

OSCE Human Dimension Implementation Meeting 2017

Statement by the Czech Republic

Opening Plenary Session, 11 September 2017

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Mr Chairman, Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

The Czech Republic aligns itself with the intervention by the European Union.

It gives us a great a pleasure to be back in Warsaw at the Human Dimension Implementation Meeting. The Czech Republic is committed to a strong and fully functioning OSCE and the HDIM plays a pivotal role in this regard.

The Czech Republic warmly welcomes this year's selected topics, in particular the topic of *Ensuring equal enjoyment of rights and equal participation in political and public life*. As a participating State as well as the Chair of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe and the current President of ECOSOC, the Czech Republic attaches great importance to the issue of participation. We believe that in order to facilitate an honest discussion on human dimension commitments we must ensure that voices of all the different stakeholders are heard. The 25th OSCE Economic and Environmental Forum held last week in Prague proved that successful implementation of existing commitments thrives on broad and inclusive dialogue.

We hope that the recent appointment of senior-level representatives of the OSCE autonomous institutions and the OSCE Secretary General will provide a much needed impetus for resuscitating such dialogue across the OSCE. The Czech Republic stands ready to support the Secretary General, Director of ODIHR, High Commissioner on National Minorities and the Representative on Freedom of the Media in their efforts and wishes them all the success.

Against the backdrop of the deteriorating situation of human rights and fundamental freedoms in the OSCE area, heightened attacks leveled at civil society, media and persons belonging to minorities, it remains crucial to continue promoting and protecting the fundamental OSCE commitments and principles. In this context, we would like to highlight the recent positive development in the implementation of Czech Republic's Roma Integration Strategy 2015–2020.

Mr Chairman,

The Czech Republic wishes to thank the host country, Austrian Chairmanship-in-Office and ODIHR for convening the 2017 Human Dimension Implementation Meeting. We look forward to open and constructive discussions over the following two weeks while acknowledging that any meaningful discussion must be met with meaningful actions.

Thank you.