

Opening Address
H.E. Mr. Carlos Martins
State Secretary of Environment
Portugal

- YOUR EXCELLENCY MINISTER OF WATER RESOURCES OF PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA, MR. E JINGPING,
- YOUR EXCELLENCY VICE MINISTER OF WATER RESOURCES, MR. TIAN XUEBIN,
- YOUR EXCELLENCY VICE-PRESIDENT OF EUROPEAN UNION'S DELEGATION TO CHINA, MR. CHRIS WOOD,
- YOUR EXCELLENCY MINISTER FOR EXTERNAL TRADE AND DEVELOPMENT OF FINLAND, MRS. ANNE-MARI VIROLAINEN,
- YOUR EXCELLENCY AMBASSADOR OF SWEDEN IN BEIJING, MRS. ANNA LINDSTEDT,
- YOUR EXCELLENCY AMBASSADOR OF NETHERLANDS IN BEIJING, MR. ED KRONENBURG,
- YOUR EXCELLENCY DEPUTY AMBASSADOR OF FRANCE IN BEIJING, MR. OLIVIER RICHARD,

**IT IS FOR ME A GREAT PLEASURE TO BE HERE TODAY AT THIS SIXTH HIGH-LEVEL DIALOGUE
CONFERENCE OF THE CHINA EUROPE WATER PLATFORM.**

SIX YEARS AFTER ITS BEGINNING, WE CAN BE PROUD OF THE SUCCESS IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THIS PARTNERSHIP, NAMELY ON ITS HIGH LEVEL DIALOGUE COMPONENT, AS WELL AS THROUGH RELEVANT ADVANCES IN THE FIELD OF RESEARCH AND INNOVATION, WITH SUBSTANTIAL IMPROVEMENTS IN BUSINESS COOPERATION.

TO PROCEED WITH WATER RESOURCES SUSTAINABLE MANAGEMENT IS AN ENDEAVOUR FOR CHINA AS IT IS FOR EUROPE AND IT IS AN ENDEAVOUR THAT DESERVES TO BE PURSUED WITH A SENSE OF URGENCY.....

THEREFORE, TO SPEAK ABOUT THE ROLE OF WATER IN THE WORLD IN 2018 IS AN URGENCY AT A GLOBAL SCALE.

WE NEED TO DEEPEN THE DEBATE ON WATER ISSUES AT INTERNATIONAL LEVEL AND TO CONNECT IT WITH OTHER RELEVANT INTERNATIONAL DEBATES, PARTICULARLY THE ONES ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PARIS AGREEMENT.

ON THE OTHER HAND, ALSO THROUGH SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS, WE ARE COMMITTED TO REACH UNTIL 2030.....

- **UNIVERSAL AND EQUITATIVE ACCESS TO WATER AND SANITATION SERVICES,**
- **TO IMPROVE WATER QUALITY AND TO RAISE EFFICIENCY IN ITS USE,**
- **TO IMPLEMENT INTEGRATED WATER RESOURCES, INCLUDING THE REINFORCEMENT OF TRANSBOUNDARY COOPERATION AND ALSO,**
- **TO PROTECT AND RESTORE, UNTIL 2020, WATER-RELATED ECOSYSTEMS.**

IN THIS FIELD PORTUGAL HAS MADE A HUGE INVESTMENT IN THE LAST QUARTER OF THE CENTURY, HAVING TODAY A REMARKABLE SITUATION IN THE WATER RESOURCES SECTOR, PARTICULARLY IN THE IMPROVEMENT OF URBAN WATER SERVICES.

- IN 1993, ONLY 80% OF THE PORTUGUESE FAMILIES HAD ACCESS TO PUBLIC WATER SUPPLY. IN 2016, THIS VALUE RAISED TO 96.5%.
- IN 1993, THE COVERAGE OF SANITATION FACILITIES DID NOT EXCEED 20%. CURRENTLY, 84% OF FAMILIES HAVE ACCESS TO COMPLETE PUBLIC SERVICE ON SANITATION.
- IN TERMS OF WATER QUALITY, PORTUGAL POSSESSES 99% OF WATER WITH EXCELLENT QUALITY FOR HUMAN CONSUMPTION IN ACCORDANCE WITH EUROPEAN UNION STANDARDS, WITH RELEVANT IMPACTS ON PUBLIC HEALTH AND ON COASTAL WATERS QUALITY, WITH THE CONTRIBUTION, IN 2017, OF 320 BLUE FLAGS – REWARD USED IN EUROPE TO DISTINGUISH THE QUALITY OF BATHING WATERS.

TO ACHIEVE THIS GOAL IT WAS FUNDAMENTAL, NOT ONLY THE INVESTMENT, BUT ALSO THE REINFORCEMENT OF ROBUST PUBLIC POLICIES SUPPORTED BY A WELL-STRUCTURED INSTITUTIONAL ORGANIZATION, WITH THE DEFINITION OF RESPONSIBILITIES AND ROLES OF DIFFERENT STAKEHOLDERS ON WATER AND SANITATION.

IN THIS CONTEXT, PORTUGAL CURRENTLY HOSTS TWO EXCELLENCE CENTRES IN THE FIELD OF WATER

- THE LISBON INTERNATIONAL CENTRE FOR WATER (LIS-WATER) AND,
- THE EXCELLENCE CENTRE OF UNITED NATIONS FOR PUBLIC PRIVATE PARTNERSHIPS ON WATER AND SANITATION.

THE FACT THAT PORTUGAL WAS CHOSEN TO HOST THESE CENTRES DEMONSTRATES THE RECOGNITION BY THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY OF THE CAPACITY PORTUGAL DETAINS IN THIS SECTOR.

I AM CONVINCED THAT THEY WILL HAVE A RELEVANT ROLE IN BUILDING CAPACITIES AT GLOBAL LEVEL TO ADDRESS SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS.

FROM THE BEGINNING PORTUGAL HAS BEEN LOOKING FOR SHARING THESE GOOD PRACTICES IN THE FIELD OF THE CHINA EUROPE WATER PLATFORM, BEING ACTIVELY INVOLVED IN THE PROJECTS SUPPORTED BY THE EUROPEAN UNION THROUGH THE PARTNERSHIP INSTRUMENT, IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE NEEDS AND ADD-VALUE OF THE COOPERATION IN THE PERSPECTIVE OF THE MINISTRY FOR ENVIRONMENT AND ENERGETICS TRANSITION OF PORTUGAL, OF EUROPEAN UNION AND CHINA.

IT IS WITH PROUD THAT WE COOPERATE WITH OUR PARTNERS FROM THE CHINESE INSTITUTE OF WATER RESOURCES AND HYDROELECTRIC RESEARCH IN THE PREPARATION OF THE PROPOSAL FOR RESTORATION OF NANXI RIVER BASIN AND WE COMMIT OURSELVES TO COORDINATE THE DEVELOPMENT OF POLICY PROPOSALS THAT IMPROVE THE RESTORATION STANDARDS AT EUROPEAN AND CHINESE LEVELS.

IN SHORT,

WE ARE COMMITTED WITH CIRCULAR ECONOMY, WITH THE SUPPORT TO COMPANIES INTERNATIONALIZATION, AS WELL AS WITH THE ALIGNMENT OF FINANCIAL MECHANISMS BETWEEN EUROPE AND CHINA ON EMERGING ISSUES ON WATER...

..... BUT WE ARE ALSO AWARE THAT THE SIMPLICITY OF THE WORDING “WATER IS LIFE” HIDES THE GREAT COMPLEXITY IN ITS MANAGEMENT, AND THAT’S WHY IT IS FUNDAMENTAL TO REINFORCE OUR PARTNERSHIPS.

DO COUNT ON PORTUGAL TO ACTIVELY CONTINUE TO BE ENGAGED IN THIS PROJECT, TO HOST THE NEXT HIGH LEVEL MEETING NEXT YEAR, AND TO UNDERTAKE THE COORDINATION OF THE EUROPEAN SECRETARIAT OF THE CHINA EUROPE WATER PLATFORM FROM 2020 ONWARDS.

THANK YOU!