**UPR39**

**Tajikistan**

*4 November 2021*

**STATEMENT BY THE CZECH REPUBLIC**

The Czech Republic welcomes the delegation of Tajikistan. We take note of political commitments of Tajikistan in the sphere of penitentiary system reform and we hope further steps will lead to prevention of all forms of ill-treatment in places of detention. In this regard, we recall our **recommendation to** ratify the OP-CAT (Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture) and establish a national preventive mechanism accordingly.

Following up on the previous review we **strongly recommend** criminalizing domestic violence and marital rape and creating an environment where victims don´t have to fear to report cases of domestic violence and are able to obtain the necessary assistance. (As a first step, we recommend to establish an inter-departmental body focused on combating domestic violence.)

Bearing in mind the importance of meaningful participation in public life and the role of civil society, we **recommend** reviewing the Law on Public Associations and all relevant policies to eliminate inappropriate restrictions on the right to freedom of association and ensure that all civil society organizations can work free from undue administrative obstacles or harassment.

We once again emphasize the importance of freedom of speech and free media for democratic prospering state. Therefore, we **recommend** reviewing legislation and policies to create a free and safe environment for journalists, bloggers and others to exercise fully their right to freedom of expression. (We also recommend preventing arbitrary and extrajudicial blocking of websites and ensuring that national security concerns are not invoked to stifle peaceful dissent and criticism of the Government.)

 Thank you.