

Lisbon and Porto unite to promote Portugal abroad

Every year the MIPIM, the most important event for the real estate industry, takes place in Cannes, where many Portuguese and foreign persons witnessed with joy a reality seldom observed in the past decades: Lisbon and Porto together, internationally promoting both cities and also Portugal.

The respective mayors, Carlos Moedas and Rui Moreira, deserve praise. "*Chapeau*", as the French would say!

This beneficial and stimulating "coopetition" (that is, the combination of the words cooperation and competition, expression that was often heard in Cannes during those days as to congratulate the many real estate industry professionals happily watching to this unique expression from the mayors of the two major national municipalities) is sorely lacking in Portugal, where the silo mentality, jealousy, and "egos" as well as short-sightedness and narrow-mindedness too often prevail. Kudos for those who, in this MIPIM, proved to be different and think different.

Well then, those who follow my opinion column for some years now got used to read a harsh and critical voice for our town halls, specially because of the delays in licensing, but when there is something to praise about and congratulate, this must also be done, and specially we should not be afraid to do it just as loud and clear.

We must then praise this attitude of Moedas and Moreira, as well the city council leaders assisting them, such as Joana Castro e Almeida from Lisbon, and Ricardo Valente and Pedro Baganha from Porto; and also the respective municipal entities to attract investment, such as InvestLisboa and InvestPorto, for giving us the opportunity to think further, to properly promote our cities and our country, and above all for letting us dream that Portugal can and is able to do more and better.

I would say that this was Portugal's and the real estate industry's strongest representation in MIPIM for a long time. Not only because of the largest turnout of Portuguese, but also because the presence of Portuguese institutions was quite dignified, thereby bringing prestige as an international investment destination.

It is also very much welcomed the strong presence of Vila Nova de Gaia and its municipal representatives, specially through Gaiurb, as well as Fundão and Vila Franca de Xira Municipalities. The representatives of this last municipality revealed a wider perspective than their counterparts from other town halls in the countryside as they dared to leave their comfort zone, looking to position themselves in the international market and learn from new realities. They did what many miss, to win and "to have world", learn with what is already done abroad... Also for them, "*chapeau*"!

In the MIPIM Portugal cocktail organized by the APPII in the Cannes port, it was also a honour to bring together all these municipal representatives and the nearly 300 Portuguese

professionals that flocked to this town for those days. It was really a unique gesture that the Associação offered to its associates, partners, and friends by managing to bring together both mayors from the major cities in our country, Lisbon and Porto, in a single moment, to the jubilation of all those who had the opportunity to be present at the MIPIM and witness the event. Most certainly this will be engraved in the memory of all for many years.

We hope that this moment of healthy and wholesome cooperation between the two major Portuguese cities, normally competing among themselves, but surely with much more in common to showcase to all international real estate investors interested in Portugal, was the first step of many taken together for the benefit of our country, of the image of Portugal abroad and attraction of foreign investment, which is very much needed in moments of economic recovery such as these we are going through and in the challenging years that lie ahead.

I know and the conversations held convinced me that this year was just a "first step". 2023 looks promising! We and the APPII will also be there, stronger than ever, throughout the 32 year continuous presence in the MIPIM.