



CZECH REPUBLIC

Permanent Mission of the Czech Republic to the United Nations

**2021 High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development
under the auspices
of the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations**

Ministerial Segment

General Debate

Statement

**by H.E. Mr. Jakub Kulháněk,
Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Czech Republic**

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Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is my pleasure to address you on the occasion of this year's Economic and Social Council and the High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development.

This year, the Czech Republic is proud to present its second Voluntary National Review. For us, it represents a chance to reaffirm our long-standing commitment and firm determination to fulfil the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

The pandemic of COVID-19 had a detrimental effect on all spheres of human life. It has stalled or even reversed the progress in some truly transformative areas of sustainable development. One of the lessons we have learned from the pandemic is that we can tackle such crises only if we do our best and do it together. We must therefore take the pandemic, as a much needed wake-up call.

We should now set out on the path of recovery by “building forward better” – that is by implementing a sustainable and inclusive recovery with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development as a global collective roadmap.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The Czech Republic has also shown a strong commitment by supporting partner countries in recovering from the pandemic in the spirit of “leaving no one behind”. Through many projects of bilateral, EU-based and multilateral development cooperation, humanitarian assistance and transformation policy, the Czech Republic supports its partners in achieving sustainable development and strengthening preparedness.

From the very start of the pandemic, we have provided our partner countries – such as Afghanistan, Ethiopia, Iraq, or Ukraine – not only with protective equipment and other health and hygiene related items but also with nutrition and livelihood support to vulnerable segments of population, including internally displaced people.

In addition, innovative technological solutions – such as nano-technologies and on-line training and coaching were used in successful public-private partnerships.

The Czech Republic has also been a strong advocate of implementing SDG Sixteen – that is in promoting just, peaceful and inclusive societies. We firmly believe that this Goal is a key pre-requisite for sustainable development. We consider it to be the best strategy for mitigating the broader socio-economic impacts of the pandemic. It will also help to fight climate change and promote and foster good governance, effective and transparent institutions and inclusive societies.

The recovery from the Covid-19 pandemic requires not only a whole-of-government or a whole-of-society approach but also a whole-of-planet approach. We all have a great opportunity to manifest our determination at the COP 26 in Glasgow and increase our *Nationally determined contributions*.

Finally, the pandemic has also been identified as a threat multiplier with a potential to increase social disparities and violence, particularly in fragile contexts. In this regard, the Czech Republic supports the efforts to increase coherence, coordination and climate diplomacy across the humanitarian-development-peace nexus as well as the human rights-based approaches. This will also be one of the priorities of the upcoming Presidency of the Czech Republic in the Council of the European Union in 2022.

Thank you for your attention.