

**Estoril Political Forum 2020**  
**28th International Annual Meeting in Political Studies**

*New Authoritarian Challenges*

*To Liberal Democracy*

Online edition , 19-22 October 2020

Opening Address João Carlos Espada

**Senhor Presidente da República, Excelência,**

**Senhora Reitora da Universidade Católica Portuguesa,**

**Senhores Embaixadores, Distintos Convidados, Senhoras e Senhores, Caros Amigos,**

Gostaria de começar por agradecer a presença de todos nesta 28ª edição do Estoril Political Forum. Um agradecimento muito especial a S.Exa. o Presidente da República — que nos dá a honra e o privilégio de nos conceder o seu Alto Patrocínio e de presidir a esta Sessão de Abertura.

Pedia agora a vossa compreensão para usar a língua inglesa, de forma a comunicar directamente com os nossos convidados estrangeiros.

**Now to our English-speaking participants and friends:**

**Ladies and Gentlemen,**

Welcome to the 28th International Annual Meeting in Political Studies, now also called the “Estoril Political Forum.” We are delighted to let you know that you are participating at Portugal’s largest annual meeting in Political Studies – and, yes, indeed, almost twenty-eight years have now passed since we had our first meeting, in the Arrábida Convent, in September 1993.

If there has been a defining permanent feature of our meetings since 1993, this has certainly been our strong commitment to liberal democracy, the rule of law, free-speech, free-trade and a market economy — the common ground of the Atlantic Alliance. This common ground, incidentally, is also one of the distinctive features of the hotel where we used to convene: the Estoril Palace Hotel was the hotel of the Anglo-American allies during the second world war.

This year we are having our first online event. We all are sorry to miss the gentlemanly in person conviviality of the Estoril Palace Hotel. But we are delighted

and honoured to have His Excellency the President of the Republic of Portugal, Professor Marcelo Rebelo de Sousa, presiding at this Opening Session — who will very soon give us the privilege of addressing us all directly.

Just before the concluding address from the President, we will have the address from the Rector of the Catholic University of Portugal, Professor Isabel Capeloa Gil, who is also the President of the International Federation of Catholic Universities.

Without further ado, it is now my privilege to give the virtual floor to Ms. Joana Pinto Balsemão, who will speak on behalf of the Mayor of Cascais — and I am delighted to recall that the local council of Cascais has been kindly supporting us for more than 10 years.

Dear Ms Joana Balsemão, the virtual floor is yours. Thank you.