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Portugal boosts cooperation in the Education Sector

In Lisbon on Friday the 2nd of January Timor-Leste's Minister of Education, His Excellency Bendito dos Santos Freitas and Portugal's Minister of Education and Science, His Excellency Nuno Crato, signed an agreement on cooperation in the education sector. The agreement sets out a protocol for the implementation and operation of the project "School Learning and Teacher Training Centers of Timor-Leste" which will involve around 150 Portuguese teachers coming to Timor-Leste in 2015.

This bilateral cooperation is set to build on the success of assistance currently focused on 11 Reference Schools spread throughout the nation where Portuguese and Timorese colleagues are working together to achieve the best educational practices in teaching the National Curriculum of Timor-Leste. Since 2011 these schools have been allocated Portuguese teachers to teach pre-school and the 1st and 2nd cycles of basic education as well as offer in-service training of Timorese teachers.

The boost in assistance in 2015 will see enhanced teacher training as well as the training of administrative staff and school managers. Plans for 2015 also include the establishment of Reference Schools in Viqueque and Ainaro. This will bring the total number of Reference Schools to 13 with one operating in each of Timor-Leste's districts.

Demonstrating growing national capacity, approximately 30 Timorese teachers who have completed their training in the Reference Schools will now be integrated into the faculty of the School Learning and Teacher Training Centers to share their skills with students and teachers.

Portuguese Minister of Education and Science, His Excellency Nuno Crato, said that the cooperation between Portugal and Timor-Leste in the field of education had been "exemplary".

Minister of Education of Timor-Leste, His Excellency Bendito dos Santos Freitas noted that the project was of high significance to both Portugal and Timor-Leste and expressed his appreciation for the efforts of all the Portuguese and Timorese teachers who had participated in the bilateral cooperation so far. He welcomed the new teachers due to come to Timor-Leste in 2015 and conveyed appreciation to the Government of Portugal for this boost in cooperation. **ENDS**



Ágio Pereira
+670 77045002
agio.pereira@cdm.gov.tl
govtlmedia@gmail.com
www.timor-leste.gov.tl