

RE: Rector of the University of Porto: Action Programme

Dear Selection Committee,

Below I outline the current status of the university and my action programme to bring it once again to prominence within the European Union and globally.

Current Status: The University of Porto is currently ranked 501-600 in the world according to Times Higher Education. This represents a significant drop in world ranking since 2014 when it was ranked 293rd. The university attracts few European Union and international students and its current enrolment is slightly over 30,000 students among its three campuses in Porto city. Apart from attracting a small number of EU students the university looks very ‘inward looking’ and focused primarily on meeting national demands. The university has a significant history but many of the current buildings look out of date. There is no question the university could use a significant ‘face lift’.

Vision: Under my leadership over the next two terms (8 years) the university will expand its student enrolment to 50,000 students, the university facilities in Porto will be upgraded, and three new campuses in Brazil, Mozambique and Angola will be established. In the process it will become a top 100 ranked global university and a leader within the European Union.

Plan: In order to make this possible significant changes will have to be made that include:

- *Financial resources:* a significant fund raising campaign will need to be launched over a four year period in order to raise the necessary capital to upgrade the university facilities and bring it into the 21st century. Capital will be raised from alumni, philanthropy and other sources.
- *Global expansion:* If the university is to become a truly global university it will need to expand outside of Portugal. Capitalising on its existing relationships in Africa and Brazil new campuses are proposed for Mozambique, Angola and Brazil. The African economy is improving thus this would be a wise investment. Brazil has over 200 million people hence it will clearly be able to support an international campus. Funds will come from the university and the host countries. It is expected that such a formal relationship will improve the economies of all the countries involved.
- *International students:* In order to attract students apart from the three Portuguese countries mentioned, the university will have course offerings totally in ‘English’ in order to attract other students from around the world. Presently the university websites are outdated and do a poor job marketing the university.
- *Innovation:* I have not examined all the programs of the university but the ones I have examined look very traditional and lack innovation. New areas of future innovation comprise: Artificial Intelligence, Drones, Virtual Reality, Cryptocurrency, Wearables (e.g. chronic diseases), Genomics, Internet of Things (IoT) products, Robotics, Connected homes (e.g. roof tiles and solar power storage), Driverless cars, and 3-D printers.

If the university is interested in expanding and becoming a global player then perhaps it is time for an international Rector with the vision and drive to make it happen.

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