The EU provides €30 million to reinforce cooperation among the Portuguese-speaking African countries and Timor-Leste

Today, the European Union and the Portuguese-speaking African countries (Angola, Cape Verde, Guinea Bissau, Mozambique, São Tomé e Príncipe) and Timor-Leste signed an agreement under which the EU will provide support of €30 million for their cooperation under the 11th EDF. The signing ceremony took place in São Tomé e Príncipe, at a meeting of high-level representatives of the beneficiary countries and the EU. The Director-General for International Cooperation and Development, Fernando Frutuoso de Melo, signed for the EU, while the Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs of Mozambique, Nyeleti Brooke Mondlane, signed on behalf of PALOP-TL.

The aim of the new programme is to reinforce a specific regional network within the Portuguese speaking countries’ community. In line with the priorities identified in the Agenda for Change, good governance is the overriding theme for cooperation with the PALOP-TL countries. The main objective will be to promote employment, through mobility and social inclusion using the common language. A specific component on governance capacity development will reinforce institutional capacity in key policy areas of common interest, such as statistics, justice, electoral cycles, and new domains such as research, climate change or environmental issues. This will allow countries to reinforce cooperation within their network, mobilizing expertise on demand in specific areas of interest.

Background

The five Portuguese-speaking African countries (PALOP – acronym of Países Africanos de Língua Oficial Portuguesa) – Angola, Cape Verde, Guinea Bissau, Mozambique and São Tomé and Príncipe – began cooperating in the 1970s and the first European Union (EU)-PALOP regional cooperation programme started in 1992. The group was renamed PALOP and Timor-Leste (PALOP-TL) in 2007 when Timor-Leste became the sixth member of the programme. The six countries share a strong linguistic and cultural identity and a similar system of governance, with common socio-economic and institutional characteristics, even if they are geographically not close to each other.

Over the past 20 years, the PALOP-TL and EU partnership has added value by reinforcing collaboration within specific policy areas of common interest, such as statistics, electoral cycles, judicial systems, culture, and human resources for health.

Past support to the PALOP-TL countries included €33.1 million under the 10th European Development Fund (2008-2013) which have been used to enhance public services, to improve economic governance, and to support electoral cycles.

The PALOP-TL and EU partnership fosters the dissemination of good practice and the exchange of know-how among participating countries. This networking also allows for consolidating strategic partnerships among these countries and with the EU, thus underpinning a reinforced political dialogue on themes of common interest.
For more information

Website of DG International Cooperation and Development; cooperation with PALOP and Timor-Leste: https://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/regions/africa/palop-tl_en

Contact details:
Gé Lambiza, International Aid / Cooperation Officer Angola and PALOP, Ge.LAMBIZA@ec.europa.eu

Sven Ruesch, Press and Media Officer (+32 2 295 87 59) Sven.ruesch@ec.europa.eu