

**Statement of the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Czech Republic presented by the Deputy
Minister of Foreign Affairs H.E. Tomáš Dub**

Mr. Chairman,

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen, Distinguished Guests,

I would like to welcome all of you in Prague on the occasion of the twentieth OSCE Economic and Environmental Forum. We are pleased to see the representatives of the 56 participating States of the OSCE, the representatives of the OSCE Secretariat, as well as the OSCE Partners for Co-operation and the representatives of international organizations. We know that this event is important for the OSCE and I wish you to make best use of it.

Before coming to the topic of the Forum, let me make few comments about the OSCE agenda as a whole.

We are heading towards Dublin Ministerial Council and we hope the outcome will be more substantive than in Vilnius where we failed to adopt any human dimension decision. This was indeed disappointing.

We are looking forward to continue our work in a runup to Dublin to adopt the decisions in all three dimensions proposed by Irish Chairmanship on Transnational Threats, Confidence Building Measures, good governance and transparency and last but not least on media freedom as well as decision on new media and safety of journalists.

Mr. Chairman,

It is high time, in our view, to achieve some progress in main OSCE's agenda, after we experience some setbacks in recent years, such as impasse in first dimension or recurrent violation of the OSCE commitments in the third dimension. There is no doubt that we have number of good and valuable commitments in the OSCE and it is indeed crucial not to undermine them with any new decision that we take in the future. More commitments are desirable only if we do not compromise on our old ones. Yet, one of our biggest challenges in first, second and not least in third dimension remain the actual implementation of the OSCE commitments.

The topic of the 20th Economic Forum - "Promoting Security and Stability through Good Governance" is very relevant. Corruption undermines rule-of-law, trust in state institutions and hampers economic development. This is something that no government can afford to overlook today. Particularly important is the role of civil society and independent media in this regard and I welcome that the session of this Forum is devoted to the "Strengthening civil society and media engagement in support of good governance, integrity and transparency".

In conclusion, Mr. Chairperson, I would like to express my hope that this year's Forum will be conducive to formulate some concrete conclusions and recommendations that can help participating States to tackle important challenges in good governance and transparency.

Let me express my thank to the Irish Chairmanship, to wish much success to the Ukrainian incoming Chair. But I would like to also thank to Secretary-General, Coordinator of the OSCE Economic and Environmental Activities, the OSCE Secretariat and its Prague Office and organizers for all the preparatory work they have done.

I wish you a pleasant and productive stay in Prague.

Thank you for your attention.