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PC.DEL/472/19  
3 May 2019

ENGLISH  
Original: FRENCH

Delegation of Portugal

**STATEMENT BY AMBASSADOR JORGE LOBO DE MESQUITA,  
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF PORTUGAL TO THE OSCE,  
AT THE 1226th MEETING OF THE OSCE PERMANENT COUNCIL**

2 May 2019

**On the occasion of the International Day of the Portuguese Language**

Mr. Chairperson,

The International Day of the Portuguese Language is being celebrated on 5 May. It is the native language of 260 million people on four continents and the most widely spoken European language in the southern hemisphere. I should like to take this occasion to stress the importance of multilingualism, of safeguarding linguistic diversity and of protecting the native and minority languages of migrant communities.

Portuguese is also very present within the OSCE participating States as the native language of Portuguese communities and the communities of nationals of other Portuguese-speaking countries.

Moreover, Portuguese is also used as a language of culture and communication in a considerable number of universities in the OSCE area. This global dimension is also reflected in the large number of OSCE participating States with Associated Observer status within the Community of Portuguese Language Countries – Andorra, the Czech Republic, France, Georgia, Hungary, Italy, Luxembourg, Serbia, Slovakia, Turkey and the United Kingdom – which we are pleased to note here on this International Day.

It is in this spirit of sharing the Portuguese language in a global multilingual and multicultural framework, which we believe is also in the spirit of the OSCE, as expressed in the Helsinki Final Act, that we draw attention today to the International Day of the Portuguese Language and reiterate our commitment and willingness to support all approaches aimed at enhancing multilingualism in our shared OSCE area.

Thank you, Mr. Chairperson.