

## **Speech by Josef Středula, President of the Czech-Moravian Confederation of Trade Unions (ČMKOS)**

Hello,

I am the President of the Czech-Moravian Confederation of Trade Unions and this is my first Tripartite Social Summit. Allow me to make a few remarks.

I have a problem. The statements made by some of you are such that I find it inconceivable that you yourselves believe them. I apologise for being so straightforward. We are talking about the European Pillar of Social Rights. I was in Gothenburg in 2017. This social pillar is supposed to work somehow, but it has no benefit for the ordinary worker. There is no European minimum wage. The chances of it are very low. And what is contained in the 20 points of the pillar is not incorporated in any directive. I am convinced that if they are not included in the directives, they will mean nothing to the EU citizen.

As far as the current situation is concerned, you may think that there is confidence in the EU, but I, as a supporter of the EU, have to say that it is significantly diminishing. The ETS is increasing energy prices at a staggering rate, from 20% to 40%, which makes people worry about next year. In addition, the Government is telling us that there will be no increase in the minimum wage. The result is that the current attitude of workers towards the EU is neutral at best.

We joined the EU in 2004. Seventeen years have passed. Do you think there has been any shift in wage convergence between East and West? There has not. And the crisis we are facing now has pushed us further back.

In the midst of this, you are putting together the European Green Deal and the Fit for 55 package, without any analysis of the impact on citizens, on workers, on companies. But then it is no surprise that people are not happy about it.

This crisis of confidence is caused by steps that have not been thought through, that have not been communicated, that have not been discussed with us. And if you believe what some governments tell you, when they say that we are excited, we are happy and we want that change, then don't believe it. Please find a way to communication directly with the representatives of the workers, the employers and you.

The European Tripartite Social Summit is a short, two-minute message that does not contain depth, impact and concern. If we can do something for the future, let us communicate more. Let us check more to see if what you are being told is also the truth. I apologise for my tone, but I just have two minutes to tell you the truth.

Thank you for listening to me. Thank you for your will to do something about it. I'm ready to help you with that.

I'm tough, but I'm fair.

Thank you for your attention.