

Opening Remarks from IESBA Chair Gabriela Figueiredo Dias The IESBA Conference 2025 Lisbon, 15 September 2025 – ISEG

Ladies and gentlemen, distinguished guests, dear colleagues and friends,

It gives me the greatest joy, and a truly heartfelt sense of pride, to welcome you all to Lisbon, and to the 2025 IESBA Conference. To those here in this wonderful hall, and to the many hundreds joining us virtually from all corners of the globe, a very warm welcome.

Lisbon is a city of light, of history, and of openness. It has been a meeting place of cultures for centuries, and today it becomes the meeting place of the accounting profession, regulators, policymakers, public authorities, academics, investors, preparers, and many others — all united by one powerful idea: that ethics matters. I cannot imagine a more fitting setting to host this gathering.

Before moving forward, and being here in Lisbon, let me, on behalf of the IESBA, and I'm sure of all of you, extend our deepest sorrow to the victims, their families, the injured at the recent terrible accident of the Elevador da Glória, an icon of Lisbon and to the people of this city.

Ladies and gentlemen,

I must confess how impressed I am by the response to this conference. More than one thousand participants from around 100 countries are registered. It shows that the mission of the IESBA resonates far beyond technical boundaries, and that ethics, integrity, and trust are alive in the hearts and minds of professionals, institutions, and societies everywhere. For me, as Chair, this is both humbling and inspiring – and a clear confirmation of our deepest conviction that ethics is a critical condition for growth.

However, this conference would never happen without the critical support of our sponsors. I could not be more grateful to ISEG, which so graciously hosts us today within its walls, and will host the IESBA Board for the rest of the week, in an outstanding, beautiful space in this University. And to OCC and OROC, the two Portuguese professional accounting organizations, who have stood alongside us supporting the Conference and the Board meeting organization in many forms. Paula, Virgilio, Joao, your generosity, hospitality, and belief in the value of ethics are gifts we do not take for granted but that will remain as a part of what we aim to build in the public interest.

I also want to express my deepest gratitude to our speakers, who have traveled to Lisbon to share their knowledge and spark with this large audience on a topic that does not often move crowds — and yet, thanks to them, this time it did. And to the tireless staff who have worked behind the scenes to make this first IESBA conference possible. Please accept my, and our, sincerest thanks.

Allow me to say a few words about the deeper significance of this gathering. Around us today are leaders from across continents and sectors — voices with different perspectives, but a shared purpose. In a world where uncertainty is high, where technology transforms faster than rules can be written, and where societal scrutiny grows ever more demanding, the need for a common ethical compass has never been greater. Ethics is our universal language: it transcends geography, bridges disciplines, and binds our work and responsibilities.

And I could not be happier that these conversations take place in Portugal, my home country - a country that has always been large in spirit and openness. It is therefore even more rewarding to count around 100 jurisdictions in our global audience. In the same spirit, ISEG, a Portuguese management and economics school, has embraced this conference and the value of internationalization in its own DNA. Just this month it has welcomed students from 70 different nationalities. Beyond the immense generosity of Dean João Duque and his communications team, who have made us feel welcome from the very start, ISEG's international spirit and rich cultural academic environment make it the perfect place for us to be today.

So, my friends, as we begin these days of reflection and dialogue, let us do so with a constructive spirit of collaboration. Let us take full advantage of this moment to deepen our common resolve: together, we can overcome misunderstandings and re-write the ethics game.

Welcome to Lisbon. Welcome to the IESBA Conference, which will start right now with the first speech of the day.

It is a great privilege to introduce now, as our first speaker, the Portuguese Minister of Finance, Mr. Joaquim Miranda Sarmiento. The role of governments and political leaders is critical in upholding ethics and the frameworks that sustain trust in markets and audit. The Minister's willingness to join us in this discussion is deeply meaningful.

Minister Miranda Sarmiento, I am now inviting you to the stage. Your presence here today truly honors us all, and we thank you sincerely for your generosity.