
Portugal: legislative elections. Mr Vaz Patto (Justice and Peace), “dialogue between parties, a challenge to avoid instability”

“In light of the results, the challenge now is dialogue between the various parties, especially the two that obtained the most votes”, said Pedro Vaz Patto, president of the Portuguese National Commission for Justice and Peace (CNJP). In the elections on Sunday 10 March, the center-right Democratic Alliance party elected 77 members to the Assembly of the Republic of Portugal, to which three deputies from the Autonomous Region of Madeira were added. The Socialist Party obtained 76 seats, the Chega (Enough) Party 48, the Liberal Initiative 8, the Communist Party 4, Livre (Free) also 4, and the People-Animals-Nature Party 1. The four seats elected by Portuguese living abroad are still to be scrutinized. “The most important challenge now is that, in the dialogue between the parties that received the most votes, consensus and compromise are sought, and that, without questioning the essence of the programmes of the various parties, it is possible to find points of contact, because this is what the national interest requires – putting the national interest above party interests”. Pedro Vaz Patto also stressed that “no one would benefit from instability that would lead to early elections again, considering the context of international crisis we are experiencing, and also the challenges and problems of the population linked to poverty, access to housing, and education”. For the President of the CNJP, the fact that abstention was not as high as in previous elections is a result of the calls for participation launched by various institutions, particularly the Portuguese Bishops’ Conference and the National Commission for Justice and Peace. After yesterday’s parliamentary elections, the President of the Republic will listen to the political parties with parliamentary seats to form Portugal’s next government.

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