

Democratic Transition in Portugal and the Enlargement of the European Union

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Portugal has been a full member of the European Economic Community (EEC), today the European Union, since 1 January 1986, after the signature of the Accession Treaty, which I had the honour to undersign, on 12 June 1985.

Both Portugal and Spain – and the latter signed the Accession Treaty and joined the EEC on precisely the same date – became members of what was then known as the “Europe of the 12”. The two Iberian countries had managed to free themselves successfully in the mid-seventies of the dictatorships that had oppressed them for several decades, and with equal success had managed to establish democratic, pluralist regimes.

Portugal was a pioneer in the processes of democratic transition that occurred in the South of Europe after 1974 – first in Portugal, then in Greece and Spain – and which then began to take place in several Latin American countries from the start of the eighties. The changes that began in central and eastern Europe from 1989 on led, essentially, to the collapse of the communist regime, symbolised by the fall of the Berlin Wall. But these political, economic, social and cultural realities are quite distinct and vary considerably. The three southern European countries suffered the rule of right wing dictatorships (in the case of Greece it was military dictatorship), while the countries of central and eastern Europe suffered communist rule as laid down by the Soviet Union.

In the South of Europe, Portugal was the first of the three above-mentioned countries to introduce the process of democratic change. The revolution on 25 April 1974 brought about the collapse of the former regime, an old, retrograde dictatorship that took control on 28 May 1926, and which had become bogged down since the start of the sixties in a meaningless colonial war with no military solution. Greece was next, when the dictatorship of the Colonels came to an end in July 1974, but here the process of democratisation was quite different. Finally, the process of transition to democracy began in Spain with the death of the dictator, Franco, in November 1975. The transition there lasted for two years, and was highly influenced by the Portuguese experience. Apart from the proximity of Portugal and Spain, and the fact that their respective histories almost always developed in parallel, the conditions in which democratic change took place in the two countries were very different. In Portugal, there was a complete break with the past, that is there was a true revolution. In Spain, the transition was pacific, that is there was no true break with the past, or power vacuum. The transition in Portugal was abrupt, with the pure and simple elimination of the “Estado Novo”. The transition in Spain evolved over time and took place under the monarchy, since Franco's dictatorship ended up in a monarchy.

The political regimes of Salazar and Franco were, essentially two out-dated dictatorships. They were not exactly fascist or Nazi dictatorships, like those in Italy or Germany. They were above all forms of extreme conservatism, authoritarian regimes highly influenced by Catholicism and by a certain anti-progress provincialism. The two Iberian dictatorships, principally that of Salazar, never encouraged nor gained the support of major mass movements, characterised by solid social demagoguery and almost military discipline, as was the case in Mussolini's Italy and Hitler's Germany. Whatever the case, the out-dated dictatorships of Salazar and Franco were completely drained, and apparently condemned at the end of the Second World War. But both had been saved thanks to the complicity of the western democracies, particularly the British and North American. Out of convenience and political advantage they decided to close their eyes to the harsh realities of the Iberian Peninsula, viewing the world as divided into two opposing blocs at a time when the “cold war” was about to begin.

In 1945-46 the Portuguese democrats were deeply convinced that the regime, which under Salazar was known as the “Estado Novo”, was irremediably condemned and unable to survive. At this time, although still very young, I was already active politically in condemning the regime and I preached this conviction. But from 1947-48, with the start of the “cold war”, we began to have doubts, and from 1949 we realised clearly that the regimes of Salazar and Franco had been saved by the so-called western democracies. The two Iberian dictatorships survived thanks to insignificant and purely formal concessions which in no way altered the essence of both regimes. Out of fear of communism, the complicity of the western democratic countries became permanent, to the point of admitting Portugal as a founding member of NATO, which was supposed to be an organisation of democratic States for the defence of freedom. It was a strategic mistake – more than just that, a political crime – committed by the western democracies, and that can be neither forgotten nor forgiven.

Developments in Greece were very different. The process was more democratic, contradictory and complex. During the Second World War, Greece suffered first Italian and then German occupation. The process of liberation was similar to that of Yugoslavia and, immediately after, there was an attempt to set up a Communist state in Greece, as in other countries in eastern Europe. This was the attempt made by ELAS in 1944, followed a short time later by the British landing, and talks between Churchill and Stalin, the former claiming that Greece was part of the West and not part of eastern Europe. Following the Potsdam conference, civil war broke out, in which the Greek Communist leader, General Markos, was supported by Bulgaria and, above all, by Tito's Yugoslavia. The state of civil war was highly confused and, by 1949 it was hard to say whether Greece would fall to the side of the western democracies, or to the side of the Soviet empire. Greece was saved finally from being behind the so-called "iron curtain", to a great extent because of the breakdown in relations between Tito and Stalin in 1948. After this breakdown, Markos was no longer supported by the Yugoslavs and the conditions were created for a return to democracy. Between 1949 and 1967, the democratic regime in Greece worked badly and suffered from very complex problems. The "dictatorship of the colonels" only took over in 1967. The Greek political process was, therefore, entirely different to the Spanish and Portuguese processes. The Portuguese dictatorship lasted for the longest time, from 1926 to 1974. The Greek dictatorship was the shortest. In 1974, it was the Colonels themselves who, having embarked on a military venture in Cyprus, had to call Constantino Karamanlis in quickly, at the time exiled in France, to re-establish democracy in his country. This whole experience was different to those of the Iberian states.

However, the three processes do have some aspects in common, which are important for the experience currently being faced by several central and eastern European countries. Firstly, despite the dictatorships, there was always a market economy in Portugal, Spain and Greece. These three countries were always linked to the international economy: they were members of the OECD, they had relations with the World Bank and with the IMF. After a certain time Portugal even became part of EFTA. Another feature of the authoritarian dictatorships of western Europe that distinguishes them from the totalitarian dictatorships of eastern Europe is that although the former did not have fundamental political liberties, there were some civil liberties, that is, citizens submitted to these authoritarian dictatorships were not totally dependent on the State, nor were they the slaves of that State, and they had, for example, the right to travel abroad, to emigrate, even if they were politicians opposing the regime. I quote my own example: I was recognised as being decidedly in opposition to the regime and was, therefore, the target of discrimination – I could not compete for a position in the civil service and I was imprisoned on more than one occasion – but I was able to practise as a lawyer, earn a living and, although after a time my passport was withdrawn, there were other periods when I could travel abroad like everyone else.

In fact, in Greece as in Portugal and Spain, emigration was always a powerful social safety valve. The major migratory movements in the sixties and seventies, benefiting from the great surge in development in western Europe, are proof of this. The remittances sent back by emigrants to their families were, indeed, a true safety valve against social explosion, which would have been inevitable without this migration. But the three authoritarian dictatorships have a third feature in common: despite these political regimes, the three countries had effective, solid ties with the western military defence system and collective security. Portugal and Greece were members of NATO. Spain was not a member of the organisation but was part of a treaty for military cooperation with the USA, which compensated for the fact that the country was not militarily integrated in NATO.

There is another important historic distinction to be made. Portugal and Greece had suffered communist attempts to take over power at very different times – Greece between 1946 and 1949, Portugal in 1975. Spain had been vaccinated against communism during the civil war, between 1936 and 1939, and since then the Communists had not taken up the offensive. In fact, while the Portuguese and Greek communist parties were strongly Stalinist and were closely linked to the Soviet regime, the Spanish Communist Party, at the time led by Santiago Carrillo, in the aftermath of the civil war and due to the fact that Stalin had many of the Communists that took part in it eliminated, put up considerable resistance to Stalinism and became a Euro-communist party from the start, similar to the Italian Communist Party, although the experience of Euro-communism ended in failure. "Euro-communism" stood for criticism of totalitarian solutions, particularly from the end of the seventies, when the transitions to democracy had been made and dictatorship had disappeared from western Europe.

Of all these processes for transition to democracy, the Portuguese process was the most illustrative and the one from which the most positive inferences can be drawn for today's times. And indeed it did influence the transition in Spain. All Spaniards recognise that without the errors committed in Portugal in 1975, democratic transition in Spain would not have been so easy and so peaceful.

The exemplary nature of the Portuguese case is due, first of all, to the circumstance of Portugal being a colonial empire – it was the first to be established in Africa and in the East, in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, and the last to disappear. This is a unique and very interesting feature which should not be overlooked. In fact, the dictatorship of Marcelo Caetano, Salazar's successor, was brought down by a typically military revolution and it was the colonial war, already underway for 13 years, that gave weight to it. It was a hard war, and some of the military were being commissioned for a third, fourth or even fifth time to do service in Africa. They had no wish to die an inglorious death in a war with no military solution in sight. They had realised precisely this – there was no military solution – and since dictatorial power had proved incapable of finding a political solution to the colonial wars – because it refused any form of dialogue and would not agree to the principle of the right of colonised peoples to self-determination – the Portuguese military brought about the revolution with the main aim of ending the colonial war. To me it is obvious that it was this idea that motivated and explains the 25 April. Unfortunately, the end of the war and the acceptance of the principle of decolonisation occurred in Portugal 15 years too late, at least when comparing with the decolonisation conducted by France and Great Britain. It was clear, to those with a thorough understanding of what was happening in the world, that Portugal could not continue with her empire – as the followers of Salazar and later Marcelo Caetano wanted – after the French and British colonial empires had been completely broken up, in the significant decolonisation movement of the sixties.

Furthermore, Portugal suffered an attempt by the Communists to gain control. In 1974, when the dictatorship collapsed, there were only two underground political parties of any importance. One party that was solidly-based and well organised was the Portuguese Communist Party (PCP), founded in 1921, and that underground had survived the Fascist dictatorship well, and shown considerable courage (and it must be remembered that the Communists in Portugal, contrary to what happened in the eastern countries, were not the persecutors, but the persecuted, spent many years in prison and this gave them tremendous moral authority immediately following 25 April). The other party was the Socialist Party (PS), which was democratic and pluralist, and was the result of the change made to the “Acção Socialista Portuguesa” (ASP), founded in 1964. This was above all a movement of political staff and intellectuals that in view of the imminent fall of the dictatorship, became the Socialist Party. This came about in a congress held in Germany on 19 April 1973, with the support of the German Social Democratic Party (SPD).

In 1974, the Socialist Party had a development strategy for the country, that involved gradual decolonisation, controlled to avoid further wars, consolidation of a pluralist democracy and the accession of Portugal to the European Economic Community (EEC) – from the time of the first legislative elections held in freedom, the slogan of the PS was “Europe with us”. The Portuguese Communist Party had a strategy for gaining control that was the exact opposite of the PS. The PCP wanted to have what the Communists called “a revolution economy” (they had in mind the example of St. Petersburg in 1917) and aimed to move directly to a system of “people’s democracy” type. For the PCP, the ideal situation was to change Portugal into a kind of European Cuba. A scheme was designed, using the people-based economy model, the same used in the eastern European states, and decolonisation was to be used to get the USSR into Africa as a major power and subsequently to submit the new independent African countries to Soviet imperial rule.

This, in short, was the major contradiction between the two main left-wing parties in Portugal, but the country was not immediately aware of this. Immediately after 25 April, the military who were part of the Armed Forces Movement (Movimento das Forças Armadas – MFA) had a sketchy idea of what they should do. They wanted to put an end to the colonial wars, of course, but they did not know how to do this. Apart from decolonisation they had the vague idea of wanting democracy and development – it was politics based on the “three Ds”: decolonise, democratise and develop – but they did not know how to achieve this. They made an appeal to the political forces and set up a “provisional government”, that had neither consistency nor cohesion, in which every member did more or less as they pleased, striving for that which they felt most correct for the country. But it was quickly found that there was a dividing line, or water shed, between those who did indeed want to pursue pluralist democracy and a relatively controlled process of decolonisation, and those who aimed, as they put it themselves, at that “revolution economy” moving directly onto the next phase, that is, a Soviet inspired “people’s democracy”.

Interestingly, Europe hailed the Portuguese revolution with extraordinary enthusiasm. For the first time, after so many failures and false starts to democracy in the world, here was a country in Europe throwing off a dictatorship! Two months later, it was the turn of Greece when an end came to the “dictatorship of the Colonels”. A kind of euphoria reigned throughout Europe, although without any real understanding of what exactly was happening in Portugal. The Portuguese revolution came as a tremendous surprise to the western countries that had, until then, always collaborated with the dictatorship and that were convinced,

up to the eve of the *coup*, that the dictatorship was solidly in place. Consequently, they had in no way prepared for the post-dictatorship situation and retained or sent to Lisbon ambassadors who were sympathetic to the situation but who knew very little about what was going on. Besides, even for a Portuguese citizen the situation was difficult to understand. Civilians did not know 'who was who' among the military – they simply did not know who they were. For example, when I returned from exile in France two days after the revolution, I asked my party comrades what they thought and who could be trusted among the military. Interestingly, the names they gave me were, as I found out later, those who were closest to the Communists and who, at the time, seemed to be the most moderate, because this was the "word of command" of the PCP. The military were in the same position with regard to the civilians. They did not know who we were, they could not distinguish the Socialists from the Communists and, often, they got it wrong and "backed the wrong horse".

In the midst of all of this, the State had completely collapsed. Street demonstrations began on the day after the revolution,. "No more soldiers for the colonies", was the cry taken up by the militants of the extreme left. This came to mean the breakdown in aid from the mainland to the African colonies, when the military who were still there had begun to fraternise with the guerrilla fighters of the nationalist movements. These same movements had had no form of support from the moderate African countries, nor from the member states of NATO and allies of Portugal. Basically they were only supported and sustained by the Communist countries – USSR, GDR, Czechoslovakia, Bulgaria, Hungary, Poland and, in some cases, China. They could count only on the solidarity of the countries of the "eastern bloc", although they did have some contact with the Scandinavian countries. In this way, almost imperceptibly, the nationalist movements, even when they were not actually communist, were gradually subjected to the support of the international communist movement.

As for the Portuguese democrats, we had the solidarity of some European countries, particularly Britain (the Labour government was in power), Germany (the Social-Democrats were in power), Sweden (the same) and Italy, but apart from these, we had no effective support from any other country. France, for example, after the flight of General António de Spínola, on 11 March 1975, thought it would be best to give support to forces set up outside Portugal or an attempt at a pseudo-democratic, restoration type *coup d'état* which, had it taken place, would have been fatal for this country, because it would have offered "on a plate" the pretext to set up a communist regime in Portugal – and take the classic example of what happened in Cuba. In the United States of America, the reaction was one of torpor and almost total indifference to what was happening in Portugal. The USA. had other concerns, although it did appoint a special ambassador to Portugal, Frank Carlucci, who merits some acknowledgement. Ambassador Carlucci, an American of Italian descent, is highly intelligent and clearly understood the Portuguese political process and helped us immensely.

The fact is that at this time the North American Secretary of State, Henry Kissinger, had come up with the famous "vaccination theory", in which it was thought preferable to allow a communist regime to take hold in Portugal, because this would act as a true "vaccination" against communism for the other countries in Europe. Towards the end of 1974, when I was the Foreign Minister for the Provisional Government, I spoke to him for the first time in Washington. Kissinger said to me: "My dear friend, it would be best for you to stay here. We will arrange a job for you in an American University. If not, you will be wiped out in Portugal: either they will kill you or you will be put in prison again. Because, obviously, you are the Portuguese Kerenski. And Portugal is lost to the West". No matter how many times I told him that I did not think I was a Kerenski, I could not agree with this comparison, nor with that of Masarik or Allende, the Americans were certainly convinced that the game was already up because, at that time, the president of the Republic, the Prime Minister and many military chiefs were either communist or prepared to play the communist game. They did not count on the reaction of the people and this was what the Socialists were encouraging and guiding. They attached no importance to European solidarity. For this reason we had to defend ourselves and to act almost alone.

We managed to defend ourselves and to act almost alone, despite the military being used for the ends of the PCP and other extreme left political groups that at the time proliferated in Portugal, particularly after General Spínola had resigned from his position as President of the Republic (to which he had been appointed by the *Junta de Salvação Nacional*), after the events of 28 September 1974. Spínola decided to resign from his duties because he felt that all of the political levers escaped him and few of the military obeyed him. He took this decision without any prior consultation and without even notifying us. For example, as the leader of the PS, I was abroad and was taken completely by surprise by the news given to me in the midst of a Council of Europe meeting when I was answering questions. At a certain point in the meeting, a member asked me: "Do you think you are still a minister? There has been another outbreak of

revolution in the streets in Portugal". I answered him: "I may no longer be a minister, but now let me tell you what I think about the situation in Portugal". It was a very difficult situation. The resignation of General Spínola and after, on 11 March 1975, his flight abroad, gave tremendous added strength to the PCP and the systematic manipulation of the military and civilians that the Communists then began.

Immediately following the April Revolution, the archives of the political police (PIDE/DGS) were opened to whoever wished to consult them. When I returned to Portugal, one of the first things I said to General Spínola was "For God's sake, have the PIDE/DGS archives sealed! Do not let anyone use the political police archives". He did indeed appoint a General to deal with these archives, who in turn appointed some advisers, who were very pleasant people and highly capable, but the majority were carefully selected Communists, as we were able to prove later. The result was that the archives were certainly photocopied and used later. Many people, both civilian and military, were later the targets of bribery. Only in this way can you explain how people who were conservative and even known to be anti-communist changed from one day to the next to being enthusiastic members or loyal collaborators of the PCP. Of course, one year later, discretely or not so discretely, they jumped back to their original beliefs. In the eastern and central European countries something very similar is happening, and it will certainly be practical and necessary for the files of the former political police to be duly protected, so that they do not have a negative effect on future political development.

You may ask how it was in Portugal, faced by so many difficulties, that those endorsing democracy managed to win through. It was indeed something quite extraordinary! I suppose they gained ground in the streets and also the Socialists managed to hold on and not to leave the government or the political process before time, despite every sort of crisis and difficulty within the "provisional governments" that followed one after the other after the Revolution. On 1 May 1975, five days after the PS had won the elections to the Constituent Assembly, I was prevented personally from joining the group on the stage in the stadium where labour day was being commemorated, although I was the Secretary General of the PS and the Foreign Minister of the provisional government. This caused major repercussions, inside and outside the stadium, that almost put an end to the commemorations. But it was after this incident that the PS began a major recovery in the streets and among the overwhelming majority of the population. We, the Socialists, gained confidence and the cry taken up in the streets was: "Socialism yes, dictatorship no"! We did not want to return to a dictatorship, whether of the right or the (pseudo) left, and we were understood by the people. I should add that the Church too played a very important part. Discreetly, but effectively, the Church was present throughout this whole struggle, which involved a constant stream of street demonstrations that attracted more people each time. Almost every day, in Lisbon, Oporto and in the main towns and cities throughout the country, the people came into the street shouting slogans and protesting against the manipulation of power by the Communists. This caused a split among the military.

The first free elections for the Constituent Assembly were held on 25 April 1975, exactly one year after the Revolution. A few weeks later, in the month of June, following a Communist, left-wing attack on the newspaper *República*, sympathetic to the PS, the Socialists walked out of the IV Provisional Government and caused a serious political crisis. Other independent ministers and the People's Democratic Party (PPD), accompanied the Socialists some time later. This meant that the Communists had to form an emergency government – the V Provisional Government – made up exclusively of Communists and the companions they had picked up along the way. This crisis and the make up of the new government gave rise to serious confrontations during what became known as the "hot summer" of 1975, which marked the start of the counter-revolutionary movement. That is, we caused a division in the Armed Forces Movement and, from then on the Communists and their allies, who felt they were losing ground, recklessly threw themselves into an attempt at a final *coup* in a last bid to take-over power, an attempt that ended in failure. It was the *coup* on 25 November 1975, followed by a *counter-coup*, that eliminated the first and re-established the democratic process.

From that time on, the transition to democracy was peaceful. In fact, throughout the whole process, from the time of the revolution, there was some violence in the streets, but fortunately there were few deaths. After "25 November" a political compromise was established, expressed in the pacts agreed between the MFA and the parties, which, it must be said, were accepted by the Communists, with some tactical meaning. This compromise for a peaceful, gradual transition to democracy, meant that the elected Constituent Assembly could draw up and approve a new Constitution for the Republic. The text of the Constitution approved on 2 April 1976 is in itself a compromise in establishing a Revolution Council as an organ of power, the members of which were exclusively military, and in recognising a revolutionary legitimacy apart from a democratic political legitimacy expressed by the vote of the people. It was against this background that the first legislative elections were held for the new *Assembleia da*

República (Parliament) as well as the first elections for the Presidency of the Republic. After these elections the First Constitutional Government was formed, over which I had the honour to preside. It was a fully democratic government and, for the first time after the Revolution, included no Communists. It was a minority government, formed exclusively by Socialists, with a relative majority in the Assembly, although initially it benefited also from the parliamentary support of the Social-Democrats and the Christian-Democrats. This government was to be brought down in the Assembly 18 months after it had been sworn in, but the Portuguese democratic process had been stabilised effectively. Some years later, in 1982, the first revision was made to the Constitution of the Republic and the Revolution Council was abolished.

Only democratic legitimacy was politically valid. In 1989, the second constitutional revision eliminated from the text of the Constitution the principle of the irreversible nature of the nationalisations that had occurred during the revolutionary period. A market economy was fully re-established, although it had never ceased to function, which meant that when Portugal joined the EEC on 12 June 1985, considerable impulse existed to help develop the country.

The writer André Malraux wrote some words that are highly pertinent in referring to this troubled but decisive period and I would like very much to quote them here because they are absolutely correct: "For the first time in History, the Portuguese Socialists demonstrated that the *Mensheviks* are also capable of overcoming the *Bolsheviks*". With pride I can say that this historic fact took place in Portugal. We were able, therefore, to build a true pluralist democracy. This democracy was highly stable, there was a division of powers, and it was recognised that an open society with a market economy was essential, with a free, democratic union movement and the political rule of dialogue and social consultation adopted. In the First Constitutional Government, of which I was the prime minister, we managed immediately in 1977 to get the authorisation of the Assembly to ask for negotiations to begin for Portugal's accession to the European Economic Community. These negotiations continued for seven years, which was an extremely difficult time for the country. Our major argument to Portugal's future partners in the EEC were exactly the same as those used today by the Czechs, Hungarians and Poles: "Now that we have managed to install a democratic regime, you cannot leave us at the gates of the European Community and refuse us assistance! How do you expect us to be able to hold on to a stable democracy when we are confronted by a disastrous economic and financial situation?" In 1976 and 1977, we received a large foreign loan to help finance the daunting task of economic recovery. We felt it was fundamental for us to join the EEC to be able to consolidate democracy in Portugal. These were our major arguments in 1977, but we only achieved accession in 1985. Due to chance and political circumstance, I was once again Prime Minister and, therefore, had the honour of underwriting Portugal's Accession Treaty to the EEC.

This accession, apart from being highly relevant to consolidate the democratic regime, and for the progress and economic development of the country, also meant that Portugal returned to Europe, the necessary direction for a small democratic State that had loyally decolonised and renounced her empire. During the former regime, Portugal's economy was based entirely on colonial rule and, when the colonies were lost, the situation became chaotic, due mainly to the mass return of those Portuguese resident in Africa (around one million) and also to the radical changes brought about during the revolutionary period. A political leader of the old regime, ambassador Franco Nogueira, who was Foreign Minister under Salazar, claimed: "If, one day, Portugal loses her colonies, inevitably she will become a province of Spain. She will have no more reason to be an independent country". We managed to prove that this theory was wrong.

The independence of Portugal was never at stake. Quite the contrary, we reaffirmed, as never before, our national identity, raised the prestige of the country and reinforced her independence. But all of this had to be achieved, as it was, within the framework of Portugal's accession to the EEC, which occurred at the same time as that of Spain, and which facilitated and developed understanding and co-operation between the two Iberian countries. Indeed, relations between Portugal and Spain have never been so good and communication between the two countries never as intense. There are practically no borders any longer between the two countries, but the truth is that within the European framework to which we belong, there is no risk of Portugal putting her independence at risk. Today Spain is a democratic, decentralised country with several autonomous regions – and even has some complex national identity problems. Unlike Spain, Portugal is a Nation State, with considerable national unity and has no regional, linguistic, religious, ethnic or border problems.

However, democracy is not a static process. It requires dynamic, on-going construction which, to a certain extent, is never complete. Despite the enormous steps taken towards the development of the economy and society, in economic terms Portugal still has some grey areas, interrogations and uncertainties.

Restructuring and modernising industry, agriculture and services has not been completely or satisfactorily achieved, although there are some encouraging signs in certain important areas such as the growing internationalisation of several Portuguese companies and the consequent strength added to some national economic groups. Furthermore, the success of Portugal joining the “advance guard” of the single currency – the euro – is a highly positive sign and encouragement to proceed with the necessary and essential reforms required to modernise the country. It must be remembered that sooner or later, the time will come when the bill for the benefits received during the early years of European integration will have to be paid. And Portugal will have to be ready to face this new phase successfully. In addition, although Portugal was always – and will continue to be – a country with an undeniable “African vocation”, relations with Africa have not been sufficiently developed or consolidated. And Africa has evolved badly. We must recognise that in global terms, the whole of the African continent evolved disastrously after the decolonisation and independence movements. Europeans began taking a different view of Africa. The British, French, Belgians and Portuguese, as well as other Europeans living in Africa, thought that up to the Second World War they were there to stay and, therefore, made an effort to create institutions and organisations for effectively developing African territories – plantations, fields, mines, intensive agriculture, some industries, road networks, basic drainage, schools, hospitals, health centres, etc.. Whenever their presence in Africa became transitory and conditioned, their attitude changed and they began to see Africa only as a source of trade, and tried to gain maximum profits with the lowest investment – and the faster the better. To this end, the best approach was to support local tyrants and accept corruption as normal and regular.

This cynicism of Europeans towards Africa is one of the causes of the terrible misery and desolation experienced today by the whole African continent. The balance of the first years of African independence is highly negative, as René Dumont demonstrated, clearly and with great courage, in his study that today is a classic: *“L’Afrique noire est mal partie”*. The balance is similar for the Portuguese, although with fewer responsibilities, in view of the circumstances in which decolonisation took place – late, and coinciding with the turbulent process of transition to democracy in Portugal. Now, however, 10 years after the collapse of communism, the swing towards democracy, also visible on the African continent, can and should lead to a new approach between Africa and the West, which should have new foundations and prospects if both parties show sufficient political determination and clarity of purpose. It is essential for the African states to be truly independent and not just have the right to independence. To this end they must have a minimum basis for sustained development, both from the economic and social points of view. This, of course, is our historical responsibility as Europeans, which we cannot and should not reject. Will we be capable of this? The problem of the so-called Third World – of Africa and, to a certain extent, Asia, and from a different perspective, Latin America – is that of the absolute need to organise a new world economic order.

To a certain extent, the problems that several eastern and central European countries face today in consolidating their new democratic regimes – with all the inherent economic, social and political difficulties – are of the same origin. We must be fully aware of what this “other” Europe means for the European Union. There can be no stable European Union if it remains indifferent to the rest of Europe. The eastern and central European states are as “European”, so to speak, as the western European states. The contribution they have made to the idea of European civilisation and culture, to the values that are common to us, is as precious and original as the contribution made by the western European countries. It is absolutely fundamental to accept this claim. To join the EEC, the Portuguese argued that they had conquered democracy with their own hands and required European solidarity to consolidate it. We cannot now refuse to show absolute solidarity and to listen to those who in eastern and central Europe are telling us the same thing, although with even more consistent and dramatic arguments. It is clear that in the current state of development of the European Union, particularly with the implementation of Economic and Monetary Union and with the euro coming into force, we must strengthen political unity, develop and consolidate the coordination of European defence and security policies, correct the democratic deficit of the institutions of the Union – particularly increasing the power of the European Parliament – and give further encouragement to social cohesion policies. The impact of the supra-national European institutions depends on their having more responsibility and subjecting them to wider basic democratic scrutiny. The coordination and development of common policies in areas as important as justice and public administration and reinforcing university, scientific and cultural cooperation, are also indispensable for Europe to become an enormous open space underlain by solidarity. And it is for all of these reasons that I consider it urgent to make a global revision of the treaties that govern the European Union, so as to give them the instruments required to make them work effectively, without which enlargement to bring in the new candidate countries could become a serious risk.

But the problem of Europe today requires, in my opinion, creating an increasingly wider-reaching unit. The enlargement of the European Union is essential. If this does not happen, we may continue to witness the serious phenomena of "Balkanisation" within the space that the geo-strategists call "Eurasia", as well as an increase in aggressive nationalism that history has shown always to be so contagious and dangerous for western Europe. We cannot overlook that the world today, in the process of accelerated globalisation, is almost completely deregulated and that the fall of communism represented, for many, the opening of a true "Pandora's box". As that serene source of inspiration, Greek mythology, has taught us, the goddess Pandora had been given a box by Zeus and distracted or unwisely she disobeyed his instructions and opened it releasing all the woes of the world. And it is this that we are witnessing today in Russia, the Balkans and the Caucasus, for example. All the woes of the world seem to have been let loose, just when we thought that the end of communism and the "eastern bloc", ruled by the former USSR, would bring the euphoria of freedom and regained democracy. But uncontrollable problems, some even unsuspected, are now emerging and developing a little everywhere. And the fact that the USA has become the sole military super-power globally, with a manifest vocation for imposing her determination to "police the world", opens up new crucial questions on building a "new international order", bearing in mind new political, economic and strategic instabilities throughout the world.

In view of these deep-reaching crises and instabilities that are a feature of the increasingly globalised world in which we live, solidarity, both nationally and internationally, must prevail over egoism – and ideas on cooperation and the emancipation of democratic socialism or social-democracy must prevail over unchecked competition and capitalism envisaged by ultra-liberalism. Democratic socialism or social-democracy has been since the nineteenth century, and particularly throughout the twentieth century, the major emancipating movement. In a gradual and reformist way, it has brought to many people throughout the world more social justice and more equality of opportunity, always with respect for freedom and human rights, within the context of open societies and market economies, in which the State has a role to play as the regulator and controller in helping the less fortunate.

We all know today that it is not the famous "invisible hand" that Adam Smith spoke of, that will resolve the dramatic situation in which so many African, Asian and Latin American peoples live, nor will it correct the pockets of poverty and marginalisation found in so many of the developed countries in the western world. The serious situation in Russia and in other countries of eastern Europe proves that the uncontrolled capitalism that has taken over there, does not resolve the enormous social problems faced by these countries and may even give rise to new and dangerous disturbances. Social problems cannot be resolved through the simple mechanisms of a market economy. Policies for solidarity and social intervention are also indispensable, and they must of course respect freedom of participation for citizens and fundamental human rights.

In many parts of our world, the basic problems facing millions of individuals continues to be the problem of survival, as Willy Brandt emphasised 20 years ago in his famous "North / South Report". In recent decades we have seen the formation of three centres for economic, scientific and technological development: the United States of America (associated with Canada and Mexico within NAFTA); Japan (and a group of Associated Asian countries); and the European Union. But apart from these three major blocs of developed countries that benefit from scientific and technological progress, two thirds of humanity continues to suffer the horrendous problems of development and survival. Many millions of people do not have sufficient food and live in misery. They live in ignorance and are the victims of disease and a very low average life expectancy. Added to this is a demographic explosion that is far out of control and increasing pollution problems that affect not only these countries but the whole planet. Mankind as a whole is being seriously affected.

It is fundamental and urgent to impose a certain degree of rationality on the development of the so-called "global village" and to develop new forms of cooperation and solidarity among the peoples of the five continents. The countries that are part of the three more developed world centres have increasing responsibilities. The financial institutions and international organisations which they control have an essential role to play in the context of globalisation underway, in trying to avoid even greater gaps between countries and peoples, gaps that in time could have serious consequences for us all, without exception. It is no longer possible to imagine that the "first world" – the world of the richest and most developed countries – can continue to ignore, with impunity, the under-development and suffering of "other worlds" that on their periphery are so pitifully limited to survival. The selfish temptation of our own well-being and indifference to the ills of others is an extremely dangerous attitude for humanity as a whole. Under-development is ripe terrain for all forms of extremism, from the most exacerbated nationalism to religious and cult fundamentalism, including xenophobia and racism.

Intrinsic rationality and the values underlying ethical idealism based on freedom, tolerance and dialogue among individuals, peoples and civilisations must be revived and spread widely. It is this idealism that must be recovered and defended by this “common home” we call the European Union. The great “European ideals” which are the grounds for the development of the so-called “western civilisation”, can only be those of rational humanism, freedom, solidarity and equality of opportunity, recognising difference and respect for others.

Freedom usually brings about “miracles”, even when they are least expected. The recent history of democracy in Portugal is an example of this. May it bear fruit!