



Tribunal de Contas

Portugal



OPENING SESSION OF THE EUROSAI SEMINAR

***ENHANCING ETHICS WITHIN SUPREME AUDIT
INSTITUTIONS***

SPEECH BY

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PRESIDENT OF EUROSAI

PRESIDENT OF THE PORTUGUESE

TRIBUNAL DE CONTAS

CHAIR OF THE TASK FORCE ON AUDIT AND

ETHICS



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Dr. Eduardo Cabrita, Chair of the Committee for Budget, Public Finances and Public Administration of the Portuguese Parliament,

Mrs. Helena Abreu Lopes, member of Tribunal de Contas and delegate chair of the Task Force on Audit & Ethics,

Dear Jacek Jeziersky, former President of EUROSAI and representative of the Supreme Audit Institution of Poland,

Presidents of the Supreme Audit Institutions of Albania, Mr. Bujar Leskaj, of Serbia, Mr Radoslav Sretenovic, and of Cape Vert, Mr. José Carlos Delgado,

Senhores Conselheiros do Tribunal de Contas,

Senhores Procuradores gerais Adjuntos,

Dear Colleagues,

Ladies and Gentlemen,



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It is a pleasure to welcome all of you to Lisboa, in the Portuguese Tribunal de Contas, and to open this EUROSAI Seminar dedicated to “Enhancing Ethics within the Supreme Audit Institutions”.

A special word is due to the presence of representatives of other regional groups of INTOSAI, namely AFROSAI, through the SAI of Cape Verde, and OLACEFS, through the SAI of Brazil, who are also members of the Organisation of Portuguese Official Language SAI (benvindo, *Ministro Walton Alencar*), and ASOSAI, through the delegates of the SAI of Indonesia; I also thank ARABOSAI represented by the Algerian SAI delegates;



My gratitude also goes to the OECD representative, Mr. Janos Bertok, and to Mr. Shourjo Chatterjee, From INTOSAI Development Initiative;

Sharing knowledge and experiences is part of the DNA of INTOSAI and EUROSAI. Besides being the basis of the motto of INTOSAI, they are objectives stated in the EUROSAI Statutes and underlined in the EUROSAI Strategic Plan. One of the four strategic goals of EUROSAI, that reflect the needs and priorities of the organisation's membership, is precisely *Knowledge Sharing*.

To achieve an effective implementation of this goal, the dialogue fostered within EUROSAI and the efforts made by



its Working Groups and Task Forces are decisive. One of those task forces is the *Task Force on Audit and Ethics*, under whose auspices this seminar is organised.

We remind that following the conclusions and recommendations of the last EUROSAI Congress, held in *Lisboa* in June 2011, the EUROSAI Governing Board agreed to set up this Task Force to deal with Audit & Ethics, aiming to promote ethical behaviour and integrity, both in SAIs and in public organisations.

This approach aimed to address challenges that increased in a period of wide financial and economic crisis, which have been causing growing difficulties for citizens. It is generally



agreed that the roots of the problem lie on failures of regulation and also on values' breakdowns. These assumptions, in times of uncertainty and need to recall the basic principles, enhance the opportunity and the advantages of exploring and consolidating this theme.

The *Tribunal de Contas* of Portugal is chairing this Task Force, partnering in this project with other EUROSAI members with experience or with particular interest in exploring how Ethics and Audit interrelate.

The Task Force initiated its works with eleven members and counts, today, with nineteen members. The increasing interest



of EUROSAI members in taking part of this project reveals how the issues at stake are topical and significant for SAI.

In its short life, the Task Force has already implemented several activities, as Ms. Helena Abreu Lopes will mention in her presentation.

The interest shown by SAI will certainly justify that some other activities meant to further explore these subjects will be developed in the near future. It will be a responsibility but also a proud privilege to continue this work.



Ethics, deontology and integrity are relevant issues in every kind of business or profession. But they become crucial when we talk about the independent audit of public finances.

Inspired by the Aristotelic *Nicomachean Ethics*, we should cooperate in order to see and discuss ethics beyond its theoretical framework, and to think about it in practical terms. In fact, the issue of ethics and integrity should not only deserve our contemplation; it deserves our common mobilization in order to effectively improve the ethical performance of Institutions.

And, dear colleagues, we cannot strive to have good governance without putting into practice the “**Good Values**”.



As a matter of fact, when INTOSAI classified ISSAI 30 in level 2 of ISSAI, as a *prerequisite for the functioning of SAIs*, it stated very clearly that acting according to ethical and deontological principles is something that an SAI cannot help doing, otherwise it won't be a true **Supreme Audit Institution.**

The work already done by the Task Force on Audit and Ethics, as well as the work we see ahead, represents a contribution for SAIs to be able to frame and to reinforce the management of ethical conduct, with practical and feasible tools that can be used in their daily work. This seminar is an important step in that path.



For *Tribunal de Contas* of Portugal, being part of this work is also an opportunity to improve its own ethical and integrity framework, in what concerns ethics guidance, management and control.

Enhancing Ethics within our institution is an important objective for us, and, therefore, included, with concrete tasks, in the Strategic Plan of the Court for the next 3 years.

Reviewing rotation policies, deepening tools to manage and control conflict of interests, fostering Ethics training, deepening Ethics guidance, and **Leading by Example** are our main concerns and objectives.



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Dear colleagues,

With all this in view, as President of EUROSAI, I would like once again to express my gratitude for your participation in this event and to wish you all a fruitful work!