



Speech of José Reis Santos, founding organizer of PES activists Portugal  
during the launch of PES activists in Lisbon, Portugal  
2 April 2007

Dear Friends,

It's been roughly a week since we've commemorated 50 years from the signature of treaty of Rome. A week ago we celebrated the path we took and looked to the future, seeking new goals.

50 Years ago, as we remember, Europe was recovering from the profound wounds of a fratricide War.

50 years ago, a group of statesmen congregated in Rome trying to build a European peace that last at least a generation. 50 years ago, they said that Europe could exist, at least, as a supra national entity of economical relief, peace keeper and maybe something more.

Today, after not one but two generations, we overcome those initial goals.

Europe is more than an economical organization. Europe is more than a peace keeper organization. Europe, today, it's not only an idea. It's real.

The *Partido Socialista* has been always in tune with this construction. As a result of the decisive vision of Mário Soares, since the 60's that ASP (Acção Socialista Portuguesa – the predecessor of the Portuguese Socialist Party) was as an observer of Socialist International. Remember that Portugal was still under an Authoritarian Regime until the mid 70's.

After the Carnations Revolution, in April 25, 1974, with the recently formed *Partido Socialista*, we run our first general election with the slogan "Europe with us". As a result of that victory, PS delivers the formal request to join the EEC. In 1985, and with Mário Soares still in its leadership, it's the *Partido Socialista* who formally signs EEC treaty. And when Portugal joins the Euro, it's also under Socialist leadership – António Guterres.

Today, as we start PES activists Portugal, we seek to continue this path, with full respect of our common background. Today, we seek not only peace and prosperity, but a European Identity, based in a political project of social cohesion, build for the people and by the people.

If in every UE country there are local, regional and national levels of political organization. Being a PES activist it's to join a fourth level of organization: the European level.

PES activists are born in the globalization era, and this have a tremendous influence in politics. We embrace new technologies because they eliminate distances, give voice to the voiceless and create new proximities.

We already have so many European citizens having debates at PES website, or blogging through the Internet. Today, the political discussion is a multi channel debate.

That doesn't mean that we give up the traditional debates. By the contrary, it means that we ought to reinforce them, promote them even harder. That's why we invite you to be here with us, debating with us. We still believe in political made for the people and by the people.





The PES activists initiative it's one of the ways in which PES motivates the debate about European politics between the 2 million socialist members throughout Europe. We, in Portugal, want to be part of this generational challenge.

Our goal is to be a complement to traditional party structures, bringing more information, more debate and more working areas. We want to be not only the messengers but also the creators of new ideas, new debates and new politics.

We believe that our relationship with Europe it's a two way street. We ought to work in an articulated manner with the party leaders and the bases.

We want to belong to the base of this relationship, connecting ourselves with the European network of activists, giving PES and PS the strength to make new pathways of development in European matters, bringing them to the day to day discussions, and bringing to local politics a European visibility.

We believe that being a socialist today it's to be pro-active. It's to have the strength and the will to build a socially fair and political advance Europe.

It's to a part of history, and to make a decisive contribution to the next 50 years.

Today, as we embrace members and friends of PS in an open minded political idea, we start this adventure – PES activists Portugal. Like 20 years ago, we believe in the European project, we believe in Europe.

50 years ago, our founding fathers asked us for a generation of peace. We gave them two and gave them also economical development and growth.

Let the third generation, our generation, build the New Social Europe, integrating diversity and promoting equality.

That's why we step forward

José Reis Santos

