[Titles]
During the week in which the European Union celebrates the 60th anniversary of the Rome Treaties, we look to the past and to the future of Europe

In this special edition, we hear the European Union representative for Hong Kong and Macao, and discuss achievements and common challenges in a Europe of 27
[Titles End]

Welcome to Magazine Europa,

Next Saturday, 25 March, the 60th anniversary of the Rome Treaties, which paved the way for what is now the European Union.

The date is marked a little throughout Europe, the official high point being the summit of Heads of State and Government that will take place on the 25th in the Italian capital.

Since 1957 much has changed in the old continent. Journalist André Jegundo of Radio Macau recalls some of the main moments of the last six decades:

RM – André Jegundo:
"It was in the 1950s of the last century, in the aftermath of World War II and in the Cold War, that many thinkers began to dream of a different Europe.
In 1951, a year after the presentation of what became known as the Schuman Plan, the European Coal and Steel Community was founded, founded by Germany, Belgium, France, Italy, Luxembourg and the Netherlands.
But it is in 1957 that these six founding countries extend cooperation to other sectors of the economy. The signing of the Treaty of Rome on 25 March establishes the European Economic Community (EEC) - the so-called 'common market'.
In 1986, the year in which Portugal joined the EEC, the Single European Act created a six-year program aimed at eliminating obstacles to the free flow of trade in the Union and opening the way to the 'Single Market', which in 1993 Four freedoms: the free movement of goods, services, people and capital.
The signing of the Maastricht Treaty takes place that same year. The treaty sets out rules for what will be the future single currency and the European community is officially called the European Union.
On 1st of January 2012, the euro becomes the official currency in 12 countries of the European Union. Today are 19.
In 2004 there is another moment: the entry of eight Central and Eastern European countries.
The Treaty of Lisbon enters into force in 2009, modifying previous treaties in order to modernize the European Union.
In 2013, Croatia brings the number of member states of the bloc to 28. A number that holds to this day, though not for long, since the UK is out. "

For the Head of the Delegation of the European Union to Hong Kong and Macao, the Spanish Ambassador Carmen Cano, on 25 March is a good time not only to take into

account the challenges facing Europe, but also to look at the achievements Achieved. In an interview with Magazine Europa, Carmen Cano leaves some examples:

RM – Carmen Cano:
"In 60 years, the European Union has succeeded in reestablishing peace and maintaining it among its member states; We have created a unique space for the movement of people, capital, goods and services; We have created a single currency, the Euro, to which 19 European countries belong; There are no internal frontiers in Europe for students, who can study at various universities for joint research projects; For example, in Europe we do not pay for roaming when we travel from one country to another with our mobile phone. The European Union is founded on common principles and values, despite differences between different Member States.
We believe in a multilateral world where we have to cooperate with our neighbors and generate development, peace and stability around the world. That's why we are, for example, the first donors and development partners, with 58 percent of the world's development cooperation money. "

The representative of the European Union admits, however, that there are challenges ahead:

RM – Carmen Cano
"We know that the European Union is much more and goes beyond Brexit; That the economic recovery after the crisis that hit Europe a few years ago is already outdated - we expect growth of 1.8 percent for this year; Unemployment rates also dropped to [an average] of 1.9 percent in Europe. We know that we face [a wave] of populism, which is a phenomenon not only in Europe, but also in many other parts of the world, a nationalism that causes exclusion and is misunderstood, but the elections of days ago in Holland and for months In Austria show that the vast majority of Europeans believe in Europe and do not allow themselves to be driven by populism. I believe that, like all other regions, the European Union is facing a world of greater uncertainty and volatility than it was a year ago, but these challenges also open up opportunities, because the European Union has accumulated the experience, the necessary These [questions] successfully. "

Last week, in the Netherlands, right-wing candidate Geert Wilders was defeated in the general election. Despite losing congressmen, the conservative party of the current Prime Minister Mark Rutte was the winner of the vote.

Negotiations between London and Brussels on the departure of the United Kingdom from the European Union are about to begin. Yesterday a spokeswoman for British Prime Minister Theresa May announced that the London government will push Article 50 of the Treaty of Lisbon on 29 July - an action that will formalize the start of the process of leaving the Union country European Union.

Carmen Cano recalls that the referendum on Brexit ended up having a positive effect on the European citizens' opinion of the European Union:

RM – Carmen Cano:

"We found that after the referendum on Brexit, the European citizen trusts more in the European Union than before Brexit. For example, 81 percent of European citizens support the European Union - more than they did before the British referendum. "

As regards the negotiations on the departure of the United Kingdom from the Union, Carmen Cano is cautious:

RM – Carmen Cano:
"Of course there will be complex negotiations. After 44 years of lots of sharing, there is obviously a lot to talk about. The European Union wants to maintain a close relationship with the United Kingdom; The United Kingdom wants to leave the European Union but continues to be in Europe. We believe that the agreement reached must reflect a balance between rights and obligations and that the achievements of the European Union can not be jeopardized. "

The future of Europe and the priorities for this year have been discussed in informal meetings at 27. Carmen Cano says that European leaders understand that priorities have to address the concerns and needs of European citizens:

RM – Carmen Cano 5:
"One of the main concerns of European citizens is security - this is definitely one of the things we are moving forward with a lot; Growth - continue to develop inclusive and sustainable growth; And job creation. In this way, we believe that we must be able to respond to citizens' concerns and continue the integration process to 27. We know that the European Union is not perfect, but it is the best instrument we have to face together and win together."

On the 25th, the Heads of State and Government will meet in Rome to discuss what model the European Union should follow in the future. Carmen Cano recalls the words of the former French Minister for Foreign Affairs, Robert Schuman, one of the founders of the European Union:

RM – Carmen Cano:
"Europe will not be made at once, nor by a single plan."

On the phone from Brussels is the resident commentator of Magazine Europe, Victor Ângelo, an international consultant based in the Belgian capital.

Hi, Victor, what's the highlight in the last 60 years?

RM - Victor Ângelo:
"I think that when looking at the last 60 years in Europe one has to be positive, in the sense that Europe today is much different and much better than it was 60 years ago. It is better in terms of freedoms; Is better in terms of economics; And is also better in terms of the social protection of European citizens. Europe is now a space of freedoms, it is a human rights space and it also represents a thriving economy, or thriving economies, and generous and functioning social security systems. Certainly we have the best social protection in the world at present. What we have today in Europe is a Europe without curtains of iron, a Europe in peace, a Europe that has

freed itself from the various totalitarian regimes, a Europe with a modern economy and also with very generous social models. "

And what are the main challenges facing the European Union at the moment?

RM - Victor Ângelo:
"On the one hand, there are political challenges that we need to continue to explain to the European Union, and it is a political project, which seeks to share some of the national sovereignties between the different states. There are political dimensions also related to the acceptance of the people - we have to be sure that European citizens, and especially the younger ones, support and believe in the European project. And that's the big challenge we have right now. We also face other challenges, which are, in particular, challenges related to the economic inequalities that still exist between different countries. These economic disparities have an impact not only on the citizens' way of life, but also on their acceptance of the European project. It is also necessary for Europeans to feel secure from the point of view of internal threats and, above all, external threats, but they also need to feel secure in terms of employment, population aging and social security. "

We have just heard the Head of the European Delegation for Hong Kong and Macao said that Europe "is much more than Brexit". But this is a subject that will mark the European agenda in the near future ...

RM - Victor Ângelo:
"I think Brexit, which is going to be a very complex process and that will divert much attention for some time, after all, is not a fatal blow to Europe. The real threats to Europe are other. On the one hand, the decline of political credibility and the institutions and, in particular, the European institutions. It is therefore essential that the credibility of the institutions be given more attention and strengthened. Another great danger for Europe is the fear of new threats from the people, especially the threats of emigration from globalization, that is, the fear of others, of those who come from outside. And we must also solve the problem of the deficit of hope that exists at the moment in Europe. Europeans must again believe that Europe is a project of hope, a project that will bring them security and prosperity. These are the three major issues that need to be addressed. "

Given the challenges, what should be the European Union's major guidelines for the coming times?

RM - Victor Ângelo:
"European leaders have to prepare the new generations for the global village. The future is a globalized future and it will be necessary to review the entire European educational process in order to prepare young people for their insertion in the global world. There will also be a need to continue to invest in economic modernization and the deepening of the single market, it will be necessary to define Europe positively - that is, what are our values, to what extent are we an area of freedoms, human rights And equality between men and women. It will be necessary to protect citizens, to make European citizens feel protected. Moving forward with political Europe, that is, a Europe of shared sovereignties. To have a kind of narrative about the future of Europe in order to show that the European Union is the only positive position and the

only position that will defend the interests of the different countries of Europe and, moreover, it is also necessary for Europe to define What kind of relationship do you want to have with your neighbors, particularly Russia, the Middle East and North Africa, but also what kind of relationship do you want with China and the United States, and also with As this year will be the year of the grand summit between the European Union and the African Union. "

With regard to the current model governing the European Union, is it to be expected that there will be amendments to the Lisbon Treaty?

RM - Victor Ângelo:

"I do not think so. I think that the Treaty of Lisbon will continue to be valid, because at the moment there is great fear in Europe: if there is a discussion of new treaties in the sense of being important structural changes to the Treaty of Lisbon, A public discussion and a referendum, so to speak, on these treaties, and at this

There is a lot of appetite for new referendums, there is not much political will for referendums, because, in fact, the experience of referendums has shown that people are not voting on the question that is asked in the referendum, but they are rather voting in Situation in the country in which they live. And the referendum is therefore an extremely dangerous, seemingly democratic weapon, but in reality a weapon that can be of mass destruction and, in this case, that could destroy the European project. That is why a treaty review at this point is an issue that is excluded, not on the agenda, and I think that we will try to make the most of the space provided by the Treaty of Lisbon to deepen European integration, especially those countries that want to move forward in Matters of economy, defense, foreign affairs, as well as justice and the environment, for example. "

Next Friday, leaders of the 27 member states will adopt a declaration, the Rome Declaration. What should be included in this document?

RM - Victor Ângelo:

"The statement is fundamentally positive. I have seen the draft declaration and, in fact, the declaration recognizes that there are major challenges, both internal challenges and challenges from outside, but that the European Union will be able to resolve these challenges and will come out of this stronger situation and with a greater Ability to withstand new threats. The Rome Declaration will also insist on unity as a necessity rather than an option and will also focus heavily on security and defense issues and the European Union's response to the issues of globalization. That is why issues of security, defense and Europe's relationship with the rest of the world will be very important issues in the declaration; But the statement will certainly talk about the issue of innovation and economic growth. "

The analysis of Victor Ângelo, resident commentator of Magazine Europe.

To close, we leave you with the ranking of the countries of the world where one is happier.

The latest edition of the World Happiness Report, produced by a United Nations agency, was released this week and indicates that

The nations that occupy the first six places of the ranking, the places of greatest happiness, are all located in Europe.

It is in Norway that you find more happiness. This is followed by Denmark, Iceland, Switzerland, Finland and the Netherlands.

At the end of the table of a total of 155 territories analyzed in the study is the Central African Republic - the country of the world where one is less happy.

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