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## 20/11/07 - Special partnership with EU: "Our standards will change completely," says Prime Minister

Prime Minister José Maria Neves said that "our standards for Cape Verde will have to change completely" as of yesterday, November 19, when the European Council on General Affairs and Foreign Relations approved the special partnership between Cape Verde and the European Union.

The head of the Cape Verdean government spoke at a press conference about what he called "a historic moment and an extraordinary victory on the part of all Cape Verdeans," and "a one-of-a-kind accord that will contribute towards innovation in relations between Europe and Africa."

Questioned regarding the practical changes Cape Verdeans will see in their everyday lives, José Maria Neves replied that "our standards will change completely" and that productivity levels in the public sector will have to change as well. Neves spoke of Cape Verde's obligation to converge "with the EU on a macroeconomic level, and the Maastrich criteria - the public deficit, inflation and the global public debt - will have to be taken into account in economic governance."

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Minister of Foreign Affairs, Cooperation and Communities Victor Borges spoke before José Maria Neves and stressed that "Cape Verde's ambition is to leave the donor/beneficiary paradigm behind and move on to a different plan of action."

According to Borges, this plan of action is founded in the "reinforcement of coordination and political dialogue on both sides," in "the promotion and defense of a framework of common interests" and in "Cape Verde's integration in the dual perspective of the ECOWAS and the ultra-peripheral regions of the North Atlantic."

"The basic postulate of this partnership is the optimization of the potentialities of the Cotonou Treaty and the mobilization of other instruments that will allow us to respond to the plan of action's aspirations," Borges explained.

Source: A Semana