**UPR32**

**VIETNAM**

*22 January 2019*

**STATEMENT BY THE CZECH REPUBLIC**

The Czech Republic welcomes the delegation of Vietnam. We commend Vietnam for the ratification of the Convention against Torture as we recommended in the previous UPR cycle. However, we notice that some key human rights issues of concern have remained unaddressed.

We make the following **recommendations**:

* First, strengthen protection against torture by, inter alia, ratifying the OP-CAT and stepping up efforts to end impunity for all perpetrators of torture.
* Second, nurture a culture of free expression online and offline, release all imprisoned human rights defenders, including bloggers and political dissenters, and put an end to their harassment.
* Third, create an enabling environment for independent civil society and ensure that the prepared Law on Association facilitates the registration, work and funding of NGOs free from undue State interference and restrictions.
* And lastly, the Czech Republic recommends that Vietnam lay ground for political plurality and democracy and guarantee its citizens the full enjoyment of the rights to vote and to be elected and to take part in the conduct of public affairs in accordance with the ICCPR (and the UN guidelines for States on the effective implementation of the right to participate in public affairs).

Thank you.