



## Associação de Amizade Portugal / EUA

Exclusive Sponsor:



The US–Portugal Friendship Association  
Washington DC 10-14<sup>th</sup> October 2011  
António Neto da Silva – President

I would, first of all, like to thank you for being here. We share common objectives and ideas by which we seek to ensure that the free world will continue to be free. These objectives and ideas are also essential for the world that is not yet free to become free.

The aims of this Association are not limited to one area. They extend to every field, both vertically and horizontally. We continue to defend the values of freedom, tolerance and solidarity, values that have always characterized the history of the United States, and which continue today, in a more universal form, to be the values that the United States defends intransigently with great resources and the blood of its sons and daughters.

These are values that Portugal, an ancient country and the pioneer of the first wave of globalization, can greatly help to disseminate, given that the Portuguese are natural interpreters of cultures and peoples. The role of Portugal in the world and the acceptance of that role, which is based on the experience of more than five centuries, are advantages that have been undervalued, but which could prove decisive.

Following the end of the collectivist illusions that affected the planet, and happily for the world, the United States is the only truly world power. Its leadership is based on values that we also defend values that seek to achieve progress by ensuring the right to free initiative of all citizens. Our aim is to make these principles the common basis of the history of Portugal and the United States, a living history of shared values and effort. It is for this reason that we intend to develop cultural, political, economic and social ties between our two countries. In the political field, we seek to encourage the sharing of experience between Portuguese parliamentarians and US congressmen and congresswomen, at both the federal and state level, focusing on congressmen and congresswomen with Portuguese blood flowing in their veins. We will seek to strengthen ties and cooperation with all those institutions whose goal it is to strengthen relations with the United States in order to help both countries achieve our common aims. We will act to disseminate Portuguese culture in the United States and

American culture in Portugal. We will be at the disposal of the Portuguese and US governments to carry out activities in Portugal, in the United States, and, in the interests of freedom, in any other part of the world, whenever those governments consider our Association to be the best and most body to do so.

Given the very low level of mutual trade and tourism, and of direct US investment in Portugal, we will do everything we can to encourage the development of business ties between our two countries. In particular, we will focus on improving the level of Portuguese contact, especially in terms of business relations, with Portuguese communities in the United States through activities involving elected US state and federal representatives of Portuguese origin.

As the main focus for common work between Portugal and the United States, we believe consideration should be given to the great world priority of **Defending the Planet**, seeking to save humankind from itself before the planet saves itself from humankind. For this reason, we defend, both internationally and nationally, the implementation of transversal policies for sustainable development by all government ministries and in all areas of society to ensure that economic and demographic growth does not threaten the world's capacity to renew its vital resources, particularly those resources essential to life such as water, air and solar radiation. Such a development would ensure that the needs of current generations can be met without putting at risk the possibility of meeting the needs of future generations and ensuring the quality of human life on a healthy Planet.

The second priority, which is no less important, is the **INTRANSIGENT DEFENSE OF OUR CIVILISATION**. Portugal and the United States should work together to:

- Ensure that **policies are devised and oriented to achieving the type of civilization we desire**. This requires awareness that every option we make will have practical consequences that must be clearly stated and defended.
- **Guide society towards certain values, institutions, practices and rules for cohabitation that is towards a way of living together that goes beyond simple quantitative targets set by governments.**
- **Defend the lay nature of the state and the legal equality of the sexes**, which means restricting the migratory flows of people who do not accept either of these principles.
- Defend, without any hesitation, **representative democracy**, which implies that parliaments should control and supervise governments, not the other way round, and that effective limits and controls should be in place to prevent the arbitrary and arrogant exercise of power.

- **Maintain the ideal of solidarity and the continuance of a social security system**, which implies neutralizing the enormous economic damage caused by unfair competition with countries where companies do not have to contribute to welfare schemes for the sick, the unemployed and the elderly, and, in certain cases, pay almost no taxes.
- Guarantee **high standards of education and civility**, for which it is essential to ensure that laws are properly respected, contracts scrupulously complied with, the rights of others respected and courtesy and rules of cohabitation observed.
- Ensure and promote **ethical corporate and business behavior**, which implies ensuring the morality of financial capitalism, regulating labor relations in a fair and sensible manner and protecting consumers from abuses and misleading advertising.
- Guarantee the **security of people and goods**, which implies reforming the justice system, which, in Portugal at least, currently protects wrongdoers more than their victims and enables crime to proliferate.
- Guarantee the **possibility of general access to an advanced level of professional training** in order to provide something close to a theoretical equality of opportunity, which means the real acquisition in teaching establishments of useful knowledge and skills geared to the future.
- Guarantee **entrepreneurship and free initiative**, which implies moderating the impulse toward the worst enemy of these principles - the voracious fiscal appetites of governments.

This is the civilization we want in Portugal. This is the civilization that the United States has always defended. The defense of our civilization has very concrete implications in terms of **the rigor and the pace at which our countries should act**, both domestically and through international institutions, to uphold the values on which that civilization is based.

This team will always be at your disposal - and in need of your contribution in terms of both actions and ideas - to strengthen the ties that unite Portugal and the United States and to work on behalf of freedom, tolerance, solidarity and sustainable development in order to preserve the Planet for future generations.