

Human Rights Council
**Second Intersessional Seminar on the contribution of the HRC to the prevention of
human rights violations pursuant to HRC resolution 38/18**

Panel 2
8 October 2019

**Statement of Portugal on behalf of the Group of Friends of national mechanisms
for implementation, reporting and follow-up**

1. Thank you Mr President.

I am pleased to deliver this statement on behalf of the 28 Member-States of the group of friends on national implementation, reporting and follow-up, namely Angola, Bahamas, Belgium, Botswana, Brazil, Colombia, Costa Rica, Denmark, Ecuador, Fiji, Georgia, Haiti, Italy, Mexico, Morocco, Netherlands, North Macedonia, Norway, Paraguay, Republic of Korea, Seychelles, Slovenia, Sweden, Thailand, Timor-Leste, Tunisia, Uruguay and my own country, Portugal.

2. We all agree that “*the prevention agenda is the human rights agenda*”; and that the Human Rights Council and its mechanisms, in particular the UPR and the Special Procedures, alongside with the Treaty Bodies, can indeed play an important prevention role, *inter alia*, through its monitoring and recommendations.

3. However, its valuable contribution to prevention will be unsuccessful if it is not met with equivalent commitment and progress at the domestic implementation of States’ international human rights obligations and commitments. The “*prevention agenda*” is thus premised, and even dependent on the “*implementation agenda*”.

The key to national human rights resilience - to having a strong and stable human rights situation at domestic level, is, quite simply, that States implement their international human rights obligations and commitments, and make concrete progress towards the full realisation of the SDGs leaving no one behind. In both regards, this means States should make progress with the domestic implementation of the recommendations they receive from the UPR, Treaty Bodies and Special Procedures.

4. And the keystone of this human rights ‘implementation agenda’ are so-called ‘national mechanisms for implementation, reporting and follow-up’ (NMIRFs). The *implementation agenda* is the *prevention agenda*. These standing bodies at national level collate and cluster all UN human rights recommendations, manage them in national databases, coordinate implementation actions across government and in some cases across the legislative and judicial branches, as well as with the

NHRI and civil society organizations, monitor implementation progress and impact, and then streamline reporting procedures back to the UN - thereby reducing reporting burdens.

NMIRFs are also key in facilitating the tasks of the States in connection with their engagement, coordination, consultation and information management capacities. Such coordination structures bring considerable benefits also in terms of national ownership; national coherence; easier communication between ministries and with NHRIs and civil society; more efficient use of resources; building human rights expertise, and enabling easier development of Human Rights Action Plans and UPR Recommendations Implementations Plans.

5. The conclusion that in our opinion we need to draw, is that **NMIRFs are key to prevention** - they enable States, with international capacity-building and technical assistance where appropriate, to promote and protect the enjoyment of all human rights, civil, economic, cultural, political and social, without discrimination. This helps States build national human rights resilience, and prevents human rights violations from happening in the first place.

6. Mr. President, to conclude let me stress that our Group welcomes the successful adoption, by consensus, of the resolution on “Promoting international cooperation to support national mechanisms for implementation, reporting and follow-up” during the 42nd session of the Human Rights Council. We firmly believe that it will contribute to build national resilience, narrow the implementation gap and contribute to the prevention of human rights violations.

Thank you.