

Statement by the Head of the Delegation of the Czech Republic

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of the national action plan measures. Based on the assessment, the action plan is updated, taking account of latest developments -the most recent update being the Government Resolution from May this year. No. 509 of 10 May 2006.

The national action plan for promotion of equality of women and men in the Czech Republic has focused on seven areas of the Beijing Platform for Action:

- To promote the principle of equality of women and men as part of the Government policy,
- To provide for legal guarantees of equality of women and men and for raising the legal awareness level,
- To guarantee equal opportunities for women and men in access to economic activities,
- To equalise the social status of women and men taking care of children and dependent family members,
- To ensure consideration for women with regard to their reproductive function and physiological differences,
- To combat violence against women, and
- To monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of application of the principle of equal status for women and men.

With reference to fulfilment of the objectives adopted by the Beijing Platform for Action, two new measures have been included in the action plan for 2006:

1. To prepare analysis of relevant aspects of migration and integration policies with regard to equality of women and men aiming at identification of inequalities and problems. To maintain records of illegal migration and residency of foreign nationals in the Czech Republic territory taking into account the gender perspective; and
2. To honour the principle of equality of women and men when setting up policy strategies and projects of development cooperation across all institutional structures and at all levels of the decision-making process.

As a member of the international community of democratic and economically developed countries and of the European Union, the Czech Republic respects the principle of mutual

governance. The Government Council for Equal Opportunities for Women and Men
and

Allow me to inform you on the most important changes in the Czech legal system that have been adopted since the delivery of the Third periodic report of the Czech Republic on fulfilment of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women. The changes have served the aims of fulfilling the Convention, as well as meeting the obligations ensuing from the legal provisions of the European Communities. These changes have been affecting in particular the labour law and criminal law areas.

With respect to the labour law, a new Act on Employment was adopted in 2004. The Act has laid down legal relations related to implementation of government employment policy and access to employment. Such relations precede entering into an employment contract. The Act prohibits the parties of these relations to commit both direct and indirect

the Criminal Code, specifically penalizing domestic violence. This offence is defined as battering (whether physical or psychological) aimed at persons dwelling in the same flat or

campaigns, thematically focused on the issues of domestic violence and gender stereotypes. Since October 2003, the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs has been running a public information campaign on the unacceptability of domestic violence, with a special emphasis on the prevention among young people within the age group between 15 and 25 years of age. Through the campaign, young people should learn about basic facts on domestic violence and also learn to recognise signs of such violence at early stages of a relationship. They should be also advised that a relationship in which either of the partners inclines towards committing domestic violence should be preferably terminated as soon as possible. An educative computer game has been developed for the campaign, teaching the young people how to act and respond in a relationship and how to recognise the line of difference between the “still normal” conduct and domestic violence.

This year, a public information campaign will be organised by the Government, focused on overcoming gender stereotypes, most importantly in employment, families and public administration. It will be implemented by the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs in cooperation with the Government plenipotentiary for human rights. In the employment area the campaign will be targeted on access of women to senior positions. In the family area, it will focus on the balanced roles of women and men in a family. Finally, in the public administration area, the campaign will promote participation of women in decision-making and management. The campaign is intended as a long running and should support an ongoing public discussion. It should strongly and clearly state the need to eliminate gender stereotypes and to highlight the benefits of genuine application of equal opportunities for women and men for the society.

Furthermore, as a Member State of the European Union, the Czech Republic has been participating in implementation of Europe-wide activities. In 2007, the Czech Republic will be involved in putting into practice a European initiative towards a just and solidarity-based society – the European Year of Equal Opportunities for All. The European Year of Equal Opportunities will be a follow-up to similar programmes implemented within the European Union in the past, such as the European Year against Racism in 1997 or the European Year of Disabled People in 2003. These activities have proven themselves as efficient tools of highlighting certain themes of the European policy. The upcoming programme will focus on training and educational activities promoting equal opportunities, including equal opportunities for women and men, both on the EU and national levels. The European Year of Equal Opportunities should also draw attention to issues of multiple discrimination based on a combination of reasons, such as gender and ethnicity, or gender and disability.

The Czech Government is aware of possible existence of multiple discrimination of Roma women who may be exposed to double discrimination as women and concurrently on the grounds of their ethnic origin. This issue forms one of the universal themes of the Decade of Roma Inclusion 2005-2015, an international initiative of which the Czech Republic is a participant. Various activities in support of Roma women are implemented

I believe that the above-mentioned activities undertaken by the Czech Government will contribute to the resolution of issues related to implementation of gender equality.

The Czech Republic, through the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs
as

be paid either to the father or mother of the child, depending on which of them stays at home to care for the baby.

Parental benefit, entitlement to which arises for the parent who cares for a child up to the age of four. The current level of the benefit is approximately CZK 3,700 per month. For your comparison, the minimum monthly wage in the Czech Republic is slightly below CZK 8,000 before tax. The Government has decided to more than double the parental benefit bringing it to the approximate level of CZK 7,600 per month as from 1 January 2007. For your comparison, the average retirement pension in the Czech Republic currently amounts to approximately CZK 8,000.