

Press Release

Prague became the official seat of the Aspen Institute in Central Europe

Under the leadership of President Walter Isaacson, the Board of Trustees of the American Aspen Institute has approved an application for a launch of its partner institute based in Prague.

Washington/Prague, April 16, 2012

One of the main activities of the Central European Institute will be a continuous development of leadership abilities of young people from diverse areas of civic society and facilitation of their mutual dialogue.

“I am delighted that the Aspen Institute is establishing a platform for policy innovation and dialogue in my hometown of Prague,” said the chair of International Board of Aspen Prague Advisors and former U.S. Secretary of State **Madeleine K. Albright**. “At a time when the nations of Central Europe confront a range of economic and security challenges, Aspen Prague will provide a regional forum for airing new ideas and diverse points of view. The result is sure to enrich and enliven public debate while providing a more informed background for making decisions that will affect us all,” added Mrs. Albright.

The Institute will aim to give to talented young individuals valuable international experience through internships and scholarships. Talented individuals from Central Europe will be also able to take part in programs of The Aspen Institute in Colorado.

“The goal of this newly founded institution is to contribute to analysis and finding solutions of current economic, political and social developments inside the Czech Republic as well as in a broader Central European, Pan-European and Euro-Atlantic scope on a professional and non-partisan basis,” said the Ambassador of the Czech Republic to the UK and the President of the Preparatory Committee of Aspen Prague **Michael Žantovský**. On behalf of Aspen Prague, Michael Žantovský signed the Memorandum of Understanding in Washington on April 13, 2012.



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“Aspen Institute Prague aims to be a place where people from politics, culture, media and business can meet and bridge these worlds, which, unfortunately, do not yet mix in the Czech Republic sufficiently. Aspen Institute Prague should become a platform which will help move the quality of civic life yet a step further,” said **Radek Špicar**, The Vice-president of The Confederation of Industry of the Czech Republic and member of the Preparatory Committee of AIP.

Tomáš Klvaňa, Director of Zdeněk Bakala Global Non-Profit Programs and member of the Preparatory Committee of the Institute, summarized the preparatory activities that resulted in successful approval of the Aspen Prague status as follows: “The requirements of our American colleagues for our application were very high. Other foreign partners waited for approval several years; we are proud to have succeeded on our first try after less than a year of intensive preparations. It was necessary not only to present a non-partisan, non-ideological program, but also present highly detailed structure of activities”.

In the following weeks, Aspen Institute Prague will become officially registered as a public benefit organization. Shortly, all the necessary bodies of the Institute will be formed. In those bodies, people from politics, public administration, business and non-profit circles will be equally represented, thus ensuring overall independence and non-partisanship of the Institute. Many respected people have already accepted Aspen Prague positions. Now preparations for the launch at an international conference in July, organized by Aspen Prague, are under way.

Contact:

Tomáš Bouška
Aspen Institute Prague
+420 603 713 351
tomas.bouska@aspensprague.cz
www.aspensprague.cz