the Bangui Forum into an inclusive success. As we arrived and expressed our intentions and vision, the Eminent Person of the Advisory Council of the g7+ was given the privilege to address the opening session of the Transitional Assembly. This decision was taken during our visit by the President of the Traditional Assembly who felt that our message needed to be heard at the highest level. This is also why Hon Kay Rala Gusmão Xanana was, at the end of the mission, invited to be a guest of honor at the Bangui forum.

In both countries, the enthusiasm expressed by all stakeholders of this mission was communicated to us as an endorsement and appropriation of the spirit of Fragile to Fragile Cooperation. By the end of our mission, F2F became part of their jargon as a term to embody the principles of solidarity, voluntarism and cooperation. It is under the F2F that we are going to; (i) share knowledge with D.R.C on Natural Resources Management and Private Sector Development by sending our experts to Kinshasa (ii) conduct the peace/reconciliation dialogue in Bangui (iii) be present at the Bangui forum to present the outcomes of the peace/reconciliation dialogue and provide more insight on how to prepare for the presidential and legislative elections in C.A.R.