



Mr./Madam Chair,

As this is the first time that Portugal takes the floor in this session of the Sixth Committee, allow me to congratulate you and the other members of the Bureau on your election and to assure you the full support of the Portuguese delegation.

Mr./Madam Chair,

We would like to begin by aligning ourselves with the statement made by the European Union, but wish, nevertheless, to make some comments in our national capacity.

The respect for and protection of the human dignity and the human rights of persons affected by disasters is a topic of great relevance for Portugal.

My delegation reiterates its belief that the *Draft Articles on the Protection of Persons in the Event of Disasters* provide an important contribution by the International Law Commission for the progressive development of international law on this subject. The COVID-19 pandemic showed the urgency for establishing a sound and universally inclined international legal framework applicable to disasters in the broad definition contained in Draft Article 3.

Indeed, as nowadays challenges become ever more transnational and complex, it is likely the world will soon face more and calamitous events, resulting in widespread loss of life, great human suffering and distress and causing serious disruption of the functioning of society .

