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**Second Meeting of the Parties to the UN/ECE Convention on  
Environmental Impact Assessment in a Transboundary Context**

**Statement by the CZECH REPUBLIC**

Mr. Chairman, Dear Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen,

First of all I would like to express my gratitude to the host country, Bulgaria, for organising this meeting in Sofia.

I would also like to thank the Secretariat for the effective support provided.

Let me briefly inform you on the progress of the ratification process of the Espoo Convention in the Czech Republic.

The Czech and Slovak Federation signed the Espoo Convention in 1991 already. After the dissolution of the federation, the Czech Republic has succeeded to the Convention in 1993. The preparation of the ratification process gained strong political support in 1999, in connection with the preparation for the access to the European Union.

The Espoo Convention has been discussed in the Parliament of the Czech Republic since February 2000. On 8<sup>th</sup> December 2000, it was approved by the Chamber of Deputies and on 10<sup>th</sup> January 2001, by the Senate. The president signed the instrument of ratification on 2<sup>nd</sup> February 2001 and immediately after that the Ministry of Foreign Affairs sent it to the depository of the Convention. It is my pleasure to announce you on the occasion of this anniversary meeting that the Czech Republic will become a Party to the Convention probably at the end of May 2001. We hope that we will be able to collaborate in a more effective way, especially in the field of SEA. On one side we can contribute with our rich domestic experience in the field, and on the other hand to extend range of national assessment to the transboundary context.

In accordance with the article 8 of the Convention, the Czech Republic started negotiations of the bilateral agreements on transboundary environmental impact assessment with all neighbouring states, i.e. Slovakia, Germany, Poland and Austria. In some cases, we conducted transboundary cooperation similar to the Espoo provisions.

The Czech legislation in force meets the requirements of the Espoo Convention already. The compliance of the Czech legal rules with the Convention is achieved by the national act on environmental impact assessment and the act on Protection of Environment. The new national act on environmental impact assessment contains detailed procedure of transboundary assessment which is fully compatible with EC Directives. It will enter into force at the beginning of the next year.

The Czech Republic is aware of the importance of the implementation of the Espoo Convention and is prepared to pay an extraordinary attention to it.

With this last sentence I would like to thank you for your attention.