

OSCE Human Dimension Implementation Meeting 2019
Statement by the Czech Republic

Opening plenary session
16 September 2019

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Madam Director,

The Czech Republic aligns itself with the statement delivered on behalf of the European Union. I would like to add some national remarks.

I would like to thank the Slovak OSCE Chairmanship and ODIHR for organizing this year's HDIM and Poland for hosting it. We are grateful to the Slovak Chairmanship for securing all needed decisions for this year's HDIM.

HDIM is a unique platform for dialogue on topical human rights issues with representatives of civil society and human rights defenders, as well as among participating States. The respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms is a cornerstone of the OSCE comprehensive approach to security. The Czech Republic is honored that, through our ongoing Chairmanship of the OSCE Human Dimension Committee, we can help strengthen the implementation of the OSCE human dimension commitments and support the Slovak Chairmanship and the OSCE autonomous institutions. Since January 2019 the HDC platform in Vienna has discussed several topics which are relevant for everyday life, including freedom of expression and addressing disinformation; promoting tolerance and non-discrimination; participation in public and political life; torture prevention; economic and social rights; effective follow-up to elections. We have invited civil society representatives from different parts of the OSCE region to contribute to the Committee's deliberations.

This year marks the 30th anniversary of the Velvet Revolution in the former Czechoslovakia. The peaceful students' demand for democracy, respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms triggered large-scale peaceful demonstrations and became part of bigger events in Europe, which caused the fall of the Iron Curtain between East and West and marked the beginning of a new era. These principles cannot be taken for granted. Today the need for protection and promotion of human rights and fundamental freedoms in many parts of the OSCE region is as relevant as it was in November 1989. We therefore thank the representatives of civil society and human rights defenders who are present here for coming to Warsaw and look forward to constructive discussions during the upcoming two weeks.

Thank you.