



## **Discurso do Ministro das Infraestruturas e da Habitação, Pedro Nuno Santos**

### **Aviation Day Conference**

**3rd March 2021**

Good morning...

Mr Luís Ribeiro, ANAC's president, that also shares with me  
the opening of the conference...

.... To all the participants in the Aviation Days Conference...

Ladies and Gentlemen,

We are living a moment that demands critical action. We,  
politicians, and we as a community, must be up to the challenge.

In Portugal we have identified the sectors that are critical for the economic and social recovery and that are key for our industrial future. For the Portuguese Government, the aviation is essential for a geographically peripheral country, a sector that directly creates thousands of qualified and well-paid jobs. Therefore we're supporting the Portuguese air navigation service provider, NAV, which is publicly owned and will remain public and, in that condition, gathers every year dozens of millions of euros for Portugal in exportations. NAV is a good example of what we want for Portugal: qualified and well-paid jobs in an organization that is a net exporter.

Portugal has also been engaged, for a long time, in bolstering the aeronautical industry that is growing in Alentejo as this is another good example of a high-tech industry that exports almost everything that it produces and that is generating hundreds of jobs in a typical economically depressed region.

We're also making one of the biggest investments our country has ever made in an enterprise in the aviation sector: we're making a long-term and solid investment in TAP – Portugal's legacy airline. We're simultaneously a partner, the main shareholder and a long-term investor in the airline. We will take

the necessary time for the airline to implement the common strategy agreed between the European Commission, the Portuguese State and TAP.

(We know that in the short term the restructuring plan will be very challenging for the TAP workers, which constitute TAP's main value. Together we will build a more sustainable airline and we will secure more than seven thousand jobs in Portugal).

We are not looking for short-term dividends and, in consequence, we will not engage in social or economic low-cost strategies. We don't want a low-cost economy.

Only public intervention can guarantee that - by establishing social and economic standards, like the minimum wage and labour standards, and by pointing the way forward - will the economy develop.

I can assure you that with the State as the main shareholder TAP won't implement policies that don't respect the workers' rights and the labour laws of the several countries where it has activity. We support an aviation sector that stands for its quality. The Portuguese Government supports policies that should avoid a

race to the bottom and we invite all the aviation sector stakeholders and all EU member states to unite efforts in order to stop these type of conduct.

Another good example of this are the ecological challenges that the aviation sector faces. All around the world the industry is greener each day mainly because of the incentives that have been laid out by the public powers. With the State as a main shareholder we can guarantee that TAP will be one of the greenest and most comfortable airlines. The great majority of hours flown by TAP will be in new and highly efficient airplanes.

It was also with the State as a main shareholder that TAP celebrated, last week, a break-through partnership with a leading company in the intermodal air-railroad transportation. This is the path that must be followed, and, in the future, we also want a strong partnership between TAP and the Portuguese rail operator, CP.

Our compromise with a greener environment and with a greener aviation sector is unstoppable. In the second semester the new passenger tax will be applied. This will conduct millions of euros to the environmental fund to help in the energetic transition to a stronger and sustainable society.

Aside from the direct impact, the aviation sector also potentiates all the tourism related activities, where we have strong comparative advantages and a well-established global competitive position. Between 2017 (two thousand seventeen) and 2019 (two thousand nineteen) Lisbon Airport had been rejecting new flights because it had reached its maximum capacity. This is unsustainable for our economy. We cannot afford to reject millions of tourists, hundreds of millions of revenues and thousands of new jobs created. We just can't and we have to fight for those objectives. We want our people to live well, to have new and better jobs and, foremost, new horizons.

This is why we are launching an Environmental Strategical Evaluation that will define the best place to build a new airport, that must respect the environment and, of course, all security standards. We have a private company interested in investing in a new infrastructure, we have the economic potential and the will of the people to have a better life. That's why the Portuguese Government is firmly engaged in developing all the efforts that will lead to the construction of a new airport in the Lisbon Area.

*Ladies and Gentleman's,*

*These are the main political and strategic lines of the Portuguese Government to help the sector recover from the pandemic.*

*I firmly believe that we will be even stronger after this crisis. But we cannot do it all alone, we will need a European and a global effort. As such, I look forward to hearing your contributions for this conference and I am sure good and sound conclusions will be reached.*

*I wish you all a good conference.*

*Thank you very much*