



Dear Friends from European Border Regions

On behalf of my colleagues the Presidents of Alentejo, Mr Roberto Grilo, and Centro de Portugal (Center of Portugal), Mrs Ana Abrunhosa, I would like to welcome you in our home euroregion EUROACE Alentejo - Center of Portugal - Extremadura (Spain), to the Conference of European Border Regions, which will take place in the framework of a week full of cross-border events.

Our border is one of the oldest in Europe: the *Treaty of Badajoz* was signed in this town in 1267 and tried to establish lines of mutual assistance and friendship. 750 years have been a long time and our History, as the History of all the European borders, has been full of disagreements and conflicts. Nowadays everything is different and those lines of friendship and mutual assistance have become reality and we share a new scenario where cross-border cooperation is a part of our everyday life.

The walls of that frontier are now a treasure for us and we can take profit from living at a euroregion with a rich cultural diversity. We have been working together for several decades and we all know that the exchange of experiences and common representation of interests among all European border regions contribute to increasing the quality of life of the citizens living in our regions.

Border regions are a key element in Europe. Many of us live in the periphery of the continent but our role is crucial to achieving the necessary cohesion for our future in common because our continent needs more thread and needle than scissors: it is time to sewing instead of cutting.

The Conference of European Border Regions will be held in Badajoz under the title *Periphery - In the Centre of Cohesion* and there will be four different sessions to tackle issues such as 'Cross-Border Cooperation in the light of the 7th Cohesion Report', 'Cross Border Cooperation as driving force for the future European Cohesion', 'Circular Economy in Border Regions' and the 'Generation of Cross-Border Cooperation Societies'.

The framework programme will offer manifold opportunities to get acquainted with the diversity of our euroregion. This European Conference is organized on a cross-border level: we will travel from Badajoz (Extremadura, Spain) to Elvas (Alentejo, Portugal) and we will visit some other towns at the Spanish-Portuguese border.

Looking forward to meeting you in Euroregion EUROACE, Alentejo – Centro - Extremadura

With best regards,

Guillermo Fernández Vara
President of the Regional Government of Extremadura (Spain)