

Interview with António Vitorino: cooperation between the Portuguese Presidency and the Barroso Commission (Lisbon, 24 October 2007)

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[Miriam Mateus] Do you think that the fact that the President of the Commission, José Durão Barroso, is Portuguese has any influence on or plays any role in the current Portuguese Presidency? What kind of relations exist between the President of the Commission and the Portuguese Presidency?

[António Vitorino] Well, obviously it has the advantage of allowing us to speak Portuguese, which makes things much easier. In terms of the functioning of the Presidencies, close cooperation with the Commission is always essential, because the Commission is the most permanent and stable institution and can contribute greatly to the success of a Presidency. In the present case, there has certainly been very close cooperation, and even complicity, involved in the Portuguese Presidency and the fact that the President of the Commission is Portuguese and that the reform of the Treaties, for example, was adopted specifically in Lisbon during this Presidency. But those good relations and that close cooperation are not confined to the Treaty. It's more broad-based and is connected to the Presidency's range of objectives, including the two Summits with Brazil and Africa, on which the Commission has also worked very hard.