



## **U.S. Support for Czech Anti-Corruption Efforts**

Twenty five years after the end of communism, the Czech Republic is an established democracy with a liberal, open market economy. Yet, just as in all countries, there is still room for improvement in combating corruption and strengthening transparency. The public remains skeptical of the government's commitment and ability to tackle these issues. Many in the Czech Republic view the United States as a country that tries its best to embody good governance and aggressively tackle corruption wherever it appears. The United States' support for the rebirth of Central and Eastern European democracy leads it to support transparency in government and commerce. Embassy Prague has been working closely with our Czech partners to that end.

**Engaging with Government** – We have actively engaged with senior Czech leaders to encourage progress on good governance. We support the "Reconstruction of the State" NGO platform's efforts to pass eight laws that would significantly strengthen transparency and limit opportunities for corruption. We have also supported the efforts of reformers from all parties with frequent public statements and by providing technical assistance and advice on implementation to Czech government agencies. In 2013, seven Czech officials from law enforcement, the judiciary and Parliament traveled to the U.S. on anti-corruption programs.

**Amplifying Civil Society** – Anti-corruption NGOs are more effective when they speak with one voice. We have fostered improved coordination among the many NGOs active on this topic by hosting roundtable discussions, awarding small grants and sponsoring Fulbright programs, as well as through one-on-one outreach to NGO leadership. In March 2013, the leading Czech reform NGOs formed a 20-member body – "Reconstruction of the State" - to coordinate and amplify their efforts, supported in part by an Embassy grant.

**Working Bottom Up** – We have matched U.S. expertise with ongoing Czech efforts by inviting a series of U.S. anti-corruption experts to visit Prague, mostly at their own expense, to consult with government and civil society leaders. Subject matter has included corporate criminal liability, police and prosecutorial investigative processes, whistleblower protection, public procurement, government transparency and free access to information. By sharing U.S. expertise, we have helped Czech citizens and public officials further anti-corruption efforts and the rule of law.

**Engaging the Region** – Reformers need to know they are not alone. We are strengthening cooperation among reformers throughout Central and Eastern Europe, while finding cross-border efficiencies to ensure governance reform does not fall casualty to a tight budget environment. We are closely aligning our efforts with multilateral institutions to publicize international best practices, including through the World Forum on Governance, an annual public-private partnership that brings leading reformers from around the globe to Prague in order to consult with each other. The Czech Republic joined the Open Government Partnership in September 2011. We encourage the Czech government to re-energize its participation in the Partnership and its commitment to its National Action Plan for Reform.