Dear Greta,

The School Strike For Climate (Greve Climática Estudantil) in Portugal heard with great enthusiasm that you will soon be heading to Madrid to attend the UN Climate Summit (COP25)!

We understand that you are still in the process of sorting out how to move from the US to Spain using renewable transportation. We would like to invite you to visit Portugal before we head to COP25, in order to get in touch with the FFF movement in Portugal, and the thousands of Portuguese students that have been school striking in the last months. It would also be an opportunity to give visibility to our most pressing environmental problems.

We just came out of an electoral process, resulting in a new government that made  the climate change mitigation a political priority. However there is a lack of consistency between what has been promised and what we are beginning to witness.

  This is why we can’t help but picture you arriving in Lisbon, where we are right now resisting the biggest aviation expansion project in the continent, [an action that activists already made true last year - LINK Aterra.info, but that would clearly make a huge impact with you on board.

Let us tell you what's at stake:

* A big corporation has just been given the Government’s approval to build a new airport for low-cost flights in the Tagus river estuary. This is a protected Natural Reserve, one of the most important wetland in Europe, a biodiversity sanctuary, especially for thousands of birds migrating between northern Europe and Africa each year. Despite an unprecedented massive negative response to the public consultation after the Environmental Impact Study, it has been outrageously approved last week. The project would clearly be a disaster for the environment and, literally, *for the planes itself (serious risk of bird striking).* This project of massive airport expansion is twofold: the construction of a new airport (in Montijo), but also already this year, the expansion of the existing Lisbon airport.The airport expansion would have catastrophical impact in the life in Lisbon, which is already battered by mass tourism. The boom in the price of houses has been pushing its very inhabitants away, [as we see more and more people, especially youngsters, forced to camp in the streets...]. It would mean duplicating the number of flights per hour and increasing the airplane emissions in 40%. This is happening in a country that has committed itself to  contain climate change and to be carbon neutral by 2050!!

However, this is not our only environmental threat.

* The Sado estuary, 50 kms south from Lisbon, is a place with a unique community of dolphins and rich biodiversity. The Port’s Authority intends to start very heavy dredging still during November. It is one of several projects to increase the capacity of harbours, harming nature and jeopardizing the goals of carbon neutrality.
* The lithium “plague” and other rare minerals are threatening rural areas of the country with open cast mining. Licenses for prospecting are being given to big corporations without transparency, covering over 10% of our country's territory!
* The traditional cork trees (“Montado”) and olive trees in the south are under severe threats. Due also to extensive and polluted agriculture practices, the drought is now severe and many areas could in some decades become deserted.
* The government has kept the 2 contracts made in 2015 to explore "natural gas" in the center of Portugal (Batalha and Pombal) by the company "Australis Oil And Gas", despite the protests of the local (and national) population

 Clearly, words speak louder than reality. Although the previous Parliament has adopted a Climate Emergency Declaration, in practice we see more and more “business as usual”.

We’ve already seen the power that mobilization can have- recently the government declared that two thermo-eletrical moved by coal would close by 2023. We, the people, are determined to make change happen.

The Portuguese Parliament has already officially invited you to visit our country. It’s now our turn (the youth climate strike in association with other environmentalist movements - ATERRA, Zero, Climáximo, etc.) to invite you to join and support us with your presence.

As for transportation, there is a pleasant but neglected night train from Lisbon to Madrid, that we intend to promote and take in vast numbers to join the COP protests.

If this is not possible, we would also be glad to have you here after the COP25.

We will be be really glad to help with logistics and with whatever you may need.

Looking forward to hearing from you,

FFF Portugal (Greve Climática Estudantil) and ATERRA