**Human Rights Council**

**21th Session**

**Item 5: Panel on Cooperation with United Nation´s Human Rights mechanisms: issues of intimidation or reprisals**

**Statement of the Czech Republic**

Thank you, Madame President,

The Czech Republic supports the statement delivered by European Union.

The Czech Republic thanks the High Commissioner and the Secretary General for their related reports, including the cases of reprisals or intimidation against those who cooperated with the United Nations and its mechanisms. We deeply regret that some Governments do not hesitate to resort to truly extreme measures to avoid international critique, including brutal treatment of human rights activists and harassment of their relatives. Also, the documented cases of attacks against individuals taking part in the Human Rights Council Sessions are totally inacceptable.

Reiterating the primary responsibility of States to ensure adequate protection against such acts, we urge all the concerned States to investigate the reported cases of intimidation or reprisals and to undertake adequate steps in order to punish the perpetrators as well as provide the victims with appropriate remedies.

The Czech Republic appreciates the vigorous attention paid to the issue of intimidation by the High Commissioner, the Special Procedures and the President of the Council, but we need an even larger and more consistent engagement of relevant mechanisms of the United Nations and, of course, of States.

We firmly believe that concentrated and consequent pressure coming from the entire international community contributes to the elimination of such cases. Therefore these cases should be not only be condemned in our speeches, but systematically addressed within the framework of the UPR, raised during the examination of periodical reports by the respective treaty bodies or by special procedures in the course of their communication with representatives of a concerned state.

Moreover, we are firmly convinced of the importance of prevention in this regard. Therefore we would like to ask the distinguished panelists the following question:

**Could you elaborate on what kind of preventive actions states and human rights mechanisms of the United Nations could undertake in order to avoid the intimidation or reprisals in particular cases?**

We are looking forward to the outcome of today´s discussion.

Thank you.