



Permanent Mission of the Czech Republic to the United Nations

April 10, 2014

General debate on national experience in population matters: assessment of the status of implementation of the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development

Statement presented by Mrs. Edita Hrdá, Permanent Representative of the Czech Republic to the UN

Mr. President,

First of all, I would like to welcome this debate as an opportunity for sharing our national experiences on population matters. The 20th anniversary of the ICPD is indeed a good occasion for taking stock of what has been achieved so far and identify the gaps and challenges. In this regard, the Czech Republic welcomes the Report of the Secretary-General as an excellent analysis and a good basis for our discussions on the follow-up to the ICPD beyond 2014.

At this time, we would like to share with you some of our national issues concerning population and development matters.

- In comparison with the rest of the European Union, the Czech Republic has low levels of poverty. It is clear, however, that more women than men are threatened by poverty, especially in the age group of 65 and older, and women who are single parents. The Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs is currently supporting a study on the economic impact of divorce on the two individuals.

- In terms of economic equality between men and women, there is still a large disparity in salaries: women in the Czech Republic have on average around 22% lower monthly salary than men. There is also much higher proportion of unemployed women, and men account for only 2% of parents claiming parental allowance for staying at home with their children. There is a long-term problem with insufficient capacity of childcare services, low use of flexible forms of work and gender discrimination in access to work. That is why one of the priorities of our current government is improving the work and family balance, including increasing childcare capacities, increasing the number of women in decision making and ensuring equal pay for equal work.
- The Czech Republic has achieved equality in regards to finished primary and secondary education. There are more women than men in tertiary education, but women in general study subjects which lead to lower paid jobs. We also have high disproportion of female teachers in preschools and elementary schools.
- Surveys of prevalence of gender based violence in the Czech Republic show that every third women suffers gender based violence at least once in her life, sexual harassment affects around 15% of women and 8% suffer rape. That's why the Czech government in 2011 has adopted a national action plan on prevention of domestic violence which is currently under review and a national awareness campaign is planned to highlight that domestic violence and violence against women is not acceptable.

Mr. President,

These are some of the issues which the Czech Republic still needs to work on. We recognize that these challenges are common to other countries and we welcome this exchange as well as the recommendations contained in the Report of the Secretary-General.

Let me also take this opportunity to inform the membership that the Czech Republic in cooperation with UNFPA is organizing a regional conference on „Population and Development Dialogue: Building Human Capital for Prosperity in Eastern Europe and Central Asia“, which will be held 11 – 13 June 2014 in Prague.

Thank you.