



CZECH REPUBLIC

Statement by

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at the 58th session of the Commission on the Status of Women

United Nations Headquarters
New York, 13 March 2014

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Mister Chair, Excellencies, distinguished delegates,

It is my pleasure and honour to address the Commission on the Status of Women on behalf of the Czech Republic. The Czech Republic fully aligns itself with the statement made by the distinguished representative of Greece on behalf of the European Union.

I would like to stress that gender equality and women's full enjoyment of human rights are essential to human, social and economic development. Therefore, the global development efforts to achieve the Millennium Development Goals have indeed improved lives of millions women and men worldwide. Thanks to this effort the gender gaps in primary education enrolments have been significantly narrowed, access to safe drinking water has been improved and the number of women and men living in extreme poverty has been halved at the global level.

While progress can be reported in many areas, the overall progress for women and girls across some of the Millennium Development Goals remains rather slow and uneven. Women still do not have full access to decent work and social protection and remain more vulnerable to poverty and hunger. Globally, the maternal mortality ratio declined by almost 50 per cent, however it continues to be unacceptably high. Furthermore, women continue to be denied equal opportunity with men to participate in all levels of decision-making process and in elections. Violence against women and girls remains a persistent problem, exacerbated by the lack of visibility and often by the context of institutionalized gender inequality and stereotyping.

For the Czech Republic gender equality is a basic principle of democratic society and a crucial and integral part of its development agenda. The Government of the Czech Republic annually approves the National Action Plan in Promotion of Gender Equality. The Plan includes several strategic tasks

which follow the goals and structure of the Beijing Platform for Action. One of the regular tasks is to apply the principle of gender equality within the Czech foreign and development policy. This task is fulfilled by implementation of the principle of gender mainstreaming and by supporting projects specifically aimed at equality between women and men.

Gender equality and empowerment of women is a most significant cross-cutting principle of those supporting fundamental rights, economic, social and labour rights within the programmes of the Czech development cooperation. The Czech Republic is doing its best to apply the principle of gender mainstreaming across the implementation, monitoring and evaluation of projects focused on the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals. Furthermore, the Czech Republic supports various projects specifically aimed at empowering women.

During the past decade the Czech Republic in cooperation with non-governmental organisations implemented a number of projects focused on improvement of girls' and women's education in countries like Afghanistan, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Senegal or Sudan. Other projects have helped to improve health care for girls and women in Georgia, Cambodia, the Central African Republic, Namibia, Senegal or Zambia. In a lot of other developing countries the Czech development policy has contributed to economic empowerment of women or to prevent gender-based violence.

Mister Chair, Excellencies, distinguished delegates,

We are meeting here to discuss the future development framework. Let me assure you, that the Czech Republic considers gender equality and women's empowerment a universal and crucial priority in the Post-2015 framework. It is the responsibility of each of us and of our respective countries to strengthen and accelerate our efforts to improve gender equality and lives of girls and women around the world as no one deserves to live in poverty or face injustice and

discrimination. Reinforced global development efforts can make a difference. I believe this session of the Commission on the Status of Women will play an important role in the formulation of the Post-2015 global development framework.

Mister Chair, Excellencies, distinguished delegates,

I would like to reassure you of the Czech Republic's as well as my own commitment to promote gender equality, to protect women's rights and tackle gender based violence. In conclusion let me invite you to a side-event the Czech Republic will organize on gender-based violence and its impacts on labour market which starts today at quarter past one.

Thank you for your attention.