Declaration and Statutes of the Community of Portuguese-Speaking Countries, of July 17, 1996 (CPLP)

The Heads of State and Government of Angola, Brazil, Cape Verde, Guinea-Bissau, Mozambique, Portugal and São Tomé and Principe, having met in Lisbon on 17 July 1996,

Deeply attached to the immutable values of Peace, Democracy and the Rule of Law, of Human Rights, Development and Social Justice;

Bearing in mind the respect for the territorial integrity and the non-interference in the internal affairs of each State, as well as the right of each State to determine the forms of its political, economic and social development and to adopt in a sovereign manner all appropriate policies and mechanisms in these fields;

Aware of the historic opportunity offered by this Conference of Heads of State and Government to provide responses to the aspirations of and appeals from the peoples of the seven countries and having in mind the auspicious results of the meetings of Ministers for Foreign Affairs and External Relations of the Portuguese-speaking countries, convened in Brasilia on 9 February 1994, in Lisbon on 19 July 1995 and in Maputo on 18 April 1996, as well as those of their meetings, held on the occasion of the 48th, 49th and 50th Sessions of the General Assembly of the United Nations;

Consider that it is imperative to:

- Consolidate the national and multinational cultural reality that confers upon the Portuguese-speaking countries an identity of their own, while reflecting the special character of their relationship and the experience of a fruitful concerted action and co-operation that has been built up over the years;

- Enhance a progressive international assertion of the Portuguese-speaking countries as a whole which, although being a geographically discontinued area, are identified by their common language;

- Reaffirm, on this highly meaningful occasion for the collective future of their countries, their commitment to strengthen their ties of solidarity and co-operation by taking concerted initiatives designed to promote the economic and social development of their peoples and to further develop the assertion and dissemination of the Portuguese language.

Reaffirm that the Portuguese language

- Constitutes, among their peoples, both an historic link and a common heritage which have been nurtured by their friendly relationship throughout the centuries and which must be enhanced;

- Is a privileged means of disseminating the cultural creation among the Portuguese-speaking peoples and of internationally promoting their cultural values, in an open and universal perspective;

- Provides, at the world level, a solid foundation for an increasingly significant and influential concerted action, as well;

- Tends to be, in view of its wide nature, a tool of communication and work within the international organisations, thus enabling each country, within its specific regional context, to be the interpreter of their common interests and aspirations.

Hence, fully confident in the future and determined to achieve the following objectives:
- To contribute to the reinforcement of the human ties, solidarity and brotherhood among all peoples for whom the Portuguese language is one of the pillars of their specific identity and, accordingly, to promote ways and means to facilitate the movement of Member countries’ citizens within the Community of Portuguese-speaking countries area;

- To encourage the dissemination and enrichment of the Portuguese language by further developing and strengthening the institutions which have been or will be established therefor, in particular the International Portuguese Language Institute;

- To enhance the cultural exchange and the dissemination of the intellectual and artistic creation within the framework of the Portuguese language by making use of all means of communication and of the international co-operation mechanisms;

- To endeavour to establish in certain Member countries concrete forms of co-operation between the Portuguese language and other national languages in the fields of research and enhancement;

- To widen their co-operation in the field of political and diplomatic concerted action, particularly within the framework of international organisations, so as to give an ever-greater expression to their common interests and needs within the international community;

- To encourage the development of their parliamentary co-operation;

- To develop their economic and entrepreneurial co-operation and to enhance the existing potential by drawing up and implementing projects of common interest, exploring to this end the various forms of bilateral, trilateral and multilateral co-operation;

- To give a new impetus to, and intensify, their co-operation in the academic field, as well as in vocational training and in the various sectors of scientific research and technology, aiming at a growing enhancement of their human and natural resources, and to promote and reinforce the training policies of officials;

- To mobilise internal and external efforts and resources aimed at assisting in the reconstruction and rehabilitation programmes, as well as in the humanitarian aid and emergency actions for their countries;

- To promote the co-ordination of the activities of the various public agencies and private bodies, economic associations and non-governmental organisations which are engaged in the development of the co-operation among their peoples;

- To promote, in the respect for the international commitments undertaken by Member countries, measures designed to overcome the problems faced by the immigrant communities in the Member countries, as well as to co-ordinate and foster co-operation in the field of immigration policies;

- To encourage bilateral and multilateral co-operation with the aim of protecting and preserving the environment in the Member countries and achieving a sustainable development;

- To promote actions of co-operation between themselves and multilateral co-ordination with a view to ensuring full respect for human rights, both in their countries and all over the world;

- To promote measures, particularly in the pedagogic and judicial fields, with a view to eradicating racism, racial discrimination and xenophobia;

- To promote and foster measures designed to effectively improve the living conditions of the child and to ensure his/her harmonious development, in the light of the principles enshrined in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child;
- To promote the implementation of specific projects of co-operation with a view to strengthening the social condition of women, thereby recognising the crucial role they perform in the well-being and development of society;

- To foster and promote exchange of young people, for training and exchange of experiences, by implementing specific programmes, particularly in the fields of education, culture and sports;

Have decided, acting faithfully in view of the vocation and the will of their peoples, while fully respecting the sovereign equality of States, to constitute as from now the Community of Portuguese-speaking countries.

Done in Lisbon on the seventeenth day of July in the year one thousand nine hundred and ninety-six.

For the Republic of Angola
For the Federal Republic of Brazil
For the Republic of Cape Verde
For the Republic of Guinea-Bissau
For the Republic of Mozambique
For the Portuguese Republic
For the Democratic Republic of São Tomé and Principe

**STATUTES**

**Article 1**

**Name**

The Community of Portuguese-speaking countries, hereinafter referred to as "CPLV", is the privileged multilateral forum for the strengthening of friendly relations, of consultation in the political and diplomatic fields and for enhanced co-operation between its Members.

**Article 2**

**Legal status**

The CPLP shall have legal personality as well as administrative and financial autonomy.

**Article 3**

**Objectives**

The general objectives of the CPLP are as follows:

a) a concerted action between its Member States at both the political and diplomatic level in its international relations, particularly with the aim of asserting its presence in the international fora;
b) the cooperation, particularly in the economic, social, cultural, legal, technical and scientific spheres;

c) the implementation of projects designed to promote and disseminate the Portuguese language.

Article 4

Seat

The seat of the CPLP is, in the first stage, at Lisbon, the capital of the Portuguese Republic.

Article 5

Guiding Principles

The CPLP shall be guided by the following principles:

a) the sovereign equality of Member States;

b) the non-interference in the internal affairs of Member States;

c) respect for the national identities of Member States;

d) reciprocal treatment;

e) the supremacy of peace, democracy, the rule of law, respect for human rights, and social justice;

f) respect for the territorial integrity of Members States;

g) promotion of the development;

h) promotion of a mutually advantageous cooperation.

Article 6

Membership

1. Apart from its founder Members, any State may, provided it uses Portuguese as its national language, become a Member of the CPLP, by accepting unreservedly the present Statute.

2. The admission of a new State to the CPLP shall require a unanimous decision of the Conference of Heads of State and Government.

3. The Conference of Heads of State and Government shall determine the formalities required for the admission of new Members, including the accession by new Members to this Statute.

Article 7

Organs

1. The organs of the CPLP are:

a) the Conference of Heads of State and Government;
b) the Council of Ministers;

c) the Standing Committee for Consultation;

d) the Executive Secretariat.

2. In pursuing its objectives, the CPLP shall also have recourse to the mechanisms for concerted action in the political and diplomatic fields and for cooperation, which have been or will be established to this end among its Members.

Article 8

Conference of Heads of State and Government

1. The Conference shall consist of the Heads of State and Government of all Member States and shall be the highest organ of the CPLP.

2. The Conference shall be empowered to:

a) establish and direct the general political guidelines and strategies of the CPLP;

b) adopt the legal instruments necessary for the implementation of this Statute; nevertheless this power can be delegated to the Council of Ministers;

c) set up the necessary institutions in order to ensure the proper functioning of the CPLP;

d) elect a President from among its Members to hold office for a term of two years. The office of the President shall be held in turn by each Member State;

e) elect the Executive Secretary and Deputy Executive Secretary of the CPLP.

3. The Conference shall meet every two years, in ordinary session. Extraordinary meetings may be convened upon the initiative of two-thirds of the Member States.

4. Decisions of the Conference shall be taken by consensus and shall be binding on all Member States.

Article 9

Council of Ministers

1. The Council of Ministers shall consist of the Ministers for Foreign Affairs and External Relations of all Member States.

2. The Council of Ministers shall:

a) co-ordinate the activities of the CPLP;

b) supervise the functioning and development of the CPLP;

c) define, adopt and implement the policies and programmes of action of the CPLP;

d) approve the budget of the CPLP;
e) formulate recommendations to the Conference on policy issues of a general nature, as well as on matters concerning the effective, harmonious functioning and development of the CPLP; recommend to the Conference the candidates for appointment as Executive Secretary and Deputy Executive Secretary;

f) convene conferences and other meetings for the purpose of promoting the objectives and programmes of the CPLP;

h) carry out other tasks assigned to it by the Conference.

3. The Council of Ministers shall elect a President from among its Members. The office of the President shall be held for a term of one year in rotation.

4. The Council of Ministers shall meet, as a rule, once a year. Extraordinary meetings may be convened at the request of two-thirds of the Member States.

5. The Council of Ministers shall be accountable to the Conference and shall submit reports to the Conference on its activities.

6. Decisions of the Council of Ministers shall be taken by consensus.

**Article 10**

**Standing Committee for Consultation**

1. The Standing Committee for Consultation shall consist of one representative from each of the Member States of the CPLP.

2. The Standing Committee for Consultation shall monitor observance by the Executive Secretariat of the decisions and recommendations from the Conference and the Council of Ministers.

3. The Standing Committee for Consultation shall meet once a month, as a rule. Extraordinary meetings shall take place as often as is necessary.

4. The Standing Committee for Consultation is co-ordinated by the representative of the Member State which holds the Presidency of the Council of Ministers.

5. Decisions of the Standing Committee for Consultation shall be taken by consensus.

6. The Standing Committee for Consultation may decide all the matters referred to in paragraph 2 (a), (b), (c), and (d) of Article 9 ad referendum of the Council of Ministers.

**Article 11**

**Executive Secretariat**

1. The Executive Secretariat is the central executive body of the CPLP. The functions of the Executive Secretariat shall be, in particular:

a) to implement the decisions of the Conference, the Council of Ministers and of the Standing Committee for Consultation;

b) to draw up the programmes of the CPLP and satisfy itself that they are implemented;

c) to participate in the organisation of the meetings of the CPLP organs;
Article 12

Executive Secretary

1. The Executive Secretary will be an eminent personality from the Member States of the CPLP. The Executive Secretary shall be elected to hold office, in rotation, for a term of two years, which may be extended for one further term of two years only.

2. The main tasks of the Executive Secretary shall be as follows:

a) to introduce and implement, under the direction of the Conference or the Council of Ministers or acting on his or her own initiative, any measures that may prove necessary to further the Objectives of the CPLP as well as to reinforce the functioning of the CPLP;

b) to appoint the staff of the Executive Secretariat after consulting the Standing Committee for Consultation;

c) to hold consultations with and to ensure co-ordination between the Governments of the Member States and other institutions of the CPLP;

d) to keep custody of the property and assets of the CPLP;

e) to represent the CPLP in the appropriate fora;

f) to perform such other tasks as may be entrusted to him or her by the Conference, the Council of Ministers or by the Standing Committee for Consultation.

Article 13

Deputy Executive Secretary

1. The Deputy Executive Secretary shall be elected to hold office, in rotation, for a term of two years, which may be extended for one further term of two years only.

2. The Deputy Executive Secretary shall have the nationality of one Member State other than that of the Executive Secretary.

3. The Deputy Executive Secretary shall assist the Executive Secretary in the discharge of his or her responsibilities and shall replace him or her in the event that the Executive Secretary is absent or unable to act.

Article 14

Quorum

Five Member States at least shall constitute the quorum for holding any meeting of the CPLP or the CPLP institutions.

Article 15

Decisions
Decisions of the organs and institutions of the CPLP shall be taken by consensus by all Member States.

**Article 16**

**Rules of Procedure**

The organs and institutions of the CPLP shall adopt their own Rules of Procedure.

**Article 17**

**Funds**

1. The resources of the CPLP shall be provided out of contributions from its Member States in accordance with a scale to be decided by the Council of Ministers.

2. A special Fund shall be set up, aiming exclusively at providing financial support for practical activities undertaken within the CPLP. It shall be financed by public or private contributions provided on a voluntary basis.

**Article 18**

**Budget**

1. The operational Budget of the CPLP shall run from the 1st July to the 30th June following.

2. The draft budget shall be prepared by the Executive Secretariat and, after being approved by the Standing Committee for Consultation, shall be submitted for consideration and adoption to each Member State before the end of March.

**Article 19**

**Assets**

The assets of the CPLP shall be all movable and immovable property which have been acquired by way of sale or gift by any public or private person or institution.

**Article 20**

**Amendments**

1. Any Member State may propose amendments to this Statute in a communication addressed to the Executive Secretariat in written form.

2. The Executive Secretariat shall thereupon transmit to the Standing Committee for Consultation any amendment proposed under paragraph 1 above, which shall be submitted by the Standing Committee for Consultation to the Council of Ministers for approval.

**Article 21**

**Entry into force**

1. This Statute shall enter into force, provisionally, on the date on which it is signed; it shall enter into force definitively when all measures and procedures under the constitutional law of Member States have been completed.
2. The present Statute shall be adopted by all Member States in accordance with their constitutional requirements.

**Article 22**

**Depository**

The original text of the Declaration constituting the CPLP and of this Statute shall be deposited in the Seat of the CPLP with its Executive Secretariat which will transmit certified copies thereof to each of the Member States.

Done at Lisbon on this 17th day of July, 1996.

For the Republic of Angola  
For the Federal Republic of Brazil  
For the Republic of Cape Verde  
For the Republic of Guinea-Bissau  
For the Republic of Mozambique  
For the Portuguese Republic  
For the Democratic Republic of São Tomé and Príncipe