**46th Session of the Human Rights Council**

**Item 4 - Interactive Dialogue with the Special Rapporteur**

**on the Democratic People's Republic of Korea**

*9 March 2021*

**Statement by the Czech Republic**

Madam President,

The Czech Republic aligns itself with the statement delivered by the EU.

We thank the Special Rapporteur, Mr. Tomás Ojea Quintana, for his insightful report. We call upon the Government of the DPRK to engage with the Special Rapporteur and grant him an immediate and unrestricted access to the country.

As the Special Rapporteur has indicated, the human rights situation in the DPRK has not improved. Unparalleled, systemic, widespread and gross human rights violations, including crimes against humanity, continue to be committed in the country under direct supervision of the State authorities. With the Covid-19 pandemic spreading across the world and the Government of the DPRK resorting to drastic containment measures, the reports of widespread undernourishment and deaths by starvation surge once again. We call upon the Government to immediately grant an unimpeded access to humanitarian actors and enable them to assist the most vulnerable communities.

We welcome the call of the Special Rapporteur upon the international community to revive its efforts and help deliver justice to victims. We join the Special Rapporteur and urge the Security Council to meet its obligations and pursue accountability, including by a referral of the situation in the DPRK to the International Criminal Court, by establishing an ad hoc tribunal or by imposing sanctions targeting those responsible. The Czech Republic highly values the work of the OHCHR office in Seoul, as well as the work of all NGOs and victims’ groups whose contribution in the field of awareness-raising, documentation and advocacy is priceless.

*Mr. Ojea Quintana, having in mind the current Covid-19 situation, can you see any chance of organising virtual reunions of separated families any time soon?*

I thank you.