

## Address given by Mário Soares (Lisbon, 12 June 1985)

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[Mário Soares] Distinguished plenipotentiaries, ladies and gentlemen.

In these 400-year-old cloisters Portugal's past and future are united today. By performing here the historic ceremony of the signature of the Treaty on the Accession of Portugal to the European Communities, we wanted to emphasise the importance of being true to our roots and traditions as an essential condition for building our future.

A symbol of the culture of Portugal, and hence of Europe, a mark of an adventure that was a dream and a reality that brought new worlds to the world, this monument, a world heritage site, is a fine expression of Portuguese skill and is an unparalleled reference to its history over many centuries. From here, then, now that the imperial cycle is ended, we will embark symbolically on a new voyage that will bring Portugal back into the context of European unity, taking a full part in its dynamism and progress.

I would like to believe that the act that you have just witnessed can, without exaggeration, be regarded as one of the most significant moments in contemporary Portuguese history and, at the same time, as a decisive step for the self-confidence of the Europe of the Communities, the broadening of its potential and also an opening to the outside world.

For Portugal, joining the EEC is a fundamental option for a progressive and modern future. But let us not think that it is an easy option. It demands a lot of the Portuguese, while at the same time opening up ample prospects for development. Furthermore, it is the natural consequence of the advance of democracy in Portuguese society, which began with the Carnation Revolution of 25 April 1974, and the ensuing decolonisation — which took place 20 years after the other European countries — and, despite the perhaps inevitable traumas and digressions, allows us today to maintain fraternal and fruitful relations with the African countries that have Portuguese as an official language, all of which are incidentally members of the Lomé Convention.

Our main task from now on will be to gradually close the gap that still divides us from the developed countries of Europe, creating genuinely European standards of living and wellbeing for the Portuguese. In any case, there is no other way. We need to keep to the path that we have trodden for the past two years, implement a rigorous and genuine financial policy, fight for political stability as an essential element of economic recovery and modernisation, and consolidate the democratic institutions, notably through the practice of national solidarity, social consultation and dialogue.

The vast majority of the Portuguese people are well aware of what democracy has meant in terms of citizenship and the dignity of work, as well as material achievements. They know that a democratic way of life at local, regional and national level represents a good of inestimable value that must be preserved and developed for the benefit of the population. In Portugal, as in Spain, pluralist democracy was an essential precondition for European integration. But now that this has been achieved, it definitively establishes the democratic institutional framework of the two countries in the peninsula that in the recent past have experienced such disastrous dictatorial adventures.

It is now the turn of the younger generations, for whom exciting prospects for personal fulfilment and progress are opening up. As the principal beneficiaries of European integration, the young will now have to learn to prepare for the major national challenge of development and modernisation, so that Portugal becomes not only a land of freedom, civic coexistence and tolerance, but also an area of prosperity, scientific and technological development, and social justice.

I am honoured to have been the person who, on behalf of the Government of the Republic, signed the application for the accession of Portugal to the EEC, in March 1977. Eight years later, at the conclusion of the negotiation process, which was long and tough, but which in the end, as everyone acknowledges, was successful for Portugal, I now have the historic opportunity to sign the Treaty of Accession. We did it! Others' names are associated with this effort which was common to the successive constitutional

governments and which required great persistence. I would like here to name Mr Sá Carneiro, Mr Amaro da Costa and Mr Mota Pinto, to mention only those who have left us. But it would be unjust to forget, at this time, the name of Ramalho Eanes who, as President of the Republic and during his two periods in office, always remained loyal to the great national project of European integration.

The last two years of the negotiations were particularly tough and intense. I should also pay tribute to the contribution of Ministers Ernâni Lopes and Jaime Gama and the ministerial teams they led, which worked with unflagging dedication and uncommon efficiency. The Committee for European Integration and its Chairman, António Marta, also deserve a word of praise for their extremely hard work and the exemplary spirit of service that they displayed.

I would also like to highlight the positive contribution made to the negotiations by the regional governments of the Azores and Madeira. In the eight centuries of its history, Portugal has experienced similar periods to the present day, in which an inescapable national challenge has galvanised the nation. And this is the case again today; there are no more new worlds to discover, but there are people and living standards to transform and improve, and new technologies to develop. However, the old guard remains wrapped up in the same systematic negative attitude towards the new, towards adventure and the spirit of risk.

I would like my words to be heard by the working people of Portugal, for whom there are new prospects and potential for progress and social justice. The future of Portugal is in the hands of farmers, labourers, scientists, men of letters, business people, executives, intellectuals, engineers, artists and especially young people — in other words, all the Portuguese, men and women — and from now on there will be no shortage of encouragement or of the aid needed to secure that future. We are no longer isolated. European solidarity will not let us down, as was demonstrated here today with the presence of qualified representatives of all the Member States of the Community of Twelve. But it will be through work, organisation and our ability to adapt to new competitive situations that the Portuguese people will have to find the strength needed to modernise production structures and, even more importantly, to make the necessary changes in mindset that António Sérgio was speaking of.

Let us be under no illusions, the coming years will require an enormous collective effort to ensure that Portugal integrates properly into the Community area. We need political stability and social peace to be able to work seriously and derive the full benefits from our work. We cannot afford the luxury of being divided on incidental issues. We will have to learn to focus on the essential, not to dissipate our efforts in contradictory action, or ignore the worthy values and people that we do in fact have. We will all be needed. But if we are to make this necessarily collective effort profitable and effective, we will have to maintain our stability and security, two indispensable values of democratic life. We have close contacts at all levels with the Europe of Twelve. The value of experience cannot legitimately be ignored here.

However, not only will Portugal benefit from European integration, but it will also give much of itself; it will contribute its ancient culture and the skill of its people to European integration, in which our emigrants into Europe have been playing an extremely valuable part for many years; a Europe in which they will now become full citizens.

For us, the Europe of the Communities will not be merely a common market in goods and services; we see it as an area of freedom, respect for human rights and humanity, and also an independent and cohesive political entity that will have the task of taking moderating action on the international stage in favour of peace. The European Community's pre-existing vocation for North-South dialogue will now be substantially reinforced with the entry of Portugal and Spain, countries whose histories are fashioned from contact with peoples and civilisations of other continents, contributing so much to the dissemination of European values in the world, and whose languages are today spoken by nearly 400 million human beings.

Portugal, which attaches special importance to the fraternal bonds with African Portuguese-speaking countries and with Brazil, is convinced that its entry into the EEC will help to create a new dynamism in European Community cooperation with Africa and Latin America. We will also remain true to our Atlantic vocation, since this Treaty recognises our rights over a wide area of this ocean that we have known so

intimately for centuries and whose enormous potential we must urgently learn to exploit.

Ladies and gentlemen.

Allow me to say a final word to the ten countries that are receiving us, for the President-in-Office of the Council, Bettino Craxi, for Minister Andreotti and for the President of the Commission, Jacques Delors. And I would also like to take this solemn opportunity to salute Spain, our sister country, represented here by President Felipe González and other dear friends, on the day on which it embarks — with us — upon a new and decisive phase of its long and immensely rich history. Spain and Portugal have almost always followed parallel destinies, which at times crossed fleetingly, but much more often we have been ignorant of or ignored one another. The fact that we are joining the EEC at the same time means that a new phase of extended bilateral cooperation opens up to us, based on mutual respect, on equal terms, with a solidarity of interests and mutual advantages. That is the political will of both States, which — I cannot stress enough — they believe will be facilitated by their simultaneous entry into the European Community.

To all of you here, especially our foreign guests, I reiterate the thanks of the Portuguese Government for honouring us with your presence and I make a final wish: that this day shall mark a date in the history of the European Community of good omen for the future of Europe, a future characterised by solidarity and unity, bringing progress and social justice to the poor of the Communities and be a factor for peace and stability in today's troubled world. Thank you very much.

[Journalist] That was Mário Soares speaking at the close of the ceremony for the signing of the Treaty on the Accession of Portugal to the European Communities.