

## **Special commemorative event of the sixty-fifth session of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs, at the occasion of the United Nations International Day against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking and launch of World Drug Report 2022**

Speech by the incoming Czech Presidency in the Council of the EU 2022

Speaker doc. MUDr. Viktor Mravcik. Ph.D.

---

Excellences, Ladies, and Gentlemen, Distinguish Delegates,

Let me first thank the UNODC secretariat for preparing this special event. I would like to also thank and congratulate all researchers, stake holders and those, who participated and supported the preparation of the World Drug Report 2022 which brings a comprehensive overview of the world drug situation.

It is my honour to speak here on behalf of the incoming Czech Presidency in the Council of the EU in the second half of 2022. The Czech Presidency will put focus on human rights, rational and evidence-based oriented drug policy. We will stress and strongly support our commitment to EU common values such as freedom of citizens, protection of human rights and dignity and rule of law aiming for a global Europe that promotes multilateralism and international partnership.

We reaffirm our strong commitment to the principles of drug policies based on the UNGASS 2016 outcome documents, Ministerial Declaration 2019, Agenda 2030, and on the UN Declaration of Human Rights to work together to improve the world drug situation.

The Czech Republic will emphasize a crucial role of drug policy fully in line with human rights obligations and will address the health-related aspects of drug use, including implementation of the current EU Drugs Strategy and its Action plan for the period 2021-2025.

We reaffirm our commitment to promote rational and evidence-based drug policies that are based on human rights advocacy, including destigmatization and harm reduction approach. The harm reduction approach should become an integral part of drug policies, but moreover, reduction of health and societal harm should become its main principle. The incoming Czech Presidency will support the implementation of evidence-based, comprehensive and integrated approach in drug policies, which consider the balance between criminal justice and public health responses to the world drug phenomenon, and acknowledge policies that address vulnerable, marginalized groups of society, people who use drugs, and people with substance use disorders.

We strongly support the involvement of civil society in preparation, implementation and evaluation of drug policies (including youth initiatives as was the case also in today's launch of the World Drug Report) and underline the importance of strengthening partnerships with UN Office on Drugs and Crime, World Health Organization, the International Narcotics Control Board and other relevant UN bodies, including support to the UN System Common Position on Drugs.

The incoming Czech Presidency delineates against any unjustifiable attack on a sovereign country. We therefore strongly condemn the unprecedented military aggression against Ukraine. In reaction to the conflict, we face together serious health and security threats, including those in drug policy – and as we have learned from this year's World Drug Report, military conflicts are magnets for illicit drug production and other drug-related problems. We stand by Ukraine and its allies.

Ladies and gentleman, thank you for your attention.