**44th Session of the UN HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL**

**Interactive Dialogue with Special Rapporteur on Myanmar**

14th July 2020

**Statement by the Czech Republic**

Madam Vice-President,

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

We thank the Special Rapporteur, Mr. Tom Andrews, for his oral report and we assure him of our strong and unwavering support of his mandate. We call upon the Government of Myanmar to resume its cooperation with the Special Rapporteur.

We take note of the ceasefire declared in connection with the COVID-19 pandemic. As we have heard from the Special Rapporteur and the High Commissioner Michelle Bachelet, however, the overall human rights situation in Myanmar continues to worsen. The civilian population in Rakhine and Chin states still suffers immensely under the conflict between the Tatmadaw military and the Arakan Army. Tatmadaw military continues to force Rohingya population to flee their villages and burns down their homes, which makes their future repatriation even more complicated. We call upon the Government to immediately halt all respective military operations.

Furthermore, we urge the Government to guarantee its citizens free access to information, especially given the current Covid-19 crisis.

The upcoming general elections announced for 8th November 2020 are an apt opportunity for the Government of Myanmar to prove its commitment to democratic transition and a chance for the people of Myanmar to participate in the political decision-making. The Czech Republic stands ready to support the Government of Myanmar in this endeavour.

*Mr. Andrews, how will you approach the ongoing restrictions on freedom of expression in Myanmar during your mandate? Will persecution of journalists and human rights defenders in Myanmar constitute one of your priorities?*

I thank you.