



**Statement of Portugal  
at the 31<sup>st</sup> Session of the Commission on Crime Prevention and  
Criminal Justice**

**Vienna, 16 to 20 May 2022**

Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Let me start by congratulating you on your election as Chair of the 31<sup>st</sup> Session of the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice.

I would like to assure you of my delegation's constructive engagement and full cooperation during our deliberations. As a starting point let me confirm you that Portugal fully aligns itself with the statement delivered by the European Union.

States continue to be confronted with risks and threats of crime, which have acquired an increasingly global, diversified and even sophisticated nature.

Despite the efforts made at domestic and international level, we continue to be daily confronted with the worldwide practice of serious crimes by organized groups, acting in many and diverse areas as child abuse and sexual exploitation of children, including online, trafficking in human beings and of cultural goods, corruption, money laundering and other crimes, as terrorism and hate crimes. In some of them it is even increasing.



Strengthening international cooperation, based in mutual trust and respect, is therefore fundamental. Portugal favours multilateralism and has been actively working at both multilateral and bilateral levels, to consolidate and further foster efficient mechanisms on crime prevention and criminal justice with other States, within the EU and other relevant international organizations, such as the Community of Portuguese Speaking Countries and the Ibero-american community.

Like state actors, our citizens and companies are also targeted with cybercrimes and crimes committed through cyberspace that affect their activities and our overall economies and societies.

For all these reasons, the thematic discussion of this Session, on *«Strengthening the use of digital evidence in criminal justice and countering cybercrime, including the abuse and exploitation of minors in illegal activities with the use of the Internet»*, could not be more opportune.

As stated one year ago, we strongly believe that the Budapest Convention remains the main framework for cooperation for tackling cybercrime, by facilitating and enhancing international cooperation in the investigation of these and other criminal offences.

Last week, Portugal signed in Strasbourg the Second Additional Protocol to this Convention that will allow an easier collection and preservation of electronic evidence as well as the improvement of international cooperation in this field.

It will also enhance criminal justice authorities' capacities to investigate cybercrime while respecting fundamental rights and data protection.



Portugal remains nevertheless open to consider other helpful improvements to the present system, participating in a constructive manner in the current negotiations in the UN framework to find consensual and balanced solutions for a Convention on «*Countering the use of information and communications technologies for criminal purposes*».

To conclude, Mr. Chair,

It is my country's firm conviction that addressing crime, keeping individuals safe and societies secure are important goals that must be actively pursued by all States, although in full respect for the principle of proportionality, human rights and fundamental freedoms, in an effort to achieve the shared aims of preventing crime, protecting victims and dealing fairly and humanely with offenders.

Having this last target in mind, we also believe that the application of the death penalty is a violation of the basic human right to life and is a disproportionate and largely counterproductive instrument to try to achieve the aims of national criminal justice systems.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.