



## 25<sup>th</sup> Session of the Universal Periodic Review Working Group

(2 - 13 May 2016)

### Statement by Portugal

#### **Antigua and Barbuda**

Mr. President,

Portugal warmly welcomes the delegation of Antigua and Barbuda and thanks it for the comprehensive presentation of the progresses made since the last UPR and for highlighting the challenges as regards the situation of human rights.

We congratulate Antigua and Barbuda on the approval of the Child Justice Bill aiming at improving the situation of juveniles in conflict with the law. We are nevertheless concerned both with the fact that detained juveniles are still not held separately from adults and with the overcrowding in prisons. In this regard, we recommend Antigua and Barbuda to introduce alternatives to imprisonment for minor offences with a view to reducing overcrowding and improving the situation of prisoners in general.

We commend Antigua and Barbuda for its efforts in tackling domestic and sexual violence, and welcome, in this regard, the adoption of the new Domestic Violence Bill and the national action plan for the period 2013-2018 to end gender-based violence. Nevertheless, Portugal is concerned with the fact that the Sexual Offences Act does not recognize rape within marriage in all circumstances. In this regard, we recommend Antigua and Barbuda to continue its efforts in fighting all forms of violence against women. We also recommend Antigua and Barbuda considers amending the Sexual Offenses Act to include inter-marital rape in all circumstances.

Portugal has for long been committed to the universal abolition of the death penalty, which we consider incompatible with the dignity of the human person and an irreversible, cruel, inhuman and degrading treatment. In light of the fact that capital punishment has not been applied in Antigua and Barbuda for more than 20 years, we recommend that it establishes a formal moratorium on death penalty and ratifies the Second Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, with a view to abolishing capital punishment both in practice and in law.

Thank you, Mr. President.