

Introductory statement for EPF online conversation

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It is a great pleasure to see so many familiar faces and welcome you all as host to this very special online conversation about the Estoril Political Forum. As most of you will be aware, this was the originally planned week for EPF 2020, which had to be rescheduled to October due to the ongoing global crisis associated with COVID-19.

In March, the Institute for Political Studies – in line with all of the Catholic University of Portugal – had to quickly make a temporary transition to online activities due to the restrictions enacted by public health authorities. This transition was remarkably successful and included also our research events, which have been taking place on a regular weekly basis with very high and encouraging levels of participation (as I'm glad to see is the case also with this afternoon's session).

We thought it would be appropriate to mark the week where EPF had initially been scheduled with an online session about the past, present and future of our long-running International Meeting in Political Studies (now going into its 28th edition). More importantly, this is also an opportunity for us to meet again – even if not (yet) in person. For this I would like to thank all of those present and particularly our Chair for this session – and EPF Director - Rita Seabra Brito and our two very distinguished Speakers: Dr. Marc Plattner, who leads our International Advisory Board and is a long-time friend of IEP-UCP and EPF, and the Director of our Institute, Professor João Carlos Espada.