

Interview with Rui Manuel OLIVEIRA COSTA,

Deputy Mayor of the city of São João da Madeira, Portugal

1- On May 7th and 8th, the city of São João da Madeira organised a conference on the theme “Urban Safety: Prevention and Action”, and hosted the EFUS’Executive Committee, what are the results of these events?

About the conference, the objective was to deliver the message that for an efficient urban safety it must lie on two pillars: prevention and action. We had the opportunity to share good experiences with national and international entities.

Concerning the EFUS’Executive Committee meeting, it resulted very important because the members conceived a document for European institutions, in the aim to remind that in the actual context of economical crisis, we have to reject a xenophobia position as a way to solve problems. We have to promote new solutions in the spirit of social cohesion in the prevention of safety and reaffirm the respect of law.

2- As a member of the Portuguese Forum for Urban Safety, how do you see the development of this forum?

I think this forum will grow in terms of membership and in terms of activities. With the completion of some projects developed with other entities, it will be obvious to include the contribution of a forum for urban safety. Urban safety being an important issue in population’s minds.

3- In Portugal, a wave of insecurity is now developing into the country, what are the solutions to push it back?

Rapid action and effective police forces and courts in the aim to contain the crime committed individually or in groups, to avoid new forms of violence. Simultaneously, consider the social causes that promote deviant attitudes of legality and implement prevention plans in each community with the involvement of various social partners. This should not be confused with complacency for offenders, as it is necessary to maintain a sense of discipline in respect of law.

4- What are the programs in favor of urban safety in the city of S. João da Madeira?

Each entity (municipality, social partners, police), fulfills its mission in terms of prevention and action and altogether they are preparing a project that will set CCTV cameras in certain places, coupled with awareness campaign.

5- As Vice-President, what kind of role Portuguese government and FOPPSU have to play in crime prevention?

Encourage a town conception which minimizes the practice of certain crimes, develop the exchange of good national and international practices which resulted positive, educate young people and children and adopt an attitude of firmness and authority with offenders, which will have a preventive effect at the same time.