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**UN Human Rights Council  
Twenty-second session, 25 February - 22 March 2013**

**Item 6:  
Consideration of UPR reports**

**CZECH REPUBLIC**

Mr. President,

Amnesty International is concerned that Roma children continue to experience widespread and systematic discrimination in their access to education. Similar concerns have also been raised by a number of international human rights monitoring bodies, including the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (CERD) which in September 2011 found that segregation of Roma children in education persisted and recommended to the Czech government that it take concrete de-segregation measures.<sup>1</sup> In addition, the Commissioner for Human Rights of the Council of Europe, Nils Muižnieks in November 2012 stated that "practical schools" (former "special schools" offering reduced curricula) perpetuate segregation of Roma children, inequality and racism. He called for such schools to be phased out and replaced by mainstream schools that would be prepared to host and provide support to all pupils, irrespective of their ethnic origin.

These findings and criticism mirror the 2007 judgement of the European Court of Human Rights that the Czech Republic had violated the right of Roma children to an education free from discrimination by placing them in "special schools" offering a lower quality education. Five years after the judgment, the segregation of Roma children in Czech schools continues.

Mr President,

We welcome that more than 20 states raised the issue of inclusive education in the Czech Republic, including by calling for implementation of the National Plan of Action

for Inclusive Education and an end to unlawful segregation of Roma children in schools.<sup>ii</sup>

We welcome the Czech Republic's support of these important recommendations, and its assurances that equal opportunity will be a central aspect of the new education development strategies.<sup>iii</sup> We also recall that in a meeting with Amnesty International in November 2012, the Czech Minister of Education, Petr Fiala, stated that desegregation and inclusive education were priorities for his ministry.

We urge the government to confirm its commitment to ending discrimination against Roma children in education and to urgently implement the reform necessary to ensure that the thousands of Roma children in the country can enjoy equal right to education, just like their non-Roma peers.

Thank you, Mr. President.

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<sup>i</sup> Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, Concluding Observations: Czech Republic, 2 September 2011, CERD/C/CZE/CO/8-9, paragraph 12; Committee on the Rights of the Child, Concluding Observations: Czech Republic, 4 August 2011, CRC/C/CZE/CO/3-4, paragraph 30; ECRI 2009, Report on Czech Republic, Fourth monitoring cycle, 2 April 2009, pp. 25-31.

<sup>ii</sup> A/HRC/22/3, recommendations 94.73 (Iran), 94.95-94.113 (Palestine, Canada, Sri Lanka, Norway, Indonesia, USA, Belgium, Kyrgyzstan, Denmark, Finland, Spain, Mexico, Slovenia, Bangladesh, Australia, Austria, Brazil, UK), 94.115 (Paraguay).

<sup>iii</sup> A/HRC/22/3/Add.1, paragraph 15.