**47th session of the HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL**

**Interactive Dialogue on annual report by the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights (Item 2), 21 June 2020, Statement by the Czech Republic**

Thank you, *Madame President*,

The Czech Republic aligns itself with the EU statement *and has some additional remarks*.

Madame High Commissioner,

We thank you for the presentation *of your Annual Report*. We appreciate your efforts and reiterate our support for your *and your Office’s* independence. *We encourage you to continue speaking up openly against grave human rights violations and echo the call for an increased funding of the UN Human Rights pillar.*

We would like to highlight some of the recent developments that deserve our attention.

We are gravely concerned by the massive repression in **Belarus** which has created a climate of fear in general public. The manner of *interception and* arrest and alleged torture of journalist Roman Protasevich is another example of complete disregard for international human rights norms *by the authorities in Belarus*. We call for immediate release of all those unlawfully or arbitrarily detained, including journalists, human rights defenders and activists *who are being detained for exercising their rights to freedom of expression or peaceful assembly. Independent and transparent investigation into all reported human rights violations is essential*.

The systematic crackdown on democracy and human rights in **Russia** is worrying. Recent legislative initiatives *signed into law* contribute to targeting independent voices and further curtail political pluralism in Russia. We are dismayed by the sentencing of Russian opposition figure Aleksei Navalny and call for his release. We urge Russia to bring its legislation in line with the European and international human rights law.

The Czech Republic strongly condemns the military coup in **Myanmar** and the following violence against peaceful protesters and civilians. We support legitimately elected leaders and those advocating peacefully for stable and inclusive democracy. We reiterate our call for the rule of law and the immediate release of all those arbitrarily detained.

We are deeply concerned about the crackdown on political opponents, independent media and civil society in **Nicaragua**. We call for the immediate release of dissidents and political contenders. Efforts to criminalize human rights defenders *and organizations* in **Venezuela** are worrying. Holding a free and fair presidential and parliamentary election is the only way out of the current *political, economic and social* crisis.