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The European Union boosts cooperation with São Tomé and Príncipe

Commissioner for International Cooperation and Development, Neven Mimica, and the Prime Minister of São Tomé and Príncipe, Jorge Bom Jesus, signed a top-up of €7 million to the bilateral funding today, in support of people's access to clean water and the fight against gender based violence.

At the signing, Commissioner **Mimica** said: *"With this extra amount of €7 million, we want to achieve two important things. First, to encourage the newly elected authorities to boost progress in the water and sanitation sector in São Tomé and Príncipe. And second, to help women victims of gender violence to find the support they need."*

A €4.05 million slice of the top-up will go to the ongoing budget support programme on water and sanitation. This will further improve sustainable access to drinking water and sanitation facilities for the population, notably girls, to bolster environmental sustainability and the resilience of vulnerable groups to climate change. Moreover, it will introduce a particular focus on gender equality: it will help women gain equal access to water resources and take part in the management of public services.

Another €2.55 million of the new funding signed today will support the government of São Tomé and Príncipe in its substantial efforts to fight against gender-based violence, in line with the recently adopted national policy for gender equality. In concrete terms, the national Counselling Centre against Domestic Violence will benefit, as will national institutions in protecting women victims of sexual violence and getting access to health and psychological services.

Last but not least, an extra €0.4 million will be used to step up coordination and other measures.

Background

Commissioner Mimica signed the top-up to the National Indicative Programme with the Prime Minister of São Tomé and Príncipe, Mr. Jorge Bom Jesus, on 9 February during the 32nd African Union summit (Addis Ababa, 9-10 February 2019).

This additional amount brings the overall financial envelope for the National Indicative Programme for São Tomé and Príncipe from €28 to €35 million for the period 2014-2020. Beyond Water and sanitation and Gender, the programme also supports agricultural exports.