

**g7+ Ministerial-Level Meeting
Access to Justice for All in Conflict-Affected Countries
19-20 June 2019, The Hague**

**ACCESS TO JUSTICE FOR ALL IN CONFLICT-AFFECTED COUNTRIES
DECLARATION AND JOINT ACTION PLAN**

We, the Ministers and high-level representatives from the g7+ member states, together with representatives from international organizations, the donor community, and civil society organizations, met in The Hague on 19-20 June, 2019.

We recall prior documents acknowledging the fundamental role of access to justice as an fundamental pillar for sustainable Peace, Stability, and Development in conflict-affected countries, including the Dili Declaration of 2010; the New Deal for Engagement in Fragile States (New Deal) in 2011; the 2030 Agenda; Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 16.3; the Declaration on Equal Access to Justice for All by 2030 (Declaration), adopted on February 7, 2019; and the Pathfinders Task Force on Justice for All Report (Task Force Report).

We take note of the Pathfinders Task Force on Justice for All Report, co-chaired by Sierra Leone, which found that 5 billion people do not have meaningful access to justice. We support the principles articulated in the 2030 Agenda, the Declaration, and the Task Force report and believe that concrete steps need to be taken to make people-centered justice a reality for conflict-affected countries. Addressing those needs should be part of the global dialogue on access to justice.

We believe that access to justice is a universal equity, but its delivery is local. This means that enhancing access to justice requires a people-centered, conflict-sensitive approach, embedded in local context, political leadership, information on the needs of people and communities, and sustainable financial investment. Our experience shows that justice is indispensable for conflict prevention. We have also seen that improving the accessibility and quality of justice has a positive multiplier effect across the entire spectrum of objectives identified in the Sustainable Development Goals. Therefore, we call upon all actors to integrate justice considerations into peace, security, and development strategic planning.

We affirm that access to justice can be advanced through collaborative relationships, including with traditional and customary authorities, community leaders, semi-governmental institutions, independent civil society, legal aid organizations, intergovernmental organizations, public-private partnerships, and international donors; using innovative tools, such as community justice centers, community-based paralegals, mobile courts; and expanding access to legal information.

We acknowledge that a people-centered justice system in conflict-affected countries requires addressing systemic or structural problems, including those that most affect women, youth, and other vulnerable groups.

We recognize that justice systems are complex, with both formal and informal systems shaping justice journeys and public perceptions of justice. Many people do not currently resolve their justice problems through the formal justice system, especially in countries affected by conflict. We note that formal systems are often adversely affected by fragmentation, weak capacity of state institutions, and lack of resources. At the same time, we understand that informal justice systems do not always meet the justice needs of women, youth, or other vulnerable groups, and justice systems should uphold global human rights standards. We believe that constructive collaboration between the two systems can complement each other and ensure that no one is left behind.

We acknowledge that international assistance is essential to justice sectors in conflict affected countries, but we believe strongly that recipient countries should exercise ownership over the justice sector. We acknowledge that increased investment in access to justice must come from increases in domestic budget allocations and from expanded international donor commitments to inclusive justice systems. Therefore, we seek improved coordination with international partners, consistent with the principles of the Declaration and the New Deal.

We commit to championing access to justice within our countries, applying the principles affirmed in this document. Therefore, we adopt this Joint Action Plan and commit to take the following concrete steps toward achieving more inclusive and people-centered justice in conflict-affected countries:

1. **Present the perspective of conflict-affected countries at the High Level Political Forum on the Sustainable Development Goals.** We agree that this Joint Action Plan, and any individual state actions intended to implement it domestically, shall be presented on behalf of the g7+ to the High Level Political Forum in July 2019.
2. **Participate in SDG Voluntary National Reviews.** We commit – as far as we have not already done so – to conducting at least one inclusive Voluntary National Review (VNR) before 2022 if possible, including a review of access to justice measures under SDG 16.3. Our participation in the VNR process will provide a conflict perspective on the SDGs that the VNRs do not yet include. We further commit to incorporating the conclusions of our VNRs in future national justice strategies.
3. **Improve data collection, monitoring, and evaluation of people’s justice needs.** We commit to increasing the scope and improving the quality of data collected on justice needs, justice outcomes, and perceptions of justice. We recognize that data can be used for mutual learning and to help donor partners tailor their support to country needs. We endorse an inclusive, people-centered approach to data collection. We commit to using data where necessary to inform policies consistent with this Joint Action Plan.

4. **Develop national access to justice strategies.** We will either develop national access to justice strategies or incorporate access to justice into existing national development or justice sector strategies, consistent with the priorities identified in this Joint Action Plan. Strategies will recognize that solutions to people's justice needs can be shaped by diverse and inclusive sources, including formal and informal justice processes, data on justice needs, and the paths to justice articulated in the 2030 Agenda and SDG 16.3.
5. **Ensure that national indicators are aligned with global indicators and national justice strategies.** We note that improving people-centered justice requires measurement tools tailored to the unique conflict contexts of the g7+ member states. These indicators will supplement global indicators and may be used to develop new funding relationships between g7+ member states and international donors.
6. **Collaborate with donors to embed the justice needs of conflict-affected countries in their assistance policies and strategic frameworks.** We commit to working with donors to ensure that their agendas reflect the knowledge held by g7+ member states about the role of justice as an enabler of broader development and security objectives.
7. **Enhance regional and global coordination on access to justice.** We commit to improving justice sector cooperation among g7+ member states under the umbrella of Fragile to Fragile Cooperation. We will seek to enhance global awareness of the unique justice needs and expectations of conflict-affected countries. We will continue to pursue coordination on justice priorities with regional and international partners.
8. **Convene regular meetings on access to justice.** We will convene at least one high-level meeting annually, and other working meetings as necessary, to share information on lessons learned and steps taken to implement this Joint Action Plan and SDG 16. During this meeting, we will also share progress, challenges, and milestones related to justice provision in our countries.



Afghanistan

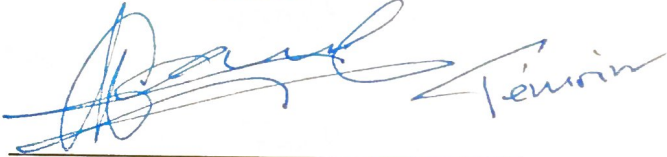


Central African Republic

Chad



Guinea



Liberia



Sierra Leone



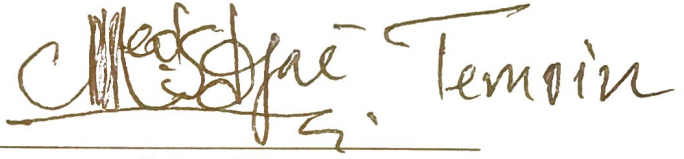
South Sudan



Togo



Comoros



Guinea-Bissau



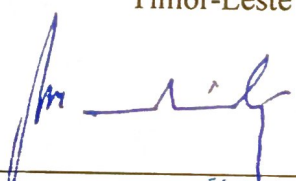
São Tomé & Príncipe



Solomon Islands



Timor-Leste



Yemen

