COURTESY TRANSLATION

Dear Colleague,

It is with great pleasure that I invite you to the Lisbon summit on 18 and 19 October 2007.

Since the opening of the Intergovernmental Conference, on 23 July 2007, the Portuguese Presidency has been working with all Member States on drafting the final text of the future Treaty. We have adhered strictly to the terms of the mandate adopted at the last European Council meeting and, as a result of our discussions, on 3 October 2007 we presented a text which has brought us closer to our objective.

Reaching agreement on the final text of the future Treaty is the challenge I am presenting for the Lisbon meeting. This is a fundamental issue for Europe. Adopting the text of the Reform Treaty means not only that the European Union will be able to concentrate its efforts on questions which more directly affect and concern its citizens, but also that it will be able to do so more efficiently.

A complete answer to those questions will undoubtedly require greater commitment to the agenda of modernising Europe's economies and societies which is provided by the Lisbon Strategy.

However, the challenges facing us are increasingly global. It is essential to take action at regional, national and European level, but that action will not be complete without a global component. The success of Europe depends on what we manage to achieve together both internally and externally. Together we must succeed in offering a more ambitious response to globalisation, while fully assuming Europe's responsibilities in the new world order which is taking shape.

For that reason, I wish to take advantage of the Lisbon meeting to discuss how to develop the external dimension of the Lisbon Strategy. I have asked the President of the European Commission to give a presentation at our meeting, based on the document "The European interest: Succeeding in the age of globalisation", which will help structure our discussion and to propose some lines of thought in this area.

In this context, there are two specific subjects of particular importance and relevance which I believe we should tackle in our informal discussions: the financial markets and the political response to the turbulence in the sub-prime mortgage market; and climate change, with a view to the ministerial meeting in Bali in December 2007.

I believe that these subjects are important and I hope that we will have a fruitful debate. I am however well aware that the agenda is ambitious and time is short, especially because my main priority will be to secure agreement on the future Treaty.

In view of the informal nature of the summit, except for the period when we will meet formally as an Intergovernmental Conference, there will be no formal written conclusions. At the close of the summit I will present some informal oral conclusions, which will provide the basis for my statements to the press.

As regards the organisation of the event, I intend to begin with a session of the Intergovernmental Conference at 18.00 on 18 October. This will be followed by the traditional family photograph. The dinner for the Heads of State or Government will be held at 20.00.

During their dinner, the Ministers for Foreign Affairs will discuss topical matters of international importance, particularly the Middle East peace process and the situation in Lebanon.

Our meeting will continue on 19 October with a working session from 10.00 onwards. Press conferences will be held at the end of the meeting.

Please accept my best wishes and I look forward to our meeting in Lisbon.