



CZECH REPUBLIC

Permanent Mission of the Czech Republic to the United Nations

17th Conference of States Parties to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with
Disabilities- General Debate

Statement by

H.E. Mr. Jakub Kulhánek

Permanent Representative

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Mr. President, Excellences, Participants,

It is an honour for me to represent the Czech Republic at the seventeenth session of the Conference of States Parties to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

Czechia aligns itself with the statement of the European Union.

Since last year, Czechia has made further progress in the field of the rights of persons with disabilities, and the implementation of the Convention, especially **the implementation of Articles 12 and 29 of the Convention, which has been improved significantly. In this year Czechia has adopted a new law Act no. 88/2024 Coll. on election administration which contains many provisions aimed at supporting persons with disabilities in exercising and expanding their voting rights, and ensuring – through reasonable accommodation – the accessibility of the whole electoral process to facilitate the possibility of voting independently and in secret:**

- **the law removes the obstacle to the exercise of the right to vote of persons with disabilities whose legal capacity has been limited, which means that persons with disabilities under full or partial guardianship will no longer be denied the right to vote;**
- the law further clarifies the **rules for assistance in the polling station** – removes some unnecessary limitations, including not requiring the assistant to have an active voting right in a given type of election, nor precluding the assistance of a district election commission member (which must be recorded); assistance is then provided to persons who need it for any legitimate reason, including those, who can read and write and are not restricted in their movements, but who, for example, have difficulty coping with an unusual situation in the polling station due to mental illness; the law emphasises the binding of the assistant to the voter's instructions and the assistant's confidentiality;
- the law obliges the Ministry of the Interior to **publish information on barrier-free accessibility of polling stations** and the principles of voting **in Czech sign language** in the information system of the election administration.

The act will come into effect in January 2026.

Due to ongoing Russian aggression, state – regional and municipal authorities in Czechia as well as non-governmental and humanitarian organizations continue to provide necessary assistance and humanitarian aid to refugees, who had to leave Ukraine, including persons with disabilities and their families.

Thank you.