

# **Jean Monnet Chair**

## ***Jean Monnet Seminars***

***The role of regional blocks in a globalized world***, by Professor  
Manuel Lopes Porto

**Manuel Lopes Porto** is a well-known scholar, originating from the University of Coimbra, where he is Professor of Law. He is reputed internationally as a leading voice and expert in integration matters. Author of many highly referred publications in several languages (including Chinese and English), he is the current President (in his second mandate) of the European Community Studies Association – World and the Director of the Jean Monnet Centre of Excellence, ‘Curso de Estudos Europeus’, of the Faculty of Law, University of Coimbra. He is also a very well-known and influential personality in Portuguese and European public life. From his vast curriculum also stand out his former experiences as Member of the European Parliament, President of the Planning Council in Portugal, President of the National Council on Education in Portugal, Jean Monnet Professor, Dean of the Law Faculty of the University of Coimbra, Portugal.

### **OUTLINE**

In the Seminar, the Keynote speaker starts by drawing attention to the new geography of the world, shaped by globalization and the increasing role played by countries like China and India, which are recovering the relevance that they had centuries ago.

It is in this framework that we are currently witnessing the formation and the strengthening of regional blocks, following into some extent the European experience.

The question ensues whether these blocks will be open or protectionist. According to the best economic theories, they should be open blocks, open trade being superior to

protectionism. And indeed we can expect that, despite protectionist measures, the advantages of free trade shall prevail.

The temptation of protectionism could however be high in Europe, because it stands as a large market where most of the trade is intra-European.

But even for Europe it would be a disaster to follow a protectionist policy. The way forward should instead be the one of strengthening European capacities: diminishing bureaucracy within the States, following the right policies, creating conditions for a participation of the society, deepening the single market, having a realistic social model and promoting the participation of the people.

This way, better opportunities should also be offered to the other blocks of the world. And Europe would remain as the main contributor to the development of less developed States.