



**Permanent Mission of the Czech Republic to the United Nations
Office and other International Organizations at Geneva**

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Statement by

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*Mr. President,
Madame High Commissioner,
Distinguished representatives of the Member States and the Observer States of the Human Rights Council,
Representatives of the Civil Society,
Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,*

It is a pleasure for me to represent the Czech Republic before this forum in this important exercise. We warmly welcome the report as well as the whole process starting by the preparation of the national report, continuing with the interactive dialogue in this room on 16th of April and followed today by adoption of the outcome document.

We are ready to continue our follow-up to the review in cooperation with our civil society and while including gender equality perspective.

Since the interactive dialogue on the situation of human rights in the Czech Republic, the Government has diligently considered all the recommendations raised during the discussion and a detailed written response to them has been submitted to the Council.

Therefore let me present here only brief overview of the responses to the main themes addressed by the recommendations:

1. Regarding the rights of ethnic minorities, especially Roma minority, the Government of the Czech Republic is aware of the need to continue its efforts and through number of initiatives strives to eliminate all forms of discrimination against or exclusion of individuals and groups defined by their race, colour of skin, nationality or language. A focused attention is being paid to the reduction of unemployment, improvement of housing situation, health and prevention of the social exclusion in Roma communities.
2. Recommendations related to fight against Nazism and extremism, they are being implemented in the framework of the government anti-extremism policy, which includes medium- and long-term provisions, both of preventive and repressive nature, against extremism, neo-Nazism, racism, anti-Semitism and xenophobia.

All activities leading to violence against groups of people and individuals, as well as any incitement to hatred against nation, ethnic group, race or belief, as well as support of movements leading to suppression of the rights and freedoms of people are criminal offences under Czech law.

The Czech Republic deeply appreciates the contribution of human rights defenders to the protection of human rights and actively supports effective measures to improve their protection and promote their activities worldwide. The Government remains committed to maintaining an environment conducive to the work of human rights defenders within our country as well, enabling individuals, groups and associations to freely carry out activities to promote and strive for the protection of human rights. The Government Human Rights Council, where an open dialogue between the Government and civil society representatives takes place, is one of the examples of such an environment.

3. Regarding the cases of sterilisation of women without their proper informed prior consent, the Ombudsman has identified 50 such cases, in some of these complaint was filed with a court, in one case a financial compensation of 20.000 EUR was awarded together with an apology, in another case apology by the hospital was awarded.

In response to these findings additional measures have been taken to improve the effectiveness of the existing legal safeguards against sterilizations based on uninformed consent. Detailed rules on sterilization strengthening the existing safeguards themselves will become part of a new Law on Specific Medical Services, which is being prepared and is expected to come into force in 2009.

Further, the Government will be considering the proposal by the Government Council for Human Rights to establish an interdepartmental working commission to examine past sterilization practices starting from 1 July 1966.

4. On the issue of cage beds in health care and social care facilities, let me confirm that in social care facilities, placement of a social service client in a cage-bed or a net-bed has been banned by law since January 1, 2007.

In health care facilities the use of restraining means is currently regulated by internal guidelines, not by law. Government in March this year approved a motion requesting the Ministry of Health to prepare new legal regulation which should follow the Council's recommendations and contain a set of detailed rules and safeguards for use of any restraining means in health care facilities.

5. The Government has been for many years exercising its strong resolve to fight trafficking in human beings. The recommendations in this field enjoy its full support and are being implemented in compliance with the National Strategy of Fight against Trafficking in Human Beings which has been in force since 2003 and updated every two years. Number of measures continue to be taken in the field of repression, prevention and care for the victims of trafficking, according to the UN Palermo Protocol and other relevant international agreements and recommendations.
6. In the area of protection of the rights of the child and support to families, the Government's current activities and plans in the area of the protection of children conform to the recommendations raised.

In March 2008, the Government tasked the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs to prepare a proposal of necessary measures for transformation of the system of protection of children, which will be submitted to the Government by the end of 2008. The transformation's long-term objective is the strengthening of the prevention and social assistance provided to families at risk as well as the improvement of conditions for the foster care in order to prevent the institutionalisation of children.

The Government is aware of the need to enable parents to combine their work and family life. A new system of three-speed drawdown of parental allowance was introduced in January 2008 entitling parents to choose from 3 options of drawdown of parental allowance according to their reconciliation strategy thus allowing families to choose the length of personal childcare freely and to share responsibilities for childcare within the family.

7. Regarding the Yogyakarta principles, currently, a Committee for the issues of sexual minorities is being set up under the Government Council for Human Rights. The committee will work on the implementation of recommendations stemming from the recently prepared analysis of the state of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender minority, most of which are already in compliance with the Yogyakarta principles, and from the Yogyakarta Principles themselves.
8. On the international political and legal framework for protection and promotion of human rights the Government remains committed to full cooperation an open and constructive dialogue with all the monitoring treaty bodies and human rights special mechanisms.

The Parliament is currently considering the Government proposal to ratify the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court. In the course of this year inter-departmental consultations will be taking place, with a view to preparing a proposal to sign the International Convention on the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance and the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs will present to the Government a proposal to ratify the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and its Optional Protocol.

The Government is of the view that the rights of migrant workers and their families are comprehensively protected under existing national legislation and the Czech Republic's international commitments and currently does not consider the signature of the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of their Families.

9. Continuing through the list of the recommendations, let me appreciate also the one relating to the international human rights law training for the judiciary. We continue strengthening this crucial aspect of education of legal professionals attended by judges and public prosecutors; some of which are open also to members of other legal professions. International human rights law issues are also covered by seminars for legal and court trainees and seminars of continuing education for judges and public prosecutors with up to three years' experience.

Mr. President,

I would like to close this overview here by informing you that we are ready to submit in the coming months and years to the Human Rights Council information on all concrete development that we will be achieved in the areas covered by the recommendations as a prove of our commitment to the ultimate goal of the UPR which is to bring concrete improvements to the situation of human rights in countries under review.

Thank you.