**52nd session of the HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL**

**General debate on the oral update by the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights**

 **7 March 2023, Statement by the Czech Republic**

Thank you, Mr. High Commissioner.

The Czech Republic aligns itself with the EU statement and adds remarks in the national capacity.

We wish to express continuous support of the Czech Republic to you and your **Office**. Your independence and the comprehensive human rights mandate are absolutely crucial.

We welcome your very **first update at the Council’s Session** and your proactive approach aimed at direct cooperation in the countries. Your early visits to Ukraine, Sudan or the Latin American region provide us with valuable insights.

2023 is a year of important **human rights anniversaries**. They provide a key opportunity for highlighting the role of the UN human rights pillar and we support your initiative and inclusive approach in this regard. We are ready to positively contribute, *also through increasing earmarked as well as unearmarked support, and through active collaboration with your Office*. Sustainable financing of the UN human rights pillar also must be ensured.

Our human rights advocacy can only be credible if we look critically at our own situation. The Czech Republic has just undergone the **Universal Periodic Review**. We will make adequate efforts to the implementation process and call on the states to do the same when it comes to their reviews.

Mr High Commissioner,

It has been a year since **Russia** launched its unjustified aggression against **Ukraine** alongside with gruesome violence, killing and immeasurable suffering of the Ukrainian people. We thank you for your dedicated attention to the situation in Ukraine and agree that the most effective way to stop the cruelty is to end this war.

What more can the Council do in this regard?

We also thank you for your update on the human rights situation in **Nicaragua**. We reiterate our call for immediate release of all individuals arbitrarily detained for expressing their political views.

On **Afghanistan***, while welcoming the cooperation of the de facto authorities with the Special Rapporteur,* we deplore the worsening of the human rights crisis and echo the call on the de facto authorities to recognize equal role of women, and to respect fundamental human rights.

In **Sudan**, we strongly encourage the authorities to ensure the right to peaceful assembly and protest, to ensure accountability for human rights violations, or to commit to zero tolerance for sexual violence, as recommended in your update, Mr. High Commissioner.

As to **Eritrea**, the Czech Republic remains concerned by the continuous severe repressions of its population, including through imposed restrictions on freedom of expression and opinion.

**I thank you.**