



## IDPH Director Arnold Solidifies Transatlantic Preparedness Linkages in Address to Public Health Preparedness Workshop

By Judith W. Munson, JD, Executive Director, International Collaborative for Public Health Emergency Preparedness

**D**amon Arnold, MD, MPH, Director of the Illinois Department of Public Health, was the featured speaker at the Prague Workshop hosted by the International Collaborative for Public Health Emergency Preparedness (ICPHEP). The March 13, 2009, workshop was the second such event mounted by the ICPHEP in the Czech Republic. Dr. Arnold's PowerPoint presentation, *Department Operations Center (Smashing Silos with Fusion): Critical Choices to Prevent Critical Conditions*, was warmly received. His provocative and insightful remarks resonated well with the Vice-Minister and Chief Public Health Officer of the Ministry of Health of the Czech Republic, Dr. Michael Vit, who also presented at the work-

shop. Dr. Arnold's presentation resulted in Dr. Vit issuing a special invitation to him to tour the Prague Crisis Center.

Dr. Arnold found much commonality with another presenter at the workshop, Roman Prymula, MD, PhD, Dean of the Faculty of Military Health Sciences at the University of Defence in the Czech Republic. Dr. Prymula described and analyzed various scenarios as he spoke to *Military Models for Public Health Preparedness*. This topic provided an especially critical linkage between the two men as Dr. Arnold is a colonel in the Army National Guard and the Guard's Commander of the Joint Task Force Medical Command in Springfield.

Dr. Prymula is also the Czech Republic's Delegate to the Management Board of the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC), which was established after the SARS epidemic. The European Union's ECDC is located in Stockholm, Sweden. The meeting of these two public health physicians, who share a military background, resulted in Dr. Arnold issuing an invitation to Dr. Prymula to speak at the 2009 Illinois Public Health Emergency Preparedness Summit at the Oak Brook Hills Marriott Resort. Dr. Prymula was the luncheon speaker on Tuesday, July 14, 2009. ■



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**Pictured from left to right:** Dr. Damon Arnold, Director of the IDPH; Dr. Karla Rihova and Dr. Michael Vit from the Ministry of Health of the Czech Republic; Judith W. Munson, Executive Director, ICPHEP; Dr. Roman Prymula, Dean, University of Defence of the Czech Republic; Professor Michael Seng from the John Marshall Law School, Chicago; and, Professor Sylvia Furner, representing the Dean of the UIC/School of Public Health.