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MINISTÉRIO DOS NEGÓCIOS ESTRANGEIROS
Direção-Geral de Política Externa

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**2nd session of the
Permanent Forum on People of African Descent**

General Debate

New York, 30 May 2023

Statement by Portugal

Speaking time – 2’

Madam Chair,

Portugal aligns with the EU statement.

Portugal welcomes the convening of the second session of this Forum. Bringing together States, UN bodies, human rights defenders, civil society and other relevant stakeholders, the next few days will surely be rich in debate around five important themes: reparatory justice, pan-Africanism, transnational migration, data collection and the right to health.

These discussions may not always be consensual, but we believe it is important to have a forum – a place – where these issues can be addressed and talked about at the United Nations.

Madam Chair,

The overarching theme of this Forum is to look forward to and prepare a UN Declaration on the promotion, protection and full respect of the human rights of persons of African descent. Portugal supports this goal and wishes to see progress in the drafting of the Declaration.

Indeed, even though we consider that the International Convention on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination should constitute the basis of our efforts and that its full implementation should be our utmost priority, we acknowledge that there are specific and targeted forms of discrimination which affect persons of African descent and which the international community must combat.



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This fight against racism targeting persons of African descent must, first of all, be waged at national and local levels. Portugal's National Plan to Combat Racism and Discrimination – which was drafted in partnership with civil society organizations representing persons of African descent - are in line with the implementation of the International Decade for People of African Descent.

Portugal is also carefully studying the report published by the Working Group of Experts on People of African descent after their official visit in the end of 2021 and the recent concluding observations and recommendations following our dialogue with CERD, last April.

Internationally, too, there is work to be done. We call on States to engage in this Forum and on the drafting of the UN Declaration, but also more broadly on the sessions of the Intergovernmental Working Group on the effective implementation of the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action.

Madam Chair,

We must have these substantive discussions which should lead to substantive and decisive action. We need better data to analyse how structural racism impacts the enjoyment of human rights, and robust public policies which address inequalities and discrimination.

Racism must be eliminated. Combatting discrimination against persons of African descent should be a priority of all. Portugal hopes this Forum will help us in our action and moves this conversation forward.

Thank you.

443 words