

Speech of the Deputy Prime Minister Mr. Bělobrádek at the Plenary, 09/26

*Dear Mr. Chairman,
Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,*

/INTRODUCTION AND CONTEXT OF THE SPEECH/

The Czech Republic welcomes the adoption of the new 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its high degree of ambition in seeking out the coveted transformation that would strike a balance between the further development of humanity and our planet's natural limits. At this point in time, we are seeing the results of – and capitalising on – the formidable institutional and human commitments that have been required in recent years for us to work together in order to arrive at a common vision of a better and fairer world where no one stands on the periphery.

The very process of plotting this collective path has not been easy; needless to say, the Czech Republic, too, had – and continues to have – its own priorities and expectations. These have largely been met to our satisfaction in the outcome document that has been tabled. We welcome and applaud the fact that a horizontal approach has been successfully applied with respect to what, until recently, was barely conceivable, and that from now on – for all of us – the concept of sustainable development will be synonymous with the balanced implementation of its three dimensions – economic, environmental and social, with the active participation of all stakeholders, including civil society.

The Czech Republic believes that the union of two previously parallel processes has been another breakthrough. These are the process based on the Millennium Development Goals, and the process, which follows on the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20). I am confident that connection will lead to better quality of development and also help to establish a balance between socio-economic growth on the one hand and the sustainable use of natural resources and environmental protection on the other.

/IMPLEMENTATION, FINANCING AND MONITORING/

In the wake of the successful Third International Conference on Financing for Development hosted by Addis Ababa in July, we can rightly celebrate another milestone in multilateralism. However, with the adoption of the 2030 Agenda we are now embarking on an equally important stage, i.e. its implementation, which must definitively confirm and deliver on the historical shift that has been achieved. A great deal of responsibility and effort still lies ahead of us. I believe it would be right and appropriate in this place and on this occasion to remind ourselves of this.

Besides the pivotal importance of actively involving governments at all levels in the implementation of the new agenda, we also need to place an emphasis on delivering an efficient funding mechanism, especially in the context of the broader application of innovative forms of aid and private sector engagement.

Another just as important further step, and a major challenge and opportunity for ECOSOC and the HLPF, will be the introduction of effective monitoring which, in a pragmatic form depending on a reasonable level of investment and human resources. It should guarantee continuous monitoring of progress in the pursuit of Sustainable Development Goals and should help to ensure the timely identification of any potential pitfalls requiring extra care in the next 15 years, e.g. by the sharing of good practice and exchanges of experience between UN Member States.

If duly elected to ECOSOC for the 2016 – 2018 period at this year's election, the Czech Republic will do its utmost to contribute to this effort.

The availability of reliable data will be a key factor in national monitoring. The Czech Republic is confident that its statistical service is a high-quality, independent source of information. It is also well aware of the need to reinforce the capacities of public administration for the collection and analysis of data in those countries where such need is identified.

/SCIENCE, RESEARCH AND INNOVATION/

Holistic solutions delivering an essential response to multifaceted global problems sometimes require complex and technically advanced procedures. The Czech Republic supports the idea of identifying them by means of projects grappling with global themes which, from a domestic standpoint, need to be incorporated into the existing system for the financing and evaluation of science.

Besides the technical dimension of science, the humanities and social sciences also have a role to play in that they are able to contribute to solutions to current social ills. Competent analyses and scientific outputs are instrumental in laying better groundwork, for example, for the repercussions of today's demographic trends, migration and/or climate change.

/CZECH SPECIFICS AND GOOD PRACTICE IN THE CZECH REPUBLIC/

From a national point of view, we look at the Sustainable Development Goals not only as a challenge originating externally, but also as an opportunity to forge appropriate links between global efforts at sustainable development and the trends we are witnessing in the Czech Republic. This forms a fluid bridge between national and global levels of sustainable development.

The Czech Republic has already progressed some way along this path by creating the Government Council for Sustainable Development, which seeks to balance all three dimensions of sustainable development. As the Council is an advisory body to the Government as a whole, it is a platform suitable for discussions on inter-ministerial issues and horizontal agendas. The very existence of the Council articulates the importance attached by the Czech Republic to the sustainable development agenda.

One of the levers to transfer the Sustainable Development Goals to a national level is the Czech Republic's Strategic Sustainable Development Framework, which is currently being updated.

/CLOSING/

The Czech Republic is confident that, by adopting the 2030 Agenda, we are embarking on a new era of sustainable development that will yield poverty eradication, shared prosperity, peace and stability. Nevertheless, if these global objectives are to be achieved, the mainstay will be respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, equal participation of women in society, functioning and effective institutions, rule of law, good governance and an environment free of corruption. The efforts associated with the delivery of such elementary conditions guarantee that the real success of the new agenda will be visible not only on paper, but also in the everyday lives of millions of people calling for change.

Thank you for your kind attention.