



Statement of H.E. Martin Bursik, Minister of the Environment of the Czech Republic at the 14 COP, Poznan, Poland, 11 December 2008

Mr. President, Excellencies, distinguished delegates:

Firstly let me express my gratitude to the Government of Poland for hosting this crucial event on the road from Bali to Copenhagen; an event, which I am confident, will move us closer to an ambitious post 2012 global climate change deal.

We are gathered here at a time when we face the further challenge of dealing with the global financial and economic crisis. But one thing is clear – we must not allow ourselves to be diverted from our ultimate task of achieving a swift transition to sustainable development. Quite the opposite – the current international consensus on the need to review our financial structures and processes, and the great efforts being made to do so, is a unique opportunity to also address our energy needs and reconfigure them from high cost/high carbon to low cost/low carbon.

In finding common solutions for global prosperity, stability, and environmental protection, we also have the potential to transform our societies and to assist our citizens to change their lives. New technologies, new job opportunities, energy independence through efficiency and diversity, to name but a few, are win-win solutions which reinforce the health of our economies, as well as our societies. We must take every opportunity to convey this vital message to our politicians and to the world.

In Bali we took a huge step towards building a global climate change partnership through a common vision and strengthened actions on mitigation, adaptation, technology transfer and finance. We all – developed and developing countries, – need to continue to work with this common purpose and commit ourselves to reduce global emissions by 50 per cent below 1990 levels by 2050 and keep global temperature increase below 2 degrees Celsius. Achieving this goal requires developed countries to reduce their emissions by between 25 per cent and 40 per cent by 2020 in comparison with 1990 and to then continue with further reductions. This however will not be enough. Supportive mechanisms must be found which facilitate limitations in the growth of developing countries emissions whilst at the same time increasing the levels of support for the achievement of sustainable development in these countries.

Whilst our cooperation must be global, our actions will predominantly be local. We are aware that this will require compromises at all levels and in all regions. We have already made some: the Czech Republic has cut its emissions by 25% since 1990 in line with our Kyoto Protocol commitments, however, there is still more to be done, especially in reducing our per capita (and GDP) emissions, Therefore, we are embarking on programmes of efficiency and technological innovation that will put our economy on a low carbon emission trajectory. We do this both for the sake of our own economy and as part of the European commitment to achieve the required levels of reduction.

Mr President, it is without doubt that 2009 will be a crucial year for the international response to climate change. In particular we need to make the transition into full negotiating mode during our March and June meetings in Bonn and beyond. The Czech Republic has the privilege of holding the EU Presidency for the first half of next year

during which our priorities will be three "E"s – Economy, External relations and Energy, including, of course, climate change.

The EU has long been an active, and leading participant in international efforts to address climate change. Indeed European Heads of State are at this very moment concluding the final details of our ambitious climate and energy package for the period until 2020. The Czech Presidency is determined to maintain Europe's position as a major contributor to the fight against climate change. To that end, the Czech Presidency will seek to develop with our fellow Member States comprehensive and detailed proposals for scaling up international finance and investment flows for mitigation, adaptation and technology transfer.

In closing, Mr. President, I would like to make clear, we have no illusions – change is difficult. And change of the scale and pace which is needed is particularly problematic. Our negotiations will not be easy, but acting in a spirit of global cooperation and responsibility we can together realise our shared goal.

Thank you