

Dear colleagues, ladies and gentlemen,

It is my great pleasure to be able to address you here at the Global Environmental Facility Assembly. We gathered here to confirm our commitment to the protection of the global environment. The Czech Republic is proud to be part of the donor community that has shown that the protection of biodiversity and water, fight against climate change and droughts and the management of chemicals belong to its long standing priorities. We are extremely glad that we managed to maintain the pledges at the same level as in the last replenishment round.

The Czech Republic is doing its utmost to live up to the slogan think globally, act locally. In being part of the GEF, vice-chairing the bureau of the UNEA Assembly or actively participating in many multilateral bodies, we are showing that we are taking our part in tackling global problems seriously. Apart from this, we are working hard to gradually increase our Official Development Assistance where the environment also plays a crucial role.

I can assure you that on the „act locally“, we are even more active. We have recently launched campaign against plastic waste which should bring about the needed change in using plastic products. We are acutely aware of the diastroust impacts plastic pollution has on global biodiversity and are ready to contribute with our small share to finding a solution for this.

The same goes for mercury. From the beginning of the negotiations we have také active part and contributed with our expertise to defining and shaping main principles eventually adopted in the form of the Minamata Convention. This global problem is of a global nature but goes down to a very local level – that´s why we have proceeded with taking legislative measures to reduce, together with the EU, substantially the production of this lethal chemical.

Ladies and gentlemen,

It's encouraging to see that the global community is committed to solving the most pressing issues. The GEF projects aim at exactly what I have just described: action on local level. In spite of all the strategic document and focus areas, we must measure what counts the most: impact on the local level, making peoples' lives and environment better. We are proud that the Czech Republic can be part of this huge effort.