

**Excellencies, distinguished colleagues, ladies and gentlemen,**

**Thank you for being with us today to celebrate the Czech national day. As I am speaking on behalf of the multilateral part of the Czech diplomatic representation here in Vienna, I'd like to recall the important role multilateral diplomacy has played from the very beginning of the independent Czechoslovak state: It was at the Paris Peace Conference in 1919 where we managed to secure international recognition for our new state. Support for multilateralism and international institutions and close ties with them have accompanied the Czechoslovak and later the Czech state throughout its history and we remain dedicated to multilateralism to this day as evidenced by our various engagements with international organizations. Here in Vienna in the very heart of multilateral diplomacy, it was most recently the Chairmanship of the Board of Governors of the International Atomic Energy Agency preceded by our chairmanship of the CTBTO. I dare to say and hope you can agree with me that both chairmanships were quite successful despite the worsening political atmosphere and I thank all of my multilateral colleagues here for their kind support and friendship – without them we wouldn't manage.**

**It is therefore even more difficult for us now and I am sure for all of us in this room, to witness the deepening crises, including that of the world multilateral order. I regret to say that while we fondly remember the creation of the independent and democratic state of Czechoslovakia in 1918, now, 105 years later, looking beyond our borders, there is little reason for joy. While we in Czechia continue to enjoy life in peace and prosperity, Russia's illegal and unjustified war of aggression has stripped the whole of Ukraine of such a privilege. So has the heinous terrorist attack of Hamas against Israel left us speechless.**

**These vicious acts do not only undermine the multilateral world order but they have concrete, very harmful repercussions for the whole nations as well as individual human beings. Within our mandate, when representing Czechia we continue to fight against aggression, terror and injustice, and promote ways forward that stem from the democratic values that the European Union has been founded upon.**

**Let me stress once again that Czechia stands firmly behind Ukraine and Israel. Let me also express my wish that we shall all rejoice in peace and profit from the benefits of a rules-based world where human rights enjoy their due respect, and that hopefully soon.**

**Thank you.**