



## **Motion A**

**A STRONGER BLOCO TO  
CHANGE THE COUNTRY**



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The parliament agreements established in 2015 between Bloco de Esquerda, PCP and the Greens with PS<sup>1</sup>, moved the right wing parties away from government, after four years of impoverishment and austerity and allowed recovering living conditions and new mobilizations. These gains are important victories. This cycle will end with the 2019 elections and Bloco has the conviction that only social mobilization and more strength on the left will allow new advances in Portugal

### **THE INTERNATIONAL SITUATION IS DEEPLY UNSTABLE**

1. The commercial war with China and the EU suits the defense of the financial system of the USA and the war escalation. Trump discourse exploits the effects of the crisis normalizing racist, authoritarian and misogynist answers, thus reinforcing the growth of far-right all over Europe.
2. Climate changes are a serious global risk. In Portugal, the fast erosion of the coastal area, longer periods of drought, growing numbers of tempests, violent forest fires and the persistent pursuit of oil prospection remind us that no places are protected from the climate menace.
3. The refugee crisis, the ultimatum to Greece, Brexit, the fascist surge, repression in Catalonia are all signs of how fast some political regimes and the EU are collapsing. All the factors of crisis in Europe are worsening. EU has substituted the slight aims of social and territorial cohesion by militarization and is more and more a punitive space.
4. Having this European disintegration into account, the left has the responsibility of building a popular alternative to the center policies and capable of facing and defeating the right and the far-right. This demands breaking the European Treaties.

### **PRAISES TO THE PORTUGUESE EXPERIENCE BY SOME EUROPEAN SOCIAL DEMOCRATS DO NOT HIDE THEIR FAILURE**

5. The outcome of the 2015 parliamentary election allowed moving the right wing from the government and stopping the impoverishment of the country. This move is a victory that Bloco also claims. But the evaluation of these agreements cannot hide their limits, contradictions and weaknesses in order to accomplish a structural change in the country.

<sup>1</sup> Socialist Party, member of Party of European Socialists.



6. The recovery of work income, salaries and pensions that was announced as an economic catastrophe by the right wing and the European institutions was the biggest conquest during this period. In one year we eliminated unconstitutional cuts in salaries, unfroze pensions and we were able to get extraordinary salary increases, restored holidays that had been stolen, lowered the tax returns, the national minimum wage reached 600€ in 2019 (20% raise during the parliamentary mandate), social electricity tariff reached 700 thousand families and the tax enforcement of permanent houses was hindered. This was also a period of civil rights that were conquered, where Bloco had a great role in social movements and in parliament. Policies that intended to minimize and charge fees to women that needed an abortion were blocked; the right to adopt children was entitled to every family; progress was made in the access to assisted reproductive technology and gestational surrogacy and with regard to gender identity. Disability became part of the political agenda though still with slow progress. Medicinal cannabis was legalized and the right to medical assisted death didn't pass only for a difference of 5 votes, which allows us to predict that the depenalization will come true in the future.
7. Having no agreement whatsoever with the left on European issues, the obedience of the Socialist Party (PS) to the Fiscal Compact led to a scarce public investment. Keeping its fundamental choices on labour legislation and privileges of rentier sectors, the government of PS has restrained the recovery of work income during this mandate.

## **AFTER THE INITIAL RELIEF AND EXPECTATION, 2018 WAS A PERIOD OF NEW SOCIAL AND LABOUR FIGHTS.**

8. In the end of 2015, there was a change in politics: the fear of more cuts gave way to recovery demands and struggles got stronger in this last year.
9. The 2015 agreement proved the fallacy of the "useful vote"<sup>2</sup>, thus changing persistent premises of the political system. The guarantee of left politics derives from the strengthening of Bloco. The agreement proves that, historically, PS did not find agreements with the left because it preferred to make deals with the right. The commitments of the deal that was signed in 2015 were developed by Bloco de Esquerda until the limits established by PS and its obedience to the EU.

## **DEBT RESTRUCTURING AND PUBLIC CONTROL OF STRATEGIC SECTORS OF ECONOMY ARE THE KEY TO A LEFT GOVERNANCE.**

10. The European blackmail against Portugal was reduced but it is temporary and all the risks remain. In 2015 the European directory preferred to avoid the political decay and the systemic risks of a new punishing process against another national state because a government of a country faithful to the treaties was at stake. The untenable external debt remains as an instrument of that blackmail. Portugal remains as a hostage of a public debt that is unpayable and of a fragile finance system
11. If privatizations of the strategic sectors of economy are not reversed, Portugal will continue to be plundered from its resources. Without the control of the strategic sectors, the country is condemned to be under the blackmail of the economic power.

## **THERE IS A GROWING PRESSURE TO RECOVER CENTRAL BLOCK POLITICS AND PUT ASIDE THE INFLUENCE OF THE LEFT.**

12. PS is searching an absolute majority at the centre and opens doors to convergences with the right. Economic power bets on absolute majority of PS and PSD<sup>3</sup> is already showing its will to be a future partner with a PS government, in a subordinated central block.

2 tactical voting in elections with more than two candidates.

3 PSD, member of The European People's Party, is the main right wing party.



13. Bloco de Esquerda is always the guarantee that the measures of the 2015 agreements are fulfilled and that new advances to more demanding levels of social rights are reached.
14. Bloco values a high degree of convergence of positions with PCP, namely on economic and labour issues and enabling the present political solution. Important differences remain as the parity between men and women, cannabis legalization, the extension of assisted reproductive technology or the decriminalisation of medical assisted dying.

## **BLOCO WILL BE PRESENT IN THE 2019 ELECTIONS WITH ITS OWN PROGRAMME TO FIGHT FOR REPRESENTING THE MAJORITY.**

15. The European election is the first electoral struggle in 2019. Bloco will be with its own candidates and joins forces with the left in an internationalist candidacy that refuses submission to the treaties. The evaluation of the years of European disintegration is made in different times and ways by the left wing forces in Europe, according to each country's reality. Bloco has committed itself in creating "Now, the People", a political platform gathering significant forces in several European countries that strengthens the forces against the treaties, the revival of popular sovereignty and solidarity among peoples. This platform does not substitute the spaces of articulation where Bloco is already participating: European Left Party, GUE/NGL in the European Parliament or Plan B. We know that part of the European Left Party accepts the decisions of Syriza government, but Bloco refuses this direction. The foundation of our programme is the recovery of employment, labour rights and Social Welfare State, an economic strategy against climate changes, the feminist and antiracist commitment, the refusal of fortress Europe and the solidarity among peoples.
16. For the parliament election Bloco presents a programme of government and a proposal of left governing. We will join forces in an economic and social transformation programme, in a socialist, ecologist, feminist and antiracist perspective. This programme has in its core the reconstruction of labour rights and the promotion of full employment. It will propose the public debt restructuring and the nationalization of the strategic sectors and a tax revolution that finances a social state with universal solutions. This includes modernization and qualification of Public School, National Health Service, Justice, Culture, Science and the right to Housing. It will develop some strategies to energy reconversion, transportation, planning, food sovereignty, having the environmental issue in the center of decisions. More transparency and fight against corruption will be demanded. It will aim at a solid democracy, fighting conservatism, racism, gender violence and every forms of inequalities and exclusion, promoting the reception of immigrants and the inclusion of people with functional diversity. In 2019, Bloco wants to be force in government with a new force relation. A left government provides a guarantee to the people: it defends salary, pension and employment. A left government does not accept any steps backwards, nor labour precariousness or cuts in wages or pension.

## **NOWADAYS, BLOCO HAS MEMBERS AND INITIATIVE IN MORE PARTS OF THE COUNTRY TERRITORY AND IS SEEN AS A POLITICAL INTERLOCUTOR IN THE WHOLE TERRITORY.**

17. In the regional election in Madeira, the creation of a left alternative relies on the strengthening of Bloco de Esquerda. Madeira is still one of the most unequal regions and has the highest poverty rates of the country. PSD is weak and for the first time it is possible to withdraw the right from government. Only the growth of Bloco de Esquerda can guarantee a political alternative in Madeira.
18. In Açores, Bloco de Esquerda is the opposition that does not give in to the predation of international interests and does not drop development or qualification. The geostrategic position of Açores must be transformed in an economic value, opposing the militaristic logic in service of the US imperialism.



19. Though Bloco representation at local level has progressed, it is still low. Articulating local and national action is a priority in our organization. In Lisbon, the good results of Bloco hindered the absolute majority of PS and forced a local government agreement with left measures in education, housing and social rights. This local rooting of Bloco demands a local work that does not mean a mere local representation, but requires other spaces of popular interaction.
20. Locally, Bloco must create the conditions to enlarge the participation of all our militants, with more debate and discussion, promoting feminist, antiracist and functional diversity inclusion practices.
21. The main challenge for the social left is to refresh the trade union movement. To Bloco de Esquerda one of its strategic interventions is its connection with the labour movements. Bloco needs to create bonds and close organization in the workplaces and support labour activists. That means the promotion of unionization, articulation, defense of democratic participation mechanisms inside trade unions and the guarantee of independence of the workers' representative associations.