

## Panel 5 - High level panel: the way forward

### **Jiří Dienstbier**

- Last year, we marked the 20th anniversary of the Beijing Platform for Action. Various evaluations prove that progress in gender equality has been achieved. However, the progress remains rather slow and uneven as gender inequality continues to be a reality in many aspects of social and family life.
- Gender equality cannot be achieved without strategic approach and effective institutional mechanisms including adequate personnel and financial capacities. For this reason I would like to focus on this specific issue in my contribution.
- As a signal of the reinforced commitment to gender equality and as a practical tool for planning, the Government adopted the Strategy for Equality of Women and Men in the Czech Republic for 2014 – 2020 in November 2014. It is the first long-term, detailed strategic document specifically aimed at gender equality to be adopted by the Czech Government. The Strategy covers 8 main strategic areas based on the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and other international documents.
- Furthermore, the Strategy covers horizontal strategic areas such as gender stereotypes, legislation, data collection, men and gender equality; and cooperation with stakeholders.
- The new Action Plan for the Prevention of Domestic and Gender-based Violence for 2015 – 2018 was approved by the Czech Government in February 2015. An Action Plan for Balanced Representation of Women and Men in Decision-making positions is currently discussed by the Government.
- Those steps confirm that active promotion of gender equality is one of the priorities of the Czech Government as well as my personal priority.
- From the experience of the Czech Republic the following five components are necessary to ensure effective promotion of gender equality at governmental as well as international level:
  - a) A gender equality unit needs to be set up with a responsibility for drafting gender equality policy and coordination of implementation of gender mainstreaming at the governmental level;
  - b) The position of gender focal point needs to be set up at all ministries with a responsibility to implement gender mainstreaming within all activities of a particular ministry;

c) A governmental advisory body for gender equality needs to be set up. It should include independent experts from the academia as well as representatives of NGOs, trade unions and business;

d) Production and use of comparable, reliable and regularly updated statistics disaggregated by sex in all areas of life need to be ensured in order to analyze and improve the effectiveness of gender equality policies. Those data need to be closely connected to gender impact assessment, gender budgeting and other tools of gender mainstreaming;

e) Comprehensive and long-term strategies for gender equality need to be adopted and evaluated regularly by governments as well as international organizations. Such strategies should define a basic policy framework for specific measures undertaken in the field of gender equality. They should be connected to budget allocations and include mechanisms for effective implementation and independent evaluation.