



Mission:

“Ready to serve the cause of democracy, human rights and civil society whenever and wherever the need arises.”

Annual Report 2013

Ladies and Gentlemen,

you are about to read the annual report of an association of Czech non-governmental organizations (NGOs), the main mission of which is support of democracy, human rights and civil society in third countries. This report describes the activities of the platform in its sixth year of existence – and it was a very busy year full of projects. We hope that reading the following lines will be as interesting and useful to you as the work itself was for the members of our Association and, especially, for the recipients of support among civil society in the countries where transition is still taking place.

Since its very beginning, the Czech Republic has positioned itself as a country with a strong global involvement in human rights stemming from its history and principles, in accordance to which it was founded. Over the course of the last century, it was twice that we lost our freedom and regained it thanks to strong support and assistance from abroad. For this reason, support of human rights and democracy has been one of the most prominent elements of Czech foreign policy, and almost a quarter of a century after the Velvet Revolution, the Czech Republic is still offering its transition experience to the countries where human rights are violated, or where authoritarian regimes are in the process of transition.

Today, we often hear the question whether the Czech Republic still has anything to share, and whether it should still take on the role of a human rights defender especially because it is in the middle of a turbulent political period itself. General debates about coordinating human rights support and Czech exports to countries with non-free regimes are legitimate, and we should have a dialog about strategic interests of the state, and the ways of endorsing them. However, it is not possible to question and weaken the long-term efforts of Czech foreign policy as a watchdog of democratic principles, because this would mean giving up our own identity and denying responsibility which we bear with the view of our own history. DEMAS members believe that our transition experience is still valid and that the partnership approach exercised by our members towards their colleagues abroad is welcome and there

is still demand for it; for this reason, we are concerned about the way the values of Czech foreign policy are questioned by some of the policy-makers. The proof can be found in joint projects implemented by our members over the course of the last year in Latin America, where such projects were initiated not by the Czech party but by representatives of civil society from Venezuela, Ecuador or Cuba.

Just like in previous years, our sincere gratitude goes to all our donors, partners and active members of the Association, because without them our work would not possible.

Jakub Klepal, Chair of the Board of Directors
Sabina Malcová, Executive Director

Activities of the platform in its sixth year

Association work is useful in several dimensions – both with regard to Association members and partners around it. The benefits the platform provides to its members are the following: coordination of activities, better communication and synergy of planned projects, as well as a possibility to participate in capacity building workshops for individual members. With regard to the partners, the significance of the Association is even clearer because it represents the positions and opinions of its members as a whole, giving them a stronger, unified voice. Therefore, the advocacy efforts are easier, more evident and more efficient. The Association forms a communication bridge between its members and state authorities, and represents the platform internationally, where its activities are perceived positively thanks to continuous advocacy.

In 2013, DEMAS had ten regular members and two members with observer status. In January, the Czech branch of Amnesty International, a well-known global organization, joined the original member organizations with the status of an observer.

Like in previous years, at the beginning of 2013, during the traditional New Year's meeting, member organizations identified the direction for the coming year; geographically,

West Balkans were selected – Serbia, Kosovo and Macedonia, as well as Eastern Partnership countries – especially, Armenia and Azerbaijan, as well as Russia. Thematically, the work of the platform, i.e. its Secretariat and member organizations, was split into three main directions: capacity building of member organizations and organizations in target countries, establishing new and maintaining existing contacts (networking) and support of democracy and human rights (advocacy). This joint work was supervised by the Board of Directors in the following composition: Vladimír Bartovic, Jakub Klepal (Chair), Ondřej Krutílek (Deputy Chair), Jeff Lovitt and Marek Svoboda.

For the purpose of systematization, the platform remained divided into four working groups covering Eastern Partnership, Russia, West Balkans and the EU. The Middle East ad hoc group was also active, although only marginally.

In 2013, DEMAS remained member of [Human Rights and Democracy Network](#) (HRDN) and [EU-Russia Civil Society Forum](#) (EU-RU CSF), through which DEMAS contributed to supporting civil society at the international level. For more details, see below.

Conferences, seminars and lectures

DEMAS Secretariat together with experts from amongst its members organizes lectures, seminars and conferences both for its member organizations and for colleagues from NGOs from target countries, university students, experts and the general public. The following events took place in 2013:

On April 5th, 2013, Maryna Puzdrová had a lecture on the topic of cooperation in the field of transition for students of the Institute of Development Studies of the Faculty of Science of Palacký University in Olomouc. In the fall, DEMAS organized its traditional course entitled [Czech Republic and Transition Aid](#) at the Faculty of Social Studies of Masaryk University in Brno; the course introduces transition cooperation and NGO work in target countries to the students. The series of lectures included [a visit](#) to Prague NGOs and to the Senate. This

year, the course was offered not only to Czech students but also to students from West Balkans studying at the Faculty of Social Studies in Erasmus program. We believe such activities have a long-term importance because many students go on to work in NGOs as employees or volunteers.

Traditionally, DEMAS participated in the [NGO Market](#), which took place at the National Technical Library on Friday, May 3rd; the NGO Market was one of the pilot projects of our member organization Forum 2000 Founda-



NGO Market.

tion. Presentations of individual member organizations and joint projects are an important element of communication with the general public.

On May 13th, the platform organized a panel discussion in cooperation with European Parliament Information Office with the title [The Role of Human Rights in the EU Foreign Policy: Eastern Partnership and West Balkans](#); the discussion was part of an afternoon debate about the future of the European Union and its possible enlargement. DEMAS was represented in the debate by Vladimír Bartovic, Jakub Klepal and Marek Svoboda.

Trainings on different topics are a tool for building capacity of individual organizations – for this reason, the Secretariat organized one



PR training with Ivana Bursíková (left) and Evaluation and Monitoring with Inka Píbilová (right).

full-day seminar in each half of the year. On June 13th, we organized a training on communication in the third sector. Its aim was to improve the way NGOs work with journalists and improve their PR. The training was conducted by Ivana Bursíková from Agora CE, a member organization, who has vast experience in this area.

On December 3rd, there was a training on evaluation and monitoring of ‘soft’ projects; the training was focused on logframes and identification of correct indicators which are important for the ongoing project monitoring and subsequent evaluation. The training was conducted by Inka Píbilová, an independent evaluator.

As a part of projects financed mainly by various donors, the Secretariat together with DEMAS experts participated in a number of seminars aimed at capacity building for NGOs in Serbia, Georgia, Armenia, Kosovo and Macedonia. Independent journalists from Azerbaijan, NGO workers from Taiwan and representatives of Belorussian civil society participated in trainings in Prague.

On September, 17th, DEMAS Secretariat organized a panel discussion entitled [The Role of Human Rights in Czech Foreign Policy](#), which

became of the most successful accompanying events during Forum 2000 conference. During the debate, representatives of all key Czech political parties (Pavel Bělobrádek, Jan Hamáček, Ondřej Liška and Karel Schwarzenberg) and the Office of the President of the Republic (Hynek Kmoníček) came to a unanimous agreement about the necessity of continuous support of transition policy as a part of foreign policy priorities of the Czech Republic, including increased public support to transition projects. You can find a brief [content](#) of the panel discussion including [video](#) on Forum 2000 Foundation website. Another panel discussion organized in cooperation with DEMAS was dedicated to [transition in the post-Soviet space](#), specifically, in Russia.



DEMAS discussions at Forum 2000, September 2013.



Panelists from the left: Theodor Marjanović, Petr Mareš, Marek Svoboda, Vladimír Bartovic, Jakub Klepal.

Advocacy

In its advocacy efforts, DEMAS is trying to influence the perception of the support of democracy and human rights as an integral part of Czech foreign policy in the eyes of the stakeholders and the general public. Although advocacy efforts are concentrated partly in the Czech Republic and partly in Brussels, they bring their results during implementation of individual transformation projects in third countries. Personal meetings have proved to be the most efficient form of advocacy.

Declarations and opinions

At the end of August, DEMAS added its signature to the joint letter of HRDN in reaction to the state of human rights support in the EU itself with the title *Strengthening the European Union's response to human rights abuses inside its own borders*. During the second half of the year, elections to the European Parliament were the main theme in HRDN. HRDN prepared an appeal for new MEPs so they place an emphasis on human rights both in third countries and in their home countries: [European elections campaign: Stand 4 Human Rights](#).

Some of DEMAS member organizations joined the [open letter](#) which reacted to participation of Czech legislators in the monitoring of presidential elections in Azerbaijan in the fall of 2013. This open letter triggered a wave of positive and negative response; it was an important gateway for advocacy activities of the platform because it appeals to the general public thanks to its media coverage on the one side while commenting on specific activities of individuals on the other side as it is targeted at individual MPs and Senators.

Among our activities oriented on Russia was publishing of a [policy paper by Nikola Karasová](#) reflecting Russian NGO laws, especially the issue of 'Foreign Agents'.

The platform continued to publish its Newsletter which was published four times during the monitored period. The Newsletter is one of the tools which DEMAS uses to communicate with the world. All issues of the Newsletter are available at www.demas.cz under News.

Projects

The goal of the one-year project with the title *DEMAs and the EU-Russia Civil Society Forum Activities Support* supported from the Transition cooperation program of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Czech Republic was to enable cooperation of DEMAS member organizations in the field of capacity building, advocacy and networking. The working platform inter-connected member organizations efficiently, supported their work and defended their joint interests thus improving their competitiveness in the global arena. The project was aimed not only at capacity building of member organizations but also at strengthening civil society and capacity of NGOs in third countries (see above). These activities were targeted mainly at improving cooperation among NGOs from the EU and Russia within [EU-Russia Civil Society Forum](#).



EU-Russia CSF in The Hague.

In 2013, DEMAS continued its work for EU-Russia CSF by hosting its Secretariat and leading its project consortium. This two-year project was launched in 2012 with 85% financial support from the European Commission. Diverse activities of the Forum were focused on implementation of individual [projects](#) of [work-ing groups](#), into which the Forum members were divided by topic, as well as on publication of joint declarations and [opinions](#), publication of [policy papers](#) and [advocacy](#). EU-Russia CSF was also linked to the project entitled *Assisting Civil Society in Russia* supported by [National Endowment for Democracy](#) (NED); the part which was implemented in 2013 was about organizing its [general meeting](#) in The Hague, the Netherlands, which was the responsibility of DEMAS.

NED also supported another project which had started in 2012 and was called *Building Capacity to Assist Civil Society in Europe and Eurasia* and was aimed at capacity building of NGOs in Serbia, Armenia and Azerbaijan. The project included trainings for regional NGOs



Group work during the seminar in Kragujevac, Serbia. February 2013.

in Serbia and Armenia, visits of NGOs workers from a Serbian region called Šumadija in Brno, because Šumadija is a partner region of South Moravia region in the Czech Republic. The situation in the civil sector in Azerbaijan was also mapped.

Two young professionals working in local NGOs were supported as a part of the project with the title *Visegrad-Balkan Public Policy Fund: Young Researchers Programme*, supported by the [International Visegrád Fund](#). The purpose of the one month-long [study visits](#) with the topic of 'society in transition' was to introduce transition policy in Visegrád countries on the one hand and work in think-tanks on the other. More detailed information about the project can be found at www.demas.cz and www.vbyoungresearchers.eu.

Funding

As we have already mentioned in Projects, DEMAS implemented a total of five grant projects over the course of 2013 with the following structure of funding:

Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Czech Republic: 700 thous.
EU: 4,720 thous.
IVF: 222 thous.
NED: 1,604 thous.

All non-investment costs were distributed among individual items mainly as salaries and travel costs, aid to target groups, services and overhead costs.

Total consumed goods: 38 thous.

Material consumption: 38 thous.
Consumption of other non-stock supplies:
0 thous.

Total services: 2,793 thous.

Travel expenses: 281 thous.
Representation costs: 18 thous.
Other services: 2,493 thous.

Total personnel costs: 1,000 thous.

Salaries: 757 thous.
Statutory social security tax: 214 thous.
Statutory social security costs: 3 thous.

Other costs: 78 thous.

Exchange rate losses: 49 thous.
Other misc. costs: 28 thous.

Total contributions paid: 4,941 thous.**Total costs: 8,850 thous.****Revenues from own activities and goods, total: 21 thous.**

Sale of services: 21 thous.

Total other revenues: 65 thous.

Revenues from exchange rate fluctuation:
65 thous.

Total contributions received: 7,301 thous.

Contributions received: 7,246 thous.
Membership fees received: 55 thous.

Total operational subsidies: 1,604 thous.**Total revenues: 8,990 thous.****Profit before tax and after tax: 141 thous.**

Imprint

The activities of DEMAS are determined independently and exclusively by the member organizations. DEMAS is politically non-partisan, and its actions reflect neither any political or ideological positions nor the interests of any other institution.

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Arcidiecézní charita Praha
Asociace pro mezinárodní otázky (AMO)
Centrum pro komunitní práci (CpKP)
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