



# CZECH REPUBLIC

Check Against Delivery

UNITED NATIONS CONFERENCE ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT  
Rio+20

## CZECH REPUBLIC STATEMENT

**Delivered by the Honourable Tomáš Chalupa  
Minister of Environment**

22 June 2012

Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

Dear Madam/Mr President, Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Twenty years ago, our delegation came to this venue – enthusiastic about the changes in our country after 1989. At that time, enormous challenges were ahead of us. We knew that far-reaching transformation was needed in terms of economy, social conditions and environmental protection. Today, we can say in a symbolic way that the changes resulted not only in democratic freedoms - which can be put into a Czech metaphor “*to breathe freely*” - but also in breathing much cleaner air thanks to significant measures taken in 1990s.

However, not every development was quite positive. Perhaps, we might have got used a bit to the thinking that everything can be regulated; that the state should intervene in more and more spheres with its enlightened beliefs; that to live on credit is a common practice etc. The history of all summits and conferences over the past twenty years – looking at their expectations and follow-up actions - shows that there is a need to inject a sense of practicality, prudence and realism into our policy decision-making.

The Rio+20 outcome document obviously reflects a mosaic of various perspectives. Everyone from us would, certainly, write a bit different document. Nevertheless, I believe that everyone from us can build on a number of significant elements the declaration provides as guidance for future steps. In our opinion there are not too many of them but still they can be found there.

From the future perspective, the success of Rio+20 will be measured not only by its immediate outcomes, but also by the follow-up actions. In this context, we believe that it is crucial to focus on the three “C” – creativity, coherence and cooperation.

Creativity - expressed through innovations - helps to strengthen our economies. We need smart solutions reconciling both economic and environmental dimensions while having also social benefits. I mean especially new working opportunities for people in innovative sectors. In this regard, the governments’ task is to set an enabling framework predictable for business and its investments. Our ultimate goal should be gradual decoupling resource use from economic growth.

Coherence of measures - taken at national, regional, municipal and local levels – must be pursued, if lasting solutions are to be achieved.

Cooperation, particularly at the international and transboundary level, is of vital importance, more than ever - because of the interlinked nature of today’s world.

Let me name a few concrete examples of actions taken in our country. Economic instruments are used to promote heating installations in buildings utilising renewable energy sources and to encourage investment in energy savings in reconstructions and new buildings.

The implementation leads not only to CO<sub>2</sub> emissions reductions but also brings other benefits such as reduction of energy consumption for heating. Further benefits are new jobs (mainly in construction sector) kept or created during the time of economic recession and also household savings in payments for energy. Therefore there is no doubt that these measures significantly improve quality of life of people in the Czech Republic.

In line with the Czech Republic’s Strategy for International Development Cooperation for the time period from 2010 to 2017 , special attention in development projects is devoted to improvement of the environment and promotion of environmentally-friendly technologies and sustainable use of resources. The projects are aimed at achieving multiple benefits, not only one-sided effects.

Finally - on a more general note, let me recall the values we revitalized in our country more than twenty years ago - two years before the first Rio conference. These renewed values were democracy, human rights, rule of law, freedom and also responsibility for own behaviour. All these are values, which should be reaffirmed also at Rio+20 Conference.

Thank you for your attention.