

Statement by

**H.E Mr. Jaroslav SIRO,
Head of the Delegation of the Czech Republic**

**at the High-Level Segment
of the International Meeting to Review the Implementation of the Programme of Action
for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States**

Port Louis, Mauritius, 14 January 2005

Prime Minister,
Distinguished Heads of State and Government,
Distinguished Mr. Secretary-General of the United Nations,
Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

First of all, allow me to express my delight and great honour in attending this very important meeting for all Small Island Developing States. I would like to express also my deep appreciation to the Government and people of the Republic of Mauritius for hosting this conference.

At the outset, allow me to express my Government's deep condolences to the States, regions and families so gravely affected by the recent fatal disaster, which affected the number of countries in South-East Asia. We do sincerely regret the enormous losses of lives, and material damages caused by the natural disaster. This event has so tragically underlined the vulnerability towards natural disasters and impacts of climate changes to the Small Island Developing States and helped to sharpen the focus of our collective action.

The Czech Republic has been fast in joining the international community when reacting to the appeals for the first necessary humanitarian aid. The Government of the Czech Republic has decided to allocate CZK 15 million (0,5 mil. EUR) and provide another CZK 200 million (6,7 mil. EUR) for the process of the rehabilitation and reconstruction of the region.

As well as in some other countries, this catastrophe has awakened the consciousness of the Czech ordinary citizens. Through various private collections and donations, more than CZK 180 million has been collected (6 million EUR).

The Delegation of the Czech Republic is of the opinion, that this world-wide momentous sentiment and the approach of numerous Governments will find its reflection in the outcome of this significant meeting and its final document.

The Czech Republic is within the European Union actively participating in international efforts to mobilize greater attention to the justifiable needs of small island developing states and also fully associates with the statement delivered earlier by H.E. Mr. Jean-Louis Schiltz, Minister of Cooperation and Humanitarian Affairs of Luxembourg, on behalf of the European Union.

The Czech Republic is not an island. On the contrary it is a landlocked country in the heart of Europe far from any sea shore. Nevertheless, we follow with great interest the agenda of this Conference and allow me to stress that the Czech Republic is prepared to participate in the further implementation of the Action Plan for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States. Only co-ordinated approach to global problems, in which each partner play his own specific role, will lead to the substantial progress in resolving the problems of the Small Island Developing States.

Thank you for your kind attention.