Future of Portuguese language debated

The future of the Portuguese language was this week debated by more than 200 representatives from the eight countries with Portuguese as an official language, at an event being held at the University of Lisbon.

One new aspect of this second International Conference on the Future of the Portuguese Language in the World System was the focus on Portuguese as a language of science and innovation. The president of the Camões Institute of Cooperation and Language, Ana Paula Laborinho, also promised concrete proposals to promote Portuguese as a research medium.

Linguistic diversity, teaching and training, and internationalisation and the cultural industries were three other major themes in the panel discussions held over the two days, along with dozens of lectures.

Tuesday’s opening session was addressed by Portugal’s Foreign Minister, Rui Machete, and the executive secretary of the Community of Portuguese-Language Countries (CPLP), Murade Morargy.

The first conference took place in Brasilia in 2010, and ended with the adoption of a plan of action to promote the language.

On Thursday, after the Lisbon conference had ended, representatives of CPLP member states met to draw up a new action plan, aimed at “orienting the language policies of the eight countries in the next three years”, according to the official programme.

The plan is then to be approved by CPLP members’ foreign ministers at a meeting at its Lisbon headquarters on 4 November, before being endorsed at the CPLP’s next summit in July next year, in Dili.

Portuguese is currently the fifth most used language on the internet, and the third on popular social networks such as Twitter and Facebook.

The Lisbon conference is to be broadcast via the internet and questions will be taken via Twitter.

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