

**27th European Environment and Sustainable Advisory Councils
Annual Meeting
Sala “O Século”, 18 de Setembro de 2019**

Nota de intervenção

Mr. Chairman of the European Environment and Sustainable Development Advisory Councils, Distinguished Members of the EEAC, Dear Mr Filipe Duarte Santos, President of CNADS,
Ladies and Gentleman.

It is a pleasure to welcome you here in these historical room of the Ministry of Environment and Energy Transition. Independently of the recognized autonomy of CNADS, we are always pleased to support their activities, like today with this organization of the 27th EEAC Annual Conference, especially this session about “Cooperation and Partnership for Sustainable Development”. We all know how 2030 Agenda is on the core of our activities nowadays.

As Mr. Antonio Guterres, Secretary General of UN, writes on the first Global Sustainable Development Report, “Our world as we know it, and the future we want, are at risk. Despite considerable efforts these past four years, we are not on track to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals by 2030”.

This report presents “an objective assessment of where we are falling short and what needs to be done”. The key message is the need of designing “a way that would appropriately take into account the interlinkages across all Goals and the holistic character of the 2030 Agenda”. The 2030 Agenda is more than the sum of measurable Goals, targets, and indicators. We should seek for “not an incremental change but a real transformation”. As the title explicitly says “The future is now”.

In a total of 162 countries, Portugal is placed on the 26th place of the most sustainable country ranking, with 76,4 points in a total of 100. Taking as reference the 17 SDGs, Portugal is considered as having a better performance on the 7 (energy), 3 (health), 8(decent work and economic growth) and the 11(cities and sustainable communities).

In Portugal, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs is coordinating the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and its 17 SDGs, with the support of the Ministry of Planning and Infrastructures. Of course that the success of this mission is only possible with the common effort and the interaction of all the other Ministries and the National

Statistical Institute, responsible for monitoring the fulfilment of each of the SDGs and the defined goals.

To better understand a global Agenda like this one, we should begin by analysing how to improve our own action. The mission of the Ministry of Environment and Energy Transition is to design, lead, implement and evaluate the policies in so much domains as the Environment, Territory management, Cities, Urban and Metropolitan transportation, Sustainable Mobility, Climate Change, Nature Conservation and Biodiversity, energy and Geology.

The Ministry's Strategy is to deal with all these policies in a perspective of Sustainable Development and guaranteeing a territorial and social cohesion, based on three pillars: to promote the circularity of our economy, to value the Territory and to achieve the carbon neutrality.

Designing and implementing public policies on environment is, by its own nature, an intersectorial and cross cutting issue. To aim to a successful result, Environment Policy must be built upon a solid dialogue with all potential partners, allowing a permanent self-evaluation and optimizing the correct implementation for the different actions.

This is a perfect occasion to have a broad discussion about the immense challenges that we are facing. As we should already know from individual and common experiences, these challenges must be faced on a common approach by all, leading the world towards a sustainable and equitable future, as underlined by the 2030 agenda.

The success of 2030 Agenda, as for Environment Policies, depend on each one capacity, but also, on the common capacity of all to know the best way to interact and to internalize all the externalities.

The evolution of World Societies for Globalization is reinforcing the strategies to have all aboard for common actions. We should commit to making the fundamental changes to a more sustainable patterns of production and consumption, essential for the success of a Global Sustainability Development.

In 2016, and in line with the ambition of the Paris Agreement, the Portuguese government assumed the compromise of reaching a carbon-neutral economy until 2050. We were in the front line of this type of committing, and we continue to do so, with the approval, last June, of the Portuguese roadmap for Carbon Neutrality, as we have also our National Energy and Climate Plan for 2030.

Portugal has built a strong experience and achieved proven results in its climate and energy policies and has been a European pioneer in adopting renewables, being, nowadays a leader in these fields.

Furthermore, in March 2018, renewable energy delivered more than 100% of Portugal's electricity consumption for the first time and more recently, this January, we achieved a new record. Wind generation delivered 63% of electricity consumption.

Decarbonisation is also an opportunity for new and innovative financing mechanisms. In Portugal, since 2017, we count with a new financial instrument: The Environmental Fund. This new instrument supports environmental policies for the pursuit of Sustainable Development Objectives, contributing to the achievement of national and international objectives and commitments, in particular those related to climate change, water resources, waste and nature conservation and biodiversity.

During COP22 Portugal has agreed with the global effort, and has committed itself with 10 million euros for climate endeavor by 2020. In 2018, the Environmental Fund financed international cooperation projects in a total amount of 2 million and nine hundred thousand euros. Actually, we have projects financed by this instrument in Cape-Vert, Mozambique, East Timor, Guinea-Bissau, Sao Tome and Principe, Angola and Tunisia.

All the 17 SDGs are equally important, and looking to our Ministry's mission they are all, more or less, in our agenda. And, if we can make an immediately connection to SDGs 6, 7, 9, 11, 12, 13, 14 and 15, let me make a special underlining to SDG 17.

I think that 2030 Agenda is a milestone specially by the assumption of having a SDG 17 at a same path as all the other 16 SDGs. And, with the add value that SDG 17 defines the designing of the implementation of the Agenda itself, and influences the way to act on the different SDGs, stating that this is only possible by using partnerships.

Let me finish this introductory remarks by reaffirming that the Agenda 2030 success depends on everyone engagement.

We all have to be able to rationalize anyone's thinking and goals, as if they were ours.

Innovation is strategic in a variety of dimensions, but the most sustainable one is the innovation of the minds.

Only with a change on behaviours we can guarantee the success of 2030 Agenda, which can only be achievable if everyone thinks and acts with good sense.

Thank you.