

OSCE Human Dimension Implementation Meeting 2016**Statement by the Czech Republic****Working Session 1: Democratic Institutions**

Mr Chairman,

The Czech Republic aligns herself with the intervention delivered by the European Union and the recommendations made on all the described topics.

The Czech Republic appreciates the high professional standards and expertise of the ODIHR, which have been proved through 25 years of ODIHR's existence. A full ODIHR's autonomy is absolutely necessary to effectively assist Participating States in the implementation of the OSCE human dimension commitments.

Let me focus on election observation, which in our view remains a corner stone of ODIHR's activities. Especially this autumn belongs to one of the busiest election observation seasons in history. The Czech Republic contributed with its long-term and short-term observers to all OSCE Election Observation Missions in 2016. We are ready to send our observers to participate in all upcoming elections in the rest of this year. We invite Participating States to strengthen their support of ODIHR and regularly contribute with their observers to OSCE EOMs. We regret to note that ODIHR had to limit the originally planned number of deployed observers to several EOMs due to insufficient Participating States contributions.

We invite ODIHR and Participating States to engage in the debate on possible improvements of Election Observation Missions. We believe it is time to address the issue of evaluation of Long Term Observers. Some observers with limited language skills, weak team spirit or low working morale shall not participate as members of OSCE EOMs.

The Czech Republic continues to cooperate with different electoral oriented non-governmental organisations including the International Foundation for Electoral Systems and Carter Center.

Together with IFES we are organizing in Prague in 2016 and 2017 series of workshops supporting the Eastern Partnership states effort to improve their electoral system. We have organized a workshop on participation of youth in politics and in October we will prepare the event on participation of persons with disabilities.

At the September Human Rights Council session in Geneva we have presented once again together with Botswana, Indonesia, Netherlands and Peru the resolution on equal participation in political and public affairs. The resolution was prepared with very much appreciated assistance of Carter Center experts. Through this resolution we would like to start a process of elaborating UN guidelines for States' effective implementation of the right to participate in public affairs.

Thank you Mr Chairman.