

**OSCE Human Dimension Implementation Meeting 2017****Statement by the Czech Republic**

Working session 3: Democratic institutions, including democracy at the national, regional and local levels, democratic elections, 12 September 2017

*/check against delivery/*

Mr Chairman,

The Czech Republic aligns itself with the statement 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 ODIHR. We support a full ODIHR's autonomy which is crucial in order to effectively assist the participating States in their implementation of the OSCE human dimension commitments.

Elections related activities remain a corner stone of the ODIHR's mandate. So far, the Czech Republic has contributed with its Long-Term and Short-Term Observers to all OSCE Election Observation Missions in 2017. We stand ready to deploy our observers to participate in all upcoming elections this year, in particular in October. According to our information, in some EOMs the number of deployed observers was limited due to the lack of nominations by participating States. Therefore, we encourage participating States to increase their contributions to OSCE EOMs.

We appreciate the recent agreement with ODIHR to evaluate the performance of all Czech Long-Term Observers participating in OSCE EOMs. In our view, any successful EOM is not possible without qualified and professional Long-Term Observers. We invite ODIHR to open discussions on a general evaluation system for all participating Long-Term Observers.

The Czech Republic will organize parliamentary elections in October 2017 and presidential elections in January 2018. We welcome the OSCE decision to deploy the Election Assessment Mission to observe the upcoming parliamentary elections. The Czech government is prepared to fully cooperate with the Mission and implement recommendations included in the Mission's Final Report if applicable.

Thank you, Mr Chairman.