I.

Last year, the world was closer to a conflict. According to a report presented at the Munich Security Conference, which highlighted the need to consolidate Europe's defense industry.

And just over a year after the European elections, Jean-Claude Juncker defends the maintenance of the current system for the selection of his successor. "Spitzenkandidat" is a process that continues to raise doubts.

Still in this issue: In Germany, Martin Schulz proposes Andrea Nahles for SPD leadership. We start with the German case to reflect on the future of social democracy on the European continent.

II.

Welcome to the Europe Magazine!

Last year the world was closer to a conflict. The statement comes from a report issued at the Munich Security Conference, which took place between 16 and 18 February in the capital of the German state of Bavaria.
In addition to the tension between Washington and Pyongyang, the report entitled To the brink - and back? notes that the United States has promoted a more country-centered political vision at the expense of diplomacy and traditional allies.
This change, the document reflects, means that Europe must do more for its own safety. The consolidation of the European defense industry would be crucial to strengthen the continent, the study finds.

And from Brussels we have with us Victor Ângelo, former Deputy Secretary-General of the United Nations and international consultant, based in the Belgian capital.

Victor, what are the most important conclusions of this report? Last year, were we actually closer to a conflict?
In reality, there is an arms race, on the one hand, that is, the great global powers are arming themselves in an accelerated way. This is the case with Russia, this is the case with China and so is the case with the United States. In addition, there are extremely serious conflicts for which no solution is found: one is clearly the conflict around North Korea. In addition, it is noted that in Europe also there are great tensions, and in particular with Russia. The relationship between the European Union and the Western world with Russia has remained unclear - and this tension with Russia has also led to a more force-based and military intervention language gaining a great deal of prominence over the last few years. 12 months.

Here is the idea that Europe must be more united in the issue of security.

Yes, although this union issue within Europe has raised some objections from the US government. In fact, the main message that was conveyed by the Americans at the Munich conference was that the defense of Europe has to go through NATO and not a defense built on Europeans alone. The US administration is extremely concerned that there is a current in Europe that believes that there should be some autonomy with regard to the defense of the European area and that autonomy must be built on the basis of the development of the security forces and European military and rely less on American support.

And what are the big messages that came out of the Munich conference?
There is much concern about Russian revanchist and the question of Ukraine remains a very important issue for the Western world. It has also been very clear that there is a very strong rivalry - and probably it could lead to an open fight between Israel and Iran. There is a great deal of concern about the security situation in the Sahel. And of course the usual themes of Afghanistan and Syria were also present at the Munich conference. The fundamental question, I think, with regard to the Munich conference is to say that the European Union has to play a moderating role in the midst of so many conflicts like the ones we have just listed.

We also have the statements of Theresa May, who called for a new security agreement for the European Union for the post-Brexit phase. Let us recall the words of the leader of the United Kingdom.

Theresa May, Prime Minister United Kingdom
(...) The treaty must preserve our operational capabilities but must also respect the sovereignty of the British and European judicial systems. For example, when we take part in European Union agencies, the United Kingdom will respect the powers of the European Court of Justice, but a solution will also be needed to respect our unique external status with a sovereign legal order.

Victor, a break from the current cooperation would have - and here I quote Theresa May - real harmful consequences?
Yes, certainly cooperation between the European Union and the United Kingdom is a very important cooperation, it is a very important fact. The UK within the European area is probably the country with the most efficient security system, both in terms of internal security and in terms of presence in international arenas. And it is in the interest of all, and in particular in the interest of Europe, that this kind of link between European and UK security systems continues. But the truth is that the message that Theresa May wanted to convey during the Munich conference was very clear, which was as follows: We are willing to continue and deepen our security cooperation with the rest of Europe, but in return we hope have a soft Brexit, a Brexit that responds to the wishes of the Government and the British people.

III.

And this Friday begins the European Union Leaders Summit. In debate will be the method of appointments to senior posts of the European Union, the Spitzenkandidat, as the journalist Lina Ferreira tells us.

The European elections take place only in May 2019, but the European Commission says that it is time to take decisions. These concerns, for example, the choice of the next President of the Commission.
Jean-Claude Juncker is not going to be re-named, you know. However, it maintains that the system of appointing list heads by the political groups of the European Parliament is maintained.
The process is called by the German term Spitzenkandidat. The method continues to arouse reservations and even opposition, notably from French President Emmanuel Macron.
In the Brussels State of the Union address of 2017, Juncker said that this experience, first adopted in 2014, when he himself was elected, must continue.
The President of the Commission is elected by the European Parliament on the proposal of the European Council, composed of the Heads of State and Government of the European Union, and taking into account the results of the European elections.
Previously, Parliament endorsed the name proposed by the European Council, but it was chosen by European leaders.
Portuguese Barroso was the last president of the community executive appointed outside the current method.

Victor, began by asking him what are the advantages and disadvantages of choosing a Spitzenkandidat?
The main advantage is that this method of choosing and electing the President of the European Commission is a very clear method. It becomes the President of the European Commission who is the head of the political family list who wins the elections to the European Parliament.
This method is currently being advocated not only by the European Parliament, but by several personalities in Brussels, because in fact this method favors the conservative family that exists in Europe, that is, it favors the European right-wing parties. At the moment, the European right is at an advantage, has much more votes, far more seats in the European Parliament than the other families, than the socialist family, or the liberal family. I no longer speak of the extreme right or left. But in reality, the Conservatives have a majority in the European Parliament and probably who will become the head of the EPP family list, which is the conservative family, the right-wing European family will become the next President of the European Commission.

What profile should Juncker's successor have in such a relevant position?
There are already some names in Brussels. There is talk of Michel Barnier, the current negotiator on the European side in relation to Brexit. There is talk of Margrethe Vestager, who is a European commissioner who is in charge of the competition and who is an

extremely visible person and is the person behind the great penalties against the American multinationals. I think talking about names and notably these two names at this stage is extremely premature, it's too early. Probably the tradition of going to choose a former prime minister or a former President of the Republic will continue to be practiced here in Brussels. I think that at the moment the Nordic countries would be very interested in being someone from this region and will probably put pressure on it to be either a person from Finland, a former prime minister of Finland, or an old Prime Minister of one of the Baltic countries. However, at this point it is still too early to see exactly which way the power relationship will fall.

And even at the summit starting on Friday, any transnational lists will be discussed. The European Parliament has already rejected the idea of the creation of these lists, for example by Emmanuel Macron. What's at stake here?
The idea would be to have a European Parliament which was relatively different from the national parliaments and was not simply a photocopy of what we found in the different capitals of the European States in terms of parliamentary regime. Transnational lists would have candidates from several Member States, would be lists that would represent European interests rather than represent the interests of country A or country B or C. Another feature of these lists would be that the first seven places of each of the lists should be filled by candidates of different nationalities to prevent a country or another country from taking a position of preponderance, but the reality is that at the moment I do not seem to have political conditions to move forward with the question of transnational lists, which will move forward with the ambition to have lists that go beyond the interests of each Member State.

IV.

In Germany, Martin Schulz is definitely out of the presidency of the Social Democratic Party. Schulz says the SPD needs to be renewed, as explained by the journalist of the Antena 1 Sandra Henriques.

[This is how Martin Schulz announced the decision to resign from the SPD leadership. Martin Schulz said that the departure of office requires an extraordinary party congress, which will take place on April 22, one Sunday, in the city of Wiesbaden, near Frankfurt. At the time of leaving the leadership of the German Social Democratic Party, Schulz appointed a name for the succession: Andrea Nahles.

Andrea Nahles was elected leader of the SPD parliamentary caucus in the Party congress in November. Former minister of Labor with 47 years, Nahles is a consensual figure within the SPD. He joined the center-Left party at the age of 18. Formed in German literature, philosophy and political Science from the University of Bonn, he was the leader of the Social Democrat Youth and is part of the left wing of the party. It is up to her now to revitalize the SPD.

We start with this choice. What about Andrea Nahles, the first woman who could lead the SPD?
A reading to a certain extent positive, to the extent that, on the one hand, Andrea Nahles is a woman with a very strong personality. On the other hand, it is the affirmation, let's say, of the parity between men and women within the German Social Democratic Party and also the fact that Andrea Nahles is an excellent speaker. It also has an inconvenience that it is evidently a lady who has been in politics for a long time and for many of the youngest his appointment as the SPD leader appears as more of the less, that is, it does not give the idea of renewal.

And with this crisis within the SPD, we can also reflect here on the future of social democracy. And I quote only one article published this year by Vox Europe, which states that in almost all of Europe the social democracy and the socialist parties are losing support. In Germany, France, Holland, Czech Republic... Victor, is European social democracy struggling to survive?
European social democracy in general has suffered a decline in electoral support, not only in the countries you have just mentioned, but also in the Nordic countries themselves which were the cradle of social democracy. Also, in France, for example, what happened last year was very clear in terms of the strength that the Socialist Party lost. The presidential candidate supported by the French Socialist Party Benoit Hamon achieved only 6% of the votes and then in the legislative elections the same French Socialist party did not go beyond the 7%, that is, the question was not only that the electorate did not like to Benoit Hamon, the question was that there is now a transfer of votes from voters who traditionally chose the Socialist Party for other parties. What we have witnessed is a transfer of these votes to the most extreme parties – Left-wing parties, but also some extreme right-wing parties, as well as to citizen and environmental-inspired parties. The European social democracy appears to many voters as more of the same, that is, as the continuity party, when in reality the European population wants a new type of political leadership.

And what renewal is needed for these parties?
I think that these social Democrats have to go back to their origins and go back to be the parties, so to speak, of citizens, who have a more unfavourable position and are, to some extent, very difficult and very precarious in societies European. Precariousness is, in fact, one of the great current characteristics of the social situation in Europe and the Social Democrats have to be the parties that are going to fight and who must fight against precariousness. It is also true that the socialist parties and the Social Democrats have lost a lot in the sense that they were parties in which the working class, industrial workers were their basis for political support and at the moment we saw in Europe the A transformation of the productive sectors and less and fewer there are the existence of worker classes or industrial workers. And these were traditionally, let's say, the supporters of the socialist parties and the Social Democrats.

V.

We just heard Victor Angelo, resident commentator for Magazine Europa.
And this week in our cultural point, we tell you that there are six Portuguese works to compete for Berlinale, international film Festival, which this year is held until 25 February.
The director João Viana has a dual participation: to join the short film "Madness", presents the Long "Our Madness" in the section "Forum". The film looks to Mozambique; It tells the story of a son who withdraws his mother from a psychiatric hospital to take her to her father, who is in a military confrontation zone.
In the section "forum" is still "the tree" by André Gil Mata and "Mariphasa" by Sandro Aguilar.
Still in the short section David Pinheiro Vicente presents "Where Summer goes (episodes of Youth)" and João Salaviza and Ricardo Alves Jr. Sign the film "Russian".
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We'll be back next Tuesday.

[Technical Sheet]
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