Portuguese National Human Rights Committee (PNHRC)
2013 Strategic Work Plan

I - General Overview
The Portuguese National Human Rights National Committee (PNHRC) was established in April 2010 by a Council of Ministers Resolution. The establishment of this Committee stemmed from a commitment expressed during the Portuguese Universal Periodic Review examination in Geneva, on the 4th of December 2009, in reply to several recommendations that Portugal improve its coordination mechanisms and present its reports to Treaty bodies on a timely basis.

The PNHRC is responsible for intergovernmental coordination with the aim of promoting an integrated approach to human rights policies. The Committee aims to define Portugal’s position in international fora and to implement Portugal’s obligations under International Human Rights Conventions. Given the broad scope of international instruments on Human Rights Portugal is a party to, the PNHRC coordinates all governmental action on Human Rights.

The Committee is chaired by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, namely by the Secretary of State for European Affairs. The MFA’s Multilateral Department, backed by the Office for Documentation and Comparative Law of the Attorney General’s Office, is the PNHRC’s Executive Secretariat.

The PNHRC has representatives from the following Ministries and State Departments: National Defense; Home Affairs; Justice; Economy and Employment; Agriculture, Sea, Environment and Territorial Planning; Health; Education and Science; Solidarity and Social Security; Culture; Media; Immigration; Gender Equality; Youth. The Portuguese Ombudsman, who is the Portuguese National Human Rights Institution (NHRI) according to the UN Paris Principles, has a standing invitation to attend all PNHRC meetings and to participate in the Committee’s work.

The PNHRC meets at least three times a year at Plenary level and, whenever needed, at Working Group level. The Committee also meets regularly with civil society representatives, at least once a year at Plenary level and, whenever needed, at Working Group level.
II – PNHRC 2013 Strategic Work Plan
(Approved by consensus on the 21st of December of 2012)

1. The PNHRC will discuss and identify national priorities for the discussions in:
   1.1 The Third Committee of the 68th UN General Assembly;
   1.2 The UN Human Rights Council Sessions (22nd, 23rd 24th and any HRC special sessions);
   1.3 The 57th session of the UN Commission on the Status of Women;
   1.4 The 51st session of the UN Commission for Social Development;
   1.5 The Council of Europe Committee of Ministers;
   1.6 The OSCE Human Dimension meetings.

2. The PNHRC will closely monitor the national implementation of the Human Rights commitments undertaken by Portugal within the framework of:
   2.1 The EU Strategic Framework and Action Plan on Human Rights and Democracy adopted by the Council on 25th June 2012;
   2.2 The Universal Periodic Review Mechanism of the Human Rights Council (December 2009).

3. The PNHRC will:
   3.1 Prepare the National Report to be discussed during the 2nd cycle of the Universal Periodic Review Mechanism of the Human Rights Council (April/May 2014);
   3.2 Regularly update the database that registers all recommendations made to Portugal by the UN Treaty Body monitoring system, the UN Human Rights Council Special Procedures; the Universal Periodic Review Mechanism of the Human Rights Council, the Council of Europe and other universal and regional Human Rights bodies;
   3.3 Circulate, namely through the Committee’s network of civil society representatives, the recommendations made to Portugal;
   3.4 Continue to develop national Human Rights Indicators as recommended by the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights.

4. The PNHRC will prepare, in close cooperation with civil society, the following reports on the implementation of UN Human Rights Convention:
4.1 8th and 9th Report on the implementation of the Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women due by the 1st July 2013;

4.2 Update the January 2011 version of the Portuguese Common Core Document.

5. The PNHRC will prepare, in close cooperation with civil society, the discussion with UN Human Rights Treaty Bodies of the following national reports:

5.1 5th and 6th periodic report on the implementation of the UN Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment, scheduled for October/November 2013;

5.2 3rd and 4th periodic report on the implementation of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.

6. In accordance with Portugal’s obligations under International Human Rights Conventions, the PNHRC will:

6.1 Designate the Independent Framework foreseen in paragraph 33/2 of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities;

6.2 Designate the National Preventive Mechanism foreseen in paragraph 17 of the Optional Protocol to the UN Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment.

7. The PNHRC will work towards the finalization of the ratification by Portugal of the following International Human Rights Instruments:

7.1 Within the United Nations, the Optional Portugal to the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, the International Convention against Enforced Disappearances, and the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on a communications procedure;

7.2 Within the Council of Europe, the Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence and the European Convention on the Exercise of Children’s Rights.

8. The PNHRC will share information on the activities it has undertaken with third countries and all relevant international organizations:

8.1 Portuguese Embassies and Permanent Missions to the UN and the Council of Europe will publicize both the PNHRC 2011-2012 Annual Report and the PNHRC 2013 Strategic Work Plan;
8.2 The Portuguese Mission to the UN in Geneva will regularly update the Office of the UNHCHR on the adoption of the Portuguese Human Rights Indicators as well as on other activities undertaken by the Committee.


10. The PNHRC will continue to work in close cooperation with civil society:

10.1 A PNHRC Plenary meeting with representatives of civil society organizations will take place in February 2013;

10.2 PNHRC Working Group meetings with representatives of civil society organizations members will be held to discuss the draft versions of the 8th and 9th Report on the implementation of the Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women prior to its submission to the CEDAW Committee;

11. The following initiatives will be undertaken by PNHRC members, within the framework of their respective competences:

11.1 Organize bi-annual training sessions on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights;

11.2 Organize an Information Program on the Council of Europe Revised European Social Charter;

11.3 Organize the 2013 Edition of the Journalism Award on the topic of “Human Rights and Integration”;

11.4 Organize a week of special media events to commemorate the “World Day on Freedom of the Press”;

11.5 Further develop a Neighborhood Proximity Policing Program targeted at victim support and vulnerable groups such as women, children, elderly persons and persons with disabilities;

11.6 Implement programmes aimed at the integration of foreign citizens, namely those that facilitate documental regularization, such as the Multilingual Contact Centre, “SEF in motion” or “SEF goes to school”, that provide assistance in various forms and languages, and the creation of the ISU System – (SEF Interface to validate the situation of third countries’ citizens that are studying or intend to work in a Portuguese higher institution);
11.7 Coordinate, through the Observatory for the Traffic in Human Beings, a European project aiming at the creation of a dynamic platform for exchange of information on trafficking in human beings;

11.8 Disseminate the "Education, Gender and Citizenship" guidelines, and organize ten training workshops throughout the country;

11.9 Award the "Intercultural School" Label;

11.10 Promote the learning of Portuguese for foreign-language children throughout the compulsory education system;

11.11 Commemorate the “European Citizens Year” in Primary and Secondary Schools;

11.12 Launch an “Equality Arts Program”;

11.13 Distribute information leaflets in Braille by the Portuguese National Library;

11.14 Implement the 4th National Equality Action Plan (2011-2013);

11.15 Implement the 4th National Domestic Violence Action Plan (2010-2013);

11.16 Implement the 4th National Trafficking in Human Beings Action Plan (2010-2013);

11.17 Implement the 1st National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security (2009-2013);

11.18 Develop a project aimed at promoting the rights of disadvantaged groups in the workplace;

11.19 Implement the 5th Edition of the "Choices Program” that aims to integrate socially children and youths;

11.20 Implement, for the second year, the international project “Next Door Family”, a project that brings together Portuguese families and families of foreigners living in Portugal.