



Permanent Mission of the Republic of Cabo Verde to the United Nations

80th Session of the United Nations General Assembly
Sixth Committee – Item 86: Protection of persons in the event of disasters
Statement by Cabo Verde

Mr. Chairperson,

Thank you for giving me the floor.

Cabo Verde aligns itself with the statements delivered by Cameroon on behalf of the African Group, and Guinea-Bissau on behalf of the Community of Portuguese Language Countries (CPLP) and wishes to add the following remarks in national capacity.

Cabo Verde takes the floor today with a profound sense of responsibility and solidarity. As a peaceful Atlantic Ocean Island State, we live daily with the reality of environmental, climatic and economic vulnerability. We therefore approach this item not as an abstract exercise but as a matter of human protection, dignity and survival.

We express our appreciation to the International Law Commission (ILC) for its rigorous and visionary work, which culminated in the draft articles before us. We also welcome the decision of the General Assembly, through resolution 79/128, to advance toward the development of a legally binding instrument by 2027, building upon those articles. This marks an important milestone in strengthening the international legal framework for disaster response and prevention.

Disasters - whether natural, technological or human-induced - are increasing both in frequency and intensity. Climate change is amplifying their destructive potential while urbanization, poverty

and fragile infrastructures multiply their human impact. The consequences are disproportionately borne by developing countries, particularly Small Island Developing States (SIDS), for whom a single event can erase years of progress towards the SDGs.

For Cabo Verde, this is not an academic discussion. It is our reality. We face severe droughts, volcanic eruptions, sea level rise and coastal erosion. Just 2 months ago we experienced a flash flood, in Sao Vicente Island, that caused loss of human life, massive destruction and loss of infrastructure up to 43 million USD, in just 5 hours.

The 2014 eruption in Fogo Island remains a vivid memory of how fragile our livelihoods are, and of how vital early warning, preparedness and solidarity are.

Mr. Chair,

The future Convention must be guided by the overarching principle of human dignity. Protection must not be limited to immediate humanitarian relief but should encompass all phases of the disaster cycle – prevention, preparedness, response and recovery.

In this regard, Cabo Verde believes that any future instrument should:

- Affirm human dignity as its central purpose, recognizing that the protection of persons is both a legal obligation and a moral imperative;
- Ensure full respect for human rights, including the rights to life, health, shelter, and access to humanitarian assistance in accordance with international law;
- Recognize the primary responsibility of the affected State, while encouraging solidarity and cooperation among all States and relevant actors. Assistance should be needs-based, impartial, and non-discriminatory, avoiding any form of politicization.
- Pay particular attention to vulnerable groups - namely women, children, the elderly, persons with disabilities, migrants and displaced persons, whose exposure to risks and barriers to assistance are often higher; and

- Incorporate disaster risk reduction and climate adaptation into the very fabric of humanitarian response, bridging the traditional divide between relief and development. Prevention saves lives and it saves resources.

Mr. Chair,

We also underscore the importance of capacity building, technology transfer, and data sharing as essential enablers of resilience. Access to early warning systems, risk mapping, and rapid response mechanisms can make the difference between disaster and recovery.

We further stress the value of predictable, coordinated and inclusive international cooperation, engaging States, regional organizations, civil society and local communities. Solidarity among developing countries, including South-South and triangular cooperation are of utmost importance. Cabo Verde has benefitted of such partnerships and would support provisions that encourage their inclusion in the future legal framework.

Cabo Verde advocates for an inclusive, transparent, and results oriented process. We are encouraged by the roadmap established by the General Assembly and the continued engagement of Member States, the ILC, and the UN secretariat and we stand ready to contribute constructively to the consolidation of the draft text that will serve as the foundation for negotiations.

In this spirit, we encourage Member States to submit their written comments and proposals by 31 December 2025, ensuring that the diversity of perspectives from all regions and legal traditions is reflected in the final instrument.

In a world where disasters know no borders, our response must also transcend borders. The protection of persons in the event of disaster is not merely a humanitarian issue - it is a test of our shared humanity and of the relevance of the multilateral system itself.

In concluding, we reaffirm Cabo Verde's unwavering commitment to a multilateralism that protects, prevents, promotes solidarity and leaves no one behind. May this process yield an

instrument that translates our shared responsibility into practical and enforceable norms, capable of saving lives and preserving dignity, one that reflects our common humanity.

Thank you.