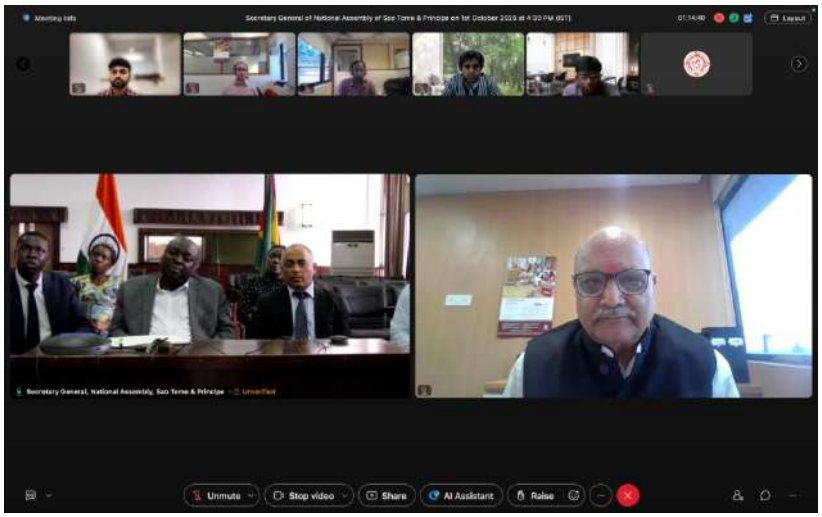
DAKSHIN Network and Collaborations

DAKSHIN Meeting with Secretary General of National Assembly of Sao Tome & Principe



DAKSHIN had a productive virtual meeting with His Excellency Mr. Domingos Boa Morte, Secretary General, National Assembly of the Democratic Republic of São Tomé and Príncipe on 1 October, 2025. His Excellency was joined by H.E. Deepak Miglani (Ambassador of India to the Democratic Republic of São Tomé and Príncipe), Mr. Salma (Advisor to Parliament) and Mr. Sefe Costa (Legal Advisor), Secretary to H.E. DAKSHIN was represented by Dr. Pankaj Vashisht, Mr. Atul Kaushik, Dr. Sivasena Reddy, Dr. Sayantan Ghosal, Mr. John Patrick Omegere, Mr. Amit Arora and Mr. Akash Singh.

Dr Vashisht thanked His Excellency Mr. Domingos Boa Morte, Secretary General, National Assembly of the Democratic Republic of São Tomé and Príncipe and his team for taking time to discuss collaboration with DAKSHIN at RIS. Mr. Kaushik then gave a brief description of DAKSHIN, the origins and background and the mandate. He highlighted four objectives of DAKSHIN, including facilitating cross-continental exchanges, developing evidence-based policy frameworks, promoting global public goods, and strengthening development cooperation across the Global South. His Excellency Mr. Domingos Boa Morte, Secretary General, National Assembly of the Democratic Republic of São Tomé and Principe thanked the DAKSHIN team for the briefing and expressed interest in digital solutions and improvement of health structures in the National Assembly, while also highlighting the need

for collaboration in agriculture sector for his country. Mr Kaushik, in response, shared India's experience with digitization in Parliament, noting that all documents are sent electronically to members, parliamentary questions are published online with searchable algorithms for citizens, and debates are broadcast live through Sansad TV (Parliament TV). He emphasized that these digital solutions have transformed parliamentary functioning and improved public engagement. Dr. Reddy provided an overview of Sao Tome & Principe's agricultural landscape, highlighting its fertile volcanic soils and tropical climate conducive to crops such as cocoa, coconut, bananas, and palm oil. Drawing on India's agricultural expertise, he suggested areas of support including high-yield crop varieties, affordable micro-irrigation with solar pumps, water and soil management, cooperative institutional models, and ICT-based advisories for farmers.

His Excellency Mr. Domingo Boa Morte expressed gratitude for the meeting and underlined the importance of collaboration with DAKSHIN. He highlighted that Sao Tome & Principe is prioritizing digital solutions and health services, particularly to improve communication with citizens and strengthen parliamentary functioning, especially focus on conveying the happenings of their parliament to the citizens of Sao Tome. He noted that while the Parliament has a young team, it lacks dedicated health services, and they want to establish a small clinic within Parliament. He further emphasized that agriculture remains critical for the country, even if it is not a top priority for Parliament, and expressed interest in learning from India's agricultural practices. On digital solutions, he confirmed that AI is a development priority and that the country requires support in both hardware and software. He expressed keen interest in adopting India's digital parliamentary practices for local adaptation. Further, Ambassador Miglani EOI mentioned that Sao Tome & Principe, the second smallest country in Africa, has a progressive democratic government with people-centric policies, resonating with India's governance values.

His Excellency Mr. Domingo Boa Morte stated that all discussions would be placed before the President of the National Assembly (equivalent to the Speaker of the Lok Sabha in India) for further discussion. He expressed interest in formalizing cooperation through a Letter of Agreement (LoA), which would also be shared with the President of the National Assembly.
Dr. Pankaj Vashisht concluded the meeting by underscoring the importance of the discussions from the lens of knowledge sharing and mutual learning and expressed the desire of DAKSHIN at RIS to work together.