

DRESDEN, 2 March 2020

## **Správa železnic signed Today a Common Declaration to the New Line Dresden – Prague**

Mr. Jiří Svoboda, Director General of Správa železnic, signed today in Dresden a common Czech-German declaration on cooperation and support in planning a new railway construction Dresden – Prague. The other signatories of this document are the Federal Ministry of Transport and Digital Infrastructure, the Ministry of Transport of the Czech Republic, Deutsche Bahn and the Free State of Saxony.

*"I am very pleased by the progress we have achieved in mutual cooperation on the project of a new high-speed line between Ústí nad Labem and Dresden. I appreciate especially the accurate approach both of Správa železnic and DB Netz. I believe that the introduced trend of communication will advance the project towards a successful approval procedure and following that to its implementation as such. The vision of reduced journey times between Prague and Dresden down to 60 minutes in the context of transferring freight trains from the exposed Labe Valley is such an important challenge for both countries that it would be a great mistake not to use this opportunity. I believe that today's signature of our declaration will help achieving this goal",* said Mr. Karel Havlíček, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Transport.

*"All parties involved are aware that the new high-speed line between the Saxon and Czech capitals is one of the most important infrastructure projects. Signing the common declaration today is a confirmation of our efforts in continuing intense cooperation during its construction planning",* said Mr. Jiří Svoboda, Director General of Správa železnic.

*"Today, we are introducing another example of strengthening the role of the railway in Europe. We have launched an ambitious project for the future. The Rapid Service will offer new opportunities for cooperation in the field of commerce, science and culture and will support environment-friendly mobility",* said Mr. Ronald Pofalla, member of the Deutsche Bahn Management Board responsible for infrastructure.

*"Saxony needs a modern cross-border railway infrastructure that will allow the connection to international long-distance transport. The new railway connection Dresden – Prague is a long-term European transport project with fundamental importance for the Free State of Saxony. For many years, we have been striving to have implemented this connection as an important gateway to south-eastern Europe. Our goal is a noise decrease and relieving Labe Valley from freight transport. Local inhabitants as tourist as well as the environment will benefit from this. Together with the government, the German railways and the Czech Republic, Saxony will continue in the project preparation",* said Mr. Michael Kretschmer, Prime Minister of the Free State of Saxony.

In its text, the document states that all parties involved welcome the recent signing of the agreement on common planning of the new railway connection Dresden – Prague by the

companies DB Netz AG, DB Energie GmbH and Správa železnic. They also agree upon continuing the implementation of other current agreements and close cooperation during further planning of the line with intense participation of the European Grouping for Territorial Cooperation (EGTC). All parties still expect that the state budgets will dispose of financial resources required for ensuring all activities within this plan.

The document's signatories also welcomed the fact that negotiations on a state agreement between the Federal Republic of Germany and the Czech Republic dealing with construction of the planned cross-border tunnel in Krušné hory (Ore Mountains) were launched this year. At the same time, they support strengthening an exchange of experience of infrastructure managers with use of new technologies that will be applied during the common project preparation as well as during railway operation to follow.

The signing of the above-mentioned agreement on common project preparation of the line Dresden – Prague at the end of last year was an important reconfirmation of Czech-German cooperation. Another step will be concluding an agreement between both countries, the preparation and ratification of which is expected in both countries within four years. Adopting this agreement is required for the following project phases – acquiring a building permit, construction and operation as such.

The project focused on development of railway transport between Saxony and Czechia plays an important role in accelerating the Krušné hory tunnel project. It was included in the EU programme Interreg, having as objective a support of cross-border Saxony – Czech Republic cooperation. At the end of January, a closing conference of this project took place, including i.a. extensive geological analyses and surveys of the high-speed line Dresden – Prague corridor in several followed variants. The existence of these analyses allows optimizing the new line's path based on geological conditions in its early phase and thus preventing any occurrence of risks during construction.