

REPORT

BETTER PREPARED TO FACE FUTURE CRISES

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The Portuguese Presidency priorities are in line with those of the European Commission, Parliament and the Presidency Trio. The main surprise of the Portuguese proposals is the social dimension, which has more emphasis than in previous presidencies, and the special attention given to the EU's relations with Africa and India. The EU's response to the health and economic consequences of COVID-19 and implementing the recovery and resilience plans will be particularly important. I believe that this resilience is achievable, not by adopting protectionist measures, but through investing in knowledge, research and innovation,



infrastructure, industries and supply chains. These measures will ensure the EU is better prepared to face any future crises, and will help make Europe more globally competitive. I am curious to see how the Portuguese Presidency will address this priority. An issue that is not on the official list of priorities, but obviously of extreme importance, will be the role of the Council, under Portuguese guidance, in coordinating of vaccine distribution and any necessary increase in production. Member States need to move with efficiency and at the same pace. Portugal can contribute to creating the cooperative environment that we will need to succeed. In fact, this culture of cooperation needs to be strengthened across many other fronts, including in the digital and green transitions. ★