



ASSEMBLEIA DA REPÚBLICA

The President

To His/Her Excellency
The President,

Dear Colleague,

On the 1st of January 2021, Portugal will celebrate both its 35th anniversary year of membership in the European Union (EU) and the first day holding its fourth Presidency of the Council of the EU.

As the world takes stock of the wide impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, Europe must provide a structured and supportive path forward, while addressing preexisting priorities and challenges.

Extraordinary times require extraordinary actions and tools. We, in the EU, must lead the way, with urgency and purpose, by doing more and doing better for the sake of both our citizens and of those who have chosen the EU to live, study and work.

Democratic and plural debates between legislators are now needed more than ever. This is the reason why parliamentarians all over the EU have decided to resort to new technologies in order to continue meeting and debating the current situation and possible ways forward.

Therefore, together with my colleagues from Germany and Slovenia, the current Trio of Presidencies has set forth a bold agenda, focused on a swift, resilient and cohesive recovery from the crisis, while also promoting debate on a more green, digital, global and socially inclusive Europe.

Over the next months, the *Assembleia da República* will host COSAC and, together with the European Parliament, will co-chair the Interparliamentary Conference for the Common Foreign and Security Policy and the Common Security and Defence Policy, the Conference on Stability, Economic Coordination and Governance in the European Union, and the Joint Parliamentary Scrutiny Group on Europol.

The Portuguese Parliament will also invite Your Excellency to join to four additional Conferences: a Conference related to COVID-19: impact on Health and Social Dimension, a Conference on the EU's Biodiversity Strategy for 2030: bringing nature back to our lives, a Conference on Rural Development and a Conference on the role of parliaments in deepening the EU-Africa relationship.

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Our focus will be fivefold: a resilient Europe, a social Europe, a green Europe, a digital Europe, and a global Europe. Furthermore, issues related to overcome COVID-19 crisis and strengthen EU and Member-States cooperation, asylum and migration, democracy and the future of Europe, as well as the Africa-EU partnership will also have a relevant focus on our agenda.

Please find herewith the provisional calendar of planned meetings and conferences to be held during the 1st semester of 2021.

We hope to welcome in Lisbon as many delegations as possible from EU national parliaments and the European Parliament. This, however, depends on the evolution of the pandemic across Europe. If needed, meetings will be held remotely, through videoconference, or in a hybrid setting, with some delegations participating from Lisbon.

No matter the format, we are fully committed with furthering interparliamentary cooperation, since dialogue is key in finding common solutions to common problems. We hope that, by providing a platform for Parliaments and their representatives to exchange views and ideas on these pressing issues, the long-term resilience of our shared values and future will be further improved.

I look forward to welcoming in Lisbon the Delegations of the Parliament to which Your Excellency presides. I wish them fruitful discussions during the upcoming semester.

With the assurances of my highest consideration,



Eduardo Ferro Rodrigues

President of the Assembleia da República

São Bento Palace, 4 December 2020

