



EUROPEAN AWARD
HELENA VAZ DA SILVA
FOR RAISING PUBLIC AWARENESS ON CULTURAL HERITAGE

HELENA VAZ DA SILVA AWARD CEREMONY
Gulbenkian Foundation, Lisbon, 23 October 2020

Text of the VIDEO MESSAGE from

H.E. Marcelo Rebelo de Sousa, President of the Republic of Portugal

Throughout my term as President of the Republic, I have followed the numerous challenges faced by cultural heritage in Portugal, both material and immaterial, the cases of forgetfulness and cases of success. There is an increased awareness of the importance to defend our common cultural heritage, particularly among local authorities and civil society.

Initiatives such as this Award, named after Helena Vaz da Silva - a dear friend and ardent advocate for heritage and culture - are extremely important. All the more so as this Award brings together national and European organisations, namely the Centro Nacional de Cultura, the Portuguese Press Club and Europa Nostra.

The presentation of the Award to Dom José Tolentino de Mendonça, Archivist and Librarian of the Holy Roman Church, but above all a citizen, priest, teacher, essayist, chronicler, playwright and poet, is an obvious choice. **We need voices such as the one of Dom José Tolentino, that demonstrate the unending bond between memory and everyday life, between the European values of tolerance and the ethical and political emergencies of today's Europe.**

I would like to greet the Secretary-General of the United Nations and warmly congratulate the Award winner and the organisations that recognised him. Your mission is also the mission of the President of the Republic and of all those who hope for a better world, also in the field of heritage.