

Madam Minister of Justice, Excellence

Dear Professor Holger Matt, Chair of the ECBA

Dear President of Eurojust,

Dear Speakers and Participants in the Autumn Conference,

Dear Guests,

Ladies and gentlemen

In my name and on behalf of the Centro de Estudos Judiciários allow me to express to all of you the great honor and privilege it is to host the Autumn conference of the European Criminal Bar Association.

Let me in a glance introduce where we are, what we are, what we do and how we do it.

This building we are in is called Limoeiro (Limoeiro means Lemon tree), and it has a long and rich history with close ties with Justice.

This place, which has been a royal palace, the Mint of Portugal, a court and prison is now a training school for magistrates.

Its origins date back to the III-IV century. On its east side the building still shows some parts of the defensive wall of that time.

Later on, in the fourteenth century, Limoeiro became the center of the governance of the kingdom. Before that, the Mint of the Kingdom had been located here.

For almost two centuries up to 1757, Limoeiro accommodated a higher court, the "House of supplication" and from that date until 1974 served as a civil prison.

The thick walls and the thick iron bars that protect the windows of this room as well as the windows of the cafeteria recall its old function.

Several prominent and popular figures of Portuguese culture served their sentences or were detained at Limoeiro. Also in our literature quite a lot

of authors refer to the Limoeiro and the humble conditions it had for its inmates.

As it is said, the history of this place is long and rich, we know a lot about it, but we just do not know why it is called Limoeiro.

Created in 1979, the CEJ is the only school in the country for training judges and Public Prosecutors.

The main mission of the Centro de Estudos Judiciários is the training of magistrates. In this context, CEJ provides training, both initial and permanent, to judges from judicial, administrative and tax courts, and to public prosecutors.

With our partners, mainly the Superior Councils, we try to give substance to a common principle, as it has been adopted by international bodies and enshrined in national law, that training must be seen not only as a right but also as a duty.

CEJ is likewise entitled to ensure training to judges, public prosecutors or candidates to the judiciary of foreign countries, in particular Portuguese speaking countries, and international bodies.

Besides that, CEJ also develops research and study activities of a judicial nature and ensures legal training activities addressed to lawyers, solicitors and other practitioners in the justice sector, and cooperates in actions organized by other institutions.

In this respect we must underline the close cooperation and dialogue that CEJ has existing with the Portuguese Bar Association (Ordem dos Advogados), having implemented common projects in order to increase confidence in the justice system.

The initial training at CEJ, based on long experience in this field, focuses specially on matters the magistrates have to deal with on a day to day basis, and from a practical perspective provides them with all the skills they require to perform their duties efficiently.

In addition to that, the new training course which began 15 days ago was strengthened with a more in depth approach to some crucial matters that

were considered of high relevance to the trainees: human rights jurisprudence of international Courts and entities; international cooperation on civil and criminal matters, European law, Ethics and deontology.

After this introduction to feel better the atmosphere where you are, allow me to say some words about your Autumn Conference.

The European Public Prosecutor's Office (EPPO) and conflicts of jurisdiction in the EU is one of the topics.

I have a particular fondness for this issue. While a national member for Portugal at Eurojust, I and other national members along with the President, Michèle Coninx, that joins us today and I warmly welcome in this school, worked altogether at Eurojust in preparing a first draft of this future institution.

Conflicts of jurisdiction were studied extensively and comprehensive examples were considered.

It was an exciting exercise to build up a European body from the legal norms of the treaties and the ambiguity they encapsulate.

We gave our vision.

After that, a lot of changes have occurred. A proposal of the Commission was tabled, other proposals were added. The Council also presented a Draft Regulation and some progress in the developments of the work was made.

Nevertheless, political and technical issues remain to be adopted.

I am convinced that the conclusions of this forum, given the high level qualities of the speakers and participants will be very fruitful and helpful to the progress of the work at European level.

But the program also includes topics of great relevance and timeliness, some of general interest and some with close links to the activities of the Association.

With regard to substantive and procedural issues arising in relation to corruption in the international context, I would highlight the attention we devote to corruption in sports. Different dimensions of the Sports law have been considered by CEJ in judicial training sessions and a book was edited in hard copy in which the corruption in sports is depth considered.

One last point I would like to mention.

It refers to the European Arrest Warrant – Handbook.

We fully recognize the importance of the issue.

We are working on the preparation of a Guide of the EAW addressed to all judges and public prosecutors.

The existence of this handbook shows that we are on the right path and that we should make it available soon.

Having said that, I would like to congratulate ECBA for making this tool available to all its members.

I am sure that it will be of a great use to all practitioners.

So I warmly welcome all of you and express my deep congratulations for having chosen Lisboa and CEJ as the venue of the Autumn Conference and for the topics that it will address.

I am sure that, in the end, the results of the Conference will be of a high level of quality in which all the participants and organizers deserve to be recognized for the important work done.

Thank you for your attention.