

Opening ceremony of the Mario Soares Chair at Rennes 2 University



Rennes University was the first of the provincial universities to begin teaching Portuguese and issued its first certificate in Portuguese in 1936.

Mario Soares and Rennes 2 University : a lifetime friendship story

During the Salazar dictatorship, Mario Soares was a political refugee in France and a language assistant from 1971 to 1973 at Rennes 2 University. His daughter highlighted the genuine gratefulness of her father for the people of Rennes, their mayor Edmond Hervé and Rennes 2 University. In 1977, Mario Soares became Mario the first honorary doctor of Rennes 2 University.

A wonderful initiative for further developments in research and the consolidation of an international network

The formalization of the creation of this 5th Mario Soares Chair in France will make it possible for further developments in the fields of research in history, culture, language and Portuguese-language Literature. In addition to Portugal, the University's department opened up, more than half a century ago, to studies on Brazil and, 30 years ago, to African countries with the Portuguese language. This last field of research has given rise to numerous publications and has allowed the constitution of an important research library on Portuguese-speaking Africa. The Bernardino Chiche collection, now part the Central Library of Rennes 2, has more than three thousand specialized works and is one of the richest collections in France in this field.

Augusto Santos Silva, Portugal's Minister of Foreign Affairs, welcomed the initiative to strengthen scientific and cultural collaboration and stated that this 5th chair in France and the 60th Camoes chair in the world will consolidate a network of academic relations and scientific research.

The research topics of the Mario Soares Chair will be :

- History and culture - 20th century and democratic transition in Portugal after April 25th, 1974
- Language: diachronic perspective in its variations and varieties in the Lusophone space
- Portuguese-language literature (colonial and postcolonial periods) and other artistic expressions

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