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Portugal and the EEC Accession: Informal Practices and Arrangements

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PEDRO PONTE E SOUSA, MAY 14 2017

In this paper, we explore the role of the informal in the EEC accession (request) of Portugal, and focus primarily (but not exclusively) on the period between the first ideas over full membership of the European Economic Community (EEC) emerged (late 1975 / early 1976) and the official acceptance of candidacy (March 1977), when the European institutions accepted the request of Portugal to negotiate its accession. The justification for such choices is threefold: 1) the role of the formal/informal in the case of Portugal's accession to the European institutions is severely understudied; the period we chose for this paper is both 2) also understudied in Portuguese foreign policy and diplomacy, and 3) is particularly fit to assess the role of informal contacts (as in a rather short time, Portugal went from being assessed as having possibility of achieving no more than an associate status, to being reckoned as a full member of the organization). Thus, our main research question is the following: How was the acceptance of the EU accession candidacy of Portugal affected, in a positive way, by informal actors, procedures, and rules?

Our main goals with this paper are the following: to briefly assess the role of informal actors/procedures/rules in international relations, with a particular focus on the accession to the European institutions; to explore a number of primary and secondary sources generally ignored by most researchers; to provide an introduction to the issue of informal actors/procedures/rules regarding EEC accession; focusing mostly on a period quite ignored in research, to shed a new light on the period between the first ideas over full membership of the EEC emerged (late 1975 / early 1976) and the official acceptance of candidacy (March 1977). We claim that Portugal's accession to the EEC is a case where every agreement and qualitative change of the relations between Portugal and the European institutions relied both on informal settings and formal ones. Additionally, we also claim that the role of bilateral relations, informal connections and interactions, and of actors not directly engaged in the accession procedures was key to determine the result of any negotiation process. Thus, such informal connections were particularly critical as to complete formal steps in the integration process, much more than the outlined formality of such procedures would indicate. In sum, this paper could be relevant both by highlighting previously ignored or untapped relations and connections, but also (and mostly) by providing a first account of the role of the informal in Portugal's EEC accession.

The Role of the Informal

The balance between the formal and the informal – whether we are talking about procedures, rules, and so on – is crucial both in the diplomatic activity and in international relations[1], more broadly. While the accession to international organizations, mainly due to the established treaties and regulations, meant that a country should go through a number of formal procedures to join it, or even to be considered a candidate to accession, it is also the case that such formalities can be bent, overlooked, or at least diminished in their strength, if the diplomatic and political realm interfere with more objective/bureaucratic processes. Even more, other actors (non-directly related with the decision-making process) may interfere in the decisions, as to gain something or to favour a third actor, for instance. Additionally, the very institutions/bodies/agencies may be interested in taking an informal role, in order to facilitate the accession process, or to gain further knowledge on the country's situation in a given area.

In this paper, we follow the definitions of formal and non-formal/informal as advanced by Conzelmann (2012: 220-221)[2]:

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Analytically speaking, one can distinguish between two aspects or dimensions of the formality-informality continuum. One is the aspect of rules, which can be more or less explicit and more or less binding. In this use of the term, formality is a situation in which behaviour is governed by conventions or social expectations, and where no or very few formal and binding rules exist. A second dimension of informality concerns the basis on which actors are involved in cooperation and rule-making activities. (...) Entry to the arenas of rule-making and cooperation is determined on the basis of resources rather than formal mandate. Such a situation usually emerges when states or other decision-makers want to consult with resource-rich actors (rich in terms of finance, expertise, information, or the power to bind others) without also having to consult with other actors of similar legal status but fewer resources.

This definition also fits our framework of analysis, putting emphasis on the rules and institutions (on which we include the procedures), as well as the actors involved. As we mentioned, this allows us to focus on actors and dynamics which are not expected to take a part (or to act in a given way) in such negotiations, and so they contribute to the decision-making process even though that contribution wasn't to be expected (either due to not being a part of the decision-making processes or taking a different than predicted part).

Are international relations intrinsically informal? Realists viewed the world as being formed by states, in an environment of anarchy, with the absence of "structures of international authority and law" (Conzelmann, 2012: 219). Are international law and international organizations capable of limiting that logic of anarchy? Realists claim that the very existence of those structures and resources either fails to change the nature of the international system or, at worst, act "as a constraint on the freedom of action of states, reining in aggressive, unlawful or simply self-interested policies" (Conzelmann, 2012: 219). In this context, the academic field of International Relations tended to focus on the formal arrangements, institutions and regulations, while minimizing or simply ignoring informal ones. Informal practices were seen either as irrelevant, provisional, casuistic, or simply less interesting of a phenomenon to focus on. Thus, any relevance that the informal might have was either downplayed or, alternatively, used as an additional argument to highlight the fragility of international law and international organizations to solve problems (Conzelmann, 2012). Indeed, along with the increasing creation of international regimes, and the development of both international law and international organizations, not only did informal contacts disappear or become irrelevant, but also informal governance has been on the rise, even within the EU institutional framework (Conzelmann, 2012; Moury, 2016; Christiansen & Piattoni, 2003). In sum, the role of non-formal actors/procedures/rules has not ceased to pay a part in international relations.

The very activity of diplomacy balances a constant equilibrium between the formal and the non-formal/informal. While acting on a much formalized basis (the 1961 Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations, and the accreditation by both states involved), and proposing very formal instruments to solve disputes (as arbitration, mediation, and conferences) it also deeply relies on informal actions. Indeed, a number of actions undertaken by diplomats while at their diplomatic positions, even though fitting their expected course of action (as the functions of pre-negotiation, observation, representation, promotion, and so on), could also be considered as non-formal or informal, at least in the way such affairs are conducted and negotiated[3] (Mongiardim, 2007). Informal personal contacts may provide the setting for moving negotiations forward, as well as allowing for useful information to be exchanged (Berridge, 2015). Indeed, a number of significant changes in contemporary diplomacy, while acting in a global world, has led to the emergence of the concept 'informal diplomacy', built on personalization and based on diplomat-to-diplomat as well as diplomat-to-foreign-publics connections, as a way of public diplomacy and to improve nation branding. Thus, they engage in "informal and 'non-diplomatic' activities", which nevertheless may produce both positive and negative results (Adler-Nissen, 2016). However, there are different assessments of whether these changes are significant or only minimal.

Returning to the very role of international law, international regimes and international organizations, a particular focus is required to the European Union, and to the European institutions, broadly speaking.

The study of European integration tends to focus on formal aspects of the integration process: formal decision-making procedures, the role and functioning of institutions, the provisions contained in the treaties, the operation of regulatory regimes in the various policy areas. This is hardly surprising: what is distinctive about the integration process in Europe – what distinguishes integration in Europe from international cooperation in other parts of the world

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– is the creation and growth of a unique institutional and legal framework structuring the relations between the participating states. (...) If the formalization of interstate relations is regarded as the essence of the integration process, it is hardly surprising that scholars should concentrate on the formal procedures and the institutionalized arenas for decision-making. However, as has become increasingly evident in the course of recent developments in the European Union, there is an important undercurrent to the formal integration process. This concerns the operation of informal networks which link policy-makers to client groups as well as actors across EU, national and sub-national institutions, and influence (or at least seek to influence) decision-making in the EU. This practice (...) is, of course, not a recent phenomenon, but a long-standing dimension of EU politics (Christiansen et. al., 2003: 1).

Thus, and even though it is understandable the focus on formal actors, procedures and rules, there are a number of informal elements which deserve to be studied, as to depict a more detailed and accurate account of the elements interacting in a given moment, in a certain decision. In this paper, we are mostly focused in elements closely related to the Portuguese state (diplomats, politicians, bureaucrats, etc.) as well as on those with a saying on the position of the European institutions (and, eventually, the full members of the EEC). Nevertheless, Christiansen et. al., (2003) provide a number of different actors, arenas and processes which may be relevant and could be the focus of further studies.

Some Considerations Regarding Sources and Methodology

We should make some remarks regarding the sources and methodology chosen for this paper. The period of analysis, focusing mostly between the first ideas over full membership of the EEC emerged (late 1975 / early 1976) and the official acceptance of candidacy (March 1977), carries both advantages and disadvantages. The main feature of this selection has to do with the reduce amount of information available, whether primary sources or academic research. This period may also be among the most interesting to assess the role of the informal, both due to the reduced academic interest it usually generates, but also to the very significance that informal actors/procedures/rules played throughout this period.

It must be mentioned that we are not hoping to provide a very detailed account of all actors/procedures/rules which acted either formally or informally during this period. What we intended to do is to depict a number of specific events, actors and occurrences which highlight the importance of the informal, under different circumstances. Thus, this focus on specific events adapts to the availability of information and, broadly speaking, to the most important events, even though it can't be certain to provide the most thorough and comprehensive description.

Regarding the sources used, and the reduced availability of secondary sources, we will resort to the academic research available, but also to a more specific genre: the memoirs of diplomats, and other actors involved in the decision-making or implementation processes. The direct account by actors involved in such processes is widely used and viewed by many scholars are rather useful, so we will not explore that issue any further. However, a more detailed explanation is required to the issue of memoirs written by diplomats[4]. These memoirs were able to accurately and in a detailed fashion, depict

their own personal and professional experiences, which would not be unrelated to their forced isolation, contact with different cultures, diversity of experiences, acquired cultural refinement and the development of a special sensitivity to everything that was different and surrounded him, these all as motivating factors of such literary activity, so often ludic and sometimes scientific. Diaries, memoirs, biographies, are some of the literary genres to which many diplomats have become more fond of, letting them see through those texts much of their ways of life and many of the traditions of the countries they had to experience, as well as frequent critical reflections on the diplomatic practice of the time (Mongiardim, 2007: 13).

These texts are particularly relevant since, in many cases, there are the single coherent explanation, or, more generally, the most detailed and meticulous exposition on a given issue, conveying the events from a unique perspective and including most relevant actors and dynamics[5]. But were these texts ignored or simply misused? In our view, a number of relevant issues lead to such a problem: the authors' writing skills; difficulty in distinguishing the accessory from the essential (and thus, the substantial size of those texts); the focus on both formal and informal

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matters (from where most scholars simply extract the very formal elements relevant to their research); the preoccupation with contextualizing every action by every decision-maker; and the very specific issues and actors being discussed. Nevertheless, as these elements may limit the role of such texts in a different research focus, it can be very significant to us – namely, the noteworthy effort most diplomats put into conveying both formal and informal matters, where the last ones are particularly relevant for us.

Portugal, the EEC Accession, and Informal Procedures

In this section, we will explore some (selected) informal elements which may be considered relevant[6] mostly on the period between the first ideas over full membership of the EEC emerged (late 1975 / early 1976) and the official acceptance of candidacy (March 1977). These actions are particularly relevant since the full accession was repeatedly rejected by both the other member-states and the European institutions themselves, advocating for a special statue / original (intermediate) formulas, or a pre-accession (Castro, 2010). As mentioned above, we will divide this part in three different sections: European institutions/bodies/agencies taking an informal role; the role of informal procedures, regarding the accession process and other related ones; the impact that people not directly related to the accession had to it (as domestic politicians, or diplomats stationed in third countries).

European Institutions/Bodies/Agencies and Informal Roles

Official representatives of the European institutions were, in many occasions, the first promoters, advocates, and even advisors to Portugal's accession, often going much further on their recommendations and suggestions than their official roles and their agencies' official stances could allow. While those contacts were promoted by Portugal's diplomacy (even though, in many cases, without following higher bureaucratic commands, but merely exploring possible opportunities), many European representatives took initiative and acted as unofficial defender of the 'Portuguese cause' (Castro, 2010; Ferreira, 2001). This is one of those cases, where Pierre Duchâteau, Director-General for External Relations of the European Commission, informally met with the Portuguese diplomat Luiz Gonzaga Ferreira, and indicated nearly all stances that the Portuguese government would (should) assume, in the process of formalization of the accession request[7]. Interestingly, an informal meeting to which Portuguese diplomacy went without any expectations and expecting a routine conversation, ended up with a complete road-map to the path towards the accession request, which was virtually followed by the letter by all actors involved (but particularly by Portugal).

A similar remark is emitted by Ferreira (2001: 93): "As Head of Mission, I visited again the Assistant Director-General Roland de Kergolay about the end of July [1974]. [He was] my first interlocutor in DG 1 – in fact we were faced with an empathy for Portugal and the Portuguese things that I have never even seen in E. Wellenstein, his hierarchical superior (...) "[8].

Ferreira (2001: 62-63) provides us with another example of official representatives taking an informal role and providing more information and guidance than mandated by their formal position, as Von Schumann, the Portuguese Desk provided, on a "purely personal ground", a number of suggestions and indications which went clearly beyond the tasks in his job description[9].

In all the aforementioned examples, it is clear that informal statements and connections helped to clarify each of the actors' positions, aimed to identify a path for future course, were the first step towards permanent links between Portuguese diplomats and official EEC representatives, and even, in the most extreme case (demonstrated by the first quote, on Duchâteau) were able to convey a course of action for the short/medium-term for Portugal to follow.

The Role of Informal Procedures

Even though this example doesn't clearly fit on the selected time-frame, it should be mentioned here, as it is the one which more clearly explains the role of informal procedures. It sums up how the imagination of political leaders created an informal procedure from scratch to confirm the progress already made and minimize any existing doubts. Specifically, it refers to the signature of a 'constat d'accord', in October 1984, where the EEC formally confirms that

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there are no technical obstacles impeding the accession of Portugal to the EEC. It is a clear example of a previously non-existing procedure, completely invented by the Portuguese prime-minister, Mário Soares, signalling the overall compliance of Portugal to all criteria established by the organization to become a full member of the EEC.

I have to say that, in the middle of the final phase of the accession process, I had to resort to the imagination to find a formula that would overcome the remaining obstacles and consolidate the gains already made. Some European governments recognized that we were already prepared to join the EEC but felt that we could not enter without Spain, whose accession negotiations were long overdue. Every day there was another problem, an obstacle, a new setback. And then, during the Irish presidency of the EEC, in a meeting I had with the Irish Prime Minister Fitzgerald, I decided to say to him: 'But if you think that we are already prepared for accession, why don't you write this down in a formal document?'. Surprised, he asked me: 'In a document, how? What can we do?'. I said to him in French: '*unconstat d'accord*', that is, 'subscribe a document in which you say that you agree on our accession!'. He asked, 'But what is this?'. I replied: it is '*un constat d'accord*'. 'In the EEC' – he insisted – 'there was never a *constat d'accord*!'. I replied: 'But there will be from now on! You make a statement, as President of the EEC, to say that nothing prevents Portugal from joining the European Community!'. He still hesitated, 'But do you think it's possible to do that?'. I replied: 'I think so, it is possible! But ask the President of the European Commission (who was then the Luxembourgish Gaston Thorn) what he thinks'. Gaston Thorn, once consulted, replied: 'Well, this practice does not really exist. But if they want a *constat d'accord*, I do not see this as a problem. I do not object to him doing it'. I returned to Lisbon with the *constat d'accord* and I do not forget the usual weekly meeting that I had at that time with the President of the Republic, Ramalho Eanes. I said to him, 'We have triumphed! We already have a *constat d'accord*! From now on, we have a document that enables us to *make fire*! We will really convince everyone that the EEC will accept our application and that we will enter!'. General Ramalho Eanes, a bit skeptic, answered me: 'According to what my advisors have told me, this is only a piece of paper!'. Well, it was this piece of paper that really gave a decisive boost to our process of accession to the EEC. In view of that written text, European governments could only recognize that they had signed a document stating that there was no longer any technical obstacle to joining the European Community. (Soares, 2001: 78-79)

The Informal Role of Indirect Actors

Actors which are only connected in a very limited way with the assessment and acceptance of Portugal's accession request may have played a relevant part in the process. Here, we will highlight two different types of actors: diplomats stationed in third countries, and domestic politicians[10].

Regarding the first category, the Ambassador Armando Martins (at the Embassy of Portugal in London) used its contacts at his previous diplomatic position (Rome) to contact the Italian prime-minister on a personal status, and asking for a special interest in the Portuguese position, in the context of the establishment of an harmonized position among the member states[11].

Regarding the second category, the role of domestic politicians unrelated with the government (and with the parties in government), there isn't much information to this point in order to convey a more detailed picture. It is known that the biggest political parties – PS (Socialist Party), PSD (Social-Democratic Party), CDS (Social-Democratic Center) all supported European integration, even though their role (as an active participant in the process) during this period is unclear, except for checking, challenging and debating the work of the government in parliament, and for their official public statements, on a national level. Only the PCP (Communist Party) frontally opposed the European option[12]. However, some short remarks were done regarding the role of those parties in specific occasions, mainly by the Prime-Minister Mário Soares himself. On the final stretch of the Prime-Minister's tour around the European capital cities, to meet with the heads of government of all EEC member-states, Mário Soares publicly applauded the support of those two political parties, in reaching out for doubtful governments and their European political families. That was the case in the last two visits, which were particularly difficult: Luxembourg (discussing the Portuguese immigration) and Brussels (insisting on the establishment of a calendar to the accession)[13][14].

Concluding Remarks

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Some brief comments are required as to assess the examples explored in this paper. First, regarding European institutions/bodies/agencies and informal roles, we have confirmed that, in some occasions, official representatives of the European institutions acted as if they were promoters, advocates, and even advisors to Portugal's accession. The assessment of the informal actions points out that they repeatedly went much further on their recommendations and suggestions than their official roles and their agencies' official stances would suggest. Portuguese diplomats and decision-makers taking a part in the process are particularly keen in stating that some European representatives acted as unofficial defender of the 'Portuguese cause'. The most obvious example is Pierre Duchâteau, Director-General for External Relations of the European Commission, which was able to pinpoint a course of action for the short/medium-term for Portugal to follow. In sum, these informal statements and connections clarified the actors' positions, identified future paths to follow, and are a testimony of the permanent links between Portuguese diplomats and official EEC representatives.

Second, regarding the role of informal procedures, this highlights how the imagination of political leaders created them aiming to advance the accession process. The example mentioned, the signature of a 'constat d'accord', in October 1984, confirmed the advances made to that point and allowed to Portuguese government to lessen current worries. 'A simple piece of paper' which definitely stated no technical obstacles were present, and that Portugal fully complied the criteria to join the EEC.

Third, regarding the role indirectly related actors informally played in the process, we could identify how (1) a diplomat stationed in an unrelated country took advantage of his personal contacts to favour the Portuguese position, and how (2) opponent political parties (which, nevertheless, favoured Portugal's accession to the EEC) directly pushed and promoted the official government position on doubtful governments across Europe and their European political families.

These are just a few examples of how the 'informal' played a (positive) part to Portugal's official request for accession to the EEC, at the politico-diplomatic negotiation which was established until that point. Despite not being representative of the entire process, the limited number of examples currently available (in primary or secondary sources), and regardless the even more scarce information on the relationship with the EEC between the April Revolution (1974) and the official request for accession (March 1977), this paper was able to underscore previously overlooked or unnoticed issues in the connections between these actors, but mostly provided a first, brief and introductory account of the role of the informal in Portugal's EEC (request for) accession. In this paper, while not gathering any new raw data, but merely shifting the focus of analysis, we were able to portray how the elements to study the 'informal' were already present in a number of primary and secondary sources, despite being traditionally given an irrelevant part. Continuing to explore (traditionally overlooked) primary and secondary sources regarding this period of time, surveying the entire accession negotiation process (1977-1985) for the role of the informal, as well as mapping could also played a negative role in this process (rather than merely a positive one, as we explored in this paper), are possible future paths for research.

Notes

[1] In this paper, as it is common in the scientific production of the area, we will use 'International Relations' (with a capital letter) when we refer to the social science, and 'international relations' (without a capital letter) for the concrete phenomena of the international system.

[2] And already previously based in Christiansen et. al. (2003).

[3] On the role of informality and its convenience, see Berridge (2015: 71): "Since states today negotiate on so many matters, an international agreement does not have to be of merely routine character for convenience to be an important consideration in dictating its shape. Convenience argues for informal agreements: treaties not styled as 'treaties', or agreements that, because they remain unpublished or are published but announce that their provisions are 'non-binding', are treaties in neither form nor substance." The author explains in more detail the various inconveniences which may be avoided by informal procedures.

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[4] A genre that used to be quite common in the past decades and centuries, it was able to find relevance “not only from a dilettante and erudite perspective of their exotic personal experiences, but also, under a corporate or pedagogical orientation, exposing the needs of professionalization and training of new specialized employees, often fuelled by a strategic vision of affirmation of the State” (Mongiardim, 2007: 13).

[5] Regarding this issue, we should mention the memoir written by Luiz Gonzaga Ferreira (1998), which until this day is the most accurate, in-depth and relevant exposé on the Portuguese foreign policy regarding Senegal, Guinea-Bissau and Cape Verde at the beginning of the Portuguese Colonial War.

[6] Usually, the examples were considered relevant by the authors and sources which we have consulted to write this paper. While this work clearly does not convey a thorough account of all relevant informal actors/procedures/rules at all times, the selection of the cases mentioned in this paper was preferably and generally done in the original sources, by the authors themselves.

[7] “On July 26th, between the inauguration of the First Government and the presentation of its program to the Assembly of the Republic, a Portuguese diplomatic official in Brussels meets informally with the Director General of External Relations of the European Commission, Pierre Duchâteau. During that meeting, the Portuguese diplomat asked the Commission official if he was informed of the intentions voiced by the Prime Minister when the Government took office. Duchâteau not only knew the content of Mário Soares’s statements, but also ‘prepared a whole scheme of action to be taken in formulating the application for membership’. Duchâteau recommended that ‘we should establish a well-defined timetable of work, action and diligence prior to the submission of the request and try to follow it closely’. Pierre Duchâteau’s knowledge of previous applications for membership and the ‘environment of certain capitals’ led to the suggestion that the Portuguese request should be aligned with the Greek and not with the Spanish (...). The Director-General of External Services of the European Commission suggested that Portugal should prepare a memorandum setting out, in a ‘balanced way’, the ‘concrete advantages that will benefit the EEC with the Lisbon accession’. Duchâteau also said that Portugal had a ‘capital of sympathy that Spain does not have and that we should take advantage of it in a just and timely manner. But it is not enough’. The High Commissioner of the European Commission illustrated the kind of memorandum he referred to with the Greek example, ‘which shows how much the EEC will benefit from the Hellenic accession. Athens as a financial square replacing Beirut, bauxite deposits, etc., etc.’. Pierre Duchâteau also underlined the advantage of ‘exploiting the prime minister’s political capital of prestige (...)’. Duchâteau also stressed the ‘care to have with Paris as one of the key points of the Community decisions and with Rome for the implications of membership in the common agricultural policy’. (...) Duchâteau also said that ‘some will be tempted to resort to the barrier of institutional issues’. But here, stressed the Director General of External Relations, ‘Portugal should never present itself as part of a second Europe. Whatever difficulties we may encounter (...) we should calmly but firmly demand a place à part entière’, which implies ‘to exclude any mention of Europe at two speeds’. At the end of the document, it is suggested a timetable for the preparation of the application for membership, which was due to start on September 20th with the reference that the Additional Protocol and the Financial Protocol pointed towards integration, followed by visits at the highest level to the capitals, to finish with the application submission by letter in February or March. Gonzaga Ferreira also reports to Lisbon that in the course of contacts with European Commission members, it is absolutely essential ‘an adequate preparation of all capital cities’, not ‘forgetting that the conduct of the negotiations and their results can largely depend on the pressure of public opinion’. In the vast document sent to Lisbon by Gonzaga Ferreira, the crucial question of the need to refuse to include Portugal at a second speed was evidenced, based on the illusion that this would be the best argument for accession. All this meant that Lisbon would have to carefully prepare the land at the community capital cities as a condition for eventually being able to proceed to formalize the request.” (Castro, 2010: 31-32).”

[8] “[The diplomatic representation of Portugal in Brussels] (...) saw from the outset the importance of the contacts it had established in DG 1 and the ties that were beginning to be consolidated with Roland de Kergolay, Pierre Duchateau, Inger Nielsen and Charles Caporale. (...) When I speak of a relationship here, I am not invoking the diplomatic treatment that we all establish and develop in the diplomatic missions that are intended for us. That is very important for the performance of our mission. But in some cases it is not enough. (...) I dare to emphasize the idea that in certain circumstances, the human factor helps a lot, it is decisive in certain cases. (...) At that crucial moment

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in which we could have received a categorically negative response that would delay the process, to 'put in a good word' as we were doing into the machine of the Commission, by the voices of our friends, helped beyond what can be imagined, allowing the consent of a project that, it things are properly seen and all factors weighed, had no foot to walk with regard as economists and financiers saw it." (Ferreira, 2001: 94-95).

[9] "On May 15th I went to the Commission for a conversation with Von Schumann, the Portuguese Desk, in search of details on the discussion of the Portuguese case in the European Parliament. It was the intention of Ambassador Magalhães Cruz to travel to Luxembourg to follow the debates. The anticipation of the parliamentary session would undermine our purpose. Mr von Schumann told me the questions raised by Representative Patijn and explained to me that the Commission had decided in advance to adopt an 'extremely cautious' response to the problems of association or accession (partly because, he told me separately, 'this is not a partisan exercise'). Von Schumann would express to me in a purely personal ground, the strangeness of DG 1 as Mário Soares had no intuition of convenience for the country and for himself, as well as the inherent aspects of courtesy that the case involved, to take advantage of the visit to the three socialist commissioners to greet and even clarify Sir Christopher Soames, even though privately, and even because he had also met with Van Elslande. (...) I had the pleasure of referring later to Magalhães Cruz on the return to the Boulevard de l'Imperatrice, Von Schumann's words: 'nos plus vives remerciements', from DG 1, for the substantiated way in which the Head of Mission and the Assistant Chief kept that Department informed, either at the request of the latter or by meetings which we provoked, or by documents which we sent to them, enabling them to put Sir Christopher Soames up-to-date with what was happening in Lisbon. We would then see with satisfaction that the Commission's services made known the fact."

[10] The contacts that Mário Soares developed, even before or in the early years of the Revolution (mostly with members of the Socialist International, but not only), are among the most mentioned elements as to facilitate Portugal's stance on accession. See Teles (2001), Soares (2001), Constâncio (2001), or Ferreira (2001).

[11] "In the United Kingdom, Ambassador Armando Martins, who had left the position in Rome to take over the representation of the Portuguese Embassy in London, uses his personal contacts to enhance the Portuguese position, having even telephoned Prime Minister Andreotti at 'Sunday evening, emphasizing that he was doing so only as a friend, and asking him for his personal interest in Italy's support for Portugal's entry into the EEC, under the terms our ambassador in Rome will clarify, highlighting the firm intention of the Portuguese government to not settle for less than accession. He replied that the Italian position so far has not been discussed and promised me that he would give the matter his personal attention and that he will speak to Forlani [foreign minister] on Monday morning. He assured me that we can count on all the goodwill and friendship of the Italian side'" (Castro, 2010: 81).

[12] The UDP (União Democrática Popular), an extreme-left party, also took a similar stance, but this party had a marginal representation in parliament (one seat in 250), and from 1983 onwards it lost its parliamentary representation.

[13] "In order to clarify Luxembourg's position, Mário Soares also said that Sá Carneiro, the leader of the largest opposition party, had a relevant role. The Prime Minister of Luxembourg told his Portuguese counterpart that he had received a phone call from Sá Carneiro to draw his attention to the importance for our country of entering the Common Market." (Castro, 2010: 143)

[14] "In Brussels, the prime minister received the support of the leader of the third most voted party in the legislative elections of 1976, saying before the cameras of the Portuguese television that the explanations of the CDS and the pressures that professor Freitas do Amaral did with the political parties of Christian democracy had a great strength to facilitate our contact with certain governments'." (Castro, 2010: 144)

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