

**Official opening speech by the Deputy Rector of Jan Evangelista Purkyně University,
Dr. Zdeněk Radanovský**

Ladies and gentlemen,

Dear colleagues,

I was asked to say a few words for the opening of your international MOSUR seminar organised by the Charles University Environment Center under the title “Establishing a Regional Centre of Expertise on Education for Sustainable Development in the Czech Republic ” and about to take place at our Jan Evangelista Purkyně University here in Ústí nad Labem.

Allow me first of all to warmly welcome personally and on behalf of the rector all the participants to this meeting whether they are from the Czech Republic or from abroad. The Jan Evangelista Purkyně University is one of the young, dynamic and developing universities established in the Czech Republic following the socio-political changes of the late 1980s-early 1990s. Our university commemorated its 20th anniversary last year. For many years there was only a pedagogical university in our city at which about 2,000 students studied. After 20 years there is now a university with eight faculties and nearly 12,000 students. One can see the dynamic development of our university not only in the number students. A not insubstantial criterion is also the integration of individual faculties in scientific and research activities. An important role has been played here from the beginning in particular by the Environment Faculty, which in this regional of natural beauty but which by the end of the last century was heavily damaged by industrial and mining activities, was established as the only one of its kind in the Czech Republic. The border triangle between the Czech Republic, the former German Democratic Republic and Poland was in its time considered the most polluted region in Central Europe. It was therefore at this very



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Environment Faculty that a whole range of important regional, nationwide and international projects started to be pursued and are being pursued and which are contributing in a substantial way to environmental recovery in this part of Europe. Faculty members are actively participating in many other projects, such as this specific project with the Charles University Environment Center.

Dear colleagues, let me wish you much success in your meeting which I believe from a look at the programme will certainly produce not only much new knowledge, but above all stimulus which can be utilised and applied both in academic and primarily in specialist practice.