

STATEMENT BY THE CZECH REPUBLIC

The Czech Republic welcomes the delegation of Ethiopia.

While commending Ethiopia's progress in ensuring economic and social rights, the Czech Republic is concerned about the April crackdown on bloggers and journalists and a number of gaps in the realization of civil and political rights. We **recommend** that Ethiopia immediately release all journalists detained for their professional activities, both those arrested recently and those jailed earlier such Mr Nega and Ms Alemu.

Further, we make the following three **recommendations**:

- to amend the Mass Media Proclamation (*Proclamation on the Freedom of the Mass Media and Access to Information*) so that the space for free media is widened, and refrain from invoking the Anti-Terrorism Proclamation to stifle independent journalists;
- to amend the Charities and Societies Proclamation (*Proclamation to Provide for the Registration and Regulation of Charities*) so that all NGOs can operate freely without restrictions stemming from the structure of their funding;
- and finally, to ensure inclusive campaigning before the 2015 elections and grant all political parties equal access to the media.