

Dear Luis, obrigada

Dear candidates,

Dear friends,

It is so good to be with you in Porto tonight.

Dear Luis, let me start by congratulating you once again on your electoral success. With you and your government, Portugal is in very good hands. And with our candidates here tonight, Europe will also be in very good hands!

Dear friends, Portugal has just celebrated an important anniversary. 50 years ago, a wind of change took through the streets of Lisbon. It was a powerful yet peaceful wind which brought down Europe's last dictatorship.

The Carnation revolution brought hope and changed Portugal forever. The Portuguese people were yearning for freedom. You were yearning for democracy. And you finally embraced it! And you embraced your European destiny, too.

And I know that your party, the PSD played an essential role. You made sure that Portugal stayed the course of democracy. You made sure that Portugal welcomed freedom. And you made sure that Portugal found peace.

This is thanks to the Portuguese people, thanks to the PSD, and you can be very proud of it!

But today, dear friends, those core values are at stake again.

Take Peace. Look at Ukraine.

Ukraine is fighting for freedom and peace. And we are supporting Ukraine. Ukraine is fighting on their soil and for our security.

We can never match the sacrifice of the Ukrainian people. But we can and what we will do is stand by their side for as long as it takes. Until Ukraine has peace at home again.

Take democracy. Today, our democracy is under attack not only from the outside but also from inside Europe.

Whether it is the extremists from the far left or from the far right.

Whether it is the AfD in Germany, or the Rassemblement National in France, whether it is Confederatia in Poland or Chega here in Portugal.

The names may be different but the goal is the same. They despise our values and they want to weaken our Europe.

But we, PSD, CDS-PP and EPP, will never let that happen. We must make these European elections a resounding victory for democracy.

My friends, democracy is indeed the hallmark of our European Union. And so is prosperity.

And I want to take the opportunity to commend your new government. Your energy is impressive. Be it on housing and health care. Or be it on the implementation of NextGeneration EU.

Dear Luis Montenegro, you can already be proud of the excellent start that your government has made.

Dear friends, Europe is the promise that anyone can make a living, a good living, out of hard work. And no one out there is working harder than our farmers. From the vineyards of the Douro Valley just outside Porto to the olive tree groves of Alentejo. Farmers work hard to bring healthy food on our table. And at this point I want to pay respect to our farmers and thank for their hard work.

I have spoken to many of them during my campaign all over Europe. I know about the challenges they face. Their costs for seeds, fertilizer and energy rise from year to year. But the prices they receive for milk, meat and grain are volatile.

And the big players in the food chain are putting pressure on them.

My friends, it cannot be right that farmers have to sell their food below production-cost. That is neither acceptable nor is it sustainable. If we want farmers to be the best care-takers of nature, their hard work must pay off!

Dear friends, the exact same principle must apply to our fishermen - and women. Coastal communities may be at the edge of our countries, but they are an essential part of our communities. Fisheries is a craft and a skill, a vocation and a profession and they are passed down through generations. And this must continue to be so!

Future generations must be able to harvest healthy oceans and make a living out of it. And it is up to Europe to enable this. This is why in the next mandate I will task a full-time commissioner for fisheries, to ensure that fisheries remains a sustainable living for generations.

Dear friends, Europe is also the promise that anyone can make a good living out of talent. And no one has more talent than our small and medium-size businesses. There are over one million of them here in Portugal. We must make life easier for them. And we need to trust them. This means simpler procedures, faster decisions and less bureaucracy,

That's why I want to abolish 25% of reporting obligations for companies at the European level.

The same goes for European funds.

The EU budget is a fantastic source of support for our businesses. But during my campaign, small business owners have told me how difficult it can be to access the funds.

This is something I want to work on in my second mandate. And I know that you are also looking into this. So let's make sure that our companies can focus on what they are really good at: innovation and creating good jobs.

Dear friends, Let me end by saying a few words about the important issue of migration. Migration is a European challenge which requires a European solution. We delivered on the Pact on Migration and Asylum. With this pact, we are strengthening Europe's external borders. We are ensuring faster and simpler procedures. But that alone is not enough.

Smugglers and traffickers are making billions. They lie to migrants, they rob them and they put them on unseaworthy rubber boats. It is high time we take tougher action against this organised crime.

To put it bluntly: We have fulfilled our international obligations in the past, we do it today and we will do it in the future. But it is us, Europeans, who decide who comes to Europe and under what circumstances. And not the smugglers and traffickers!

Dear friends, These last five years have been incredibly challenging. But we have learned one thing: if we stand together, if we are united, we can move mountains!

Think of the pandemic.

Nobody expected Europe to be able to provide vaccines. Together we did it.

Nobody expected Europe to create the 800 bn recovery fund NextGenEU. Together we did it.

Nobody expected Europe to withstand Putin's blackmail and to overcome a massive energy crisis. Together we did it.

Dear friends, let's show the power of our unity. The power to build a solid majority for a strong Europe.

We have three more days until the elections.

Three more days to get out the vote.

And a victory for Europe.

Let's stand up for prosperity,

Let's stand up for security

Let's stand up for democracy.

And above all, my friends,
let's stand up for Europe.

Viva Portugal ! Viva a Europa!