

# **PORTUGAL**

## **INTERVENTION**

**BY**

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**POLICY OPTIONS AND POSSIBLE ACTIONS  
TO EXPEDITE IMPLEMENTATION**

**AFRICA**

**INTERGOVERNMENTAL PREPARATORY MEETING  
FOR THE SEVENTEENTH SESSION OF THE  
COMMISSION ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT**

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Madam Chair, distinguished Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I naturally concur with and subscribe to the interventions made by the Czech Republic on behalf of the European Union.

Considering however the paramount importance of this theme I would like to make some remarks on my national capacity.

As stated in the Secretary General's report on policy options and actions for expediting progress in implementation on issues related to the promotion of sustainable development in Africa (E/CN.17/2009/8), "*land degradation and desertification affect a large portion of the continent*". Increasing water scarcity and intensification of drought are closely related and equally daunting challenges. These problems, and their impacts on Africa's environment, society and economy require a comprehensive and holistic response through concerted efforts among concerned stakeholders, at all levels.

In this regard, I would like to share with you some of the endeavors undertaken in the context of the Community of Portuguese-Speaking Countries (CPLP), which comprises Angola, Brazil, Cape Verde, Guinea-Bissau, Mozambique, Portugal, Timor-Leste and Sao Tome and Principe, and to which Portugal currently presides.

Among these rank cooperation agreements signed with various UN agencies and bodies that have been central tools for the exchange of experiences among Portuguese-Speaking countries and for the implementation of programmes and development of partnerships in the selected thematic cluster of issues covered by the current third implementation cycle of the Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD) and aimed at, inter alia, combating rural poverty, desertification and water scarcity.

As a whole, these actions, demonstrate the engagement of the CPLP in multilateral actions in the African Portuguese-speaking countries and Timor-Leste towards poverty eradication, the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals (MDG's) and the synergistic approach to the implementation of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, Particularly in Africa (UNCCD), taking into consideration the complexity of the interactions of climate, land degradation and biological diversity with sustainable livelihoods, particularly in areas affected by drought and desertification.

As an example, I would highlight the signature of a cooperation agreement, in November 2007, between the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) and the CPLP was signed , to combat rural poverty in Portuguese-speaking Developing Countries, while helping them to better manage their resources.

Then again, in May last year, a technical cooperation project which was signed by CPLP and the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), aiming at the formulation of the cooperation program South/South and North/South, for the

implementation of the UNCCD, through the enactment of activities directed to the formation of national stakeholders and to the elaboration of national financial strategies. This project, covering all the Community member States, aims to contribute to sustainable development and the reduction of poverty both in African Portuguese-speaking countries and Timor-Leste, through two specific objectives:

- first, national capacity-building for intersectional and participative planning in combating desertification; and
- secondly, a conception of a Community programme to combat desertification, aimed at the implementation of a cooperation programme to implement the Convention as a central element in combating land degradation, the improvement of livelihood for populations in affected areas and the management and conservation of natural resources with a view, as well, to facing the negative impacts of climate change.

With the UNCCD secretariat, CPLP has finalized and signed, last November, a new partnership initiative with the purpose of augmenting education strategies and inter-regional cooperation.

The signing of this protocol agreement rings in further measures to enhance the UNCCD's 10-year Strategy Plan that runs to 2018, and seeks, among other objectives, to establish a platform for joint action and cooperation to combat desertification and soils deterioration and to confront drought and shortage of water by supporting the efforts of Community member States in facing the root causes of the problem through implementation of the Convention.

The future joint work between the CPLP and the UNCCD is also expected to focus on supporting South-South cooperation in several areas such as sustainable land management, water resources management and combating poverty.

Thank you very much Madam Chair