

## Czech National Day 2021

Jiří Brodský

Honorable members of parliament, Doyen of the Diplomatic Corps, Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen,

Let me welcome you all, also on behalf of my wife Hana, to the Czech National Day reception. We are celebrating the birth of our independent and democratic, republican statehood 102 years ago, and at the same time this year marks 70th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations with Mongolia.

We have installed 22 photos from the history of Czech-Mongolian relations on the fence of Sky Plaza, so that everybody can see them until the end of December. The official visits, construction of the First hospital in Ulaanbaatar, Darkhan cement factory, cooperation of our geologists and discovery of Erdenet copper depository, Czech turbines, buses and motorcycles, sophisticated technologies installations, cooperation in forestry and protection of the environment, including return of Przewalski horses, cultural events, and most importantly people-to-people contacts.

The fact that the Czech Republic was able to re-assume its place among mature European democracies through the reference to the era of the First republic should be remembered and celebrated. Nobody contributed more to the establishment of the democratic First republic in 1918 like the first democratic President Tomáš Garrigue Masaryk, but I would like to remember his son Jan Masaryk today.

He was 32 years old, when Czechoslovakia was founded. He lived through the times of the First republic and helped to gain recognition and respect for the newly born state as a diplomat, first in Washington and later in London, where he was appointed as Ambassador in 1925 and served there until 1938, when he fought againsts the appeasement policy and carried immensely heavy diplomatic burden vis-a-vis Prime Minister Chamberlain. After the Munich conference, Masaryk resigned, went to the USA for a few months, then returned as Minister of foreign affairs of the Czechoslovak exile government in London. He continued to work as Minister of foreign affairs after the war, signed the UN Charter for Czechoslovakia and lead Czechoslovak delegation at the Paris peace conference. After the communist coup in February 1948 he refused to resign from the government and on 10 March he tragically passed away.

Today, Czech Ambassadors have the special privilege and authority to award honorary silver medal named after Jan Masaryk to foreign nationals who promote the Czech Republic abroad and contribute to the development of relations between the Czech Republic and their respective countries.

That is why I have decided to award this medal to Mongolian personalities who contribute to the further strengthening of Czech-Mongolian relations, in recognition of their long-term activities. I am pleased one of them is here with us: Mr Davaanyam, who has served as Chairman of the Association of Mongolian alumni of Czech and Slovak universities for the past 30 years. I highly value your friendship to the Czech Republic and to me personally and I feel certain you are a personality that deserves to be recognized this way.

Last but not least, I should like to thank the Czech embassy team for making this reception possible. Many thanks to Delicatessen café team and Altan Taria for their excellent food and for providing Pilsner Urquell today for our guests.