**HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL**

**45th Session**

**Item 5: Interactive dialogue with the Assistant Secretary-General for Human Rights on the report of the Secretary-General on cooperation with the United Nations, its representatives and mechanisms in the field of human rights​**

30 September 2020

**Statement by the Czech Republic**

Thank you, Madam President.

The Czech Republic aligns itself with the EU statement. We thank the Secretary-General for his report on intimidation and reprisals against those seeking to cooperate with the United Nations, its representatives and mechanisms in the field of human rights.

The Secretary-General has raised some issues of concern and made concrete recommendations. In this regard, we would like to reiterate a few remarks.

We are seriously concerned about the large numbers of incidents against those engaging with the United Nations. Reprisals pose a threat for both protection of human rights and functioning of the UN system. The protection of those seeking to cooperate, or having cooperated, with the UN system is thus essential for the effectiveness and credibility of the human rights mechanisms.

The Czech Republic supports the Secretary-General’s approach to this issue and particularly the attention he devotes to define a more coherent framework in this field. Proactive measures to prevent and protect, not limited only to reacting to incidents, are a vital component of this framework. We fully agree that acts of intimidation or reprisals carried out against any individual or group are unacceptable and should be investigated to ensure accountability and effective remedies.

Although the continued broader efforts to strengthen the human rights system is encouraging, we believe that a more effective response requires a concentrated UN-wide action and must go beyond documentation and recommendations.

The Czech Republic continues to support efforts to create an enabling space for Civil Society at large, including at UN Fora.

*In the short/medium term, do you foresee any changes on the previously identified trends (geography, impact on certain groups)?*