

Domestic rat holes

The flash floods in Northern Bohemia are a reminder that governments have trouble at times keeping their citizens safe at home, without even venturing abroad. In this context, the planned closing of 10-25 Czech embassies and consulates, largely in Africa and Latin America, is easy to defend. In a broader context, though, [Lubomír Zaorálek](#) of ČSSD has a point when he says the foreign ministry lacks a coherent plan. Unless the plan is to clear the way for China. If the savings from closing the offices were used for boosting the CR's competitiveness at home or in other parts of the world, it might make sense to "consolidate and conquer." But if the money that is "saved" in Africa and Latin American is thrown down the usual domestic rat holes (to turn Jesse Helms' expression around), the CR will have nothing to show for its partial retreat from the world and will soon have to announce another one.

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