

## LDC5 Side-event

### **Holistic and multisectoral interventions to address systemic and structural vulnerabilities in LDCs: Lessons learned from Angola**

**6 March 2023**

**12:15 - 13:45**

#### **Statement by H.E. Mr. Francisco Gonçalo Nunes André Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs and Cooperation of Portugal**

Mr. Chair,

Dear colleagues,

I thank you for the invitation to discuss and highlight the important steps taken by our priority partner, Angola, towards a successful, well deserved and irreversible graduation from status of Least Developed Country (LDC).

We celebrate, this year, **45 years** of fruitful, meaningful and ever growing **cooperation between Portugal and Angola**.

I am thus very happy to be here to share some of our insights into the complex process of graduation.

Allow me to underline that from the very beginning Portugal has supported the Angolan authorities in their vision for the graduation moment.

We also commend and underline the Angolan Government's constant and crucial commitment to graduation as a national goal of great relevance.

In any long term and profound process of national transformation, **political will and vision are indispensable to overall success**.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

**The LDCs are at the forefront of the severe crises the world is facing.**

As highlighted by UNCTAD's LDCs Report, "*the international community needs to begin addressing these inequalities*".

The question is therefore: what can be done to tackle these issues and promote sustainable development?

Some reflections from our side:

The first step is to **address the root causes of vulnerabilities**.

- On this matter, we welcome UNCTAD's work on assisting developing countries to access the benefits of a globalized economy, namely on trade, environment, climate change and blue economy.
- Portugal works closely with partner countries in the establishment of **Strategic Cooperation Programmes**, including with Angola, that build on common priorities aiming at promoting sustainable development.
- Our cooperation is further enhanced within the **Community of Portuguese Speaking Countries**(CPLP), but also in the context of the European Union and the United Nations.

➤ Furthermore, **2030 Portuguese Development Cooperation Strategy priorities** are fully aligned with the 2030 Agenda, the Addis Ababa Action Agenda and the Paris Agreement.

Secondly, focusing on human development is of utmost importance to tackle structural vulnerabilities. That is why, among other initiatives, we work closely with partner countries, including with Angola, in **two crucial fronts**: Education and Health.

➤ In the **Education sector**, we are focused primarily on **three areas**:

o Initial training of educators and teachers, up to secondary level education;

o Continuing education for teachers throughout their careers, at all levels of education;

o Professional training aimed at contributing to the reduction of unemployment, through the improvement and professional training of other professionals in the education sector.

This represents an important investment in technical and vocational training of young people, that will **enable Angola to take full benefits of its demographic dividend**. We will continue to work closely with Angola in these areas.

This support has been implemented in 10 of the 18 provinces of Angola, making the project available in more than half of the country.

We also support the Ministry of Education of Angola as a driving force in the reform of the education system and the national training plan.

➤ In the **Health sector**, we are focused primarily on developing Angolan research capacities:

o We supported the creation, from scratch, of a Health Institution that focuses predominantly on transmissible diseases;

o We also support the Ministry of Health of Angola, assisting on the development of public policies, thus contributing to the accomplishment of SDG 3.

**Other areas of our cooperation** with Angola cover:

➤ **Strengthening good governance**, by reinforcing institutions transparency and accountability;

➤ **Addressing food insecurity** by investing in agriculture to increase food production and reduce dependence on food imports (EU funded project **FRESAN**) which has had a very positive impact in the regions most affected by climate change and drought.

➤ **Ensuring adequate financing**. We appreciate the fact that Angola is one of Portugal's main trading partners, with emphasis on agriculture, construction, manufacturing and telecommunications.

Through partnerships, we will strengthen support to SMEs (*small and medium-sized enterprises*) in designing bankable projects and accessing funds and instruments made available by the International Financial Institutions.

With the recent Lusophone Compact (*Compacto Lusófono*), we are developing a strategic partnership with the African Development Bank aimed at supporting the private sector in African Portuguese-speaking countries.

This allows us to work with Angola in **promoting investments in different sectors and supporting economic diversification**, creating new jobs and opportunities and reducing the country's reliance on a single-commodity export. **This is even more important as Angola is about to graduate from the LDC category in 2024.**

The **promotion of gender equality across all sectors** and the **empowerment of women and girls** is also important, as it is working collaboratively with local communities and civil society organizations, by building partnerships through an inclusive and integrated approach, involving all stakeholders.

Angola's increasing efforts in these areas must be recognized. Indeed, with the country's coordinated action with its partners, we can stimulate progress where it is most needed.

On this note, I would like to **congratulate UNCTAD** on its very successful ongoing multiyear, multisectoral "Train for Trade II" EU-UNCTAD Joint Program to help diversify Angola's economy.

Since 2020, and through extraordinary voluntary contributions, Portugal has financed UNCTAD in a **quarter of a million Euros** on this project, but also for the trust fund for LDCs production capacity.

We also finance other initiatives that are relevant for the Portuguese cooperation, namely the Water Convention, Environment and the Sustainable Development program.

**UNCTAD's work is not only very important in abstract level, it also delivers significant results.**

We remain committed to supporting the work developed by UNCTAD, namely in African Portuguese-speaking countries and Timor Leste, on improving human and institutional capacities and supporting the implementation of their national development objectives, as well as the 2030 Agenda.

Finally, one last word about **partnerships**.

We believe that only through locally led development and through ownership of the projects by partner countries' entities we can mobilize the full range of their expertise.

I would like to finish by expressing Portugal's firm commitment to continue strengthening its cooperation with Angola, in the context of a sound relationship and open dialogue, centred on mutual interests and shared responsibilities.

Nevertheless, our cooperation efforts should not wane after the victory of graduation.

We will continue by Angola's side.

Let us work together and do our part in helping to **bring forth the full implementation of the Doha Program of Action and its deliverables successfully.**

Thank you.