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Malta summit marked by concern with the political changes in Washington, in the week when Jean-Claude Juncker claimed that 2017 is an “all or nothing” year for Europe.

2016, ended with the positive signal for euro zone, in terms of unemployment and economic growth. But the United States charge that euro is undervalued to serve the interests of Germany.

Two months before the first round of presidential election, the controversy is installed in the right-wing in France. In our program, we will analyze the chances of those main candidates after Benoît Hamon from the left elected in the election.

Welcome to Magazine Europa,

The European leaders gathered informally in La Valleta, in Malta, in order to prepare the summit on 25 March— a summit that aims at discuss the future of EU.

During the meeting, a cooperation plan with Libya was approved. O objective of plan is try to reduce those migratory flows that across Mediterranean Sea towards Europe.

The meeting was also marked a concern with Trump’s foreign policy. The President of European Council, Donald Tusk, appealed to the unity of member states by using an American motto “united we stand, divided we fall.”

In the declaration before summit Malta, German Chancellor, Angela Merkel, made it clear that Europe has its destiny in its own hands.

RM – Angela Merkel:
“Europe has its destiny in its own hands. I believe the stronger we state clearly how we define our role in the world, the better we can

take care [of] our transatlantic relations. That's why I am here, for me, a priority is talk about Europe."

Before the meeting in Malta, Jean-Claude Juncker also gave a same attitude to the declaration that have been coming from Washington about European Union.

RM – Jean-Claude Juncker:
I don't feel threatened but there is room for explanation I get the impression the new administration does not know the details of the European Union. But in Europe details matter.

Last week, the president of European Council laid out for the next few months. 2017 is a "all or nothing " year for Europe, said Jean-Claude Juncker. A year that full of "risks" but also "opportunities".

The official emphasized the work done and to be done by EU with respect to the issue of refugees, including provide assistance to those refugees come to Europe and find solutions relating to causes of migration. In speech of Jean-Claude Juncker, he strengthened security not only in the external borders of block, but also on the digital market.

Over the phone from Lisbon, today we have the resident commentator of Magazine Europa, Victor Ângelo, international consultant who based in Brussels.

Hello, Victor, let's begin with informal summit in La Valleta. What assessmente you will give for this meeting?

RM – Victor Ângelo:
I think the assessment is positive insofar as the leaders were allowed to discuss two important issues at stake: the issue of migrations, especially, in support of North Africa, an on the other hand, the issues related to the new American administration. These are two problems that, now, dominate an agenda of Europe and I believe that communications of impressions and ideas between leaders can at

least, prepare a position more united in terms of the two issues.

The election of Donald Trump in the United States seems have agreed Europe to rethink strategies... Who dominates this debate in European area?

RM – Victor Ângelo:
In this moment, the reaction of Europe towards Donald Trump is clearly identified by the public position of the President of European Council, Donald Tusk, took especially to say that the new American president is a threat to unity of Europe. I think that Donald Tusk, now is the flagship of the European position with regard to the United States. It is important so far as he represent a collective willing of all the heads of country and government, on the other hand, how to do in a case that mandate—could or not be renewed-(this) let him, whereas, said some truths and in addition, prepare a space to whom is going to follow, maybe some leaders from European Council, maybe Donald Tusk himself, in the second mandate.

How to evaluate the priorities set by Jean-Claude Junker for 2017?

RM – Victor Ângelo:
"I think that Jean- Claude Junker has been clear to know the dangers which in front of us in 2017. To summarize the position of the president od European committee, I will say that Jean-Claude Junker consider 2017 like a year of "go or stop", in other word, a decisive year. In this way, I think that is important that he has dramatized a European equation to this ongoing year, and this allow the European leaders realize that, in reality, the common project could be proposed. Besides, in terms of priorities Jean-Claude Junker hope that, in 2017, could focus on three essential issues: the issue of migration, internal security and defense of Europe, in the military and strategic area, the third is economic development of EU, particularly, should put more attention on digital economy."
The unemployment in Euro Zone was narrowed in December to about 9.6%, the lowest rate since May 2009.

The data from Eurostar also indicate that the economy of Euro Zone increased 1.7% in terms annul to the rate of 2016. It´s a slowdown in face of 2% of expansion annual in 2015, but the area´s economy became better in the last trimester of last year.

These positive data was famous to the public in a interview of Financial Times with Peter Navarro, Donald Trump´s counselor. He criticize the role of Germany in relation to the unique currency:

RM –declaration of Navarro:
A big obstacle to viewing TTIP as a bilateral deal is Germany, which continues to exploit other countries in the EU as well as the US with an 'implicit Deutsche Mark' that is grossly undervalued

Victor, considering those declarations of Peter Navarro, which will be Washington´s strategy?

RM – Victor Ângelo:
The strategy of the President of United Sates, Peter Navarro is just a spokesman, consists of devaluation of dollar. They think that, if dollar lose value in relation to others international currencies, this will make the American economy export more and expand. So, we have to see a series of attack towards euro and also toward yen and Chinese currency, Yuan. In addition to this, for Europe, the truth is that euro have value for market.
The value of euro has been relatively stable in recent months. It´s true that euro lost a lot in comparison to dollar, but this is neither a manipulation of markets nor of currency. This is just a international economy play as it should do, in other words, in certain time, the currency attract many capital and is exactly what happen now in relation to dollar. This make dollar increase because there is a big demand of this currency. It is said that euro is now manipulated is just

a political strategy, and have nothing to do with a financial or a monetary reality.

In spite of this turbulent political situation, the economy of euro zone is now releasing a signal to restart. What is the contribution of theses positive signals?

RM – Victor Ângelo:
On the one hand, some European countries´ economy has been increasing. This is, evidently, in countries like Germany, Spain, and France. The only economy in Europe that is still in trouble is Italy. Anyway, the rest of EU has already had a growth, including Portugal. The business environment is still positive and those investors also have confidence in the future of European economy, which is very important.

The positive environment of business brings more investments; more investments bring a economic growth and a reduction of unemployment. It´s true that the unemployment declined in EU. Also, we can´t forget that European Central Bank play an important role in the funding to European countries, and due of large European companies. (the bank) plan to cost, during 2017, 780 thousands of euro in due ,which means that the European economy will be monetarily supported by European Central Bank and this is a great economic stimulation.

In Portugal, the rate of unemployment declined to 10.2% in December—the lowest rate since May 2009. Following Spain, Portugal is the second country, which the rate of unemployment stepped back in December on an annual basis. It´s good news for Iberian Peninsula, but in the south, Italy is still in the shadow.

RM – Victor Ângelo:
It’s good news for both Portugal and Spain. Like we know, the most fundamental problem is still focus on Italy, where 40% young people don’t have jobs. And Italy is, this moment, a big worry of Europe. This

could have a strong impact on Italian election. If in the Italian election, people vote negative to Europe, it´s evident that the future of Europe will be threaten once more... So, the greatest concern is concentrate on investments and main economic planner of Europe in issue of Italy and makes Italy, like Spain and Portugal, to enter a process of economic restart.

In Romania, after a week of protest on streets, the government retreated and announced in Saturday that will abolish the polemic decree which decriminalize some corruption cases and reduce punishments in cases of abuse power.

Although the Executive ceded, the manifestation is continuing. The Romanian request a dismissal of social-democrat Government.

There are less than 2 months for France to have the first round election, and now the country is installed by polemical right-wing.

Someone now claim that François Fillon´s wife earn more than 800 thousands euro per year as parliamentary assistant to her husband and his husband´s successor.

Fillon denied any irregularities and accused the left-wing try to break him down. But appeared more voices that think he should quit this election.
Meanwhile, Benoît Hamon, the left-wing´s candidates, won in Socialist Party and will represent his party in this election.

RM – Benoît Hamon:
I believe that faced with a conservative right that represents privilege and a destructive extreme-right, our country needs the left, but a modern, innovative left

Victor, what do you think about Benoît Hamon in this year's election?

RM – Victor Ângelo:

I think that the candidate of Socialist Party, Benoît Hamon, does not have a big chance to enter second round. So, he merely has possibility to be next president of France. In fact, the election will be most concentrate on two candidates, one from the extreme right-wing, Marine Le Pen, the other one is from the right-wing, François Fillon. But, take into account of the scandal around François Fillon, he will also have a very little chance to go on in the next round, although 10 days before, many people believed that he will be the next French President. So, the question now is who can go on into the next round in addition to Marine Le Pen.

In the right-wing, a polemical situation already installed. Is it possible to find a new candidate?

RM – Victor Ângelo:
Yes, later or sooner, I believe that Friançois Filiion will abandon this election. A situation is that he can´t sustain. More and more voices that come from his party and the right-wing think that he can not continue. In this way, the question is who will substitute? And now, this point is clear.

The cases around Fillon can benefit Marine Le Pen and the extreme right? Who can, finally, cope with him in the second round?

RM – Victor Ângelo:
I think, now, the most possible one is Emmanuel Macron. Emmanuel Macron is 39 years old young man and was minister of economy until last summer. He is a man who has an excellent behavior on TV, for example, very well on TV, a serene man, although with some tones of left side, and he is clever to use a electoral campaign to attract two sides.
I think that, probably, the fact is he represents a change in generations—so, a political renewal and also he don´t have a radical position, and he can switch between the right and the left. I think he will be the candidate that face the fascist Marine Le Pen in the second round and probably, we could have a very young president of France in May.

The analysis of victor Ângelo, resident commentator of Magazine Europa

At last, move our eye to silver screen. The international Cinema Festive of Berlin starts this Thursday, The creative director of festival, Dieter Kosslick, said that this year they focus on Europe-"on history and wars in Europe"

This time, the jury chaired by Dutch director and screenwriter, Paul Verhoeven.

18 films will be in the race for Golden Bear and Silver Bear Award. The festival opens with premiere of Étienne Comar´s Django.

There will be four Portuguese short films compete in this edition No.67

The festival will last until 19.

See you next week

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Magazine Europa is presented by journalist Sofia Jesus, with the comments of Victor Angelo, a former undersecretary general of the United Nations, and Rui Flores, coordinator of the Jean Monnet Project Magazine Europa, coordinates it.

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