I.

French President considers Turkey's accession to the European Union impossible. We must abandon hypocrisy, Emmanuel Macron said during the Turkish head of state's visit to Paris.

Portugal is from the European countries where it is colder at home. In this program, we look at the Eurostat statistics, which reveal that 22.5 percent of the Portuguese cannot keep the house warm properly.

Also in this issue: European Union repudiates death penalty in Israel for convicted terrorists.

II.

Welcome to the Europe Magazine!

It was a press conference with several moments of tension. And with Turkish President Tayyip Erdogan and French President Emmanuel Macron revealing what separates and what unites the two nations.

The French leader stressed that in the face of recent developments in the field of human rights, membership of the European Union is not possible.

Emmanuel Macron, President of France
With regard to relations with the European Union, it is clear that recent developments and choices do not allow any progress in the understanding process. We had a very frank conversation on this issue, but it is clear that we should abandon a hypocrisy which would consist in thinking that a natural progression is possible for the opening of new chapters, which is not true.

Erdogan was at the end of last week for the first time in Paris since the failed coup in 2016 in Turkey.
At the same press conference, the leader was troubled when a French journalist asked him about possible complicity of the Turkish authorities with the Islamic State. Erdogan left an alert.

Tayyip Erdogan, President of Turkey
There are so-called guardians of terror and terrorists. These guardians are thinkers, they write in the newspapers, they are the ideologues who contribute to terrorism. One day, you will see. These people will appear at your doorstep as terrorists.

This was a clear reference of Erdogan to the cleric Fethullah Gülen, who is in exile in the USA and the leader of Ankara accuses of having inspired the coup attempt in Turkey

in 2016.

And with us on the phone from Brussels is Victor Ângelo, a resident commentator of Magazine Europe and an international consultant based in the Belgian capital.

Victor, did Emmanuel Macron say what the European Union wanted to say a long time ago?
I think yes. European public opinion is not in favor of Turkey's accession to the European Union. I saw this weekend a survey by a major Belgian newspaper and thousands of people were interviewed in that survey - more than 16,000 people - and 94% said they did not want Turkey in the European Union. And that is very much the feeling that exists throughout Europe. That alone explains the fact that the negotiations have lasted for 54 years, and 54 years later there is no progress whatsoever and the possible date of Turkey's accession to the European Union is not on the horizon.

In fact, Macron did not even criticize the ambiguity of Brussels in this whole process of negotiations. The Frenchman suggested a form of cooperation, a sort of partnership to ensure the link between Turkey and the Turkish people with Europe. How do you foresee the relationship between Turkey and the EU in the near future?
The word ambiguity you just mentioned seems to me to be an important word. Indeed, Europe has maintained and wants to maintain a relatively ambiguous relationship with Turkey. Turkey is a very large neighbor, but an awkward neighbor. It is a neighbor that we lack, which is needed to control, for example, the migratory flows from the Middle East, which is also fundamental in terms of being a partner in that part of the European geopolitics, which is the Middle East, but on the other side is a neighbor who does not want to see very close to our homes. And, for this reason, this situation has remained ambiguous. Now, following the declarations of Emmanuel Macron talks about a partnership agreement, that is to say, Turkey would be left out, but would have very close economic relations and very privileged with the European Union. It is a kind of half-hearted party, without however being part of the club and without, for example, allowing free movement of people, that is to say, one of the great fears of European countries is that part of the population of Turkey seeks to emigrate to Europe to a Europe that already has a lot of emigration, which already has many Turks, because in the 60s and 70s there were great migratory movements of Turkey towards Europe and people do not want to see this kind of migrations again.

But Victor, is not Germany a success story of Turkish integration in Europe?
Germany has a large proportion of Turkish emigrants living in Europe, that is true, and many of them have integrated perfectly. Some of them occupy very important places in German society and political life. But it is also true that a part of German public opinion was surprised when he saw that many of these Turks who had lived for tens and tens of years - and some of them are already second or third generation - in Germany, many of them when it came to supporting the president of Turkey Erdogan, they clearly and to some extent supported the policy that Germany was trying to promote towards Turkey

which was a policy of greater openness and greater democracy.

On the other hand, this visit, this operation of charm, reveals some willingness of Tayyip Erdogan to approach the EU ...
The key is to recognize that Turkey at the moment thinks it is very isolated from the European Union, at the moment Turkey also has many difficulties in its relationship with the United States, there have been immense political and even military conflicts between Turkey and the States United States, in particular with regard to its position vis-à-vis Syria, with regard to support for the Kurds, with regard to the purchase of Turkish arms from the Russians, an issue that was very much overlooked in Washington and therefore , is that Turkey is at this time, this early in the year trying to make an offensive of charm towards Europe.

III.

Portugal is the fifth country in the European Union that has the most difficulty in heating the house. Nearly 23 percent of families suffer from thermal poverty. More with the journalist Sofia Jesus.

Bulgaria, Lithuania, Greece and Cyprus. These are the countries of the European Union that suffer more from thermal poverty, that is, situations where families can not keep the house warm properly.
Portugal is in fifth place, according to data released last week by Eurostat.

The figures, referring to 2016, show that 22.5% of Portuguese families do not have the financial conditions to keep their homes warm. The situation is explained by the price of electricity - one of the most expensive in Europe - and also by poorly prepared winter homes.
The European average stands at 8.7 percent. Bulgaria, which has the worst results, has 39.2 percent of families that cannot cope with the cold.
With less than two percent of families in this situation are Luxembourg and Finland, where there are more people with economic power to warm the house properly.

Should these cold recurrents not require a revision of housing construction rules in countries like Portugal?
I think so, I think there are issues related to the houses, with the efficiency of the isolation of the dwellings, there are also issues related to a certain urbanistic anarchy that exists in Portugal, with families to build very cheap aluminum balconies in any way in their houses, and balconies these that do not allow to isolate the cold. But also-and this is mainly the problem in Portugal-is that the income of the families is very low, the energy is expensive. In fact, in Portugal we currently have electricity which is one of the most expensive in Europe. Not because the electricity itself is expensive, but because the successive governments in Portugal have linked to the value of electricity a whole series of taxes that make the energy invoice very high for the Portuguese.

Despite the fifth worst result of the European Union, the situation in Portugal has improved in the face of recent years. In 2006 Portugal arrived at 39,9%. What has led to this improvement?
Between 2006 and 2016 there was an increase in the standard of living of people and more families began to have better housing conditions and especially more income to be able to heat their homes during the winter. I remember here 10, 15 years ago, when I went to Portugal in winter, I was very cold when I went to visit people, when I went to visit the family, when I was going to visit friends. Nowadays it is easier, it is more tempting to go to Portugal during Christmas or during the winter, to the extent that many of my friends already have the house more heated than they had in the past. There is an empirical indicator here that shows that you live better today than you lived 15 or 20 years ago.

In Spain, 10,1% families are unable to warm the house properly. How do you explain that the neighboring country has higher values than Portugal?
In Spain there is a plan to combat energy poverty. The Spanish government has been very active in supporting the neediest families in terms of financial aid in terms of identifying the most vulnerable cases. The families' energy debts are staggered throughout the year, they allow to avoid that situation where suddenly in December or in January or in February the electricity bills or the gas bills are very high, so all this is staggered throughout the year. On the other hand, there is a clear and very proactive policy in Spain that prevents the cuts in electricity and gas supply to families, especially to poorer families. There has also been a great deal of effort in the last few years for the energy efficiency of dwellings, that is, the Spanish government has invested immensely to grant families credit, so that these families can improve for example the windows, can improve the Doors, can improve the roofs, so that the cold does not enter inside the house.

iv.

The European Union repudiated the death penalty in Israel to convicts of terrorism. For Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu it is about justice in the face of extreme cases, as the journalist Marta Melo tells us.

The House of Deputies of Israel has adopted a bill that will allow the death penalty to be applied to convicts of terrorism. The proposal went by very little: with 52 votes in favor and 49 against.
The bill was presented by the defense Minister's party, Avigdor Lieberman, and supported by the Prime Minister, Benjamin Netanyahu.
The Minister stated during the debate that the new law might act as a powerful deterrent against terrorists
For Netanyahu, who was present in the vote, it is about justice in the face of extreme

cases.
However, the European Union has already reacted, expressing displeasure.
In a press conference, the spokesperson for the European Union, Carlos Gordejuela, said that Brussels is opposed to the death penalty in all circumstances and without exception and that the world trend is for the abolition of capital punishment.

Victor, after the Jerusalem episode, which departed from Donald Trump, and the European Union reacted by saying that it does not recognize Jerusalem as the Israeli capital, this is the second time in a short time that Brussels is in a position to confront Israel. What analysis can be made of the current relationship between the European Union and Israel.
At the economic level, relationships are pretty good. There are a whole range of trade agreements between the European area and Israel that allow products from Israel to enter Europe – notably industrial products – virtually without any fee. But from a political standpoint, relationships are very tense. Israel sees the European Union as very close to the Palestinian positions.
At the moment the major concerns here in Europe regarding Israel are the following: On the one hand, we are trying to prevent a division between European countries, those in favor of Donald Trump's position, that is, to prevent countries that recognize Jerusalem as capital of the Israeli state-and there was talk in two or three countries that could have the same type of position as that which was announced by Washington. The second big question is in fact this issue of the death penalty. For Europe, capital punishment is a fundamental issue and the European Union usually has very difficult relations with countries that apply the death penalty and the third major issue here in Europe is to know how the European Union's political capacity to intervene can be increased so to play a more effective role in the peace process in the Middle East, a more effective role that has so far been lacking in Europe.

And what reading can be made of this Israeli initiative?
There are two issues here, one of which is that Israel is increasing the pressure on the Palestinians – and this is a way of increasing this pressure. And the second issue is that Israel seeks, in particular, for Europe, to assert itself politically to force Europe to define itself. And above all, I think that Israel continues to bet on a division that can exist within the European Union between countries more favorable to the position of Israel and less favorable countries. Israel particularly looks to eastern Europe with a way of seeing that it thinks that there could be some support for the positions of Israel and the American positions, for various reasons, even for historical reasons. These Eastern European countries were countries that had large Jewish colonies, those colonies that were exterminated during World War II, so there is a certain sense of guilt at the level of these countries and from that sense of guilt, the Israelites seek Turn it into a feeling of remorse and support.

V.

Victor Angelo, with us every week here in the Europa Magazine.

And for our cultural suggestion today we travel to Paris. The Louvre Museum has opened two new rooms that have on display 31 works that have been plundered by the Nazi regime.
Between 1940 and 1945 near a hundred thousand pieces of art were stolen in France and transferred to Germany. Many of them were destined to feed the collection of the Hitler Museum – the Sonderauftrag in Linz, Austria. A project that never saw the light of day.

We're done here today. See you next week.

[Technical Sheet]

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