

CZECH REPUBLIC

17th UPR – STATEMENT ON SAUDI ARABIA

The Czech Republic warmly welcomes the delegation of Saudi Arabia and commends its participation in the UPR.

While appreciating Saudi Arabia's efforts in certain areas, we **recommend** it making further advances through the accession to ICCPR, ICESCR, OP CAT and OP CEDAW and through withdrawing its reservations to CEDAW, CRC and CERD.

Second, despite Saudi Arabia's acceptance of recommendations on the rights of minors at the last UPR, juveniles continue to be subject to harsh punishment in Saudi Arabia. We **recommend** Saudi Arabia to refrain from imposing the death penalty, corporal punishment and life imprisonment for crimes committed by persons under the age of 18.

Third, we regret that non-governmental human rights organizations are not allowed to operate freely in the country and **recommend** Saudi Arabia to bring its domestic legislation in line with the rights to freedom of expression, association and assembly, and to enact and implement a Law of Association enabling NGOs to operate legally, without harassment and undue government interference. We also **recommend** Saudi Arabia to ensure that the judicial and law enforcement system is not abused to harass individuals for expressing their political or religious views. Finally, we **recommend** Saudi Arabia respond positively to the Special Procedures requesting a visit to the country.

Thank you, Mr. President.