

Thank you Chair, Ministers, Executive Director, distinguished delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen,

- First of all, let me say that Czechia fully aligns itself with the statement delivered on behalf of the European Union and its Member States.
- We very much welcome the thematic focus of this Assembly and the report of the Executive Director. Czechia is a highly urbanized country. The support of sustainable urban development therefore stands as a long-term and crucial priority for the Czech government. Shortly after the adoption of the New Urban Agenda in 2016, we prepared a detailed Implementation Plan to monitor the achievements of individual targets.
- In line with the priorities outlined in the thematic report, we are currently implementing a number of measures in support of affordable housing or climate protection and environmental sustainability. Both on national and local levels.
- But lately, like other countries in the region, we have been facing a major challenge in terms of managing the vast influx of refugees coming from Ukraine, as a result of the unprovoked and unjustified Russian war of aggression against this country.
- Sadly, we do not need to look any further for an example of the nature of this war, than this morning, when we heard of the destruction of the Kachovka dam – a reservoir of potable water for many in southern Ukraine. There cannot be any doubt that Russian forces aimed, once again, at harming ordinary people and damaging Ukraine's civilian infrastructure. And it is just as evident, that such unjustified attacks undermine the implementation of the SDGs and the New Urban Agenda, which we collectively strive to achieve.
- In this context, I also wish to underscore that Czechia continues to support Ukraine and is ready to assist with its post-war recovery and reconstruction.
- I would like to stress that we should concentrate on strengthening international cooperation. And especially between the already existing platforms. Czechia proposes that UN-Habitat initiates the system of permanent cooperation with all five UN Regional Economic Committees, with their relevant "subsidiary bodies", which are directly involved in housing and urban development issues.
- In conclusion, allow me to express my firm belief that the negative trend of falling behind in SDGs implementation can still be reversed, if we all unite and work together. I can assure you that Czechia is fully prepared to actively cooperate towards achieving these goals.
- Thank you for your attention.