TAKING UP THE CHALLENGE OF DEVELOPMENT IN FRAGILE REGIONS

4 July 2019

**JOINT PARIS G7 / G5 SAHEL COMMUNIQUE**

1. On 4 July 2019 in Paris, we, the G7 Ministers responsible for development cooperation and the Commissioner for International Cooperation and Development of the European Union, met for the first time in this format with our counterparts from Burkina Faso, Chad, Mali, Mauritania and Niger, the member States of the G5 Sahel. Taking note of the urgent situation in the Sahel, we endorsed the following actions:

## Long-term challenges and fragilities in the Sahel

2. Strong action is required in order to unlock social and economic opportunities and address the root causes of instability in the Sahel. Urgent challenges still need to be addressed, including the lack of economic prospects and employment, especially for young people and women, limited access to resources, health systems and basic services such as justice, nutrition, education and social protection, and weak governance. Some long-term trends aggravate the complexity of these challenges and the vulnerability of the population. The population growth rate will lead to a doubling of the Sahel's population by 2040. Growing inequality – including inequality of opportunity, territorial inequalities, gender inequality and women's lack of empowerment – may deprive the region of much of its human and economic potential, while providing fertile ground upon which crises and conflicts may arise. Complex and pressing global issues, including climate change, desertification, environmental degradation and lack of energy access, may also deepen the vulnerability of the population, as 83% of total employment in the G5 countries is related to the food economy (OECD/Sahel and West Africa Club).

3. This situation calls for strong action to be undertaken, first by the Sahel countries, to improve governance, domestic resource mobilization, increase budget expenditures and strengthen institutional capacity for the provision of quality basic services to all, without discrimination, and secondly by the international community, to support these efforts with enhanced, coherent and coordinated support.

## Taking the partnerships in the Sahel one step further

4. Stressing the systemic importance of development and stability in the Sahel for sub-Saharan Africa and the international community, we, the G7 and G5 Sahel, call for strong partnerships and coordinated action on the part of the international community to help address the root causes of fragility, inequality and poverty in the Sahel. We commit to strengthening the G7 and G5 Sahel partnership, which is key as the G7 provides half of the total annual ODA received by the G5 Sahel countries. We also recognize the importance of other stakeholders, such as civil society and diasporas that can play an important role for the overall development of their communities in countries of origin.

5. We, the G7 and G5 Sahel, call upon the main international organizations and financial institutions to intensify efforts in the Sahel. We underline in particular the significant role played by

the World Bank Group, the United Nations Development System, the African Development Bank and the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development. We express our strong support for a successful nineteenth Replenishment of the International Development Association (IDA) and fifteenth Replenishment of the African Development Fund, with an enhanced focus in both funds on addressing fragility, including in the G5 Sahel States.

## Changing methods: Sahel Alliance, humanitarian-development-peace nexus, ownership by capacity building and domestic resource mobilization

6. We, the G7 and G5 Sahel, underline the need for development partners, international organizations and financial institutions to coordinate their actions and methods of intervention on the ground, in close coordination with the G5 Sahel, at regional and local level, and in coherence with the priorities defined by the G5 Sahel countries through its Strategy for Security and Development and its Priority Investment Program (PIP) 2019-2021. We welcome the efforts made through the Sahel Alliance, created in 2017, as an example of an innovative framework to coordinate and monitor action between donors and partner States. We are pleased to announce today that all G7 members are now part of this alliance, as either members or observers.

7. We acknowledge the need to adopt and deepen comprehensive approaches fully consistent with the humanitarian-development-peace nexus. We underscore the value added of the G7 – G5 Sahel partnership, as the G5 Sahel's goal is to cover both development and security strategies. We note that emergency humanitarian needs in the Sahel are unmet and call for an international burden-sharing in funding for emergency programmes. We also note the ongoing impact of insecurity in the region and the need to address the root causes of violence.

8. We, the G7 and G5 Sahel underline the crucial need for greater ownership by national authorities and commit to enhancing support to capacity building for national and local authorities to help them deliver their mandates. We, the G7 and G5 Sahel, underline the importance of strengthening domestic resource mobilization in Sahel countries, as well as the efficiency of public spending and public financial management. We call on development partners to enhance their mobilization in Sahel countries on this continuum of actions related to public finance. We will continue to work with the International Monetary Fund (IMF) on how IMF-supported programs can support this continuum of policy actions in low-income countries and in particular in Sahel countries, drawing on the outcomes of the Review of Facilities for low-income countries and the Review of Program Design and Conditionality. Those outcomes aim to increase access to concessional financing and enhance the flexibility and tailoring of IMF programmes to country-specific needs, including, on a case-by-case basis, the opportunity for longer programme duration. We ask the IMF and World Bank Group (WBG), working with other development partners, including through the Platform for Collaboration on Tax and the Addis Tax Initiative, to intensify their work and coordination in support of tax capacity building and public financial management in Sahel countries and other low-income countries, tailoring their efforts to national specificities. We also reiterate our support for the further implementation of the IMF-World Bank Group multi-pronged approach to addressing emerging debt vulnerabilities.

## A significant step forward in human development

9. We, the G7 and the G5 Sahel, recognize the need for more investment in the field of human development – including access to nutrition, food, education and health systems, as well as gender equality and women's empowerment – as both a powerful lever for growth and a solution to harness the demographic dividend.

10. In this context, we, G7 and G5 countries:

- Recognize the need to substantially increase public spending in the field of human development, with a strong focus on empowering women and girls;
- Welcome the initiative by Burkina Faso, Chad, Mali, Niger, and the firm intention expressed by Mauritania to join the World Bank's Human Capital Project, which signals their commitment to accelerate human capital outcomes and improve their score in the Human Capital Index (WB);
- Call upon international organizations and finance institutions to intensify their action in the field of human development in the Sahel. In particular, we express our strong support to the World Bank's Africa Human Capital Plan, including its dedicated effort in the Sahel region, which aims to increase human development financing in Africa to15 billion USD between 2021-2023 ;
- Recognize that promoting women's empowerment and notably women's entrepreneurship is a priority. We support the existing initiatives in this area, such as the Women Entrepreneurs Finance Initiative (We-Fi) or the Affirmative Finance Action for Women in Africa (Afawa) programme launched by AfDB;
- Commit to advancing our collaboration together and with other relevant stakeholders to speed up progress in addressing all forms of malnutrition, through systemic approaches, including by strengthening nutrition within health systems and by promoting nutrition-sensitive, resilient and sustainable food systems. Next year's Nutrition for Growth Summit in Tokyo will represent a crucial moment to identify key actions. We support the Scaling Up Nutrition (SUN) movement which facilitates cross-sectoral work and helps raise political leadership. We, G5 Sahel countries, will speed up the implementation of our national multi-sectoral nutrition action plans. We, G7 members, will improve the coherence of our actions for nutrition in the region, including through multi-donor approaches;
- Underline that in order to eliminate food insecurity, it is necessary to address the root causes of poverty, including through decent job creation. We, the Development Ministers of the G7 and Ministers of the G5 Sahel, welcome the G7 Food Security Working Group framework on decent job creation for rural young people in the Sahel. We, the G5 Sahel countries will work with our G7 partners to address the drivers of rural unemployment among young people;
- Commit to stepping up health systems strengthening in all countries, focusing on primary health care as a cornerstone for making progress towards achieving Universal Health Coverage. We support the broadening of fiscal space for health and encourage Sahel countries to increase public investments in primary health care, especially to create jobs in the health workforce, in line with the African Union "Call to Action". We commit to improving the well-being of women and girls and contribute to potential social and economic benefits in the Sahel region, through regional partnership, such as the Ouagadougou partnership. We commit to supporting the success of the sixth Replenishment Conference of the Global Fund for AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria, which France is pleased to be hosting in Lyon on 10 October 2019, aimed at raising at least $14 billion to fight the three diseases over the 2020-2022 period, including through building resilient and sustainable health systems (RSSH).

11. Convinced of the added value of a strong partnership between the G7 and the G5 Sahel, based on a shared understanding of the long term challenges faced by the region, we stand ready to work together in the coming years and to coordinate our efforts in all relevant multilateral institutions, in a spirit of mutual accountability and responsibility, in order to provide hope and opportunities for the young people of the Sahel region.