**Joint Press Statement Marking “World Anti-Corruption Day”**

**9th December 2015**

December 9 marks International Anti-Corruption Day, a day dedicated to raising awareness of corruption and commemorating the adoption of the United Nations Convention Against Corruption. This year’s theme is “breaking down barriers – promoting civil society’s role in anti-corruption.” For the second consecutive year, we are issuing a joint statement to mark this occasion.

Corruption is a global challenge that reduces our prosperity by 5% of global GDP every year ($2.6 trillion - World Economic Forum). In addition to hampering economic growth and investment, corruption also undermines the stability of societies and the ability of governments to meet the needs of their citizens. Our governments are therefore committed to battling corruption in all its forms, both at home and abroad.

Throughout the past year, our respective embassies have organized several events to promote transparency. (A list of those events is included in the attached Annex). We have intensified our engagement with members of the Government and senior officials. Our Embassies have also provided assistance to organizations working to strengthen transparency.

We recall the Czech Government’s coalition agreement, which established legislative priorities to limit opportunities for corruption. We applaud the recent adoption of the Register of Public Contracts Act by the Chamber of Deputies. We look forward to further action over the coming year that enhances accountability in the process of public procurement, promotes a more effective prosecution service free from undue influence and improves transparency in political party financing.

Our Embassies stand ready to continue assisting the Czech Republic in achieving its goal of greater openness and transparency. To that end, we will launch a social media campaign in January 2016, designed to share our countries’ experiences in combating corruption.

H.E. Jan Thompson, Ambassador of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland

H.E. Andrew Schapiro, Ambassador of the United States of America

H.E. Siri Ellen Sletner, Ambassador of Norway

H.E. Hayong Moon, Ambassador of the Republic of Korea

H.E. Otto Jelinek, Ambassador of Canada

H.E. Annika Jagander, Ambassador of Sweden

H.E. Helena Tuuri, Ambassador of Finland

**ANNEX**

**Conferences, seminars, meetings**

* **International Conference “Developing trends in combating corruption, money laundering and recovering criminal assets in Europe” – 20-21 October 2015 organized by the Government of Norway, the Ministry of Finance of the Czech Republic and the Council of Europe.**
* **Anti-Corruption Seminar** co-organized by The Office of the Government of the Czech Republic and the Embassies of the Republic of Korea, UK and USA **–** 9 October 2015
* Supporting international conference “Whistleblowing: The Way to Protect Financial Interests of the EU” **–** 17-18 September, organized by Oživení and European Anti-Fraud Office
* Hosting seven Ambassadorial meetings with Cabinet members and senior officials throughout the year on the topic of transparency.

**Trainings, projects**

* Six Czech representatives from law enforcement, the judiciary and the prosecution service traveled to the U.S. in September 2015 to learn from the U.S. experience combating corruption.
* Grant competition specifically targeted at organizations combating corruption – December 2014-February 2015, followed by awarding of a substantial grant.
* Week-long training for Czech Government officials on transparent defense procurement - February 2014.
* 44 NGO projects on strengthening transparency supported by the Norway Grants.
* Project on Open Data and Transparent Public Administration with the Open Society Fund and British Embassy in Prague.
* Project on corporate governance of state-owned enterprises with Frank Bold and British Embassy in Prague.