

58th Session of the Human Rights Council
(Adoption of the UPR Outcome in the 4th cycle of Portugal)
Statement by the Portuguese Ombudsman
24th March

Distinguished President and Members of the Human Rights Council,
Distinguished Permanent Representative of Portugal to the United Nations,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

As we celebrate the 50th anniversary of the Portuguese Ombudsman, we welcome this opportunity to cooperate once more with the Human Rights Council during Portugal's 4th Universal Periodic Review.

As the National Human Rights Institution, we have been actively engaged throughout the process. In our parallel report and in all our interactions with UN bodies and Members, as well as with civil society, we have provided comprehensive insight on the human rights situation in Portugal.

Despite Portugal's commitment and the efforts made by the State, significant concerns remain in critical areas, enduring poverty playing here a significant role. We will be focussing on two particularly vulnerable groups: older persons and persons with disabilities.

The at-risk-of-poverty rate for older persons has grown from 17.1% in 2022 to 21.1% in 2023 (the highest since 2007). Extremely low non-contributory pensions but also the substantial delays in pension processing are two of the main obstacles to achieving social protection in an ageing population.

In 2024, the Ombudsman released an important report concerning the rights of persons with disabilities. Taking measures with regard to systemic deficiencies in this area should be a national priority, in particular the timely issuance of disability certificates should be guaranteed, and the provision of assistive products should be improved.

We reaffirm our commitment to strengthening human rights protection in cooperation with national and international partners.

Thank you.