



**DISCURSO DO ALMIRANTE
CHEFE DO ESTADO-MAIOR DA ARMADA, POR
OCASIÃO DA ABERTURA DO CONFERÊNCIA
NATO INNOVATION NETWORK OPEN INNOVATION
CONFERENCE AND EXPO 2024 (NOICE24)**

Tróia, 11 de setembro de 2024

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am truly honoured to be part of this event and would like to extend my congratulations to ACT for organizing this remarkable conference. I also want to thank you all to spend your time to travel to Portugal and visit us at REPMUS.

We have already entered an era of global confrontation. We have to defend the international system based on individual freedom, the rule of law, and fair and balanced relations among nations, regardless of their power or capabilities.

Why does innovation matter? Innovation is crucial because it helps balance power disparities, as demonstrated by Ukraine's defense against Russia. Additionally, innovation is key to advancing our societies and leveraging scientific progress for overall improvement.

Innovation is more often to find in smaller entities than in larger ones. This is because smaller organizations tend to be more agile, with less inertia, fewer legacy systems, and greater flexibility, making them more adaptable and open to change.

While not every change leads to innovation, without change, innovation cannot occur.

Also, not all change is beneficial. But innovation cannot thrive without the courage to challenge long-held ideas, practices and convictions.

So, ladies and gentlemen, what is this buzzword, "innovation"? It's certainly something that we cannot initiate with a simple decree. Instead, it is a result of a culture, a mindset, and often

emerges from a strong need for change, a competitive environment or confrontation.

An innovator is driven by a sense of urgency, a kind of impatience to create something different. But innovation can die, or never born under poor leadership. Leaders without vision, who are unwilling to take risks and complacent with their status quo, will not drive change.

Therefore, we need to cultivate a new attitude - one that spread across all sectors: military, industrial, academic. We must foster this mindset with religious fervour, encouraging new followers to drive transformation within their organizations. Change for better!

Innovation also needs the right conditions: material, infrastructural, financial, and cultural. Effective leadership understands the obligation to create an environment where the seeds of innovation can thrive.

Here in Troia, we have developed this infrastructure as part of NATO's Diana Initiative, offering both shallow and deep water facilities. This Center is designed to support operational experimentation and connect military, academic, and industrial sectors. Within this innovative environment, we have a team of developers, technicians, and makers who are creating prototypes, testing new ideas, and developing advanced warfare capabilities.

In closing, I urge you to immerse yourself in the excitement of REPMUS - the annual meeting of makers, creators, and innovators with their robots, systems, and ground-breaking solutions.

Thank you once again for your presence and your patience in listening to me.