

Mr. Chairman – *Your Excellency Vice Foreign Minister Song Tao, Secretary-General of the Secretariat*, Your Excellency Director General Liu Haixing, distinguished national coordinators, excellencies, ladies and gentlemen,

On this occasion I am entrusted, as the coordinator of the initiative in the Czech Republic, to share with you remarks from the point of view of the Czech Government.

But first of all I would like to express thanks to our Chinese friends for the warm welcome and great hospitality in Beijing and excellent organization of this meeting.

The Czech Republic has warmly welcomed the initiative of Premier Wen Jiabao laid out in Warsaw earlier this year in the form of the twelve-measure plan for the support of friendly cooperation between China and 16 countries in Central, Eastern and South Eastern Europe. We see it as a strategic opportunity to further strengthen traditional ties between China and the Czech Republic and **develop our cooperation in trade, investment, research and development, education, tourism, culture and people-to-people contacts** for our mutual benefit.

We appreciate leadership of China and its pragmatic and systematic approach to the steps leading to successful and functional implementation of the initiative.

We follow these steps with great attention and interest and the Czech Republic is eager and ready to work together with Chinese partners on the details of the accomplishment of the plan.

The overview of the Czech Republic and its potential for business cooperation as well as investment opportunities for Chinese companies and regional representatives, for tourism exchange, for cooperation of the education institutions and research institutes as well as academic exchanges has been well presented during the Cooperation Seminar at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Beijing by the representative of the Czech Embassy last month (*on 14th August 2012*), so I will not repeat them here.

What I would like to point out is that currently, in the Czech Republic, we are trying to analyse what concrete steps could be taken on our side to move swiftly forward. It is necessary to explore whether there are projects Chinese companies could participate in to make the best use of the initiative. We realized that we need further clarification of how each measure of the plan is to be implemented within the specific environment and standards. We want to be active. **We offer to organize expert as well as senior political meetings in Prague to implement twelve-measure plan.**

We heard a lot today and we appreciate it. Information on concrete terms of implementation is crucial and we would like to learn more about how the Chinese entrepreneurs, institutions and individuals are planning to use a distinctive potential of each of the 16 specific countries of Europe. We see **great potential for investments, technology cooperation, energy cooperation, cooperation in the field of education and for joint innovation endeavours in China and the Czech Republic.**

We understand that it may take some time and significant effort for such a broad initiative to produce tangible results. It is therefore important that we stay focused, as much as possible, on practical and result-oriented activities and utilize, to maximum extent, already existing frameworks of cooperation. Let me reaffirm that the Czech Republic is prepared to invest the time and energy in this regard.

Mr. Chairman, distinguished national coordinators, excellencies, ladies and gentlemen, my presence at the Inaugural Conference and Coordinators' Meeting in Beijing has been a very useful opportunity to meet, share our views and discuss possibilities of further development of our relationship.

Today's meeting has been an opportunity to learn more about China and its plans. I am looking forward to further cooperation between our countries.

Thank you for attention.