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Represented by:

Dr Dimitrij Rupel

Editor:

Dr Milan Jazbec

Editorial board:

Bojan Brezigar, Dr Milan Jazbec, Matej Marn, Anita Pipan, Žiga Pirnat, Matjaž Šinkovec, Gregor Šuc

Language editing:

Žiga Pirnat (Slovene), Dean DeVos (English)

English translation:

Ana Belac, Mojca Ceferin, Katarina Knez, Tea Mejak, Breda Negro Marinič, Tomaž Poličar, Boštjan Zupančič, Nataša Zupančič, Irena Žakelj Cerovšek

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Žiga Pirnat

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Slovenia at the Helm of the European Union

15 July 2008

On 30 June 2008 at 11 p.m., Bernard Kouchner and I turned on the blue illumination and stars of the European Union on the Eiffel Tower in Paris. The Slovenian EU Presidency was coming to an end and the French was about to begin. Some days later, at the meeting of the foreign ministers of the new Union for the Mediterranean – again in Paris – my British colleague David Milliband greeted me: “Mr former President!” Slovenia’s Presidency was really over.

It started on 1 January 2008 when I received the baton of the General Affairs and External Relations Council from my Portuguese colleague Luís Amado. Slovenia became the first new EU Member State to hold the presidency of the most important European structure.

At the time when we were deciding whether to take on this enormous task, the Union’s spirits were higher than today. It was the period before the great disappointment of 2005, when French and Dutch voters rejected the 2003 Constitutional Treaty. At the end of the Slovenian Presidency, the Union received yet another blow, this time coming from Ireland.

After the first setback (in January 2006), I commented as follows:

“Member States and citizens – according to the Constitution – should show tolerance towards the cultural and religious heritage, and respect for human rights, democracy, and the rule of law. Thus, the European Constitution would not allow mocking Christianity or expressing ideological partiality in the media and in the courts. The Constitution would concede no nationalist intolerance and no expression of contempt towards a nation or its glorification; it would permit no oppression and no unilateral acts towards minorities. European values can be a problem even for well established European states, such as, for example, Austria: in one of its federal states a minority language is publicly and expressly despised – even though it is an official European language. One could also ask oneself (if we may pause for a moment at Slovenia’s own doorstep) whether media monopolies and a slow judiciary are in accordance with fundamental European values. And then, is Croatia’s unilateral renaming of the Bay of Piran as the “Bay of Savudrija” in accordance with European values...?”

In fact, the difficulty arises from an anti-western and intrinsically anti-European political attitude which – in Slovenia – prospered for many decades and which we have been trying to leave behind ever since the first democratic elections and the declaration of independence of our country. Telling indicators and important turning points in such frame of reference were the discussions stirred up by our parliamentary elections (especially in 2004), plebiscites, and referendums, particularly the one on Slovenia’s EU and NATO membership. They touched upon concepts such as national self-confidence, democracy, and a market economy; though the basic issue was whether Slovenia belonged to the West or not. Here we had to tackle similar, yet in most cases harder problems than other post-socialist countries. Other EU and NATO candidates may have had more technical but much fewer political problems; our primary task – though not the only problem – was taking leave of Yugoslavia and setting



up an independent state. While Bulgarians, Czechs, Estonians, Latvians, Lithuanians, Hungarians, Poles, Romanians, and Slovaks viewed the EU and NATO against the background of their experience with the Soviet Union and the Warsaw Pact, Slovenes lived for decades under the misconception that Yugoslav socialism was better than Soviet socialism. Furthermore, we managed to become entangled in numerous lies and delusions, concerning, for example, the civil war, "the brotherhood and the unity", non-party self-managing pluralism, social property, non-alignment, and so on.

Some people may have difficulty identifying with common European values, for they are not certain if they can achieve them; others, however, simply do not believe in them because they do not accept concepts such as Christianity, humanism, enlightenment, freedom, the responsibility of the individual, etc. Even if such dilemmas may be particularly harsh in Slovenia, they are not limited only to Slovenian society. In any case, Slovenia – together with other former socialist countries – has managed to join the European Union and receive a "certificate" of overall devotion to European values. To be frank, as regards the 2004 enlargement more than one blind eye was turned. There are doubts about common European values also in the West, above all in radical leftist circles and various worker, immigrant, and minority organizations. But the problem lies neither with such organizations nor with full-fledged EU Member States. The problem lies with the countries outside the Union which, on the one hand, have not yet passed the European tests but which, on the other hand, need to become EU members – in the interests of the existing members and their safety.

Some days ago I wrote to my Austrian colleague Ursula Plassnik, who is presiding over the EU and had asked me for a contribution to the discussion on the European future and the possible revival of the Treaty establishing a Constitution for Europe:

... I believe that most Europeans have at least two problems or demands: firstly, they are not ready to renounce their national identity and their state institutions, and secondly, due to the current challenges and threats they would like stronger European unity based on common values and standards. In my opinion, it seems inevitable that decisions concerning the common values of the existing members will need to be adopted unanimously.

Perhaps my Austrian colleague read these words as a commentary on Turkey's, or possibly Croatia's, accession – but my point was of a more general nature. Apart from Turkey and Croatia acceding to the European Union, I am also interested in the Union's ties with Macedonia, Serbia, Montenegro, Bosnia-Herzegovina, and above all Kosovo. The broadest framework for these links can be found in the conclusions of the Thessaloniki European Council and is called the "European perspective". Certainly, the European perspective of South-Eastern Europe depends not only on the realisation of the Thessaloniki conclusions, but also on many other factors, such as the available resources within the Union's "financial perspectives" in the second decade of the 21st century, the Common Agricultural Policy reform, and the advancement of the Lisbon Strategy.

(...)

The impasse on the European Constitution reveals that the Union's integration processes are inadequate and uncertain. There is an atmosphere of mistrust within the Community – especially since the last enlargement – linked with the issue of competences (namely the division of labour between the EU and its Member States), which in fact touches the very essence of the Union's values. The question whether the EU should develop into the united states of Europe (i.e. a political community) or be primarily a tax-free union (i.e. an economic community) is the cardinal question connected with values. In addition, the EU is occupied with some other essential political issues, such as the agricultural policy, a common

tax policy, special discounts and deals between the original members, etc. Indeed, there are a number of reasons why some countries wish to postpone further enlargement. They speak about the need for – primarily – an internal discussion within the European Union.”

*

The term of Slovenia's EU Presidency was an exciting and complex period. I kept a diary throughout this time and concluded it (the entries of 29 June and 1 July) with the following comments:

“This has been an important week. On Monday (24 June) I attended two meetings in Berlin at the invitation of F.-W. Steinmeier: the Conference in Support of Palestinian Civil Security and the Rule of Law – where in addition to developing ideas, also aid was collected, – and the Quartet meeting. In Berlin, apart from the hosts (Chancellor Merkel gave the introductory speech), also attending were the Arab League (Amr Moussa), Palestinians (Salam Fayyad), Israelis (Tzipi Livni), Sergey Lavrov, Condi Rice, Tony Blair, Moratinos, Jean Asselborn, Tonio Borg, Maxime Verhagen, Jonas Störe, Javier, and Benita. In my contribution I referred to the past period characterised by the rhetoric of “open doors” and “windows of opportunity”. In Europe we were well aware of the significance of such policy. I commended the positive developments (Annapolis).

Chancellor Merkel pointed out that the Middle East Peace Process was also in Germany's interest. “The local people need visible proof that things are changing for them and their lives!” Mr Fayyad was satisfied with the participation, but complained about the Israeli incursions into Nablus. This threatened the credibility of the Palestinian government and Mahmoud Abbas. Tzipi Livni said that “the neighbouring state” should be a partner, not a failed country. She added that Jenin was becoming a success story and reiterated the “two states for two peoples” formula, meaning that the state is to be established according to the ethnic principle. (...) Israel is interested in “what happens on the other side of the border”. She mentioned the pressure on Israel to reoccupy Gaza. Condi said that every country needed security and judicial structures. She mentioned the 88 million dollar contribution for the training of security forces. Javier thanked Fayyad for the work he had done in the last year. He also mentioned the need for judges and cooperation with Arab countries. Lavrov was hinting at election results not being respected (Hamas' victory) and was underlining the need for lasting peace, meaning an agreement among Palestinians and the division of authority.

Benita reported on the EU's contributions (in 2008, more than 400 million in advances). (...) There (in Israel), election competition has already started within the Kadima party. Establishing a Palestinian state (including the sensitive systems, such as forensic medicine) will require enormous resources. The Arabs say that they will give money when they see some progress. But there is no progress because there is no money. Of course, everything is connected with the Palestinian and Islamic revolution.

At the press conference I complimented the German organization and emphasized the importance of Palestine's integration into the international community as a sovereign state. What is at stake here is building a nation, and the European Union has quite some experience in this field. Germany is an appropriate choice for such conference, having distinguished itself in the resolution of the Balkan crisis. Establishing a Palestinian state will stabilize the entire region.

At the meeting of the Quartet (the US, the EU, Russia, the UN – Ban Ki-moon participated via video conference from New York) I said practically nothing. Javier, who also chaired the meeting, and Benita spoke on behalf of the EU. Condi pointed out the expansion of Israeli settlements as a negative element of the Middle East Peace Process. Blair put forth a good argument: the more we engage the more we can achieve. Both Ban Ki-moon and Blair said that the Israelis could do more. (...) It is too soon to

... speak about a "national unity government". The Quartet set out its conditions. "There is a difference between Gaza and the West Bank. Gaza should not be rewarded." On the European side, we insisted on an exchange of information and the release of prisoners. Ban Ki-moon suggested reopening border crossings. Lavrov was emphasizing the importance of the unity of the Palestinian people. (...) He insisted that (the message) should contain a firm announcement of the Moscow conference. Condi objected longer than anyone else.

The Quartet also discussed Lebanon and the support for the presidents Suleyman and Siniora. Condi mentioned the Shebaa Farms. (...)

*

While Prime Minister Janša was in Khanty-Mansiysk with Medvedev (Barroso and Javier), I was in Kyoto at the G8 Foreign Ministers meeting (Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, the Russian Federation, the United Kingdom, and the US). At first the plan was to combine the two meetings. After the official dinner in Kyoto we were supposed to fly to Siberia with Lavrov (Javier and Benita) and participate at the main meeting of the EU-Russia summit. However, Lavrov cancelled his trip to Kyoto as the Russian President had asked him to participate at his meeting. Having considered several possible arrangements, I finally decided to stay in Japan for two days since combining Kyoto and Khanty-Mansiysk without one's own plane proved to be impossible.

At the G8 meetings the European Union plays a side (complementary) role. I spoke twice during the discussion: about North Korea and the Middle East. With regard to North Korea, I first complimented Ambassador Chris Hill (whom we know from Macedonia) and then presented a minor theory regarding the twofold orientation or task of the EU's external policy: while the first task is of a diplomatic nature, the second is of broader scope, dealing not only with reforms in an existing state but also with the establishment of a new state (Afghanistan, Kosovo, Palestine). The European Union has been rather successful in applying diplomacy and introducing transitional (democratic, economic) reforms. This proved to be effective in the Balkans and in Korea. The first is an example of helping a state, the second an example of substituting for it. Referring to the Middle East, I repeated my arguments from Berlin that it was necessary to build a Palestinian state, but that this was difficult because of the revolution there (Hamas vs. Fatah, the Holy War, etc.). Establishing a state is costly – having in mind the resources the US invested in Israel. I also said that the situation in Gaza was bad and that the circumstances in the West Bank were not much better: how can we possibly set up a Palestinian state and economy with road blocks in place and Israeli settlements expanding? I mentioned my visit to the Qalandia refugee camp. A state must also provide for health care. I presented the case of children diabetics. At the end I commended the talks between Syria and Israel.

We argued with the Russians about Zimbabwe. (...) During the meeting in the Kyoto guest house I was pondering over the character of the G8 group. In fact, it has the same role as the Holy Alliance after the Congress of Vienna. The then conservative European powers (Austria, Prussia, and Russia) managed to rein in Europe until the First World War. Today, we also need Americans and Canadians. In Kyoto, I had separate meetings with my Japanese colleague Komura and the new Australian Minister of Foreign Affairs, Stephen Smith.

The trip to Japan was extremely straining, but I was rather enchanted by the architecture, the tidy houses, and the water gardens. More than from majestic monuments (even if the Buddhist temple I visited was impressive), the country's high culture emanates from Japanese austerity, cleanliness, and friendliness.

Tomorrow, I'm handing over the European baton in Nova Gorica and in Paris."

*

Ljubljana, 1 July

"Yesterday was the last day of the Slovenian Presidency. In Nova Gorica, around 3 p.m., I met Bernard Kouchner who had landed in Trieste not long before. We hugged on the border between the two Goricas, between Slovenia and Italy: the mayors of both towns were there, we made some brief friendly speeches in front of the flags and I handed over the baton that I had received from Amado in Madeira – who, in turn, had received it from Frank-Walter Steinmeier six months earlier. Then we drove to the Kristančič estate. Old Mr. Kristančič said in a heartfelt manner that he never lets people put me down. Indeed, whenever possible, the media and malicious individuals tried hard to smear me. Kouchner spoke well of me.

After lunch and some glasses of excellent wine from the Goriška Brda region we drove to Ronchi Airport where M. was waiting. Kouchner had flown in with a replacement Falcon with fewer seats because a bigger plane had broken down. However, having promised to take me to Paris with him, the now repaired bigger Falcon had come to Trieste as well, and there were two jets waiting for us. It was a pleasant flight, though I had to talk at length to two French journalists.

In Paris, my French counterpart and I had to repeat the ritual with the plastic baton (wrapped in EU blue paper with stars). It was 11 p.m., just before the Eiffel Tower was lit up. At the beginning of the French Presidency it changed colours and displayed the European wreath of stars. In front of the Parisian public, Kouchner – accompanied by Christine Ockrent and later also by his son – was even more cheerful.

(...)

I can briefly review the achievements of my presidency of the EU General Affairs and External Relations Council as follows:

It was a time of glory for Slovenia: never before was it possible and never again will it be possible to draw so much attention and gain such respect for Slovenia. At every moment it was possible to reach by phone any international personage, not only the ministers. We were invited everywhere and received everywhere. I met with many contemporary politicians and statespersons.

It was an extremely busy and straining time for me. My agenda abounded with issues. I travelled huge distances, met numerous statespersons, and participated in and contributed to highly important international events (the EU–LAC and EU–US summits, the G8 meeting, the Quartet, the Quint, etc.).

It was a time of success for Slovenia: we succeeded in tackling global problems in Kosovo and Serbia, Bosnia-Herzegovina and Russia. There were positive developments in the Middle East, we helped Georgia and Macedonia, and led accession negotiations with Croatia and Turkey.

It was an edifying time: we learnt that problems cannot be solved by force but only by arguments and personal commitment.

We witnessed a new test of European solidarity: the Irish referendum failed. (...) We all gained new experience, and Slovenia made its presence felt.

Nonetheless, at home our efforts were constantly undermined. Every day brought insults, lies, malicious gossip, jealousy ...

(...)

The European Union needs to seriously reconsider its very nature: evidently, the citizens of Europe are rather discontented with their Union. Instead of striving for unity they increasingly act against one another, whereas young people seem to take everything as largely self-evident."

*

The six-month Presidency was also a good opportunity to present Slovenia's culture to the world. The events that took place in Slovenia referred primarily to the European Year of Intercultural Dialogue 2008, as declared by the EU. One of the main focuses was the 500th anniversary of the birth of Primož Trubar, founder of Slovenian written culture. Attention was, furthermore, drawn to the work of the world famous architect Jože Plečnik, whose creations mark the European capitals of Vienna, Prague, and Ljubljana, as well as several other localities in Slovenia. Parts of Plečnik's opus were presented at an exhibition in Brussels. Another important personage from Slovenian history put on display was Herman Potočnik, whose theoretical work "The Problem of Space Travel" represents an essential contribution to the beginnings of the space age.

In its short history as an independent state, Slovenia has performed other important functions, such as the Presidency of the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe and membership in the UN Security Council. However, we believe that the Presidency of the Council of the European Union was the most demanding task we have ever taken on. We are pleased it has proven to be a success. Our achievements will serve as an inspiration for our future work and a foundation for the creative energy of this and future generations in Slovenia. It is not an overstatement to say that by successfully concluding the six-month EU Presidency Slovenia and its diplomacy have brightened their star on the European map.

The present publication offers a selection of viewpoints, positions, and assessments of this great project that will leave an important mark on our present era and better define our future.

Dr Dimitrij Rupel
Minister of Foreign Affairs

“Under Slovenia’s Presidency, the EU managed to overcome a long-standing deadlock”

Slovenia was the first of the new Member States to be entrusted with the role of the Presidency of the Council. At the end of its Presidency, Slovenia can be proud of its accomplishments.

From my own experience as President of the Council in 2007, I know that fulfilling the role of Presidency of a Union of 27 Member States is an almost Herculean task. It requires political will and determination, perseverance and patience and, of course, a skilful and highly motivated Presidency team.

Germany and Slovenia, together with our Portuguese friends, constituted the first “Trio” Presidency team. Work on our joint 18 month programme started in the beginning of 2006 and allowed for an early exchange on our common priorities. The responsibility for the “Trio”-programme has created a particular bond between Dimitrij Rupel, Luís Amado and myself. Throughout our three Presidencies we have regularly consulted and sought mutual advice, at the margins of Council meetings and in numerous bilateral contacts. In difficult situations, we have given each other support and a word of encouragement. I have been in touch with Dimitrij Rupel on a weekly, sometimes daily basis. I had therefore been very confident, from early on, that the Slovenian Presidency was to be a success!



Of the many accomplishments of the Slovenian Presidency, its leadership and crisis management regarding the situation in Kosovo will be remembered as a particular example of successful statesmanship. In Kosovo, the Slovenian Presidency was challenged with a difficult task: it had to ensure a coherent approach of the EU to the proclamation of independence while at the same time keeping Serbia engaged in a dialogue with a view to maintaining regional stability. As an important success of the Slovenian Presidency regarding the Western Balkans I would also like to mention the recent signature of the Stabilisation and Association Agreement with Bosnia and Herzegovina, an important step in its European course.

Under Slovenia’s Presidency, the EU also managed to overcome a long-standing deadlock in its discussions on a negotiation mandate for a new Partnership and Cooperation Agreement with Russia. Dimitrij Rupel’s personal engagement and commitment proved pivotal for this breakthrough – a breakthrough that finally enables the EU to embark on negotiations on a comprehensive framework for cooperation with Russia on a whole range of issues such as security, energy, trade and technology. I should not fail to mention the progress being made, thanks to the efforts of the Slovenian Presidency, in implementing the EU’s Strategy for a New Partnership with Central Asia, which was adopted during the German EU Presidency.

Regarding the Middle East, Slovenia has, during its Presidency, maintained the momentum to create a context and climate for the parties to the conflict to remain engaged in a process towards a negotiated solution. I should like to highlight, in particular, the Action Plan of the EU to reinforce the capacity of the Palestinian Authority in the field of rule of law and security and the reinforcement of the EU police mission for the Palestinian territories, EUPOL COPPS. The "Berlin Conference in support of Palestinian Civil Society and the Rule of Law" of 24th June has demonstrated the resolve of the European Union to actively promote peace and stability in the region.

Afghanistan and the EU's efforts to support security, stabilisation and development in that country remained high on the agenda during the last six months. I particularly welcome that the EU, under Slovenian leadership, decided to commit itself to substantially increase its efforts through its police mission EUPOL Afghanistan, with the aim of doubling the original number of experts working in the mission.

The fact that Slovenia has demonstrated successfully its ability to steer the European Union over six months is yet another proof of the successful integration of new Member States in the European Union. It should also give confidence to others who will follow suit.

Frank-Walter Steinmeier
Minister of Foreign Affairs
of the Federal Republic of Germany

“Slovenia took the lead at a particularly sensitive moment...”

As the Slovenian Presidency of the Council of the European Union is approaching its end it is my sincere pleasure to congratulate my colleague Dimitrij Rupel and his collaborators for the good work of the past six months and everything that was achieved.

Slovenia held for the first time the Presidency of the Union and it participated in the first experience of the Trio of Presidencies, together with Portugal and Germany. I believe that the cooperation between our three countries contributed to a more efficient management of the tasks that had to be fulfilled. This Trio performed well.

Slovenia took the lead at a particularly sensitive moment for the Western Balkans and was able to pursue the line that had been established by the Trio's programme, contributing to a deeper relationship between the countries in the region and the European Union. Indeed, the Association and Stabilisation Agreements with Serbia and Bosnia Herzegovina were signed and the delicate issues raised by Kosovo were handled with skill.

I would also highlight the importance of the Summit between the European Union and Latin America held in Peru. It represented an important landmark in the relations between the two continents and contributed to the reinforcement of our ties in areas of vital importance such as the environment and climate change, as well as the fight against poverty.

In another area of the world, I would recall the relevant role that the Slovenian Presidency had to play in the follow-up to the events in Tibet. The correct management of this dossier was instrumental in terms of the relationship between the European Union and China.

A successful Presidency indeed.



Luís Amado
Minister of State and Foreign Affairs
of the Republic of Portugal

“The Slovenian Presidency has proved capable of defending our values, our interests and our policies...”

Thanks Dimitrij, on behalf of all of us, for your excellent Presidency.

Your most obvious merit will have been to put an end to the artificial division between the “new Member States” and the former ones. You were the first “new Member State” to chair the EU Council and you did it successfully for six months in a spirit of balance and efficiency. After you, there will be no more new and old Member States, you have six months experience, my Presidency is still to come and today, I feel “newer” than you are! I hope you will give me some recipes.

I would like to congratulate you on your Presidency: you defended the European values, interests, and policies around the world with efficiency, in all conflicts and in all regions: the Middle East, Africa, and Latin America with an impressive EU-LAC Summit. You chaired the annual EU-US Summit with Prime Minister Janša, and you will chair the upcoming Summit with Russia. I would also like to congratulate you on unlocking the negotiation mandate for the future EU-Russia agreement, which had been blocked for more than two years.



The Slovenian Presidency also reflects your personal touch, and I can see it in “the Balkans”. What an image to see, in the country of Tito’s birth, the family of Balkan countries including Serbs and newly independent Kosovo reunited in peace during the Gymnich meeting in Brdo. Who would have believed this 10 years ago, when I was last in Kosovo? Kosovo’s independence in February and Serbia’s path towards democracy and Europe is our collective success achieved under your efficient leadership.

Let me add my personal touch by thanking you particularly for the launching of the ESDP mission in Chad, the largest one the EU has ever undertaken. The Union may be proud of it; this is the image we have to give to our citizens, who sometimes wonder about the meaning of our project.

Thank you also for putting forward the defence of human rights. I know this is a personal cause stemming from your personal experience [and your fight against Communism]. Thank you for your endeavours to set up guidelines on the rights of children in armed conflict.

Finally, I would also like to thank you for your readiness to be there for each and every one of us during these six months. The EU-27 is complex, but you tried to simplify it. I appreciate your commitment and the fact that we could always reach you when we needed you. I fondly remember the convivial atmosphere during our pleasant evening in Bled during the Gymnich meeting.

Thank you for your dedicated efforts.

(Acknowledgement by Bernard Kouchner, Minister of Foreign and European Affairs of the Republic of France, on the occasion of the dinner of foreign ministers of the EU on the margins of the European Council, 20 June 2008)

On 30 June, when my friend Dimitrij Rupel handed over the baton of the Presidency of the Union which he had carried for six months, I was able to cast an admiring eye over all the work he had accomplished for the Slovenian Presidency. I did so all the more for the fact that in preparation for succeeding him I had been working with him extremely intensively for several months.

Today, I wish to thank him and to congratulate him on the marvellous work he has done. I wish also to salute the action of the Slovenian Government as a whole, and all those who have ensured, day by day, the Presidency's success.

It was in itself historic: Slovenia is the first "new Member State" to have taken on this responsibility. The history of European integration will see this first time as a first success.

But the greatest merit of the Slovenian Presidency has precisely been to succeed in making us forget this aspect and to succeed in erasing the artificial divisions there is sometimes a tendency to impose. During his six months at the helm of the Union, it is not the Presidency of a "new Member State" that we have seen, but simply that of a European State. Thanks to Slovenia, there will no longer be "new" and "old" Member States. There will only be Europeans united in a single European family and imbued with a common spirit.

A spirit the Slovenian Presidency has proved capable of making a living reality with its concern for balance and effectiveness, its spirit of abnegation, its search for consensus. It has been able to remain mobilised at the service of the Union, showing a constant readiness, a constant willingness to listen to its partners. In a European Union of 27, that is a remarkable feat.

The Slovenian Presidency has also proved capable of defending our values, our interests and our policies in all the world's conflicts and regions, from the Middle East to Africa. In addition to Latin America, with an impressive summit in Lima, where 60 Heads of State and Government from both continents were represented. This provided an opportunity to reaffirm our determination to act jointly with Latin America and inject renewed impetus into our common projects to alleviate poverty and promote sustainable development.

The Slovenian Presidency has also carried high the flag of our values, untiringly emphasising the importance of Human Rights, excellent illustrations of which can be found in the adoption of guidelines on the definition of the rights of children in armed conflict and the determination to pursue an integrated approach to the protection of those rights in all aspects of the Union's external action.

I also warmly commend the launch of the EUFOR operation in Chad to provide the required protection and security for the reconstruction of the villages of the tens of thousands of people displaced due to the situation in the region and in Darfur. Faced with this emergency, the European Union was capable of deploying the largest military mission of its history, mobilising 17 Member States. A fact that testifies to the capacity of the European Union to bring all concerned together in pursuit of goals of solidarity and justice.

And lastly, the Slovenian Presidency also scored a striking success in breaking the logjam around the negotiating mandate for the future EU/Russia agreement, blocked for over two years and a recurrent source of tension. This new mandate should now allow us to renew our relationship with our neighbour.

Of these many successes, if it were necessary to choose just one, I would point without hesitation to the colossal and successful effort made for the Balkans. I have in mind here the action of the Slovenian

Presidency at the time of Kosovo's declaration of independence, preventing the threatened explosion of violence while at the same time helping Serbia down the road towards Europe and democracy. This action by the Slovenian Presidency to assure stability in the region, one that has all too often been at the heart of turmoil on our continent, was an immense political success, and a success in the eyes of History.

I shall always have a vivid recollection of our Gymnich in Brdo: the image, in Slovenia, of the whole Balkan family – from Serbs to newly independent Kosovars – gathered together in peace: who only ten years ago could have believed it? The peacefully acquired independence of this people and the gaze of Serbia now turned towards Europe: these are successes in a composition whose score is played collectively by all Europeans. One that the Slovene Presidency has admirably succeeded in orchestrating.

And to conclude, there is the question of manner – the “final touch” – a Presidency's background music, which also speaks directly to the heart. How could we ever forget Ljubljana, the kindness of its inhabitants and the welcome, straightforward and warm, that they gave us, the enchantment of the marvellous town of Piran, the charming beauty of Slovenia's mountains and the exceptional heritage of Brdo, where a magnificent welcome was extended to us? My desire to return to Slovenia is also a measure of this Presidency's success!

Bernard Kouchner
Minister of Foreign and European Affairs
of the Republic of France

“Our neighbouring country has shown that small and medium-sized states are also successful pilots of the European Union”

Following Slovenia's convincing historical debut, France as one of the EU founding states has taken over the EU Presidency. Slovenia is the first country of the EU class of 2004 to run a highly successful Presidency in sometimes difficult circumstances. Like Portugal before it, our neighbouring country has shown that small and medium-sized states - SMS - are also successful pilots of the European Union.

As a neighbour, Austria has close and friendly ties with Slovenia. We have vigorously supported its Presidency and congratulate Slovenia on its success.

Slovenia's prudent Presidency, which took into account the interests of all partners, no matter whether small or large, made it possible for us to take concerted action even after Kosovo's declaration of independence.



The European perspective is thus becoming tangible and real for the citizens of the Western Balkan States, which is an essential contribution to peace and stability in this region.

Thanks to the convincing and persistent work by the Slovenian Presidency it became possible to start negotiations on a new agreement between the EU and Russia.

(Excerpt from a press statement, 2 July 2008)

Ursula Plassnik
Federal Minister for European and International Affairs
of the Republic of Austria

“The Council of the EU owes a great deal to Slovenia...”

A tribute to the Slovenian Council Presidency

I would like to pay tribute to Slovenia for its achievements over the past six months at the helm of the Council of the European Union. Slovenia was the first country from the generation of 2004 to take over the Presidency and its term of office during the first semester of 2008 has been an impressive and successful première. The Council owes a great deal to Slovenia, and the courage, diligence and perseverance displayed throughout its term.

Slovenia deserves much credit for leaving a sound legacy on which the European Union will build in future. Let me just mention some of the key achievements that will be crucial for the medium and long-term future of the European agenda.

The EU made important headway in the area of competitiveness of undertakings, the social dimension of the Lisbon Strategy and the European Research Area. The European Institute of Innovation and Technology will be of key significance for the future of European research and development. The Presidency gave prominence to the alarming rise of food prices as well as oil and gas prices and to promoting a more coordinated, long-term response to the food crisis along with specific measures to alleviate the impact of the price surges.

Important legislation was passed to further strengthen the internal market and environmental protection, including measures to liberalise the electricity and gas markets.

Under the Slovenian Presidency the Council adopted key political decisions for the timely adoption of the climate and energy package. As a result, the EU will be able to face these crucial challenges and make an important contribution to the conclusion of a comprehensive global agreement on climate change after Kyoto. The Presidency led a series of third-country consultations, including summit meetings, to ensure a timely conclusion for a sustainable post-2012 agreement.

By helping to enhance the European perspective for the Western Balkans region through various concrete initiatives, the Slovenian Presidency brought the region considerably closer to the EU family. Both Serbia and Bosnia and Herzegovina signed Stabilisation and Association Agreements. The EU started dialogues on visa liberalisation with all the countries of the Western Balkans and opened negotiations on a multilateral transport agreement. Committed to stability in the region, the EU gave a united response to Kosovo and agreed to establish the EULEX mission, the EU's largest ESDP operation to date, and appoint the EU Special Representative. Accession negotiations with Croatia and Turkey continued.

The EU-third country summits with Japan, Latin America and the Caribbean, the USA and Russia further strengthened the strategic dimension of our relations with these key partners. Thanks to the



decisive support of the Slovenian Presidency, it was possible to start negotiations on a new agreement between the EU and Russia. The EU launched the Black Sea Synergy initiative within the European Neighbourhood Policy. The EU continued its efforts to contribute to Palestinian state-building in support of ongoing final status negotiations.

Although it was overshadowed by the result of the referendum in Ireland, I will also mention the preparatory work for the beginning of the implementation of the Lisbon Treaty conducted by the Presidency and the report issued on the work completed.

Your country will now return to the routine of normal EU membership but with all the credit it has earned, and with the self confidence and the wealth of knowledge acquired from its experience over the past half year. I am sure that you will use these assets - as before - to further the course of European integration and to contribute to our common future.

Javier Solana
Secretary General of the Council of the EU
EU High Representative
for the Common Foreign and Security Policy

“Slovenia astutely managed steps towards a new institutional settlement...”

Slovenia's EU Council Presidency was historical in several ways. In addition to having been the first “new” Member State to join our single currency, Slovenia became the first of the new countries of the enlarged European Union to serve at the helm of our Union and thus the first to crown the reunification of Europe. After hardly 4 years of membership, Slovenia has re-taken its rightful place in the heart of Europe.

But Slovenia's Presidency was not simply an event of major symbolic importance – it first and foremost produced good work for Europe in challenging times. The Slovenian Presidency took forward important policies and initiatives on the European level, thus not only making our Union more effective but also showing our citizens how essential the European dimension is to realizing their aspirations in today's globalised world. Slovenia astutely managed steps towards a new institutional settlement that will bring about a more efficient and democratic Europe for the future. At the same time, Slovenia made an important contribution to a “Europe of results” that delivers to Europe's citizens.



This is particularly important in my field of external relations. Let me just highlight three achievements which were realized thanks to the good team work between the Slovenian Presidency and the Commission. Firstly, Member States adopted a mandate to negotiate a new comprehensive agreement with Russia which will certainly boost our relations with that strategic partner in the future. Secondly, we worked hard to support progress in the Middle East Peace process by fostering the Annapolis commitments and adopting a new aid mechanism for the Palestinian people. And thirdly, we deepened our relations with our neighbours and are now in particular in the process of upgrading our relationship with Ukraine, Moldova, Morocco and Israel. All this reflects the fact that a “global Europe” is increasingly punching its weight on the world stage and starting to tackle transnational challenges together, such as climate change, energy security or rising food and oil prices.

Of course, these achievements are just examples. But they illustrate that Europe can make a real difference if it acts decisively and coherently. This is what our sometimes sceptical citizens expect from their Union. I therefore salute Slovenia for its commitment, professionalism and team spirit to build a Europe of tomorrow.

Benita Ferrero-Waldner
European Commissioner for External Relations
and European Neighbourhood Policy

“Slovenia’s expertise of the region was instrumental...”

At the beginning of the year 2008 many drew up doomsday scenarios for the Western Balkans. I disagreed with them. There certainly was, and still is, a danger of instability, at the moment when Kosovo’s future status is being resolved. But the repercussions needed not be destabilising if the EU gave a decisive and unified steer to ensure a coordinated response.

Today, we are managing the Kosovo status process and maintaining regional stability and peace.

I also said then that, by end 2008, all the Western Balkan countries should have passed through the gateway for candidate status by signing Stabilisation and Association Agreements (SAA) with the EU.

I am glad to note that today, six months ahead of schedule, we are already there – with the signature of the SAA with Bosnia-Herzegovina in June we reached this milestone.



I also hoped then that the Serbian citizens would seize the opportunity and vote for a Europe- and reform-oriented government. The elections of 11 May were a close call but paved the way for it. The signature of the SAA with Serbia in April and the opening of visa dialogue were cited by many observers as crucial signals of the EU’s commitment.

All this would not have been made possible without the dedication and professionalism of the Slovenian EU Presidency, which has put the Western Balkans high on the EU’s political agenda. Slovenia’s expertise of the region was instrumental in giving the EU’s decisive and unified steer to face the challenges in the region.

Slovenians understand better than anyone else in Europe that we need patience and determination to drive progress in the region.

Thus, I am glad that the European Council last week gave its “full support for the European perspective of the Western Balkans.” It stressed that “by making solid progress in economic and political reform and by fulfilling the necessary conditions and requirements, the remaining potential candidates in the Western Balkans should achieve candidate status, according to their own merits, with EU membership as ultimate goal.”

This is clear-speak at its best.

This is a powerful message to the region at the moment when the Irish voters said no to the Lisbon Treaty. While the EU considers how to pursue its institutional reform, we keep on working in parallel on a carefully managed and gradual accession process in South East Europe. We don’t take any sabbatical from our work for peace and stability.

I would like to commend the Slovenian Presidency for this wise approach and thank in particular Foreign Minister Dimitrij Rupel for his personal commitment and relentless efforts to bring the region closer to the European Union.

Olli Rehn
European Commissioner for Enlargement

“This remarkable country has led a reinforced and enlarged European Union the last six months...”

Slovenia makes history in the EU - first Slavic country in the driving seat

The six months of the Slovenian Presidency have come to an end. It is therefore time to take a look back and review its achievements. Three topics have defined this Presidency. The first was intercultural dialogue, which is a European priority, throughout 2008 culminated in the inauguration of the Euro-Mediterranean University in Portorož in June. The second was the Western Balkans, which swiftly rose up the political agenda following the declaration of independence by Kosovo. The third was the ratification of the Lisbon Treaty, which made good progress during the Slovenian Presidency, but which suffered the setback of the No vote in the Irish referendum.

The European Parliament worked closely with the Presidency and enjoyed good cooperation and partnership, including in the field of foreign affairs. In this regard I would like to concentrate on the efforts of the Presidency in bringing the countries of the Western Balkans closer to the European Union.



The task of bringing the countries of South-East Europe - Croatia, Bosnia, Montenegro, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (FYROM) and Serbia - closer to accession to the European Union was a priority of the Slovenian Presidency which they approached with full commitment. The declaration of independence by Kosovo presented a significant challenge.

The Kosovo Assembly proclaimed Kosovo's independence in late February. The decision had been expected and reflects the will of the citizens in Kosovo to take their political destiny and institution-building for independence into their own hands in a peaceful fashion. Over a year ago, following the Ahtisaari report, the European Parliament advocated internationally supervised sovereignty for Kosovo. The European Parliament encouraged those in positions of political responsibility in Kosovo to establish democratic political institutions that respect the rights and freedoms of all citizens as part of a multiethnic Kosovo that has peaceful co-operative relations with its neighbours.

In late April the Stabilisation and Association Agreement and the Interim Agreement was signed by the EU with Serbia. Given the complex situation and impending election in Serbia at that time, the agreement aimed to pave the way for ever-closer collaboration between the EU and Serbia across a range of issues. It should bring tangible benefits for Serbians such as access to markets and better conditions for investment and job creation. This is one further step to anchoring Serbia firmly in the European family of democracies, which was also confirmed by the results of the parliamentary elections of 11 May. Concluding that agreement was an unquestionable achievement of the Slovenian Presidency.

The countries of the Western Balkans have a European perspective. They should continue down the road of political and economic reform, and rebuilding their societies after the troubled 1990's. It is hoped that the process of adaptation and preparation for future EU membership will contribute to increased integration within the region itself.

The Slovenian Presidency of the EU is an excellent example of the fundamental change that has taken place in Europe over the past two decades. This is an extraordinary achievement, when you consider that less than 20 years ago Slovenia was part of communist Yugoslavia. This remarkable country has led a reinforced and enlarged European Union of 27 Member States for the last six months dealing with all the complex challenges it was facing; and did an exemplary job.

Hans-Gert Pöttering
President of the European Parliament



The World in the First Half of 2008

In the first half of 2008, the world was marked by a series of events of more or less spontaneous nature - these were either caused directly by nature or resulted from the activities of man or the wider society. Slovenia, as the country holding the Presidency of the EU Council, responded to all these events, first in the form of Presidency statements, and more thoroughly by adapting the agendas of the meetings, including those of the European Council in March and June, and also by other actions. Some events were less coincidental, but due to their importance they cannot be disregarded.

In January, Slovenia took over the EU Council Presidency from Portugal. Malta and Cyprus adopted the euro. In the same month, the global price of oil hit a record USD 100 a barrel. Slovenia, as the Presidency country, called on Kenya to use transparent and legal means in announcing the results of the presidential election and condemned the violence that broke out as a result of alleged election irregularities. The first half of the year was also marked by the continued crisis in Sudan (Darfur), the delivery of humanitarian assistance and a rather slack response of the international community. The Slovenian Presidency supported the Arab League plan for resolving the most severe political crisis in Lebanon following the end of the civil war in 1990; however, agreement between the Lebanese Government and the opposition Hezbollah was reached only in May after an escalation of violence. At the end of the month, Italian Prime Minister Romano Prodi resigned after a vote of no confidence in the Senate.

At the beginning of February, there were increased attempts by armed groups in Chad to seize power. Slovenia as the Presidency country urged all parties involved to seek a peaceful political solution. A few days later, on 17 February, Kosovo declared its independence from the Republic of Serbia. This long expected event met with contradictory reactions in the international community and resulted in demonstrations of approximately a hundred thousand Serbs in Belgrade, which also impacted the Slovenian Embassy. Slovenia followed the example of most EU Member States and recognised Kosovo's independence. In February, the Turkish Army shelled the posts of Kurdish rebels in northern Iraq; the bombings continued at intervals for several months. At the end of February, Cuban President Fidel Castro, who had been in power for almost five decades, stepped down and the Cuban National Assembly unanimously selected Raul Castro to succeed his brother. Violence escalated in southern Israel and Gaza and later (in March), Palestinian President Abbas broke off all contacts with Israel as a sign of protest and declared a three-day mourning period. Israeli air strikes on Gaza continued. In Pakistan, opposition parties won parliamentary elections. The People's Party of the assassinated Benazir Bhutto received the largest number of votes, closely followed by the Pakistan Muslim League (N), which was a severe blow to Musharraf's coalition allies. On 23 February, the Slovenian and international public was shocked by the news of the passing away of the former Slovenian President, Dr Janez Drnovšek.

March witnessed the controversial presidential election in Zimbabwe, where President Robert Mugabe adamantly refused to step down – the consequences of his self-will were still visible in June (due to a brutal pogrom against opposition supporters, the only contender, Morgan Tsvangirai, pulled out of the re-run election). In Tibet, a series of violent incidents of unrest causing victims broke out as a sign of protest against the Chinese rule. In a special statement, Slovenia as the Presidency country, called on all parties to peacefully resolve all conflicts between the Chinese Government and the Dalai Lama. The third package of the UN Security Council sanctions against Iran was adopted; the European Parliament passed a resolution on Iran in January. In February, the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) expressed its concern about the aggravating surveys on Iran's atomic armament. In June, the High Representative for the Common Foreign and Security Policy, Javier Solana, presented in his proposal on behalf of six states (the United States, Russia, China, the United Kingdom, France and Germany) special economic and trade incentives

for Iran, whereby the latter has not given the relevant assurances regarding its nuclear programme. Armed clashes escalated between Shiite fighters and the Iraqi Government and US forces. The April ministerial conference of Iraq's neighbours in Kuwait should lead to reconciliation between the two parties. The March European Council responded to the turmoil in the financial markets by modernising three extensive and detailed timetables for measures in different fields involving the regulation and control of financial markets. Moreover the climate and energy package was adopted as one of the major and more concrete responses to the rapidly increasing effects of climate change.

In April, the EU, led by the Slovenian Presidency, advocated the territorial integrity of Georgia and refused to recognize Abkhazia and South Ossetia. Slovenia welcomed the subsequent democratic parliamentary elections. Dialogue was re-established between the Israeli and Palestinian sides.

In May, Cyclone Nargis devastated Burma/Myanmar, causing the tragic death of 100,000 people, which makes it the second deadliest named cyclone of all time. On 7 May, Dmitry Medvedev was inaugurated Russia's new President, and his predecessor Vladimir Putin became Prime Minister. On 12 May, China's Sichuan province was struck by a massive 7.8 magnitude earthquake which claimed 69,197 human lives.

The June European Council responded to the spiralling food prices. The leaders agreed that assistance had to be provided, particularly to the poorest. Within the UN and the G8 Group, the EU will strive to combat the effects of soaring food prices on the world's poor population. In this context, attention was also devoted to biofuels policy and the acceleration of progress towards attaining the Millennium Development Goals. A large donor conference for Afghanistan was held in Paris in January; in June, Talib rebels broke into a prison in Kandahar, and retaliatory measures of NATO and the Afghan Army ensued. The Israeli and Palestinian negotiators agreed on the drafting of parts of the Peace Plan as envisaged at the Annapolis International Conference in November 2007.

The Slovenian EU Council Presidency ended on 30 June, as Slovenian Foreign Minister Dimitrij Rupel passed the symbolic baton and flag of Europe on to his successor, French Foreign Minister Bernard Kouchner.

Anja Fabiani
Minister Counsellor
Policy Planning and Research Division



JANUARY

Intercultural Dialogue

Intercultural Dialogue

From the outset of the preparations for the Slovenian EU Council Presidency, intercultural dialogue was an essential component of the country's priorities, an important element of both culture and foreign policy, including relations between the Member States and relations with the immediate European neighbourhood, and, finally, an integral part of Europe's global responsibility and its fundamental values.

The European Commission and the European Parliament declared 2008 the European Year of Intercultural Dialogue in order to enhance the socio-cultural aspects of European integration, to encourage cultural production, and to recognise the important role culture has had in creating Europe's identity, fostering its solidarity, and establishing dialogue between 27 countries, nations, regions, religions, and languages. In this context, the concept of culture should be defined both in a narrow sense as cultural production and in a broader sense as European values, civilisation, and tradition, and the humanist heritage, political culture, and boundless creativity of European nations. Culture, in the latter sense, covers those aspects of national identities which stem from the European humanist heritage and the fundamental values of European integration, and which feature democratic culture as their common denominator.

EU policies on intercultural dialogue are directed above all towards the Member States – particularly those which joined the Union in 2004 and 2007 – in order to promote their participation in European cultural exchanges, to encourage dialogue between civil societies, and to consolidate the Continent. The Slovenian EU Council Presidency considered intercultural dialogue to be an integral part of dialogue with the Western Balkan countries, in view of the common aspirations to a European future for the entire region and particularly the aggravated situation in Kosovo. The promotion of dialogue between nations, cultures, and religions is an essential aspect of Europe's dialogue with its Eastern and Southern European neighbours. Furthermore, as part of the third pillar of the Barcelona process, intercultural dialogue is the key determinant of Europe's dialogue with the Arab world and with Turkey as a candidate for EU membership. During its Presidency, Slovenia actively supported the UN's Alliance of Civilizations initiative, dialogue between the EU and Asia within the Europe-Asia Meeting (ASEM), and other forums promoting interest in understanding between cultures, religions, and traditions, and advocating peaceful coexistence and cultural and intellectual exchanges. In recent times, public awareness of the necessity of the global understanding and knowledge of cultures has improved; in addition, Europe has shown greater political will to support such exchanges, projects, and policies; this progress was also encouraged by the Slovenian EU Council Presidency. The following paragraphs summarise the most important events during the Slovenian EU Council Presidency.

In January, a celebration in Ljubljana officially launched the European Year of Intercultural Dialogue. The initiative's slogan "Together in Diversity" is aimed at raising awareness of the importance of national cultures, creativity, and linguistic, religious, and societal diversity, contributing to Europe's consolidation and the understanding of the European Union as a concept that extends beyond its political and economic dimensions. In his speech in Ljubljana, the President of the European Parliament said that the declaration of the European Year of Intercultural Dialogue had clearly demonstrated the EU's firm political determination to make culture an integral part of all European policies.

February witnessed an important international conference on Muslims in Europe, the possibility of their integration into European societies, and the associated problems. The foreign ministers of Austria, Afghanistan, and Slovenia, the Italian Minister of the Interior, the UN High Representative for the Alliance of Civilizations, and numerous other prominent researchers and diplomats

discussed the EU's opportunities arising from the growing Muslim community in Europe and Europe's wish to establish itself as the homeland of all the people who inhabit it.

In March, an informal meeting of EU foreign ministers (Gymnich) was organised in Brdo, which also touched on intercultural dialogue, including media freedom and religious tolerance.

In April, a notable conference entitled "Europe, the World and Humankind in the 21st Century" was held in Ljubljana and attended by prominent European intellectuals; the panellists discussed the issue of fundamental European values and the role of Europe and European humanism in the global reality of the 21st century. In their final statement, the participants urged Europe to promote understanding of the world and exchanges between people if Europe is to continue to adhere to its humanistic principles. In Europe's past, cultural traditions could enrich one another only if they provided for mutually beneficial contexts.

Intellectual creativity and freedom lay the foundations for understanding and dialogue, particularly in spheres less accessible to politics and diplomacy. The humanist heritage of European nations should become a more visible basis for European unity and Europe's common contribution in these critical times of a global lack of understanding, uncertainty, and violence.

In May, the President of the Council of the EU, together with presidents of the European Commission and the European Parliament, received in Brussels representatives of the monotheist religious communities in the EU and recognised the contributions of religious communities and theologies to raising ecological awareness, the preservation of the planet, and the proper management of natural resources.

In May, the Slovenian Ministry of Foreign Affairs organised a conference in Ljubljana entitled "New Paradigms, New Models – Culture in EU External Relations", where the President of the European Parliament, European commissioners for culture, external relations, and science, and the President of the General Affairs and External Relations Council, Dr Dimitrij Rupel, addressed participants regarding culture in EU external relations. Culture has an important role in the EU's dialogue with its neighbours, and cultural workers often assume the role of ambassadors of European values and become the protagonists of dialogue; thus, it is important for diplomats to learn the language of culture and for cultural workers to learn the language of politics and diplomacy, as they share the responsibility to create the conditions enabling a comfortable life in a peaceful and creative environment, which is also the objective of the EU and its neighbourhood policy.

In June, the Foundation Charter of the EMUNI University was signed at a ceremony in Portorož; the establishment of the University was one of the key projects of the Slovenian Presidency in the fields of science and intercultural dialogue. With this international research and educational institution based in Portorož on the Slovenian coast, Europe would like to provide to the countries of the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership an appropriate framework for meetings, academic exchanges, studies, and research and thus establish a solid forum for intercultural exchange and dialogue between students and researchers from the Mediterranean area. The presidents of the European Council, the European Parliament, and the European Commission, and the Secretary-General of the Arab League underlined in their speeches the importance of academic exchange and concrete research projects aimed at dispelling prejudice and doing away with ignorance and through which we cooperate as partners, sharing the eagerness to learn and understand each other.

Dr Klemen Klun
External Expert on Intercultural Dialogue

Survey of Events

1 January

Launch of the Slovenian Presidency of the Council of the EU – On 31 December 2007, the Slovenian Foreign Minister and President of the General Affairs and External Relations Council, Dr Dimitrij Rupel, officially took over the Presidency of the Council of the EU from Foreign Minister of the Portuguese Republic Luís Amado. (Madeira)

When Cyprus and Malta joined the eurozone, they were warmly welcomed by the Slovenian Presidency.

Entry into force of the **Visa Facilitation and Readmission Agreements** concluded with the Western Balkan countries.

7 January

Minister Rupel received **EU Special Envoy for Burma/Myanmar Piero Fassino**. (Ljubljana)

The Slovenian Minister of Culture, Dr Vasko Simoniti, the European Commissioner for Education, Training, Culture and Youth, Ján Figel, the European Commissioner for Science and Research, Dr Janez Potočnik, and the Ambassador of the European Year of Intercultural Dialogue, Marko Peljhan, inaugurated the **international conference “Intercultural Dialogue as the Fundamental Value of the EU”**, an introduction into the European Year of Intercultural Dialogue which was entrusted for preparation to Slovenia as the Presidency of the Council of the EU. (Ljubljana)

8 January

Minister Rupel met with **Brussels correspondents of the European media** and presented Slovenia's EU Presidency priorities and its positions on the future status of Kosovo (Ljubljana).



Minister Rupel meets European journalists (Photo: BOBO)

The Slovenian Government met with the **European Commission**. On this occasion, Minister Rupel met with the European **Commissioner for Enlargement, Olli Rehn**, and the **European Commissioner for External Relations and European Neighbourhood Policy, Benita Ferrero-Waldner**. The second part of the meeting was also attended by the **Commissioner for Development and Humanitarian Aid, Louis Michel**, and the **Commissioner for External Trade, Peter Mandelson**. (Brdo pri Kranju)



Meeting between the Slovenian Government and the European Commission (Photo: BOBO)

Minister Rupel held a separate meeting with **Benita Ferrero-Waldner, the European Commissioner for External Relations and European Neighbourhood Policy.** (Ljubljana)

In a telephone conversation with Amr Moussa, Secretary-General of the Arab League, Minister Rupel pledged the **EU Presidency's support for the Lebanon plan** adopted by foreign ministers of the Arab League at their meeting in Cairo. (Ljubljana)

9 January

Minister Rupel received the **Secretary General of the Organisation of the Islamic Conference (OIC), Dr Ekmeleddin Ihsanoglu.** (Ljubljana)

Minister Rupel met with **Palestinian Foreign Minister Riyad al-Malki**, pledged his commitment to promoting the Middle East Peace Process and emphasised that during the Slovenian Presidency the latter would remain one of the EU's main political topics. (Ljubljana)

9–10 January

Informal meeting of Directors General for European Affairs of the EU Member States. (Brdo pri Kranju)

10 January

Janez Janša, the Prime Minister of the Republic of Slovenia and President of the European Council, received representatives of the **European Trade Union Confederation (EUTC).** (Ljubljana)

The Chair of the Working Party on Human Rights (COHOM), Smiljana Knez, presented the **Slovenian EU Presidency priorities in the field of human rights** to the Subcommittee of the European Parliament on Human Rights. (Brussels)

State Secretary Matjaž Šinkovec met with the **Assistant Secretary of State at the U.S. Department of State, Daniel Fried.** (Ljubljana)

10–11 January

Informal meeting of political directors of the EU Member States. (Brdo pri Kranju)

11 January

Minister Rupel attended the meeting of the **European Trade Union Confederation (ETUC)** and **national trade union confederations** from Slovenia, the Czech Republic, Finland, France, Germany and Portugal. (Ljubljana)

Minister Rupel received **Serbian Minister of Foreign Affairs Vuk Jeremić**. (Ljubljana)



Minister Rupel meets with Serbian Foreign Minister Jeremić (Photo: BOBO)

The Slovenian Presidency organised the presentation of the study **“Enhancing the EU Response to Children Affected by Armed Conflict with Particular Reference to Development Policy”** published by the European Centre for Development Policy Management (ECDPM). (Brussels)

The **EU Troika-United States political directors meeting**. (Ljubljana)

12 January

Prime Minister Janša attended the **official ceremony on the occasion of Malta’s joining the eurozone**. (Valletta)

15–16 January

The President of the Republic of Slovenia, Dr Danilo Türk, attended the **First Alliance of Civilizations Forum**, where he spoke at Plenary Session I entitled “The Alliance of Civilizations: Managing Diversity in the Era of Globalization”. (Madrid)



President Türk at the First Alliance of Civilizations Forum (Photo: BOBO)

The Director-General of the Directorate for Policy Planning and Multilateral Relations, Anita Pipan, attended the session of the **Group of Friends of the Alliance of Civilizations** held during the course of the forum, where she presented Slovenia's activities. (Madrid)

16 January

Prime Minister Janša apprised Members of the European Parliament of the **priorities of the Slovenian Presidency of the Council of the EU**. (Strasbourg)



Prime Minister Janša addresses Members of the European Parliament (Photo: Bor Slana/BOBO)

At the seat of the **International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia (ICTY)**, Minister Rupel held two separate meetings with the **President of the Tribunal, Fausto Pocar**, and the **Chief Prosecutor, Serge Brammertz**. (The Hague)

In the framework of regular dialogue between countries and dialogue between the Presidency and the Member States, Minister Rupel met with **Maxime Verhagen, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Netherlands**. (The Hague)

State Secretary Šinkovec met with the **Secretary of State at the Spanish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Miguel Ángel Navarro Portera**. (Ljubljana)

17–18 January

Minister Rupel attended the **5th informal meeting of foreign ministers of Mediterranean EU Member States**. (Pafos)

18 January

Prime Minister Janša attended the **official ceremony on the occasion of Cyprus's joining the eurozone**. (Nicosia)

State Secretary Šinkovec met with the **Minister of State of the Republic of the Sudan, Muhammad al-Samani al-Wasila al-Sheikh al-Samani**. (Ljubljana)

19 January Minister Rupel met with the **Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, David Miliband**. (Brdo pri Kranju)

Minister Rupel attended the **briefing for the Presidency by the EU members of the Contact Group**, together with the German Federal Minister for

Foreign Affairs, Frank-Walter Steinmeier, the British Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, David Miliband, French Foreign Minister Bernard Kouchner, Italian Foreign Minister Massimo D'Alema, the EU High Representative for the Common Foreign and Security Policy, Javier Solana, and European Commissioner for Enlargement Olli Rehn. (Brdo pri Kranju)

21 January Minister Rupel met with **President of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan Pervez Musharraf**. (Brussels)

21–22 January In his capacity as President of the General Affairs and External Relations Council, Minister Rupel chaired the **EU Troika-Arab Maghreb Union meeting** in Morocco. (Rabat)

The Slovenian Presidency organised an **informal EU workshop on climate change**, traditionally prepared by the Member State at the beginning of its Presidency. The workshop was attended by some 100 participants, mostly European experts and heads of delegation participating in the negotiations for the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change and the Kyoto Protocol.

22 January State Secretary Šinkovec met with **Deputy U.S. Trade Representative John Veroneau**. (Ljubljana)

22–23 January The Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Centre for European Perspective organised the **Regional Seminar on Arms Exports Control**, attended by experts from Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, EU Member States, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia¹, Montenegro, Norway and Serbia. (Jable)

23 January Minister Rupel presented the **priorities of the Slovenian EU Council Presidency** at the regular meeting of the North Atlantic Council. (Brussels)

Minister Rupel addressed **Members of the European Parliament**. (Brussels)

Minister Rupel addressed the participants of a closed session of the **EP Committee on Foreign Affairs (AFET)** on the issue of Kosovo. (Brussels)

Minister Rupel presented the **Slovenian EU Presidency priorities** to the EP Committee on Constitutional Affairs (AFCO). (Brussels)

Minister Rupel met with the **Prime Minister of the Republic of Kosovo, Hashim Thaçi**. (Brussels)

The Slovenian Presidency welcomed the **presentation of the climate and energy package by the European Commission**.

The **Symposium "Climate Change and Perspectives for EU-Japan Cooperation"** was held at the Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Slovenia. (Ljubljana)

¹ The Republic of Slovenia has recognised Macedonia under its constitutional name "Republic of Macedonia". For the purposes of this publication, Macedonia will be referred to under the name used within the EU – the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (FYROM).

24 January

Minister Rupel presented the **Slovenian EU Presidency priorities** at the meeting of the OSCE Permanent Council. (Vienna)

Minister Rupel met with the **OSCE Secretary General, Marc Perrin de Brichambaut**. (Vienna)

Minister Rupel met with the **Austrian Foreign Minister, Dr Ursula Plassnik**. (Vienna)

Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov paid a visit to the Slovenian Embassy in Moscow and attended a working lunch with ambassadors of Slavic countries, an event aimed at promoting intercultural dialogue, one of the Slovenian EU Presidency priorities. (Moscow)

Prime Minister Janša met with the Presidency of the EPP-ED Group in the European Parliament and presented the **Slovenian EU Presidency programme, focusing on its priorities**. (Brussels)

A representative of the Republic of Slovenia and the Chair of the Political and Security Committee, Metka Ipavic, presented the **Slovenian EU Presidency priorities** to the EP Subcommittee on Security and Defence. (Brussels)

25–27 January

During his visit to Slovenia, **UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon** met with his host, Prime Minister Janša, President Türk, Minister Rupel, and Former Slovenian President Milan Kučan. (Bled, Brdo pri Kranju, Ljubljana and Jable)



Prime Minister Janša and UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon (Photo: BOBO)

28 January

Minister Rupel chaired for the first time the meeting of the **EU General Affairs and External Relations Council (GAERC)**, which centred on the situation in the Middle East, particularly the Arab-Israeli conflict, and the situation in Lebanon. Minister Rupel expressed his regret at the large number of victims in Kenya and humanitarian consequences, voicing his support for the Panel of Eminent African Personalities, led by Kofi Annan. The Council also addressed the crisis in Darfur, which affected the entire region; the European Union adopted a decision on the launch of the largest military operation in its history to support the stabilisation of the region (EUFOR Tchad/RCA). The Council addressed the situation in Pakistan – in this context, Minister Rupel reported on his meeting with Pakistani President Musharraf – and Iran. (Brussels)



First GAERC meeting during the Slovenian EU Council Presidency (Photo: EU Council)

Minister Rupel announced the decision of the GAERC to offer Serbia an interim political **agreement in order to accelerate its drawing closer to the EU**. The EU Council welcomed the European Commission's intent to establish **dialogue with the Western Balkan countries on visa liberalisation**. (Brussels)

The **11th meeting of the Green Diplomacy Network** was organised, focusing on climate change, the introduction of informal environmental coordination sites in third countries, and demarches. (Brdo pri Kranju)

State Secretary Andrej Šter, presented the **Slovenian EU Presidency priorities in the fields of international development cooperation and humanitarian aid** to the EP Committee on Development. (Brussels)

Ambassador Veronika Stabej, EuroMed Chair, addressed the participants of the meeting of the **Committee on Political Affairs, Security and Human Rights of the Euro-Mediterranean Parliamentary Assembly**. (Brussels)

29 January

The National Assembly of the Republic of Slovenia ratified the **Lisbon Treaty**, with 74 votes in favour. (Ljubljana)

Minister Rupel presented the **Slovenian EU Presidency priorities** to the EP Committee on Foreign Affairs (AFET). (Brussels)

Minister Rupel met with **Dutch Minister for European Affairs Frans Timmermans**. (The Hague)

Minister Rupel presented the **Slovenian EU Presidency programme and priorities** at the Netherlands Institute of International Relations Clingendael. (The Hague)

State Secretary Šinkovec met with the **Minister of Public Services of the Republic of Kosovo, Arsim Bajrami**. (Ljubljana)

Slovenian Minister of Defence Karl Erjavec addressed the participants of the informal meeting of **EU defence policy directors**. The participants of the first ESDP event during the Slovenian Presidency discussed the **EU Military Operation in Bosnia and Herzegovina – Althea – and EUFOR Chad/RCA; representatives of the Council General Secretariat and the European Union Military Staff presented the preparations for an operation in Africa.** (Brdo pri Kranju)

30 January

Minister Rupel presented the **Slovenian EU Presidency programme and priorities** to ambassadors to the EU Council. (Strasbourg)

Minister Rupel met with **Council of Europe Secretary General Terry Davis**.

Launch of **dialogue on visa liberalisation with Serbia**.

31 January

Minister Rupel met with **UN High Commissioner for Human Rights Louise Arbour**. (Ljubljana)



Minister Rupel and High Commissioner Arbour (Photo: BOBO)



FEBRUARY
European Neighbourhood
and Enlargement

European Neighbourhood and Enlargement

At the end of 2007, the intention to give “a new focus to the Western Balkans” was included in our Presidency programme. This was welcomed by our colleagues dealing with the region at the Commission and the Council Secretariat in Brussels, who truly wished for an ambitious Presidency; it also seemed natural that Slovenia was in a position to contribute significant added value in this specific area.

During the Presidency, progress was achieved not only in the Western Balkans but also elsewhere: New negotiating chapters were opened with Croatia and Turkey, and the Polish-Swedish initiative to establish an Eastern Partnership was approved. Decisions were adopted to enhance relations with Ukraine, Moldova, Israel, and Morocco; the Black Sea Synergy came to life. The European Union’s attractive “soft” influence emanates from its every border. However, the Western Balkans remains of special interest to the Union and is its priority area as regards enlargement. This was reconfirmed at the Gymnich meeting in Brdo in March and particularly at the June European Council, which is all the more important in the light of the Irish “no” to the Lisbon Treaty. As regards the Western Balkans dossier, we were able to draw on our experience acquired in the former common state of Yugoslavia.

We can be satisfied that almost all Presidency objectives regarding the Western Balkans have been achieved. The first and foremost among them is the signing of the Stabilisation and Association Agreement with Serbia and Bosnia and Herzegovina respectively, which has completed the SAA network (excepting Kosovo) and set the countries of the region firmly and almost irreversibly on the path towards the EU. Particular efforts were invested in seeking political consensus within the EU on signing the SAA with Serbia. After months of intensive debates within the Union, the opinion prevailed that the signing itself would bolster not only the democratic and pro-European forces in Serbia, but also the endeavours to meet the condition of cooperating with the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia (ICTY). The signing of the SAA ten days before the parliamentary elections thus proved to be the right decision. The electoral success of pro-European forces exceeded the most optimistic expectations; in addition, in mid-June, one of the four remaining Hague fugitives was apprehended in Serbia. What some interpreted as a “concession” to this country proved to be a significant contribution to its drawing closer to Europe and political stability. Thus, Serbia rediscovered Europe. The election result also confirmed Slovenia’s understanding of the region’s stabilisation and its European integration as a process where reform and progress towards the EU are interdependent. A breakthrough similar to that with Serbia was made some months before with Bosnia and Herzegovina, where an intricate choreography of strong incentives by the European Union finally resulted in the consensus of political parties on the first stage of police reform, which paved the way for the signing of the Stabilisation and Association Agreement.

Another important milestone was the presentation of roadmaps on visa liberalisation with regard to the countries in the region. These include very specific conditions to be met before visa requirements are abolished. In an atmosphere charged with the fear of globalisation, terrorism, organised crime, illegal immigration, and job loss, it is by no means an easy task to convince all the Member States of the need for this project and of its concrete benefits. The main argument we used was based on a fact, which, eighteen years after the fall of the Iron Curtain, has been almost forgotten in some Member States: before 1990, the parents of today’s young generation in Serbia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro, and even Kosovo were able to travel to most (Western) European countries freely and without limitation. How is a young Serbian woman supposed to support pro-European forces if she has never had

the chance to get to know the European Union like other young Europeans, via InterRail and Ryanair, we argued.

In addition to these two key achievements regarding the Western Balkans, the Commission drafted, on Slovenia's initiative, a package of various practical measures for the benefit of the local population. Thus, negotiations have been launched on a special transport agreement for the region, preparations for a joint investment framework for the Western Balkans are underway, the number of scholarships has increased, and cooperation in the fight against drought, which has affected South-Eastern Europe in recent years, will be enhanced. In the beginning of June, at the Centre for European Perspective at Jable Castle representatives of the countries in the region signed a Letter of Intent to establish a Regional School for Public Administration (RESPA).

The Slovenian EU Council Presidency was also marked by the Kosovo issue. In the period just before our six-month term, there was no hope that Serbia and Kosovo would find a consensual solution based on Ahtisaari's plan and a later proposal by Wolfgang Ischinger, and it became clear that Slovenia would not be able to avoid this complex and sensitive issue. On 17 February, Kosovo declared independence. At the GAERC meeting that took place on the following day – certainly among the most demanding ones apart from the April meeting, which adopted the decision to sign the SAA with Serbia – the ministers, led by Slovenia, managed, despite the different positions of the Member States, to agree on certain basic aspects of the Kosovo issue. Notwithstanding the serious challenge posed by the declaration of independence, the EU managed to maintain unity throughout; the situation in Kosovo remained calm except for incidents on the border with Serbia and in Mitrovica, and Kosovars exercised patience, tolerance, and – in spite of the obvious joy following the newly acquired independence – restraint. At the Gymnich meeting in Brdo at the end of March, the Serbian Foreign Minister met the entire EU-27 for the first time since Kosovo's declaration of independence; in the plenary session, all delegations, including that of Kosovo, sat together at one table – with Slovenia assuming the role of mediator. In addition, Serbia demonstrated a far greater sense of responsibility than had been first expected. The stability of the Western Balkans held, and it now seems that after two decades, the Yugoslav crisis is finally nearing an end. Nevertheless, Kosovo, particularly its economic perspective, regional cooperation, and its participation in the European integration process remain challenges to be tackled by presidencies to come.

Particular attention will also have to be devoted to the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. Regrettably, the circumstances – particularly the unfortunate name issue and the fact that the country did not receive an invitation to join the Alliance at the NATO Bucharest Summit in April, as well as irregularities that marked the early parliamentary elections – prevented the Slovenian EU Council Presidency from advancing the country's EU integration. The next Trio Presidency (France, the Czech Republic, and Sweden), which shares Slovenia's particular interest in the region, will have to deal with Montenegro's and Albania's applications for membership and find, together with the European partners, a way to keep Europe's door open to the Western Balkan countries while trying to put Europe's house in order.

Leon Marc
Minister Plenipotentiary
Head of Division for South-Eastern Europe
and Chair of the Council Working Group on the Western Balkans (COWEB)

Survey of Events

- 1 February** Foreign Minister Dimitrij Rupel met the **Minister of Foreign Affairs of the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Antonio Milošoski, President of the Assembly Ljubiša Georgievski, President of the Republic Branko Crvenkovski, and Prime Minister Nikola Gruevski.** (Skopje)
- 3 February** Minister Rupel received the **Ashkenazi Chief Rabbi of Israel, Yona Metzger.** The main subject under discussion was the importance of intercultural dialogue. (Ljubljana)
- 4 February** Minister Rupel headed **the EU Troika meeting with Azerbaijan** together with the European Commissioner for External Relations and European Neighbourhood Policy, Benita Ferrero-Waldner. In addition to the meeting with Foreign Minister of Azerbaijan Elmar Mammadyarov in the Troika format, Minister Rupel also met President Ilham Aliyev and took part in the ceremony to mark the official opening of the premises of the Delegation of the European Commission in Baku. (Baku)
- State Secretary Matjaž Šinkovec headed the **EU Troika-Japan political directors meeting.** (Tokyo)
- The EU Council adopted **the Joint Action on the European Union Rule of Law Mission in Kosovo** (EULEX Kosovo).
- Peter Feith was appointed **EU Special Representative in Kosovo** (EUSR).
- 4–5 February** State Secretary Andrej Šter delivered a speech at the **EU-Bosnia and Herzegovina interparliamentary meeting.** (Sarajevo)
- State Secretary Šinkovec attended **the G8 political directors meeting.** (Tokyo)
- 5 February** Minister Rupel headed the **EU Troika meeting with Georgia** together with the European Commissioner for External Relations and European Neighbourhood Policy, Benita Ferrero-Waldner. In addition to the meeting with Georgian Foreign Minister David Bakradze, Minister Rupel and Commissioner Ferrero-Waldner were also received by President of the Republic of Georgia Mikhail Saakashvili, Chairwoman of the Parliament Nino Burjanadze, State Minister on European and Euro-Atlantic Integration Giorgi Baramidze, and Prime Minister Vladimer Gurgeneidze. (Tbilisi)
- State Secretary Šinkovec attended the **Joint Coordination and Monitoring Board (JCMB) for the Afghanistan Compact.** (Tokyo)



State Secretary Šinkovec at the meeting of the Joint Coordination and Monitoring Board (JCMB) for the Afghanistan Compact

6 February

Minister Rupel headed the **EU Troika meeting with Armenia** together with the European Commissioner for External Relations and European Neighbourhood Policy, Benita Ferrero-Waldner. In addition to Armenian Foreign Minister Vartan Oskanian, Minister Rupel and Commissioner Ferrero-Waldner were also received by Prime Minister of Armenia Serzh Sargsyan, Chairman of the National Assembly Tigran Torosyan, and President of the Republic Robert Kocharyan. (Yerevan)



EU Troika-Armenia meeting (Photo: BOBO)

7 February

Minister Rupel met **Minister of Foreign Affairs of Montenegro Milan Roćen**. (Brdo pri Kranju)

Yves de Kermabon was appointed **Head of EULEX Mission in Kosovo**.

8–9 February

Minister Rupel delivered a speech at the **44th Munich Conference on Security Policy**. He met with Croatian Foreign Minister Gordan Jandroković at the margins of the Conference. (Munich)

11 February

State Secretary Šinkovec headed the **EU Troika-Ukraine political directors meeting**. (Kyiv)

11–12 February Minister Rupel, the Maltese Foreign Minister, Dr Michael Frend, and the Foreign Minister of Saudi Arabia, HRH Prince Saud Al-Faisal, together headed the **meeting between EU foreign ministers and the Arab League delegation.** (Valletta)

At the **EU-Arab League ministerial meeting**, State Secretary Šter outlined the project of establishing a Euro-Mediterranean University. The initiative met with great interest. (Valletta)



EU and Arab League ministers in Malta (Photo: BOBO)

12 February Minister Rupel met with **Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov.** (Goriška Brda)

13 February Minister Rupel chaired the **EU Troika-Russia ministerial meeting.** The EU High Representative for Common Foreign and Security Policy and the Secretary-General of the Council of the European Union, Javier Solana, the European Commissioner for External Relations and European Neighbourhood Policy, Benita Ferrero-Waldner, and the Minister of State for European Affairs of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the French Republic, Jean-Pierre Jouyet, also represented the EU at the meeting. The delegation of the Russian Federation was headed by Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov. (Brdo pri Kranju)



Meeting between EU representatives and the Russian delegation (Photo: BOBO)

State Secretary Šinkovec met the **EU Director at Human Rights Watch, Lotte Leicht**. (Ljubljana)

15 February Minister Rupel took part in the **conference on the Western Balkans** organised by the European Parliament Socialist Group (PES). (Ljubljana)

Minister Rupel met the **President of the Assembly of the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Ljubiša Georgievski**. (Ljubljana)

State Secretary Šinkovec met the **Deputy Assistant Secretary for Democracy, Human Rights and Labor, Erica Barks-Ruggles**, and the **Deputy Assistant Secretary in the Bureau of International Organization Affairs of the U.S. Department of State, Manisha Singh**. (Ljubljana)

17 February State Secretary Šinkovec **chaired the EU political directors meeting to coordinate the response of EU Member States to the resolution by the Kosovo Assembly declaring independence**. (Brussels)

18 February Minister Rupel chaired the **EU General Affairs and External Relations Council (GAERC)**. The Council adopted conclusions on Kosovo, taking note of the resolution by the Kosovo Assembly, noting that Member States will decide, in accordance with national practice and international law, on their relations with Kosovo, and reaffirming the European perspective for the Western Balkans. The meeting also focused on the European Neighbourhood Policy, with the ministers devoting particular attention to Moldova. The Council also dealt with several other foreign policy issues: The EU called on all involved parties in Chad to quell violence and reiterated its support for the initiative by the African Union to cease fire and find a permanent solution to the crisis; regarding Burma/Myanmar, the EU Council called on the authorities to strive for a rapid transition, which would include a constitutional referendum and lead to multi-party elections in 2010; as to the situation in Kenya, there was much concern over the violence and instability – the EU Council repeated its appeal to Kenya's political leaders to put an end to violence and voiced its support for the initiative of Kofi Annan and the Panel of Eminent African Personalities. (Brussels)

Minister Rupel chaired a meeting between the **EU Troika and Montenegrin delegation** headed by Foreign Minister Milan Roćen. (Brussels)



State Secretary Šter addressing the participants of the Conference (Photo: BOBO)

19 February State Secretary Šinkovec chaired the meeting of the **EU-Lebanon Association Council** on behalf of the EU. (Brussels)

State Secretary Šinkovec briefed the Committee on Foreign Affairs (AFET) of the European Parliament on the **conclusions of the General Affairs and External Relations Council**. (Strasbourg)

20 February Minister Rupel gave an address on behalf of the EU Council at the **plenary session of the European Parliament**, introducing a debate on Kosovo. He informed Members of the European Parliament of the conclusions that had been unanimously adopted at the GAERC meeting on Monday, 18 February. (Strasbourg)

Launch of dialogue on visa liberalisation with the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia.

21 February Minister Rupel met the **Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, Dr Rangin Dadfar Spanta**. (Brdo pri Kranju)

Minister Rupel chaired the **EU Troika-Afghanistan ministerial meeting**. On the part of the EU, the meeting was also attended by Benita Ferrero-Waldner, Commissioner for External Relations and European Neighbourhood Policy, Francisc Vendrell from the EU Council General Secretariat, and Rama Yade, French Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs and Human Rights. The delegation of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan was headed by the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Dr Rangin Dadfar Spanta. (Brdo pri Kranju)



Press conference after the EU Troika-Afghanistan meeting (Photo: BOBO)

Launch of dialogue on **visa liberalisation with Montenegro**.

22 February Minister Rupel opened the **conference "Inclusive Citizenship in Europe: Do We Need New Guidelines?"** at Jable Castle. The aim of the Conference was to examine the possibilities of drafting new guidelines for inclusive citizenship with a view to ensuring that "new" minorities in Europe could play a role as full citizens of the EU Member States. (Jable)

State Secretary Šinkovec chaired the **EU Troika-Turkey political directors meeting**. (Ankara)

25 February

Minister Rupel met with **Foreign Minister of Bosnia and Herzegovina Sven Alkalaj**. The main subject under discussion was the integration of Bosnia and Herzegovina into the EU. (Ljubljana)



Minister Rupel and Foreign Minister of Bosnia and Herzegovina Sven Alkalaj (Photo: BOBO)

27 February

Minister Rupel took part in the final session of the **Stability Pact** and the inaugural meeting of the **Regional Cooperation Council**. (Sofia)

28 February

Minister Rupel received Foreign Minister of the Kingdom of Denmark **Per Stig Møller**. (Ljubljana)

Peter Feith was appointed **International Civilian Representative** (ICR) in Kosovo by the International Steering Group on Kosovo (ISG).

Matej Marn, Head of the European Union Division at the Slovenian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, headed an **EU Troika-Bosnia and Herzegovina political directors** meeting. (Ljubljana)



MARCH
Energy and Climate
Change Package

Climate Si.nergy: Slovenian Foreign Policy Challenges after the Presidency

Slovenia took over the EU Council Presidency in a period when climate change, energy security, and global environmental issues had already been firmly placed at the top of the European political agenda. The groundwork of our Presidency in terms of climate change and energy was laid with ample political vision, patience, and dedication by two great women in European politics: German Chancellor Angela Dorothea Merkel, who in 2007, during the German EU Council and G8 Presidencies, was pronounced a “climate leader”, and Margaret Mary Beckett, who in her famous address as Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs of the United Kingdom in 2006 forever “changed the face of foreign policy by linking it to climate change”.

During its EU Council Presidency from January to June 2008, Slovenia thus also became the centre of the global fight against climate change, the *axis mundi* of international environmental action. The basic EU Member States’ targets had already been declared, as the spring 2007 European Council defined the EU’s new integrated climate and energy policy, including ambitious European commitments by 2020: reducing emissions of greenhouse gasses (GHG) by at least 20% compared to 1990 or even 30% provided that other members of the international community commit themselves to comparable reductions; increasing energy efficiency by 20%; a 20% share of renewable energy sources in overall EU energy consumption; and a 10% share of biofuels in transport. The achievement of these commitments should be enabled through the energy and climate change legislative package presented to the Member States by the European Commission on 23 January 2008. At the end of the December 2007 Bali Conference of the Parties to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change and the Kyoto Protocol, basic guidelines for an international process were set, leading to a comprehensive global arrangement to reduce CO₂ emissions beyond 2012. An agreement should be reached by December 2009, the date of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention and the Kyoto Protocol in Copenhagen, Denmark.

With its EU Council Presidency, Slovenia assumed the task of effectively linking European legislative developments (the adoption of the package) and the fight against climate change on a global scale (especially in the framework of the Convention). Slovenia’s main “environmental challenge” during its Presidency was thus clear: if we Europeans would really like to combat the adverse effects of environmental threats on the planet as a whole, we have to set a good example. The coordination and implementation of our own commitments thus became the key to international success and Europe’s reputation as negotiator.

It is empirically impossible to precisely assess the effects of the Slovenian Presidency as far as the environment is concerned. Compared to the Earth’s age, 4.55 billion years (with ± 0.07 billion deviation), the six calendar months of the Presidency are indeed just a tiny fraction. In the global fight against climate change, spurred on by the desire for a harmonious society living in unison with the environment, praise and high marks are not important. Only concrete action counts. And just as there are never too many explicit cases of respect for human rights, there are never too many examples of protecting the environment and our planet.

However, in the bare six months of the Slovenian EU Council Presidency, energy and climate change issues revealed the complexity and difficulties in the foreign policy of small countries when responding to the basic challenges of settling international relations, including our common concern for the development of the planet. Coordinating, studying, and scrutinizing environmental issues, which are an enigma for diplomatic syntax and orientation, was frequently based on the “first law of environmental policy” introduced by Richard Falk in 1971. According to

Falk, there is a close link between the quantity of time available for adaptation and the possibility of an outbreak of violence, trauma, or force, the usual companions of the adaptation process.

Apart from the energy and climate change package, and international negotiations on the post-Kyoto arrangement, in its foreign policy dimension the Slovenian Presidency had to address the interdependence of climate change and international security, which will be – as we can already see – among the central future issues of international foreign policy, the global order, and geostrategic considerations. This was one of the reasons for the presentation of a joint report by the High Representative for the CFSP and the European Commission on the impact of climate change on international security at the spring 2008 European Council. This issue was included in dialogues with third countries at the highest level during the Slovenian EU Council Presidency.

From the interaction of foreign and security policy and climate change, the need arose for concerted interdepartmental action within states, as well as for urgent institutional adaptation to relatively new emerging issues of future international politics. We already tried to act accordingly at the Bali Climate Summit in December 2007 and at the Bonn Conference in June 2008. Climate change in connection with international security namely covers very diverse global issues, such as interstate conflicts, poverty, soaring food and fuel prices, natural disasters, economic risks, territorial loss and border conflicts, environmentally induced migration, radicalization and growing instability, energy supply, and issues relating to the rule of international law and human rights.

When successful, a presidency always brings about change. It enriched Slovenian foreign policy by incorporating in its structure the “climate” orientation of cosmopolitan Europe, which will remain at Slovenia’s heart also in the post-presidency period. The mitigation of the effects caused by various unacceptable acts of mankind, be it global warming, a shortage of drinking water, migration, or an unbearable rise in food prices, is becoming more and more a foreign policy reality of developed and less developed countries. It is our desire that we become, also after our Presidency term, more aware of the long-term effects of our actions. Strategically, it would thus be worth considering the differentiation between – on the one hand – “climate change as political manipulation”, i.e. merely the content of foreign policy that has to be addressed by various governmental departments in order to meet the expectations of the public and civil society, and – on the other hand – “global warming as a scientifically defined fact”, which goes beyond the distinction between the public and the private, politics and society, or authority and the citizen, and which requires action. When a tsunami strikes, it destroys everything. Therefore it is more than worthwhile to adapt also in terms of foreign policy.

Dr Jana Urh
Counsellor
Environmental Correspondent
Policy Planning and Research Division

Survey of Events

- 2–3 March** An **Asia Europe** (ASEM) Senior Officials' Meeting aimed at an informal exchange of views on key international political and global issues, as well as at preparations for the October ASEM 7 Summit in Beijing. The meeting was attended by delegates from 41 ASEM Member States, the ASEAN Secretariat, the European Commission and the EU Council Secretariat. (Brdo pri Kranju, Bled)
- 3 March** Foreign Minister Dimitrij Rupel participated in the high-level segment of the **seventh UN Human Rights Council session**. (Geneva)
- In the margins of the session, he met **UN High Commissioner for Human Rights Louise Arbour; the President of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), Dr Jakob Kellenberger; the Director-General of the UN Office at Geneva (UNOG), Sergei Ordzhonikidze; the Executive Secretary of the UN Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE), Marek Belka; the Foreign Ministers of Cuba and Argentina, Felipe Pérez Roque and Jorge Taiana, respectively; and Vice President of Colombia Francisco Santos Calderón**. (Geneva)
- State Secretary Matjaž Šinkovec headed the **EU Troika-Pakistan political directors meeting**. (Islamabad)
- 4 March** Prime Minister Janez Janša met with **President of the Committee of the Regions Luc Van den Brande**. (Ljubljana)
- 4–5 March** Dr Ernest Petrič, Slovenian Ambassador and Permanent Representative to international organisations in Vienna, and Hugo Fernández, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs and Worship of the Republic of Bolivia, co-chaired the **Xth High-Level meeting of the Coordination and Cooperation Mechanism on Drugs between the European Union and Latin America and the Caribbean**. (Vienna)
- 5 March** Minister Rupel chaired the **EU Troika- Canada ministerial meeting**. On the part of the EU, the meeting was also attended by the Commissioner for External Relations and European Neighbourhood Policy, Benita Ferrero-Waldner, and Robert Cooper representing the EU Council Secretariat. The Canadian delegation was headed by Foreign Minister Maxime Bernier. (Brussels)
- The European Commission presented a **Communication on the Western Balkans**. The Slovenian Presidency warmly welcomed the presentation of the Communication, in which the European Commission assessed the progress of the region, proposed several specific measures for the further deepening of relations between the EU and the Western Balkan countries, and called for necessary reforms. (Brussels)
- 6 March** Minister Rupel participated at the **North Atlantic Council**. The main topics discussed were NATO enlargement at the Bucharest Summit and operations in Kosovo and Afghanistan. (Brussels)



NAC meeting in Brussels (Photo: NATO)

Minister Rupel chaired the **EU Troika meeting with the United States of America**. On the part of the EU, the meeting was also attended by the Commissioner for External Relations and European Neighbourhood Policy, Benita Ferrero-Waldner, and the High Representative for the EU Common Foreign and Security Policy, Javier Solana. The American delegation was headed by United States Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice. In addition to the Western Balkans, the forthcoming EU-US Summit, and the US visa-waiver program for EU Member States, the talks also focused on Russia, Afghanistan and Pakistan, Iran, Israeli-Palestinian relations, and crisis areas in Africa. (Brussels)

State Secretary Andrej Šter received **members of Israeli Knesset Danny Yatom and Isaac Ben-Israel**. They discussed the Slovenian EU Council Presidency and the situation in the Middle East. (Ljubljana)

7 March

Minister Rupel met with **Turkish Foreign Minister Ali Babacan**. Their talks focused on Turkey's progress in accession negotiations, the Cyprus issue, and the Turkish Army's intervention in northern Iraq. (Brussels)

State Secretary Šinkovec met with the political director at the Lithuanian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, **Žygimantas Pavilionis**. (Ljubljana)

Launch of dialogue on **visa liberalisation with Albania**.

10 March

Minister Rupel chaired the **EU General Affairs and External Relations Council (GAERC)**. The focus of its first session was the preparations for the European Council. The situation in the Western Balkans, the Middle East, Zimbabwe, Iran, Georgia, Afghanistan, and Pakistan was discussed, as well. The ministers exchanged views on the developments in Kosovo and Serbia. Minister Rupel welcomed the Commission's intent to renew dialogue with Bosnia and Herzegovina. The ministers acknowledged the progress made with regard to the Stabilisation and Association Agreement, encouraging the Government of Bosnia-Herzegovina to meet the imposed conditions as soon as possible. The Council devoted considerable attention to the situation in the Middle East – on behalf of the EU, the ministers expressed concern over the growing tension.

They also exchanged views on the possibilities to include all EU Member States in the US visa-waiver program. (Brussels)

Minister Rupel participated in the **quadrilateral between the EU and the Council of Europe**, which was also attended by the Chairman-in-Office of the Council of Europe Committee of Ministers, Slovak Foreign Minister Ján Kubiš, the Secretary-General of the Council of Europe, Terry Davis, and the Deputy Director General of DG RELEX of the European Commission, representing the Commissioner for External Relations, Karel Kovanda. (Brussels)

Minister Rupel chaired the **EU-Algeria Association Council**. (Brussels)

11 March



Albanian Foreign Minister Basha, HR/SG Solana, State Secretary Šinkovec and representative of the Commission Michael Leigh at the press conference after the meeting (Photo: EU Council)

In the margins of the General Affairs and External Relations Council, an **EU Troika meeting with Albania** took place, chaired by the Secretary-General of the Council of the European Union and High Representative for the Common Foreign and Security Policy, Javier Solana. The Slovenian Presidency was represented by State Secretary Šinkovec, and Albania by Foreign Minister Lulzim Basha. Representatives of the European Commission and the upcoming French EU Council Presidency also attended. (Brussels)

State Secretary Šinkovec briefed the Committee on Foreign Affairs (AFET) of the European Parliament on the **conclusions of the General Affairs and External Relations Council**. (Strasbourg)

State Secretary Šinkovec met with the **Secretary-General of the International Burmese Monks Organization, U Uttara**. (Brussels)

Along with Swedish Foreign Minister Carl Bildt and European Commissioner for Enlargement Olli Rehn, Minister Rupel gave an introductory address at the **conference "Five years after Thessaloniki: the Western Balkans on the road towards the EU"**. (Brussels)

Minister Rupel chaired the **EU-Ukraine Cooperation Council**. The Ukrainian delegation was headed by Prime Minister Yulia Tymoshenko. (Brussels)

12 March

Prime Minister Janša attended the **plenary session of the European Parliament** on the occasion of its 50th anniversary. (Strasbourg)

The Slovenian Philharmonic performed at the Bozar Palace in Brussels as an introduction to the Spring European Council. Prime Minister Janša, the European Commissioner for Science and Research, Janez Potočnik, and numerous members of the diplomatic corps attended. (Brussels)



Concert of the Slovenian Philharmonic at the Bozar Palace (Photo: Thierry Monasse/EU Council)

13 March

Before the Spring European Council, the traditional **Tripartite Social Summit** was held, attended also by Prime Minister Janša. (Brussels)

13–14 March

Prime Minister Janša chaired the **European Council**. The main topics for discussion included the launch of a new cycle of the Lisbon Strategy for Growth and Jobs, the energy and climate change legislative package, and the stability of financial markets. The European Council confirmed the validity of the Integrated Growth and Employment Guidelines and adopted specific recommendations for Member States. It invited the European Commission, Parliament and Council to focus on implementing the ten priorities laid down in the new Community Lisbon Programme as soon as possible. EU Heads of State and Government then confirmed an ambitious schedule for the adoption of the climate change-energy package and fundamental principles as a basis for agreement. They devoted part of their discussion to the recent turmoil in international financial markets, as well as responding to it and preventing such crises in the future. The European Council stressed that immediate disclosure of risks and losses of banks and other financial institutions was essential to restore confidence in financial markets. Heads of State and Government also addressed the future of sovereign wealth funds. They agreed that such funds had proved to be very useful so far; however, there were certain concerns associated with them. Therefore a common European approach based on uniform principles should be developed, they decided, and supported the agreement on an international voluntary code of conduct for those funds. (Brussels)



Secretary-General of the EU Council Solana, Minister Rupel, Prime Minister Janša, and President of the European Commission Barroso at the press conference (Photo: Thierry Monasse/STA)

14 March

State Secretary Šter received **President of the Storting (Norwegian Parliament) Thorbjørn Jagland**. (Ljubljana)



State Secretary Šter and President of the Storting Jagland (Photo: BOBO)

17 March

At the **Conference of Foreign Affairs Committee Chairs of National Parliaments of EU Member States** Minister Rupel spoke about the EU's foreign policy during the Slovenian Presidency. (Ljubljana)

Prime Minister Janša attended the opening ceremony of the **15th session of the ACP-EU Joint Parliamentary Assembly**. (Ljubljana)

17–20 March

State Secretary Šter participated at the **ACP-EU Joint Parliamentary Assembly** meeting. (Ljubljana)

18 March

Minister Rupel, accompanied by the EU Special Representative for the Middle East Peace Process, Marc Otte, met with **Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak, Foreign Minister Ahmed Aboul Gheit and Secretary-General of the Arab League Amr Moussa**. Dr Rupel pointed out the EU's efforts for the strengthening of dialogue between the Israelis and Palestinians in the spirit of the Annapolis Agreement. (Cairo)

State Secretary Šinkovec met with **EU Special Representative and Ambassador, Head of Delegation in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia Erwan Fouéré**. (Ljubljana)

As part of the cultural programme marking the Slovenian EU Council Presidency, the Embassy of the Republic of Slovenia in Prague, in collaboration with the Slavonic Library of the National Library of the Czech Republic, inaugurated the **exhibition "Synergy of Slovenians with the Czechs"** in the Klementinum. (Prague)

19 March

Minister Rupel met with representatives of the Palestinian Authority. In the company of the EU Special Representative for the Middle East Peace Process, Marc Otte, Dr Rupel met with **President of the Palestinian National Authority (PNA) Mahmoud Abbas, Prime Minister Salem Fayad, and Foreign Minister Dr Riyad al-Malki**. Before leaving the Palestinian territory, he visited the Kalandia refugee camp where he spoke with **Karen AbuZayd, Commissioner-General of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA)**. (Ramallah)



Talks between Minister Rupel and PNA President Abbas (Photo: BOBO)

20 March

Minister Rupel, accompanied by the EU Special Representative for the Middle East Peace Process, Marc Otte, concluded his three-day visit to the Middle East in Israel. The purpose of the visit was to collect information on and appraisals of the Middle East Peace Process. He met with **President Shimon Perez, Prime Minister Ehud Olmert, Foreign Minister Tzipi Livni, a representative of the Israeli opposition, Benjamin Netanyahu, and the United Nations Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process, Robert H. Serry**. (Tel Aviv)

As part of the cultural programme marking the Slovenian EU Council Presidency, the Embassy of the Republic of Slovenia in London hosted a **gala event featuring a concert by Slovenian pianist Dubravka Tomšič Srebotnjak**. (London)

- 20–21 March** State Secretary Šinkovec met with the **Vice-Minister of the Lithuanian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Jaroslav Neverovič**. (Vilnius)
- 21 March** Minister Rupel welcomed the **first meeting between President of the Republic of Cyprus Demetris Christofias and Turkish-Cypriot leader Mehmet Ali Talat**. (Ljubljana)
- 26 March** Prime Minister Janša **presented the spring European Council conclusions to the European Parliament**. (Brussels)
- Minister Rupel received **UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) António Guterres**. (Ljubljana)
- Dr Rupel met with the **Deputy Prime Minister of Montenegro for European Integration, Dr Gordana Đurović**. Their talks were mainly devoted to Montenegro's drawing closer to European structures. (Ljubljana)
- At a **press conference**, Minister Rupel presented the Informal Meeting of EU Ministers of Foreign Affairs (Gymnich). (Ljubljana)
- 27 March** Minister Rupel received the **Finnish Minister for Foreign Affairs and OSCE Chairman-in-Office, Ilkka Kanerva**. (Ljubljana)
- Minister Rupel met with **Czech Deputy Prime Minister Alexandr Vondra**. (Ljubljana)
- Minister Rupel received a **group of journalists from Western Balkan countries** who were on a study visit to Slovenia. He apprised them of the endeavours of the Slovenian EU Council Presidency to revive the Thessaloniki Agenda, emphasising Slovenia's wish that all countries in the region fulfil the conditions for European Union membership as soon as possible. (Ljubljana)
- Welcome address by Minister Rupel at the **charity dinner of the International Trust Fund for Demining and Mine Victims Assistance – ITF**. (Ljubljana)
- 28 March** On the occasion of the latest published edition of the Sarajevo Notebooks and the Informal Meeting of EU Ministers of Foreign Affairs, Minister Rupel and Swedish Foreign Minister Bildt participated in the **roundtable entitled "Western Balkans and European Perspective"**, held at the City Museum of Ljubljana. (Ljubljana)
- 28–29 March** Brdo pri Kranju hosted the **Informal Meeting of EU Ministers of Foreign Affairs** (Gymnich). It was attended by the foreign ministers of all EU Member States, the Secretary-General of the Council of the European Union and High Representative for the Common Foreign and Security Policy, Javier Solana, the European Commissioner for External Relations and European Neighbourhood Policy, Benita Ferrero-Waldner, and the European Commissioner for Enlargement, Olli Rehn. The first day's session centred on the Middle East Peace Process and relations between the European Union and the Russian Federation, while the topics of the second day were the Western Balkans and

intercultural dialogue. Foreign ministers of Western Balkan countries and for the first time also a representative of Kosovo participated in part of the session. The debate at the informal meeting also focused on the assessment of the latest developments in Tibet and attitudes to Islam. (Brdo pri Kranju)

31 March

Following the abolishment of all controls at the internal land and sea borders on 21 December 2007, when Slovenia, along with eight other new Member States, joined the Schengen area, **border control at the internal air borders was abolished, as well.**

Minister Rupel received in Ljubljana **Shri Anand Sharma, the Indian Minister of State at the Ministry of External Affairs responsible for the countries of Latin America, Sub-Saharan Africa, part of Europe and certain parliament and administrative issues.** Dr Rupel also took part in the opening of the Embassy of the Republic of India in the Republic of Slovenia. (Ljubljana)

Minister Rupel took part in the **ceremony on the occasion of the abolition of border controls on internal flights** and the final accession of the Republic of Slovenia to the Schengen area at the Ljubljana Jože Pučnik Airport. (Brnik)

As part of the **“EU back to school” project**, Minister Rupel held a lecture on the EU for the students at the Gimnazija Jožeta Plečnika grammar school. (Ljubljana)

Minister Rupel took part in **an informal meeting of a number of EU foreign ministers** at the invitation of French Minister of Foreign Affairs Bernard Kouchner. The meeting was also attended by the foreign ministers of Italy (Massimo D'Alema), the Netherlands (Maxime Verhagen), Slovakia (Ján Kubiš), Spain (Miguel Ángel Moratinos), and the United Kingdom (David Miliband). The ministers focused on the experience of the Slovenian EU Council Presidency and the challenges of the incoming French Presidency. (Paris)



APRIL
EU Summits with Third
Countries

EU Summits with Third Countries

The EU has developed very diverse relations with most of the countries and international or regional organisations of the world. The EU has established political dialogue with most third countries, which has been strengthened through regular summits and/or ministerial meetings.

The EU is represented at summits by the Troika, consisting of the President of the EU Council, i.e. the head of state or government of the Presidency country, the President of the European Commission, and the Secretary-General/High Representative for the Common Foreign and Security Policy. Such meetings are an opportunity to strengthen the EU's role as a global player.

During its EU Council Presidency, Slovenia devoted particular attention to strengthening dialogue with third countries, which are the EU's main partners in facing modern global challenges. The key topics of all summits were the ensuring of energy security, combating climate change, and dealing with regional security issues.

Slovenia co-chaired four summit meetings: the EU-Japan Summit, the EU-Latin America and Caribbean Summit, the EU-US Summit, and the EU-Russian Federation Summit. The EU-Canada Summit was also planned, however due to a delay in implementing the agreements of the previous summit, it was postponed until the French Presidency.

The most prominent of these was the EU-US Summit, which was the only summit to take place in Slovenia. This was the last summit with US President Bush. The Summit in Lima had the highest participation. It was attended by the representatives of 60 countries. The Summit with the Russian Federation marked the official beginning of dialogue between the EU and the new Russian President Medvedev. The EU-Japan Summit strengthened the strategic partnership between the EU and Japan, which is based on long-term cooperation and common values.

The first summit during the Slovenian Presidency was held in Tokyo on 23 April. Apart from the general assessment of the development of EU and Japanese relations and an overview of the key topics, the summit was aimed at strengthening cooperation in fulfilling commitments relating to the Millennium Development Goals, with particular emphasis on the development of Africa and an exchange of views on the economic situation in the world and the Doha Development Agenda.

The fifth EU-LAC Summit, which was held in Peru on 16 and 17 May, marked a decade of institutionalised dialogue at the highest level, confirmed the progress attained in relations between the two regions, and charted further steps for cooperation. Six mini-summits were conducted within the Summit, with four sub-regions and two countries participating. The final declaration was harmonised already before the foreign ministers' meeting for the first time in the history of such summits; heads of state or government participated in this summit in the largest number thus far since the beginning of the EU-LAC process in Rio de Janeiro in 1999.

The representatives of both regions achieved progress in the harmonisation of positions within both main summit topics: "Poverty, inequality, and inclusion" and "Sustainable development: the environment; climate change; energy". They confirmed the significance of vocational education as an important tool in combating poverty, which has been underlined throughout by the Slovenian Presidency. They committed themselves to establishing a joint EU-LAC environmental programme entitled EUroCLIMA and, possibly, an EU-LAC foundation. These two constitute the added value of the Summit.

The eighth EU-US Summit was the leading annual event in transatlantic relations. This year's Summit was held in Brdo pri Kranju, Slovenia, on 10 June. All the main objectives were achieved: the strengthening of the Transatlantic Partnership, particularly its strategic nature; the implementation of commitments made to date and a review of those realised; and ensuring continuity in transatlantic cooperation also in the future. The Slovenian EU Council Presidency devoted particular attention to the endeavours for visa-free travel to the US for all EU Member States. At the Summit, the US confirmed its commitment to extend the programme to new countries by the end of the year.

The last Summit during the Slovenian Presidency was held in Khanty-Mansiysk in western Siberia on 26 and 27 June. Apart from the exchange of views on the further development of relations between the EU and the Russian Federation, the above-mentioned key topics, the challenges of the global economy, and the safety of the food supply, the summit was also an opportunity for the formal beginning of negotiations on the new framework agreement between the EU and Russia. The mandate for negotiations was approved during the Slovenian Presidency following a two-year standstill.

A coordinating body was established and tasked with preparing summits during the Slovenian Presidency. This body was led by the Foreign Policy Advisor to the Prime Minister, and was composed of all the chairs of the working groups of the EU Council responsible for substantive preparations of summits, and Protocol and Presidency Secretariat representatives.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs was tasked with preparing the calendar of the Presidency. Possible dates for the organisation of the envisaged summits were determined in cooperation with the Office of the Prime Minister of the Republic of Slovenia, the General Secretariat of the EU Council, and the European Commission, and were later harmonised with the countries concerned. The only date known prior to the Slovenian Presidency which was not subject to harmonisation was that of the Summit between the EU and Latin America and the Caribbean, which was set in the final declaration of the previous Summit in Vienna in 2006. For the EU-Japan Summit, the date proposed at the beginning of the harmonisation prevailed, despite the fact that it was only confirmed on 1 April. The dates for the Summits with the US and Russian Federation significantly differed from those originally proposed.

The representatives of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs were also tasked with preparing summits in terms of substance, from the harmonisation of agendas with the Secretariat and the Commission and an individual third country, to the drafting of the final or joint statements or declarations adopted at these events.

The Slovenian Presidency successfully concluded all the mentioned summits.

Matej Marn
Minister Counsellor
Head of the European Union Division
And Deputy Political Director

Survey of Events

- 1 April** The Government of the Republic of Slovenia remitted **EUR 150,000** to the Palestinian National Authority through the new European Mechanism PEGASE (*Mécanisme Palestino-Européen de Gestion et d'Aide Socio-Économique*) to ensure salaries to Palestinian teachers. (Ljubljana)
- Foreign Minister Dimitrij Rupel reported to the Committee on Foreign Affairs (AFET) in the European Parliament on **the informal meeting of EU foreign ministers** (Gymnich) that was held in Slovenia on 28 and 29 March. (Brussels)
- 2 April** Foreign Minister Rupel held the **press conference** on the achievements of the first half of the Slovenian EU Council Presidency. (Ljubljana)
- Under the auspices of the Slovenian EU Council Presidency, a conference was held in Brdo, Slovenia, entitled **"Giving a stronger voice to civil society in the EU neighbourhood – Development of civil dialogue and partnership relations between civil society, national governments and EU institutions"**. The representatives of NGOs, countries and the EU institutions discussed the situation of civil society in Western Balkan countries and East European countries – European Neighbourhood Policy partners, Turkey and the Russian Federation; the involvement of civil society in the implementation of EU projects, control over the implementation of its policies and possibilities to enhance development aid effectiveness. (Brdo pri Kranju)
- 2–4 April** Foreign Minister Rupel accompanied Prime Minister Janez Janša at **NATO Summit**. Croatia and Albania received an invitation to start NATO accession talks. (Bucharest)
- 4 April** The European Centre for Development Policy Management (ECDPM) prepared the **presentation of a study entitled "Enhancing the EU Response to Women and Armed Conflict with Particular Reference to Development Policy"** for the Slovenian EU Council Presidency at the premises of the Permanent Representation of the Republic of Slovenia in Brussels. Director-General Anita Pipan took part on behalf of the Presidency. (Brussels)
- The Slovenian EU Presidency **called upon the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia** to continue with the integration into the Euro-Atlantic structures, even though it was not extended the invitation to join the Alliance at the NATO Summit in Bucharest. (Ljubljana)
- Director-General of the Directorate for European Affairs and Bilateral Relations of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Slovenia Bogdan Benko led the meeting of the **EU-Israel Reflection Group aimed at enhancing relations between them**. (Brussels)
- 6–7 April** In cooperation with the European Commission, the Policy Planning and Research Division organised the **meeting of the heads of planning departments and services of the foreign ministries of the EU Member States**. A special guest at the meeting – focusing on the Western Balkans, Afghanistan and frozen conflicts – was the EU High Representative for the Common Foreign and Security Policy, Javier Solana. (Brussels)

- 8 April** State Secretary Matjaž Šinkovec participated in a **conference organised by the Hanns Seidel Foundation**. (Brussels)
- 9 April** Foreign Minister Rupel met **President of Turkmenistan Gurbanguly Berdimuhammedow**. (Ashgabat)
- 9–10 April** Minister Rupel chaired a meeting of the **EU Troika with Central Asian countries**. The meeting was attended by the representatives of Turkmenistan, Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan, and Kazakhstan. (Ashgabat)



Participants of the EU Troika meeting with Central Asian countries (Photo: BOBO)

- Foreign Minister Rupel took part in **the bilateral meeting with the representatives of Kazakhstan** preparing to assume the chairmanship of the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) in 2010. Foreign Minister Marat Tazhin particularly discussed with Minister Rupel Slovenia's experience in the OSCE Chairmanship. (Ashgabat)
- 11 April** Foreign Minister Rupel delivered a lecture at the Brandeis University in Boston on the occasion of the **50th anniversary of the international student exchange programme** on topical European issues, e.g. the ratification of the Lisbon Treaty, the protection of human rights, the stabilisation of Central Asia, the Western Balkans, and Kosovo. (Boston)
- 12 April** Foreign Minister Rupel met with **United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon** and **President of the International Crisis Group Gareth Evans**. (New York)



Minister Rupel meeting with UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon (Photo: BOBO)

12–14 April

As part of the cultural programme marking the Slovenian EU Council Presidency, **the Slovenian Philharmonic** held three concerts in Austria. (Vienna, Graz, St. Pölten)

14 April

Minister Rupel delivered a speech at the **Permanent Council of the Organisation of American States (OAS)** and outlined the challenges of the Slovenian EU Council Presidency and the preparations for the EU-US and EU-LAC summits. He devoted special attention to the cooperation between the EU and Latin America and the Caribbean. (Washington)

Minister Rupel met with **US President George W. Bush's National Security Advisor Stephen Hadley**. (Washington)



Minister Rupel met with US Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice (Photo: BOBO)

Minister Rupel met with **US Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice**. In their talks, they focused on the situation in the Western Balkans, with the emphasis

on Kosovo, practical measures how to stabilise the Western Balkans, the progress in the negotiations between the Israelis and Palestinians, and the overall situation in the Middle East. (Washington)

State Secretary Andrej Šter addressed the participants of the **11th meeting of the directors of national mine action centres and UN technical advisors, the representatives of NGOs, and donors.** (Ljubljana)

14–15 April

State Secretary Šinkovec headed the EU delegation at the G8 political directors meeting. (Kyoto)



State Secretary Šinkovec on the margins of the political directors meeting

15–16 April

At the **conference “Basic Principles for the Settlement of the Conflicts on the Territories of the GUAM states (Organization for Democracy and Economic Development)”**, the Slovenian EU Presidency underlined that frozen conflicts were the greatest obstacle to progress and security in the region. Director-General Anita Pipan addressed the participants on behalf of the Slovenian EU Presidency. (Baku)

16 April

On the occasion of the Slovenian EU Council Presidency, the charity association Femmes d’Europe organised a **concert by Camerata Slovenica ensemble** in the Belgian Royal Conservatory of Music. It was sponsored by Mrs Marjetica Rudolf Rupel, who attended the concert with her spouse, Foreign Minister Rupel, and Mrs Margarida Barroso, the spouse of the President of the European Commission. (Brussels)

Minister Rupel delivered a lecture entitled **“The Slovenian EU Council Presidency and internal and external challenges of the EU”** at the Institute for European Studies of the Vrije Universiteit Brussel. (Brussels)

17 April

State Secretary Šter participated in **the summit of the Group of the European People’s Party (EPP-ED) of the European Parliament**, organised by the group on the occasion of the Slovenian EU Council Presidency. (Portorož)

17–18 April

In cooperation with the European Commission and the network of NGOs EPLO (*European Peacebuilding Liaison Office*), the Slovenian Foreign Ministry and the Centre for European Perspective organised the international conference **“Increasing the Impact on the Ground – NGO and EU Collaboration in the Thematic Area of Children Affected by Armed Conflict”**. (*Jable*)

18 April

The EU and Russian Federation held their **seventh round of human rights consultations**, led by Director-General Benko. (Ljubljana)

Minister Rupel met **Moldova’s Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs and European Integration Andrei Stratan**. (Ljubljana)

Minister Rupel received **Special Envoy of the Prime Minister of the People’s Republic of China Guan Chengyuan**. (Ljubljana)

A **concert by Camerata Slovenica ensemble** was held in Temple de la Madeleine as a main cultural event marking the Slovenian EU Council Presidency. (Geneva)

20–25 April

Slovenian Minister for Development Žiga Turk and State Secretary Šter took part in the **12th Ministerial Meeting of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD)** in Ghana. (Accra)



Foreign Minister Rupel at Expanded Ministerial Conference of the Neighbouring Countries of Iraq

22 April

At the **Expanded Ministerial Conference of the Neighbouring Countries of Iraq**, Minister Rupel confirmed the EU’s support to endeavours for a secure, stable, democratic, prosperous and unified Iraq, and its commitment to Iraq’s independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity. (Kuwait)

On the margins of the Expanded Ministerial Conference of the Neighbouring Countries of Iraq, Slovenian Foreign Minister Rupel met his Iraqi counterpart **Hoshyar Zebari**. (Kuwait)

23 April

Prime Minister Janša took part in the **17th EU-Japan Summit** together with President of the European Commission José Manuel Barroso. A broad consensus was reached at the Summit meeting on numerous important views on the global fight against climate change, promoting international peace and security, and the commitment to enhance prosperity and the quality of life. The EU and Japan committed themselves to continue to cooperate closely with a view to enhancing progress and the quality of life of their respective citizens. (Tokyo)



Slovenian Minister of the Economy Andrej Vizjak, Prime Minister Janez Janša, Japan's Prime Minister Jasuo Fukuda, President of the European Commission José Manuel Barroso, and European Commissioner Benita Ferrero-Waldner at the plenary session of the 17th EU-Japan Summit (Photo: Tina Kosec/BOBO)

At his official visit to the European Parliament, President of the Republic Danilo Türk met with **President of the European Parliament Hans-Gert Pöttering** and addressed the Members of the European Parliament. (Strasbourg)

24 April

Minister Rupel received representatives of the **Slovenian minority in Italy newly elected to the Italian Parliament and to Friuli-Venezia Giulia Regional Council**. (Ljubljana)

State Secretary Šinkovec attended the session of the **European Parliament Contact Group for Relations with the Turkish Cypriot community**. (Strasbourg)

25 April

Minister Rupel attended **a working lunch of the Regional Partnership with UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon**, hosted by Austrian Foreign Minister Ursula Plassnik. Later, he had a bilateral meeting with UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon and Director General of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) Mohamed ElBaradei. (Vienna)

Minister Rupel also took part in the debate **"The UN and the EU: Joining Forces for the Challenges of the 21st century"**. (Vienna)

On the occasion of the 12th Ministerial Meeting of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, State Secretary Šter met with **Ghanaian Foreign Minister Akwasi Osei-Adjei**. (Accra)

28 April

Minister Rupel met with **Serbian Foreign Minister Vuk Jeremić**. The two foreign ministers focused particularly on the European perspective of Serbia. (Luxembourg)

Minister Rupel chaired the **EU-Croatia Association Council**. The Croatian delegation was headed by Minister of Foreign Affairs Gordan Jandroković. (Luxembourg)

Minister Rupel headed the **EU Troika meeting with the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE)**. The OSCE delegation was headed by Finnish Foreign Minister Alexander Stubb. The main topics of the meeting were Kosovo, South Caucasus, Transdniestria and Afghanistan. (Luxembourg)

The **EU Troika meeting with the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS)** took place; it was chaired by the Secretary-General of the Council of the European Union and High Representative for the Common Foreign and Security Policy, Javier Solana. The Slovenian Presidency was represented by State Secretary Šinkovec. (Luxembourg)

The **EU-Egypt Association Council** was held; it was chaired by the Secretary-General of the Council of the European Union and High Representative for the Common Foreign and Security Policy, Javier Solana. The Slovenian Presidency was represented by State Secretary Šinkovec. (Luxembourg)

29 April

Minister Rupel chaired the **EU General Affairs and External Relations Council (GAERC)**. At first, ministers devoted attention to the situation in Zimbabwe. They demanded the immediate publication of election results, condemned post-election violence, and assessed that incidents were directed against those who wished democratic change in the country. The Council prolonged the suspension of visa restrictions for Uzbekistan. One of the main topics of the session was the Western Balkans. The Council adopted the decision that the EU would sign the Stabilisation and Association Agreement with Serbia and welcomed the adoption of the decision on the police reform in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The decision to hold a referendum on the constitution in Burma/Myanmar was favourably assessed. The Council also discussed the Middle East Peace Process, Iraq, Pakistan after elections and Georgia. (Luxembourg)

Serbia signed the Stabilisation and Association Agreement with the EU. (Luxembourg)



*Press conference after the signing of the Stabilisation and Association Agreement with Serbia
(Photo: EU Council)*

Minister Rupel chaired the **EU Troika meeting with the Russian Federation** at the ministerial level. The EU was also represented by the High Representative for Common Foreign and Security Policy, Javier Solana, and the European Commissioner for External Relations and European Neighbourhood Policy, Benita Ferrero-Waldner. The Russian delegation was headed by Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov. (Luxembourg)

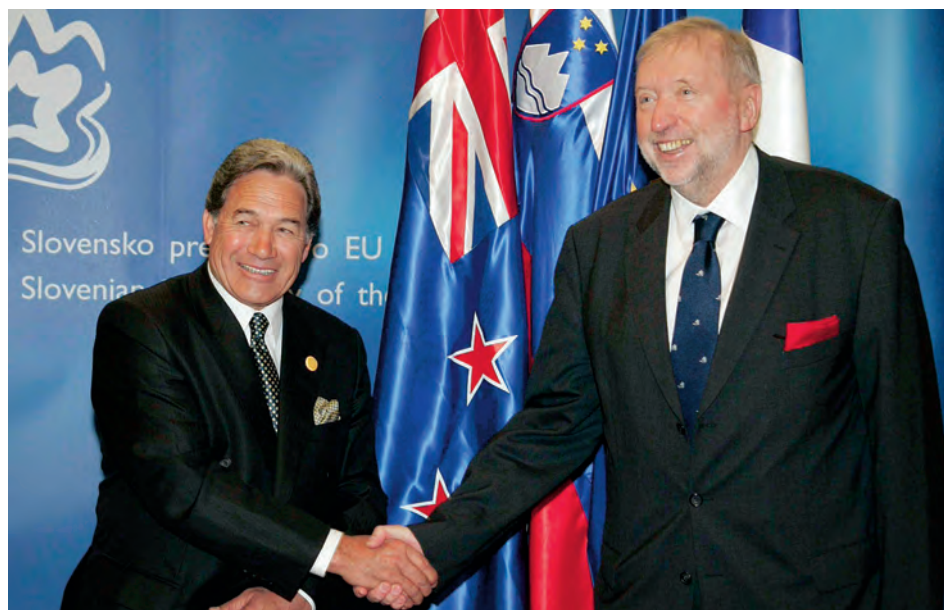
State Secretary Šinkovec **chaired the EU political directors meeting.** (Luxembourg)

In cooperation with the Government Communication Office, the Embassy of the Republic of Slovenia in Denmark organised a **gala concert** featuring **Irena Grafenauer**, a world known flautist, clarinettist **Mate Bekavac** and guitarist **Klaus Jäckle**, marking the Slovenian EU Council Presidency and Europe Day. The event was also attended by Danish Crown Prince Frederik and his spouse, Princess Mary. (Copenhagen)

At the session of the **Economic and Social Council** (ECOSOC), Slovenia was unanimously elected to the Executive Board of the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) for the period from 1 January 2009 to 31 December 2011. (New York)

30 April

Minister Rupel met with **New Zealand Minister of Foreign Affairs Winston Peters.** (Ljubljana)



Minister Rupel and New Zealand Foreign Minister Winston Peters (Photo: BOBO)

Minister Rupel headed the **EU Troika meeting with New Zealand**. The meeting was also attended by Minister of Foreign Affairs of New Zealand Winston Peters, the representatives of the European Commission and of the General Secretariat of the EU Council, respectively. (Brdo pri Kranju)



MAY
Development Cooperation

Development Cooperation

Development cooperation is an important element of the EU and its Members States' foreign policy activities. With nearly 50 billion euros in annual development aid, the EU is the world's biggest donor and bears a large share of responsibility for carrying out commitments taken on by the EU and the international community as a whole.

Slovenia became a development aid donor only a few years ago; however, it has already assumed its share of responsibility. We believe that we have successfully fulfilled Presidency-related tasks also due to excellent cooperation with our predecessors, Germany and Portugal. As a Trio Presidency, we had also prepared an 18-month programme entitled "Strengthening the European Union's Role as a Global Partner for Development".

The 18-month Trio Presidency focused primarily on achieving the MDGs. Activities in this respect were successfully completed with this year's developmental General Affairs and External Relations Council (GAERC) in May, which adopted conclusions on the EU as a global partner for development. EU actions within the framework of important international events due to take place in the second half of 2008 have thus been outlined. On these occasions, the international community will assess how the countries are fulfilling their commitments regarding development assistance and pledge greater development aid effectiveness, improved division of labour among donors, and greater policy coherence for development. The scheduled events include the Third High Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness to Review the Implementation of the Monterrey Consensus in Accra, the Second Global Conference on Financing for Development in Doha, and the UN High-Level Event on the Millennium Development Goals as part of the United Nations General Assembly session in New York.

At its June meeting, the European Council devoted special attention to the issue of achieving the MDGs and put forward a text entitled "The EU as a global partner for pro-poor and pro-growth development: the EU Agenda for Action on MDGs" to its partners and other donors. In 2008, half way to the year 2015, by which time the MDGs should have been achieved, the European Council's objective was to strengthen the international community's efforts to attain these goals, particularly in Africa, which is lagging behind. The European Council confirmed the EU measures to combat the rise in food prices, which seriously threatens the implementation of the MDGs.

During its EU Council Presidency, Slovenia focused particularly on the issue of children and women in armed conflicts. Our main objective was to highlight the possibilities of assisting children and women from the aspect of development and humanitarian assistance. We believe that Slovenia has done so successfully. Slovenia is especially pleased to note that for the first time this issue was also discussed by the European Council, which adopted a conclusion on a comprehensive approach to dealing with children in armed conflicts, including human rights, European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP) operations, development cooperation, and humanitarian assistance. We are convinced that through this approach, the EU will reinforce the coherence of its external action as regards the issue of children in armed conflicts.

Concerning the protection of women and strengthening their role in the prevention and resolution of armed conflicts, a study was conducted in cooperation with Austria and Germany, and a special declaration on this issue was drafted by the Slovenian Presidency. We expect the upcoming Presidencies, especially that of the French, to continue to deal with this issue.

Slovenia is very pleased with the excellent cooperation with the European Parliament and national parliaments during its Presidency. In addition to the regular presentation of the Presidency programme and the debriefing at the end of the Presidency, the Committee on Development of the European Parliament and the Committee on Foreign Policy of the National Assembly of the Republic of Slovenia convened a special meeting on EU development policy for the representatives of the national parliaments. This was a unique opportunity for the representatives of the new Member States' parliaments to learn more about EU development cooperation policy, as they play a decisive role in shaping development policies and raising public awareness of these issues in their own respective countries.

Slovenia has also devoted special attention to integrating the new Member States into development cooperation implementation. In December 2007, even before Slovenia took over the EU Council Presidency, the country organised a meeting of development ministers from the new Member States in Bohinj, Slovenia, which was also attended by the European Commissioner for Development and Humanitarian Aid, Louis Michel, as well as the Danish and Portuguese development ministers. A very beneficial exchange of experiences took place, and possibilities of cooperation between the European Commission and the Member States in development cooperation were discussed. The need for development aid effectiveness and the implementation of the EU Code of Conduct on the Division of Labour among European donors were highlighted in particular.

The February "Conference on the Challenges of EU 27 Development Policy" meeting, which was attended by a great number of European development ministers, focused on how to best integrate the action of all EU Member States and the European Commission when shaping European development policy that would also take into account the interest of the new Member States in committing direct bilateral development assistance particularly to countries in the Western Balkans, Eastern Europe, the Caucasus, and Central Asia.

Slovenia is pleased that under its Presidency, the EU confirmed its commitments regarding financing development cooperation and established a framework for its active role within the international community, especially the United Nations and the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), in advocating more effective aid delivery and a successful division of labour among donors. We should nonetheless keep in mind that in development cooperation, the partner country and its needs play a decisive role. The MDGs can be achieved only if we all act together.

Marija Adanja

Ambassador

Head of Division for International Development Cooperation and Humanitarian Assistance

Survey of Events

2 May

Minister Rupel attended a **Middle East Quartet** meeting in London. On the part of the EU, the EU High Representative for Common Foreign and Security Policy, Javier Solana, and the European Commissioner for External Relations and European Neighbourhood Policy, Benita Ferrero-Waldner, also participated in the meeting. As members of the Middle East Quartet, United States Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice, Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov, UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon, and the Quartet Special Envoy Tony Blair took part as well. In the meeting, the Quartet members assessed the course of the peace process after Annapolis – the course of bilateral talks between the Israeli and Palestinian sides, as well as the situation in the field, including Gaza. (London)



Press conference after the Quartet meeting (Photo: BOBO)

5 May

At the initiative of President of the European Commission José Manuel Barroso, **approximately twenty high-level representatives of Christianity, Judaism, and Islam from Europe** met unofficially at the European Commission headquarters. The meeting was co-chaired by Commission President Barroso, Slovenian Prime Minister Janez Janša, and the President of the European Parliament, Hans-Gert Pöttering. The main topics discussed were climate change and reconciliation. (Brussels)



Prime Minister Janša, President of the European Commission Barroso, President of the European Parliament Pöttering and various high-level representatives of the main religious faiths in Europe (Photo: Thierry Monasse/STA)

Minister Rupel met with **Turkish President Abdullah Gül, Turkish Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan, Speaker of the Turkish Parliament Toptan Köksal, and Minister of Foreign Affairs Ali Babacan.** (Ankara)

Upon the publication of the latest Sarajevo Notebooks issue, the Slovenian Ministry of Foreign Affairs organised a round-table entitled the **“Western Balkans and European Perspective”** in cooperation with the European Commission Delegation. In addition to the authors and editor of the publication, European Commissioner for Science and Research Janez Potočnik participated in the round-table. (Tirana)

Director-General Bogdan Benko presented the **Slovenian EU Council Presidency priorities in the field of foreign relations** to the Committee on Internal Market and Consumer Protection (IMCO) of the European Parliament. (Ljubljana)

6 May

Minister Rupel headed the **EU Troika-Turkey** ministerial meeting. The EU delegation also consisted of European Commissioner for Enlargement Olli Rehn and French State Secretary in charge of European Affairs Jean-Pierre Jouyet. The Turkish delegation was lead by Turkish Minister of Foreign Affairs Ali Babacan. (Ankara)

State Secretary Šinkovec briefed the Committee on Foreign Affairs (AFET) of the European Parliament on the **GAERC conclusions.** (Brussels)

On the basis of a joint initiative by Slovenian Minister of the Interior Dragutin Mate and President of the European Commission José Manuel Barroso, Slovenia joined the **initiative of a number of Schengen area members** that will simplify the implementation of agreements between the European Community and Serbia as well as other Western Balkan countries on the facilitation of the issuance of visas. (Ljubljana)

7 May

Prime Minister Janša attended the 39th meeting of the **Conference of Community and European Affairs Committees of the Parliaments of the EU** (COSAC). In his address he stressed environmental conservation aimed at enabling further sustainable development, succeeding in the fight against poverty, and the ensuring of global peace and security as the main global challenges. (Brdo pri Kranju)

At the **Council of Europe Committee of Ministers** meeting, Minister Rupel talked about the importance of intercultural dialogue during the Slovenian EU Council Presidency. (Strasbourg)

On the margins of the Council of Europe Committee of Ministers meeting, Minister Rupel met with **Georgian Deputy Prime Minister Giorgi Baramidze.** (Strasbourg)

State Secretary Šter delivered a speech at the **international conference “Social Health Protection in Developing Countries: Who Will Pay?”.** (Paris)

	The European Commission presented a visa liberalisation roadmap for Serbia . (Brussels)
8 May	<p>As part of the 11th International WDR Europa Forum, Minister Rupel met with Hungarian Foreign Minister Kinga Göncz. (Ljubljana)</p> <p>State Secretary Šinkovec met with Georgian Minister of Foreign Affairs Eka Tkeshelashvili and Georgian State Minister for Reintegration Issues Temur Iakobashvili. (Tbilisi)</p> <p>State Secretary Šinkovec headed the EU Troika visit to Georgia at the level of political directors. (Tbilisi)</p> <p>Within the framework of the Fifth European Union-Latin America and Caribbean Summit, the Slovenian Ministry of Foreign Affairs organised a concert by a leading performer of the Ljubljana Opera, Juan Vasle. (Lima)</p> <p>The European Commission presented a visa liberalisation roadmap for the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. (Brussels)</p>
9 May	<p>On Europe Day, Minister Rupel held a press conference on the Slovenian EU Council Presidency and current international issues. (Ljubljana)</p> <p>Minister Rupel received Kosovo's Prime Minister Hashim Thaçi, who had been attending the Europa Forum. (Ljubljana)</p>
10 May	State Secretary Šinkovec met with the Political Director of the Lithuanian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Žygimantas Pavilionis . (Ljubljana)
11 May	The Slovenian Presidency, the European Commission and Lithuania reached an agreement on a mandate given to the European Commission to start negotiations on the new Partnership and Cooperation Agreement with the Russian Federation . Minister Rupel confirmed the news at a press conference after meeting with Lithuanian Minister of Foreign Affairs Petras Vaitiekūnas and Prime Minister Gediminas Kirkilas. Furthermore, he met with Lithuanian President Valdas Adamkus. Minister Rupel was accompanied by the Swedish and Polish foreign ministers, Carl Bildt and Radosław Sikorski, respectively. (Vilnius)
12 May	A group of five EU foreign ministers (from Slovenia, Lithuania, Latvia, Poland, and Sweden) headed by Minister Rupel visited Georgia's capital to see the latest developments in the country and the region. They met with the new Georgian Foreign Minister, Eka Tkeshelashvili , President Mikheil Saakashvili , and Prime Minister Lado Gurgenedze , as well as with the Head of the United Nations Observer Mission in Georgia (UNOMIG), Jean Arnault . (Tbilisi)
13 May	The Slovenian EU Council Presidency called for a peaceful election campaign in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia . (Ljubljana)

State Secretary Šter headed an extraordinary **GAERC** meeting at which European development ministers assessed the humanitarian situation in Burma/Myanmar after the devastation caused by Cyclone Nargis, as well as the response by EU Member States and the European Commission. They also discussed the tragic earthquake that hit the Chinese province of Sichuan. (Brussels)

State Secretary Šinkovec headed an **EU Troika-Indonesia political directors** meeting. (Jakarta)

Minister Rupel opened an **international conference “New Paradigms, New Models – Culture in EU External Relations,”** which was, among others, attended by European Commissioner for Science and Research Janez Potočnik, the European Commissioner for External Relations and European Neighbourhood Policy, Benita Ferrero-Waldner, the European Commissioner for Education, Training, Culture, and Youth, Ján Figel', and European Parliament President Hans-Gert Pöttering. Under the Slovenian EU Council Presidency, the Slovenian Ministry of Foreign Affairs organised the conference in cooperation with the European Commission, the European Cultural Foundation, as well as Austrian and Dutch Foreign Ministries. (Ljubljana)

Minister Rupel received the **President of the European Parliament, Hans-Gert Pöttering**. The two touched upon the situation in the Western Balkans, the developments in Georgia, and the EU's role in resolving both of these issues. (Ljubljana)

Minister Rupel met with **Kosovo Assembly President Jakup Krasniqi**. (Ljubljana)

14 May

Within the framework of promoting Slovenia during its EU Council Presidency, the Slovenian Government Communication Office and the Slovenian Embassy in The Hague opened the **exhibition “Secrets” by Slovenian industrial designer Oskar Kogoj** in the atrium of The Hague City Hall. (The Hague)

15 May

Together with the Russian Slavic Foundation and the Moscow Musical Society, the Slovenian Embassy in the Russian Federation organised a **gala concert to celebrate intercultural dialogue as well as Slavic literacy and culture days**. (Moscow)

State Secretary Šinkovec headed an **EU Troika-China political directors** meeting. (Beijing)

Under the Slovenian EU Council Presidency, the 25th round of **EU-China Human Rights Dialogue** took place. (Brdo pri Kranju)

Minister Rupel met with **Peruvian Minister of Foreign Affairs José Antonio García Belaúnde**. (Lima)

15–16 May

In the capital of Peru, the **Fifth European Union-Latin America and Caribbean (EU-LAC) Summit** took place, attended by representatives from 60 countries and co-chaired by Slovenian Prime Minister Janša and Peruvian President Alan García Pérez. The aim was to strengthen strategic partnership between the two regions, based on mutual respect, trust, common values, and economic, political, cultural, historical, and human ties. The main Summit topics were poverty, inequality, integration, and sustainable development. On the first day, Minister Rupel opened the plenary session of the EU and LAC foreign ministers. Four issues among the key ones that mark EU-LAC relations and cooperation were discussed during the session – migration, intercultural dialogue, regional integration, and drugs. At the Summit, the Lima Declaration was adopted, by which 60 countries from both regions committed themselves to cooperation and the eradication of poverty, inequality, and exclusion, and to fighting against climate change in order to preserve the planet. The regions pledge to achieve more equitable and inclusive levels of social development by formulating and implementing more effective social policies. (Lima)

The Director-General of the Directorate for International Law and the Protection of Interests at the Slovenian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ondina Blokar-Drobič, headed the **25th round of the EU-China Human Rights Dialogue**. (Brdo pri Kranju)



The European Union-Latin America and Caribbean Summit (Photo: BOBO)

15–17 May

Under the Slovenian EU Council Presidency, the **Fifth Module of the 8th European Diplomatic Programme** and the **Training Directors Meeting** for EU Member States were held. (Brdo pri Kranju)

17 May

Six mini-summits of the **EU Troika** and representatives of **sub-regional groups** (Mercosur, the Andean Community, Central America, Cariforum), **Chile**, and **Mexico** took place, headed by Prime Minister Janša. (Lima)

20 May

Minister Rupel met with **Nigerian Minister of Foreign Affairs Ojo Maduekwe**. (Ljubljana)

Minister Rupel headed the **EU Troika-Nigeria** meeting. The Nigerian delegation was headed by Foreign Minister Ojo Maduekwe. The main topics under discussion were conflict management and prevention, the fight against the illicit stockpiling of and trade in small arms and light weapons, climate



EU Troika – Nigeria meeting (Photo: BOBO)

change, energy security, the fight against terrorism, migration, and human rights. (Brdo pri Kranju)

Prime Minister Janša attended the ceremonial signing of the **Joint Tripartite Declaration establishing a “European Maritime Day”**. (Strasbourg)

21 May Minister Rupel met with **Ukrainian Minister for Foreign Affairs Volodymyr Ogrzyzko**. (Ljubljana)

21–22 May State Secretary Šinkovec participated in the South East European Cooperation Process (SEEC) Summit. (Bourgas)

22 May Slovenia celebrated **Slovenian Diplomacy Day** – the 16th anniversary of joining the United Nations. On this occasion, an Open Door Day was held at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. (Ljubljana)

Minister Rupel headed the **EU Troika-Ukraine** meeting. The other participants in the meeting were the European Commissioner for External Relations and European Neighbourhood Policy, Benita Ferrero-Waldner, a representative of the EU Council General Secretariat, Helga Schmid, and a representative of France, Jacques Faure. The Ukrainian delegation was headed by Foreign Minister Volodymyr Ogrzyzko. The main topics under discussion were regional and international issues, the internal situation in Ukraine, negotiations on the



Press conference after the EU Troika-Ukraine meeting (Photo: BOBO)

New Enhanced Agreement between the EU and Ukraine, and cooperation in the field of European Common Foreign and Security Policy. (Brdo pri Kranju)

At the level of the Permanent Representatives Committee (COREPER), the Slovenian Presidency ensured **agreement on a compromise proposal** for a directive of the European Parliament and of the Council on common standards and procedures in Member States for returning illegally staying third-country nationals. (Ljubljana)

22–31 May

The XIII Biennale of Young Artists from Europe and the Mediterranean was organised under the auspices of Slovenia, as the country presiding over the EU Council. (Bari)

24 May

State Secretary Šinkovec delivered a speech at the **64th Interparliamentary Meeting between the European Parliament and the Congress of the United States**. (Ljubljana)

26 May



*Minister Rupel and Lithuanian Foreign Minister Petras Vaitiekūnas at the May GAERC meeting
(Photo: BOBO)*

Minister Rupel chaired the **EU GAERC**. The Council assessed the course of parliamentary elections in Georgia and expressed satisfaction with the peaceful elections after the authorities had been called upon to remedy shortcomings noted by OSCE observers. The ministers committed themselves to strengthening EU-Georgia relations by continuing political dialogue and implementing the action plan within the framework of the European Neighbourhood Policy. At this meeting, the Council: decided that the EU would double the number of participants in the EUPOL AFGHANISTAN mission; welcomed the checklist for the inclusion of the protection of the rights of children in armed conflict in ESDP operations; adopted the mandate for negotiations on the new framework agreement with the Russian Federation and the Doha Agreement on Lebanon; and promoted the Middle East Peace Process. The Council furthermore discussed the situation in Somalia, Zimbabwe, and Iraq, and announced that the Stabilisation and Association Agreement with Bosnia and Herzegovina was to be signed at the June meeting. (Brussels)

On the margins of the GAERC meeting, Minister Rupel met with the **Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Serbia, Vuk Jeremić**. (Brussels)

Minister Rupel participated in the **Joint Parliamentary Meeting on the Western Balkans, bringing together MEPs and the speakers of the national parliaments in the EU Member States and the Western Balkan countries.** (Brussels)



Minister Rupel at the meeting of MEPs and the speakers of the national parliaments in the EU Member States and the Western Balkan countries (Photo: BOBO)

Minister Rupel chaired the **18th Joint Council and Ministerial Meeting between the EU and the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC).** On behalf of the EU, the meeting was attended by EU Member States foreign ministers, the High Representative for the Common Foreign and Security Policy, Javier Solana, the European Commissioner for External Relations and European Neighbourhood Policy, Benita Ferrero-Waldner, and European Commissioner for Trade Peter Mandelson; the delegation of the Gulf states was composed of the foreign ministers of the United Arab Emirates, Bahrain, Saudi Arabia, Oman, Qatar, and Kuwait, as well as AbdulRahman Bin Hamad Al-Attiyah, GCC Secretary-General and the GCC's coordinator for negotiations with the EU. (Brussels)



Press conference after the EU-GCC meeting (Photo: BOBO)

26–27 May

Within the **GAERC**, State Secretary Šter chaired the meeting of EU Member States ministers for international development cooperation and humanitarian assistance. The focus of attention was the EU contribution to achieving the MDGs; furthermore, the ministers discussed the humanitarian situation in Burma/Myanmar. (Brussels)

27 May	<p>Prime Minister Janša attended the Joint Parliamentary Meeting of delegations from EU Member States national parliaments, and the speakers of the parliaments of the Western Balkan countries and Turkey. The meeting focused on the European perspective of the Western Balkans and key challenges of the region. (Brussels)</p> <p>Minister Rupel chaired the EU-Turkey Association Council. The Turkish delegation was headed by Minister of Foreign Affairs Ali Babacan. (Brussels)</p> <p>Minister Rupel met with Turkish Cypriot leader Mehmet Ali Talat. (Brussels)</p> <p>Minister Rupel chaired the EU-Moldova Cooperation Council. (Brussels)</p> <p>Minister Rupel briefed the AFET on the conclusions of the latest GAERC meeting. (Brussels)</p> <p>State Secretary Šinkovec headed an EU Troika-United States of America political directors meeting. (Brussels)</p>
28 May	<p>State Secretary Šinkovec headed the EU Troika-European Economic Area (EEA) ministerial meeting, bringing together the EU Member States and the European Free Trade Agreement (EFTA) Member States Iceland, Liechtenstein, and Norway, (without Switzerland). (Brussels)</p> <p>State Secretary Šter headed the first EU Troika-Cape Verde ministerial meeting. (Brussels)</p> <p>State Secretary Šter briefed the European Parliament Committee on International Trade (INTA) on the Twelfth United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD). (Brussels)</p> <p>State Secretary Šinkovec delivered a speech at the 1st EP-Kosovo Interparliamentary Meeting. (Brussels)</p> <p>State Secretary Šinkovec headed an EU Troika-Russia political directors meeting. (Brussels)</p> <p>The European Commission presented a visa liberalisation roadmap for Montenegro. (Brussels)</p>
29 May	<p>Minister Rupel attended the Iraq Compact Annual Review Conference in Stockholm. On its margins, he met with UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon and Iranian Minister of Foreign Affairs Manouchehr Mottaki. (Stockholm)</p>
29–30 May	<p>A two-day Euro-Mediterranean Conference of Ministers of Culture on culture and intercultural dialogue was held under the Slovenian Presidency. The Greek Government prepared starting points for further steps in establishing dialogue among cultures in the Euro-Mediterranean area. (Athens)</p>

30 May

Minister Rupel met with **Indian Minister of External Affairs Pranab Mukherjee**. (New Delhi)

Minister Rupel chaired the **EU Troika-India** meeting at the ministerial level. The meeting was attended by representatives of the EU Council General Secretariat, the European Commission Secretariat-General, and Rama Yade, the Secretary of State at the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs on behalf of the upcoming French Presidency. The Indian delegation was headed by Minister of External Affairs Pranab Mukherjee. (New Delhi)

The **10th Human Security Network Ministerial Meeting** was held, at which the Member States discussed human security and the impact of climate change on vulnerable population groups. On behalf of Slovenia, Director General Pipan also participated in the conference. (Athens)

State Secretary Šinkovec met with **NATO Deputy Secretary General Claudio Bisogniero**. (Ljubljana)

The Slovenian, Lithuanian, and French Ministries of Foreign Affairs as well as the European Union Institute for Security Studies (EUISS) organised a conference entitled the **European Security Culture** in Paris. The conference was attended by Milan Jazbec, Head of Division for Policy Planning and Research at the Slovenian Ministry of Foreign Affairs. (Vilnius)

30 May–4 June

Organised by the Forum of Slavic Cultures, the Flagey Cultural Centre held a **Slavic Film Festival**, where each Slavic country presented itself with a film. (Brussels)



JUNE
Transatlantic Relations

Transatlantic Relations

The European Union is becoming an increasingly important global player and has been developing close cooperation with a number of partners around the world, the most important form being the transatlantic relations embracing EU cooperation with the US and Canada. In view of its international influence and global role, relations with the US have greater political weight and are more diversified.

Transatlantic cooperation is strategically important for both the EU and the US. Both partners are interested in the stable and prospective development of this cooperation, which positively impacts the development of global relations in the world. When assessing the nature and importance of the partnership, it should be taken into account that it is based on common values such as democracy, the rule of law, respect for human rights, and a market economy. In addition to the economic relations that constitute its most important dimension, the spectrum of cooperation is very broad, embracing justice and home affairs, environmental issues, energy and energy security, security policy, international law, topical international issues, and other matters. Transatlantic relations are essentially bilateral but have global effects and implications. It is thus becoming more and more obvious that the success of both partners in confronting global challenges and threats is increasingly dependent on the success of this transatlantic cooperation.

These relations can look back on a long and rich tradition. EU-US relations – which represent the basic component of the transatlantic partnership – were institutionalised in the mid-50s, with the opening of the Washington office of the Delegation of the European Commission, while the strategic foundations of this partnership were established shortly after the end of World War II, with the Marshall Plan, i.e. the programme of US assistance to the war-ravaged countries of Europe. A period of enhanced partnership between the EU and US started with the Marshall Plan, which is celebrating its 60th anniversary in 2008. This partnership proved to be crucial for the fall of the Berlin Wall, the symbol of the Cold War and a divided Europe, and served as an important political framework for the reintegration of Europe. The fact that in 2008 Slovenia became the first of the new EU Member States from Central and Eastern Europe to hold the Presidency of the Council of the EU and hosted the EU-US Summit confirms the success of the transatlantic partnership over the last 60 years.

From a historical point of view, the relations between the EU and US have been developing successfully, in the right direction, and with a tendency to strengthen, particularly in the fields of common interest. Naturally, these interests are not always identical or self-evident, therefore cooperation requires political support and concrete incentives on both sides of the Atlantic. This is what the summit meetings of the EU and US statesmen are devoted to, representing the most important form of cooperation between the EU and US and taking place every year on the basis of the 1990 Transatlantic Declaration. These summits address concrete issues of bilateral cooperation between the EU and US and provide the framework for strategic dialogue on global issues crucial for the entire international community. This was also the objective of the 2007 Washington EU-US Summit, which adopted a decision on the establishment of the Transatlantic Economic Council (TEC) and set up the basis for transatlantic cooperation on climate change and energy. During the preparations for the 2008 EU-US Summit, the Slovenian EU Presidency built upon the attainments of the 2007 Summit organised during the German Presidency.

In the area of transatlantic relations, the Slovenian EU Presidency defined the following priorities:

- To strengthen the strategic nature of the transatlantic partnership;
- To increase the visibility of transatlantic cooperation on both sides of the Atlantic and in the wider international community;
- To stimulate concrete forms of EU-US cooperation in all fields;
- To build upon the achievements in transatlantic cooperation to date, with particular emphasis on the implementation of agreements, particularly from the most recent EU-US Summit in Washington;
- To organise a successful summit, which should demonstrate the unity of the transatlantic partners, be rich in terms of content, ensure concrete results and answers, and be oriented to the future;
- To draw-up a summit document, which should contain strong political messages on the importance and strategic nature of the transatlantic partnership; and
- To ensure the continuity of the transatlantic cooperation.

The EU-US Summit was convened in Brdo pri Kranju on 10 June 2008 and represented one of the most important events organised by the Slovenian EU Presidency. Among the four summits with third partners, this was the only one to take place in Slovenia and it proved demanding in terms of content and organisation. The event was important for both the Slovenian EU Presidency and its bilateral relations with the US. The bilateral meetings of the Slovenian President and the Prime Minister with the US President, which were convened on this occasion, strengthened the positively developing allied relations between Slovenia and the US. The arrival of President Bush at the EU-US Summit in Slovenia – it was his eighth and last summit – embraced much symbolism as he started his presidential mandate in Europe at the meeting with Russian President Putin in 2001 in Slovenia and ended it at the same place in 2008. The EU-US Summit meeting put Slovenia at the heart of world developments, which positively influenced its overall visibility in the world. The summit agenda was divided into three topics for discussion: regional and security issues, transatlantic bilateral cooperation, and global issues.

As regards the discussion of these issues, the Summit organised in Slovenia ensured the continuity of dialogue based on our common values and similar interests. A high level of consensus was reached in addressing individual international issues, particularly the Western Balkans, the Middle East Peace Process, Iran, Iraq, and Afghanistan. Attention was drawn to severe human rights violations, especially in Burma/Myanmar, Zimbabwe, and Sudan; the importance of effective multilateralism and the role of the UN was underlined and the necessity to respect international law principles in countering terrorism and to collaborate in the field of preventing the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction were highlighted.

Expectations were highest in the field of transatlantic economic cooperation. Trade between the EU and US accounts for 40% of global trade; daily transatlantic trade amounts to EUR 1.7 billion. Thus, this area has the greatest potential for both businesspeople and consumers. With this in mind, the Transatlantic Economic Council (TEC) was founded at last year's summit with a view to ensuring the necessary political support on both sides of the Atlantic for eliminating trade barriers and speeding up the transatlantic economic integration process. The preparation of the TEC agenda, the implementation of which it is estimated will cost approximately EUR 10 billion, started during the Slovenian Presidency and was confirmed at the Summit in Brdo pri Kranju. It was during the Slovenian Presidency that the first stage of the Open Skies Agreement entered into force and negotiations for the second stage opened. It is estimated that the realisation of the Agreement will increase the number of passengers by 25 million in the next five years and save about EUR 12 billion. The Slovenian EU Council Presidency devoted considerable attention

to endeavours to enable visa-free travel to the US for all EU Member States. At the Summit, the US confirmed its commitment to extend the visa-free regime to the new Member States by the end of the year.

Climate change and energy issues were subject to continuous and enhanced transatlantic dialogue during the Slovenian Presidency, on both expert and higher levels. The EU-US Summit was important in this respect, since it confirmed the interest in and the necessity for close cooperation between both partners in this field, particularly within the UN framework and with a view to concluding a new global agreement by 2009; unfortunately the Summit failed to define the possible common principles in the process of drafting a new global agreement.

Now that our Presidency of the EU has concluded, we can assess that expectations have been met and goals attained in the area of transatlantic relations, and that the EU-US Summit was successful from political, thematic, and organisational aspects.

With the term of the present US administration expiring, a question arises as to how the transatlantic relations should be developed in the future. During its Presidency, Slovenia endeavoured to take into account the historical dimension and importance of this transatlantic cooperation as well as the necessity to ensure continuity in these relations, taking into account the changes both on the global scale and in the relations between the two partners. Therefore, the endeavours to redefine the strategic framework and contents of the transatlantic cooperation will, on the one hand, require the strengthening of the EU's institutional framework for operations in the field of the Common Foreign and Security Policy and increasing the political readiness of the EU Member States to take on bigger burdens in international relations while, on the other hand, expectations will have to be raised for enhanced multilateral approach in international relations by the new US administration. The EU will have the opportunity to open discussions on this topic among its Member States before the end of the year.

Roman Kirn

Ambassador

Head of Division for North and Latin America and the Caribbean and
Chair of the EU Council Transatlantic Relations Working Party (COTRA)

Survey of Events

2 June

Prime Minister Janez Janša attended **the celebrations marking the 10th anniversary of the European Central Bank and the European System of Central Banks.** (Frankfurt)



Prime Minister Janša and European Central Bank President Jean Claude Trichet (Photo: BOBO)

3 June

Foreign Minister Dimitrij Rupel received **Foreign Minister of South Africa Nkosazana Clarice Dlamini-Zuma.** (Ljubljana)



Ministers Dlamini-Zuma and Rupel (Photo: BOBO)

Foreign Minister Rupel headed the **EU Troika–South Africa meeting** at the level of Foreign Ministers. The European Commission was represented by the European Commissioner for Development and Humanitarian Aid, Louis Michel, and the South African delegation by Foreign Minister Nkosazana Clarice Dlamini-Zuma. Representatives of the General Secretariat of the Council and of the next, French Presidency also participated at the meeting. (Brdo pri Kranju)

The European Commission presented the **visa liberalisation roadmap for Albania**. (Brussels)

3–4 June **The international conference “Development Aid Providers from New EU Member States: Experiences, Trends and Challenges”** was convened in Ljubljana. The participants at the conference – organised by the Slovenian development institutions, such as the Centre for Excellence in Finance, Centre for European Perspective, Foundation “Together”, and International Trust Fund for Demining and Mine Victims Assistance – were welcomed on behalf of the Slovenian EU Presidency by Director General Anita Pipan. (Ljubljana)

4 June Foreign Minister Rupel outlined the preparations for the **EU-US Summit** at the European Parliament. (Brussels)

Foreign Minister Rupel met with **Prince Albert of Monaco**. (Brussels)

5 June Foreign Minister Rupel, together with the Minister of Higher Education, Science and Technology, Mojca Kucler Dolinar, received members of the diplomatic corps and acquainted them with the **Euro-Mediterranean University project** (EMUNI). (Ljubljana)

Opening of the exhibition entitled “Slavs of Europe” took place in the Royal Museum of Art and History. The exhibition was prepared, under the auspices of the Forum of Slavic Cultures, by the Russian Ethnographic Museum from St Petersburg in cooperation with the Slovene Ethnographic Museum and the Scientific and Research Centre of the Slovenian Academy of Sciences and Arts. (Brussels)

5–6 June State Secretary Andrej Šter participated at the meeting of foreign ministers of **the informal Mediterranean Forum** (FOROMED). The plenary session focused on the discussion on future cooperation in the Mediterranean (Barcelona Process: Union for the Mediterranean). (Algiers)

6 June Foreign Minister Dimitrij Rupel chaired the **EU Troika–Brazil meeting** at the ministerial level. The European Commission was represented by the Commissioner for External Relations and European Neighbourhood Policy, Benita Ferrero-Waldner, and Brazil’s delegation was led by the Minister of External Relations, Celso Amorim. Representatives of the General Secretariat of the Council as well as of the upcoming French Presidency also participated. (Brdo pri Kranju)

The European Commission presented the **visa liberalisation roadmap for Bosnia and Herzegovina**. (Brussels)

- 8 June** Foreign Minister Rupel received **Salem Jaber Al-Ahmed Al-Sabah, Special Envoy of Sheikh Nasser Al-Mohammed Al-Ahmed Al-Sabah, Prime Minister of Kuwait**. At the meeting, Foreign Minister Rupel thanked the Government of Kuwait for the contribution of EUR 1 million for the Euro-Mediterranean University. (Bled)
- 9 June** **The Euro-Mediterranean University** (EMUNI) was inaugurated, with a number of guests expressing their support to the new university: Prime Minister Janša, Secretary-General of the Arab League Amr Moussa, President of the European Parliament Hans-Gert Pöttering, and President of the European Commission José Manuel Barroso. (Portorož)
- Foreign Minister Rupel received **Secretary-General of the Arab League Amr Moussa**. (Ljubljana)
- Foreign Minister Rupel chaired the **EU Troika–China meeting** at the ministerial level. The EU delegation also comprised the EU High Representative for the Common Foreign and Security Policy, Javier Solana, the European Commissioner for External Relations and European Neighbourhood Policy, Benita Ferrero-Waldner, and the Minister of State at the French Foreign Ministry, Alain Joyandet, while the Chinese delegation was headed by Foreign Minister Yang Jiechi. (Ljubljana)
- 9–10 June** **The international conference “Intercultural Dialogue and Education for Development – The Role of Education and Awareness Raising in the Implementation of the European Consensus on Development”** was held in Ljubljana. Director General Pipan addressed the participants on behalf of the Slovenian EU Presidency. (Ljubljana)
- State Secretary Matjaž Šinkovec headed the EU delegation at the **G8 political directors meeting**. (Tokyo)

10 June



Handshaking after the press conference: US President Bush, Prime Minister Janša, and President of the European Commission Barroso (Photo: UKOM/Grega Wernig – Salomon 2000)

The **EU-US Summit** was organized at Brdo pri Kranju, where Prime Minister Janša, President of the United States George W. Bush, President of the European Commission Barroso, and EU High Representative for the Common Foreign and Security Policy Solana underlined the importance of strategic transatlantic cooperation and called for coordinated approach to world issues, both regional and global. The EU and the US confirmed progress attained in transatlantic relations, committing themselves to further enhance their strategic cooperation. The leaders in a narrower core discussed the most topical regional issues, particularly the Middle East Peace Process, the Western Balkans, Central Asia, the Caucasus, and Iran; at the plenary session, they exchanged views on important regional issues and global challenges such as climate change, energy, negotiations within the World Trade Organisation, development, public health, security, and free movement of goods and persons. (Brdo pri Kranju)

Foreign Minister Rupel met with **Chinese Foreign Minister Yang Jiechi**. (Ljubljana)

12 June

Foreign Minister Rupel met with **Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of Greece Janis Valinakis**. (Athens)

12–13 June

The **33rd ACP–EU Joint Council of Ministers meeting**, the highest decision-making body between the EU and the ACP countries (Africa, Caribbean, Pacific) was held. The meeting was attended by the representatives of 27 EU Member States and 78 African, Pacific and Caribbean countries and was co-chaired by State Secretary Šter. (Addis Ababa)



State Secretary Šter at the ACP-EU Joint Council of Ministers meeting

13 June

Foreign Minister Rupel met with the highest representatives of the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia – **Foreign Minister Antonio Milošoski, President Branko Crvenkovski, Prime Minister Nikola Gruevski, Minister of Internal Affairs Gordana Jankuloska**, and **leaders of three political**

parties (president of the Social Democratic Union of Macedonia Radmila Šekerinska and presidents of the two Albanian community parties Menduh Thaçi, Democratic Party of Albanians, and Ali Ahmeti, Democratic Union for Integration). (Skopje)

Halfway through the European Year of Intercultural Dialogue and at the end of the Slovenian EU Council Presidency, the city of Brussels, the European Commission and the Slovenian Government Public Relations and Media Office organised **a concert under the European Year of Intercultural Dialogue slogan “Together in Diversity”**. StrojMachine from Slovenia, Karim Baggili Quintet from Belgium and Gipsy.cz from the Czech Republic made their appearance.

16 June

Foreign Minister Rupel chaired the **EU General Affairs and External Relations Council** (GAERC). The Council devoted considerable attention to the issues linked to Africa. Chief Prosecutor of the International Criminal Court Luis Moreno Ocampo reported on the situation in Sudan. The Council expressed its concern over the security situation in the country. At the same time, the GAERC supported an inclusive approach to the resolution of the political, security and humanitarian crisis in Somalia and commended progress attained in the Great Lakes Region (Congo, Burundi, Rwanda and Uganda). In addition, the EU Council discussed the Western Balkans. The ministers expressed satisfaction with the signing of the Stabilisation and Association Agreement with Bosnia and Herzegovina and acquainted themselves with the course of elections in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. They welcomed the presentation of plans for a gradual liberalisation of the visa regime with Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro, and Serbia. (Luxembourg)

Bosnia and Herzegovina signed the Stabilisation and Association Agreement with the EU. (Luxembourg)



*The signing of the Stabilisation and Association Agreement with Bosnia and Herzegovina
(Photo: EU Council)*

Foreign Minister Rupel chaired the **EU–Israel Association Council**. The Israeli delegation was headed by Foreign Minister Tzipi Livni. (Luxembourg)

Prime Minister Janša met with the **President of the European Economic and Social Committee, Dimitris Dimitriadis**, who thanked him for the excellent cooperation with the Slovenian Presidency. (Ljubljana)

State Secretary Šinkovec **chaired a meeting of the political directors of EU Member States**. (Luxembourg)

16–17 June At the **Euro-Mediterranean Partnership seminar**, Director General Pipan underlined, on behalf of the Slovenian EU Presidency, that international law must be respected in the fight against terrorism – both human rights law and humanitarian law. (Prague)

17 June Foreign Minister Rupel chaired the **accession conference with Turkey**; the Turkish delegation was headed by Foreign Minister Ali Babacan. Two new chapters were opened on this occasion. (Luxembourg)

Foreign Minister Rupel chaired the **accession conference with Croatia**; the Croatian delegation was headed by Foreign Minister Gordan Jandroković. Two new chapters were opened on this occasion. (Luxembourg)

Foreign Minister Rupel briefed the Committee on Foreign Affairs (AFET) of the European Parliament on **the EU Council meeting and on the progress of the Slovenian Presidency**. (Strasbourg)

At the international **conference “Regional Cooperation – Opportunities, Challenges and Synergy”**, Director General Pipan underlined – on behalf of the Slovenian Presidency of the EU Council – that effective regional cooperation is a good preparation for the integration of the countries in the region into Euro-Atlantic structures. (Chisinau)

19 June On the margins of the European Council meeting, Minister Rupel hosted a **dinner for EU foreign ministers**. The ministers agreed that the EU should withdraw the limitations imposed on Cuba in 2003 and thus facilitate political dialogue. At the end of the dinner, which was also the last official meeting of the ministers during the Slovenian Presidency, the future President of the EU Council, French Foreign Minister Bernard Kouchner, thanked Minister Rupel for the work accomplished. (Brussels)

The Republic of Slovenia as the Presidency country published a joint **Declaration on Prisoners of Conscience** drafted by EU Member States and 37 other signatory states. (Ljubljana)

19–20 June Prime Minister Janša chaired the **European Council**. Heads of state and government of EU Member States conducted a broad debate on the outcome of the Irish referendum – the rejection of the Lisbon Treaty – and its implications for the EU. They agreed that the ratification process must continue and concluded to return to this issue at the autumn meeting. The European Council also confirmed its full support to the European perspective of the Western Balkans; the European leaders made some recommendations to the countries of the region as regards their drawing closer to the EU. The Council commended

the progress attained by the Western Balkan countries in different fields and stressed some aspects of reforms that will be necessary in the future. Later in the discussion, the leaders called for unity in introducing measures to alleviate the consequences of high food and oil prices at home and on the global level. Prime Minister Janša underlined that not only short-term solutions but also long-term structural adjustments are required. Heads of state and government of EU Member States approved the accession of Slovakia to the euro area on 1 January 2009. (Brussels)



European Council – group photo (Photo: Thierry Monasse/STA)

24 June

At the extraordinary plenary session of the European Parliament, Prime Minister Janša presented the **June European Council conclusions**. (Brussels)

At the **Conference in Support of Palestinian Civil Security and the Rule of Law**, Minister Rupel confirmed EU's advocacy of active cooperation in the strengthening of the Palestinian civil security forces and the rule of law. High representatives from a number of countries and international organisations participated at the conference, including US Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice, Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov, and special envoy of the Middle East Quartet Tony Blair. The conference was opened by the German Federal Chancellor Angela Merkel. (Berlin)



Middle East Quartet meeting

Minister Rupel attended the meeting of the **Middle East Quartet** and represented the EU together with the EU High Representative for the Common Foreign and Security Policy, Javier Solana, and the European Commissioner for External Relations and European Neighbourhood Policy, Benita Ferrero-Waldner. The US delegation was headed by Secretary of State Rice and the Russian delegation by Foreign Minister Lavrov. UN

Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon participated at the conference from New York via a satellite connection. (Berlin)

State Secretary Šter briefed the European Parliament Committee on Development (DEVE) on the **attainments of the EU Council Presidency in**

the field of development cooperation and held a presentation at a joint session of the Committee on Development and Committee on Foreign Policy of the National Assembly of the Republic of Slovenia. (Brussels)

25 June State Secretary Šinkovec headed the EU delegation at the **G8 political directors meeting**. (Kyoto)

26 June Minister Rupel met with the **Minister for Foreign Affairs of Japan Masahiko Kōmura** (Kyoto).

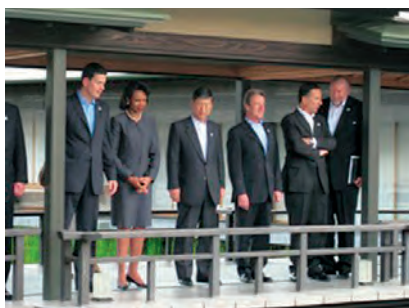
26–27 June



Press conference after the 21st EU-Russia Summit (Photo: Bor Slana/BOBO)

The EU–Russia Summit, hosted by Russian President Dmitry Medvedev, was held in Khanty-Mansiysk. Prime Minister Janša and President of the European Commission Barroso represented the EU at the highest level. Prime Minister Janša was accompanied by the Secretary-General of the Council and High Representative for the Common Foreign and Security Policy, Javier Solana, and Slovenian Minister of the Economy Andrej Vizjak. The President of the European Commission was accompanied by the European Commissioner for External Relations and European Neighbourhood Policy, Benita Ferrero-Waldner, and the European Commissioner for Trade, Peter Mandelson. The Russian party was represented by Foreign Minister Lavrov. Leaders from both sides welcomed the beginning of negotiations on a new framework agreement between the EU and the Russian Federation. Upon reviewing the implementation of roadmaps for the four common spaces – the Common Economic Space; the Common Space of Freedom, Security and Justice; the Common Space of External Security; and the Common Space of Research and Education, Including Cultural Aspects – both sides expressed satisfaction with the achievements in the first half of 2008. The Summit confirmed the importance of open energy dialogue and the strengthening of cooperation through instruments that would ensure the

reliability and safety of supply and demand to both parties. The EU exposed its interest in further cooperation in the global fight against climate change. The leaders also addressed other topics including the resolution of frozen conflicts in the common neighbourhood, the Middle East Peace Process, the Iranian nuclear issue, and the situation in Afghanistan. Apart from the joint statement on the launch of negotiations on the new framework agreement, a joint statement on cross-border cooperation was also adopted. (Khanty-Mansiysk)



Foreign Minister Rupel with G8 representatives

27 June

Foreign Minister Rupel met with **Australian Foreign Minister Stephen Smith**. The meeting was proposed by Minister Smith, who wished to thank Minister Rupel for the endeavours of the Slovenian EU Presidency in strengthening the relations between the EU and Australia. (Kyoto)

State Secretary Šter opened the second **seminar on “Diplomatic and Consular Protection of EU Citizens in Third Countries – Exchange of Experience and Best Practices”**, which was organised by the Slovenian Presidency in cooperation with the European Commission. (Brdo pri Kranju)

30 June

The conclusion of the Slovenian Presidency of the EU Council – Minister Rupel officially handed over the EU Council Presidency to French Foreign Minister Bernard Kouchner. (Goriška Brda and Paris)

30 June – 1 July

Meeting of the Directors of Archives of Ministries of Foreign Affairs from EU Member States and EU Institutions, jointly organised by the Slovenian and French presidencies, was convened at Brdo pri Kranju on the last day of the Slovenian and the first day of the French Presidency. The cultural event incorporated into the conference was dedicated to the inauguration of exhibition “Bridges of friendship – Episodes from Slovenian-French relations from the 18th century to the present day”. With this final event of the Slovenian EU Council Presidency, Slovenian archivists symbolically handed over the Presidency to the French. (Brdo pri Kranju and Ljubljana)



**The European Media's
Coverage of Slovenia's EU
Council Presidency**

The European Media's Coverage of Slovenia's EU Council Presidency: "Plaudits as Slovenia Hands on the EU Baton"

Thus wrote **Toni Barber** in the *Financial Times* on 30 June. Such was the general assessment that appeared most often in the European media during the Slovenian EU Council Presidency. Journalists who followed the work of the Slovenian EU Council Presidency in the first half of the year spoke of the high level of professionalism and excellent organisation; among the deficiencies they most often mentioned excessive caution. Below are presented the responses of foreign journalists to their Slovenian colleagues in the large Press Centre of the European Council building.

Ann Cahill (*Irish Examiner*) stated: "Taking into account that Slovenia is a small country and that it assumed the EU Council Presidency only a few years after accession, I was very surprised that you had prepared everything so sensibly. Most of the meetings were held at the same place, where security could be ensured; everything was very well organised. So much for this matter. On the other hand, you have also done well in Brussels. You did not take on more than you could handle. And, as I myself come from a small country and was involved in the Irish Presidency, I may say that small countries can perform the function of the presidency country very well because they do not set themselves high goals. They need not make efforts to achieve great things at any price; furthermore, they know that if they wish to create a certain atmosphere, they have to do it in a different way."

Even more flattering with regard to Slovenia are the words of the Czech radio journalist, **Pavel Novák**: "This Presidency has shown that a new Member State can also be efficient and prepare successful summits. Moreover, it can be equally successful in organising other meetings and lead the Union as well as any country. I am not fully convinced that France, known for its somewhat more leisurely lifestyle, will do as good a job. We are therefore pleased that we will not hold the Presidency immediately after Slovenia but only after France, because our administration is not as good as that of Slovenia."

The Western Balkans was a high priority of the Slovenian Presidency in the foreign policy area. The European media wrote a great deal about this topic and the reviews were appreciative. **Bernd Riegert** (*Deutsche Welle*) notes: "Slovenia, the first former communist country to hold the rotating EU Presidency, oversaw positive developments in the Balkans over the last six months."

Joanna Sopinska (*Europolitics*), in analysing these activities, noted that the Slovenian EU Council Presidency "has worked hard in the past months in order to bring the Balkans closer to the European Union. It has achieved most of its goals. All countries in the region, including Serbia and Bosnia and Herzegovina have an associate status. All of them have commenced negotiations on visa-free regimes. Tangible progress has also been achieved in Kosovo. Slovenia successfully led the EU through the first months of Kosovo's independence. Thanks to its skilful diplomacy, the region remained stable and there were no major confrontations between Serbia and Kosovo. Unfortunately, despite significant efforts, Slovenia did not manage to realise the timetable for the deployment of EULEX mission, which should have started operating in the middle of June."

Agnes Federer (*Nepszabadsag*) has also observed that the situation in Kosovo is now more stable: "Despite the fact that the Slovenian Presidency started with a diplomatic scandal which caused quite a stir, Slovenia focused on its work. It did well also in difficult situations, such as regarding Kosovo's declaration of independence. The situation in Kosovo today is more secure than could have been expected at the beginning of the year, also thanks to Slovenia's endeavours."

The media in the Balkan countries also wrote about Slovenia's activities in the region. The Slovenian Presidency work concerning Serbia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, and Kosovo has been assessed as positive; however, there have been some reproaches as regards Slovenian-Croatian relations. Such a reproach is most often encountered in the Croatian media.

Augustin Palokaj (*Oslobođenje*) writes that six months ago, when Slovenia took over the EU Council Presidency, "it had no great ideas about 'saving Europe' as France has now ... In these six months, Slovenia has perhaps done the most for Serbia. It managed to persuade all Member States, including the Netherlands, to sign the Stabilisation and Association Agreement with Serbia despite the fact that the latter had not made any progress in cooperating with the Hague Tribunal." The journalist further mentions two other historic events: the signing of the Stabilisation and Association Agreement with Bosnia and Herzegovina and the launching of negotiations with all Western Balkan countries, excepting Kosovo, on visa abolition. As to Croatia, he considers that Slovenia's role was not a particularly commendable one. "Many EU diplomats share the view that in the case of Croatia, Slovenia 'missed the opportunity' to prove that the Presidency was beyond narrow national interests." Despite this, in his opinion, Slovenia made a significant breakthrough and proved that a small country can be equally successful in holding the EU Council Presidency.

The Croatian *Vjesnik* reports that according to assessments, "Slovenians devoted too much attention to neighbouring Croatia and raised bilateral issues to the European level," admitting, however, that they "made efforts to break the deadlock in respect of the Balkan issue and were to a large extent successful in doing so; the developments in Serbia were particularly positive, leading to the victory of pro-European forces. The situation in Kosovo also became more aggravated during the Slovenian EU Council Presidency, but was resolved more peacefully than could have been expected by the greatest optimists."

The Russian press agency *Itar Tass* devoted particular attention to relations between the European Union and Russia, quoting Russian President Dmitry Medvedev, who "assessed that the first EU Council Presidency held by a Slavic country would also forever be historic due to the launching of negotiations on a new partnership agreement between the EU and Russia." He expressed his appreciation for all those engaged in the preparation of the Summit, mentioning in particular Prime Minister Janez Janša. President Medvedev also expressed his hope that the French Presidency would not change the course charted by Slovenia."

As to the Irish No vote regarding the Lisbon Treaty, the media have called attention to the pragmatic and calm reaction of the Slovenian Presidency. **Bernd Riegert** (*Deutsche Welle*) notes: "The crisis of the Irish No vote overshadowed Slovenia's term. According to Jacki Davis from the European Policy Centre, Slovenia, a recent EU member, has shown that things would not go disastrously wrong and that they could manage it effectively.... I think they've done that and that's really the best one could have asked for." French journalist **Jean Quetremier** (*Libération*) assessed that "in seeking solutions, France will not be better than Slovenia. I only hope that it will not be worse. The reactions of large countries in such crises (the outcome of the Irish referendum) are not always the best. In a crisis like this, it is better to be small."

It may therefore be concluded that global assessments of the Slovenian Presidency are positive. French journalist **Jacques Docquier** (*Les Echos*) considers that Slovenia may pride itself on the honourable balance of its Presidency, among other matters, achieved by bringing the Balkans closer to the Union and adopting many demanding directives. "In the eyes of many observers, this Presidency has, despite a lack of experience and resources, made progress in many areas with its

strong will and by always seeking compromise. Slovenia's real success is proof that small countries are more effective than their bigger partners, who pursue their national interests more closely.

Hungarian journalist **Andras Agoston** (*Magyar Nemzet*) concludes, after many commendatory words about the Slovenian Presidency, that Slovenia has met expectations. He quotes a December 2007 statement of a high-ranking Brussels-based diplomat that Slovenia – known as a good organiser and skilled mediator – would have to be cautious not to go off the right track and on the road to ruin in the Union. In conclusion he quotes the *Financial Times* review praising Slovenia for its calm professionalism during a turbulent phase of the EU's development, adding that France is now taking on the EU baton with more colour.

On 3 July, the *European Voice* published an article entitled "More than two cheers for Slovenia". The article states that Slovenia was courageous in taking on the Presidency of the Council of Ministers.

"There was a lot riding on its performance, even in terms of EU institutional history. It was the first of the 21st century newcomers to take up the challenge. This was the first time in more than a decade that a new Member State had held the Presidency. Slovenia was the first post-communist country in the role and the first ever Slavic country. It was also – after a string of large and medium-sized countries – another proving ground for a small Member State. There was also, as it turned out, more than a fair share of big issues for any EU Presidency, marked as it was by collapsing EU markets, spiralling energy and food prices, growing tensions in the Western Balkans and with Russia, to say nothing of the hopes – then fears – of the Lisbon Treaty. On the whole, Slovenia deserves congratulations for what it has done. It has had some successes. Its errors have been minor. And it has kept the show on the road. In today's difficult EU climate, that is not a bad record." *European Voice* journalist **Simon Taylor** added his comment to the review: "Among the successes for which Slovenia can take credit are an agreement on energy market liberalisation and the working time directive, which had for years remained on the table without resolution through successive EU Presidencies. It also tackled the Kosovo issue, where the outcome was not so ideal but could have been worse. Briefly, the work was well done."

Bojan Brezigar
Office of the Minister

More than two cheers for Slovenia

Slovenia was courageous in taking on the presidency of the Council of Ministers. There was a lot riding on its performance, even in terms of EU institutional history. It was the first of the 21st century newcomers to take up the challenge. This was the first time in more than a decade that a new member state has held the presidency. Slovenia was the first post-communist country in the role and the first ever Slavic country. It was also – after a string of large and medium-sized countries – another proving ground for a small member state (and for the new breed of small member states that the EU acquired in 2004).

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On the whole, Slovenia deserves congratulation for what it has done. It has had some successes. Its errors have been minor. And it has kept the show on the road. In today's difficult EU climate, that is not a bad record.

Among the successes for which Slovenia can take credit, its ambitious response to the international financial turbulence is one that stands out. The March European Council and an expertly-managed informal meeting of finance ministers in April produced timetables for valuable new measures in cross-border financial market regulation, supervision and co-operation, while the finance minister staunchly defended European Central Bank independence in the face of French attempts to meddle.

It presided over the achievement of an agreement on energy market liberalisation that reconciled EU big-hitters France and Germany. Although Slovenia benefited from much discreet European Commission assistance (not, in any case, an uncommon service to EU presidencies on the most difficult disputes), the deal was done on Slovenia's watch.

In a minor key, the same could be said for the agreements on working time and temporary agency workers, or on the return directive, all of them measures which had for years remained on the table without resolution through successive EU presidencies. They are compromises, and not universally applauded compromises, but they are agreements – and winning agreements is much of what EU presidencies are tasked with.

In foreign affairs the touch was not so sure. A mandate was agreed for negotiations on a new EU-Russia agreement and missions were dispatched to Chad and the Central African Republic, but not directly as a consequence of Slovenian diplomacy. In the grey area of enlargement, accession negotiations crept ahead with Croatia and Turkey while the EU presidency focused intensely on the trouble-spots in the western Balkans. Perhaps counting too much on Slovenia's authority in the region, its bids to win co-operation by concessions have not shown much effect in Serbia, Bosnia or Kosovo.

The weakness of smaller or inexperienced states was perhaps most evident in internal EU power struggles, such as over the visa-waiver negotiations with the US. Slovenia (whose citizens already benefit from the current agreement with the US) did not handle this well on behalf of the other new member states (which do not). And when the Czech Republic went it alone in bilateral negotiations with Washington, Slovenia did not – or could not – rein it in sufficiently, thus diluting EU competence in this area.

As always, the EU remains work in progress. But Slovenia's spell at the head of the table has worked out well in showing – yet again – that the 'big-bang' enlargement was not a terrible mistake and did not leave Europe exposed to mismanagement by incompetent outsiders or a plethora of tiny new member states.

That is worth a seven out of ten for any presidency.



CONCLUSION

**Slovenian EU Presidency – A First
Class Diplomatic Endeavour**

Slovenian EU Presidency – A First Class Diplomatic Endeavour

The Slovenian Presidency of the Council of the EU has come to an end. This is an important turning point in the functioning of the Slovenian state and its diplomacy since it represents – like any conclusion, particularly a successful one – the commencement of a new period in terms of quality. Slovenian diplomacy reached its zenith during the Presidency and has thus become more mature and experienced.

The Presidency was a demanding, comprehensive, and complex event and project, the most important one in Slovenia's history following independence. The presidency as a process drew on comparable projects thus far, such as the structural transformation of Slovenian society which led to EU and NATO membership and a non-permanent seat on the UN Security Council (1998-1999), Slovenian OSCE chairmanship (2005), chairmanship of the Human Security Network (2006/07), and chairmanship of the IAEA Board of Governors (2006/07). Next year Slovenia is to hold the Presidency of the Council of Europe for a six-month term. The Slovenian diplomatic corps, with a staff of somewhat more than 500, and over 50 diplomatic and consular representations abroad, has grown, developed, and strengthened along with these projects.

By engaging in different formal structures and informal networks, both through formal membership and the establishment of different contacts, it has become – also thanks to the EU Presidency – an effective, experienced and flexible diplomatic corps, open to change and knowledge. It has reached maturity and has proved that the efforts of the past 20 years to establish the state of Slovenians and all Slovenian citizens have been justified and beneficial.

Slovenia held the EU Presidency ten years after becoming a non-permanent member of the UN Security Council and less than four years after becoming an EU member. The basis for holding the Presidency was the European Council decision of December 2004, according to which Slovenia was to be the first new Member State to hold the EU Presidency in the first half of 2008. The reasons behind this decision can be found in recent Slovenian political and historical experience and success compared to the other new Member States.

The country holding the EU Presidency presides over the Council of the EU so as to ensure the constructive and effective work of all EU Council formations and European Council meetings. During its term of office, the presiding country therefore has the following tasks, which can be divided into three clusters:

- Conducting the work of all EU Council formations and of the European Council,
- Representing the EU Council in relation to other EU institutions, and
- Representing the EU in relations with international organisations and non EU members (so-called third entities).

Declarations and Slovenian Presidency statements			
	Declarations	Presidency statements	Total:
January	13	10	23
February	14	12	26
March	15	14	29
April	13	8	21
May	14	17	31
June	7	15	22
Total:	76	76	152
Comparison:			
German Presidency 2007	47	89	136
Portuguese Presidency 2007	59	70	129

Despite the same Presidency system, every country has ample possibilities to introduce its own approach and create its own political Presidency image. This is reflected in the determination of the order and dynamic of dealing with priority issues and in the political tone of the Presidency, which is shown through the mode of conducting discussions, convening meetings, drafting agendas, formulating draft positions and conclusions, etc. In compliance with EU Council arrangements (e.g. those of October 1977 and December 2006) and in view of the limited diplomatic networks of practically all Member States in third countries in which the presiding country has no resident embassy, the functions of the presiding country are transferred to the next presidency country, or other country as necessary. In Slovenia's case such functions were performed by France (in 110 countries), the United Kingdom (7), Germany (6), Portugal (2), and Italy and Ireland (1 each). And in keeping with this principle, despite its limited diplomatic network, Slovenia performed such function during the Portuguese Presidency in Montenegro, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, and Kosovo.

The Slovenian diplomatic network has accomplished a huge, demanding, and responsible task. Not only did the embassies perform the local functions of the Presidency, but also the other permanent representations to international organisations (particularly in New York and Geneva) ensured the coordination of EU views on individual issues and presented them within different forums. During the Presidency, the role of the permanent representation to the EU in Brussels was the most prominent one; as agreed, it acted rather independently according to the "Brussels-based" principle.

The basic content, formal, and political framework for the Slovenian Presidency was the "Trio" formula introduced at the September 2006 Council meeting. Slovenia held the Presidency together with Germany and Portugal; the 18-month period started in January 2007 (to be followed by the present Trio – France, the Czech Republic, and Sweden). Prior to that, all three countries had to draft, together with the Commission and the Council Secretariat, an 18-month Presidency Programme, as a starting point for preparing three consecutive 6-month Presidencies (the Programme was presented in December 2006). The largest part of it had already been outlined by preceding activities and European Council conclusions, EU Council documents, and other documents (the so-called inherited agenda). Within this framework, every country holding the Presidency chooses or highlights the issues that are topical and close to its interests. This ensures the continuity of policy throughout successive presidencies, to which the current Presidency country adds its own emphasis.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs conducted, organised, or participated in approximately 6,000 events relating to the Slovenian EU Council Presidency. The following events took place during the Slovenian Presidency:

- Eight meetings of the General Affairs and External Relations Council (GAERC) – seven formal and one informal (Gymnich);
- 809 sessions of working groups and working bodies;
- 189 events at the EU-third country level, including the EU-Japan Summit, EU-LAC Summit, EU-US Summit, and EU-Russia Summit, and 45 events at the foreign-minister level;
- 25 events at the sub-ministerial level;
- 33 accompanying events;
- 49 events related to the European Parliament;
- 408 multilateral events related to the Presidency;
- 354 cultural and promotional events, of which 178 were financed by Presidency funds;
- 3,596 other events related to the Presidency at diplomatic missions and consulates (concerning EU coordination, heads of mission, deputy heads of mission, etc).

There were in total 160 events at the ministerial or higher levels. 83 events were held in Slovenia, 3,455 events in Brussels (of which approximately 1,000 fell within the competence of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs), and 4,792 events were held elsewhere.

Within the extensive Trio Presidency Programme, Slovenia identified, in accordance with the practice of the Presidency country, the issues on which it focused most. These included: the debate on the future of Europe; enlargement; the Western Balkans; the European Neighbourhood Policy; the European Year of Intercultural Dialogue; energy; the Lisbon Strategy; cohesion policy reform; climate change; biodiversity; the EU's role as a global player; a review of the Common Agricultural Policy; EU budget reform; and Schengen and the future of the EU external border. The above issues provided the basis for defining the Slovenian Presidency priorities, which included:

- Future of the EU (the reform treaty and institutional reforms);
- EU enlargement and the European Neighbourhood Policy (particularly regarding the Western Balkans);
- Energy and climate change package;
- Intercultural dialogue.

The promotion of human rights in EU foreign policy

The focus of the Slovenian Presidency was on the endeavours towards **strengthening the mechanisms for the promotion of human rights within the EU Common Foreign and Security Policy**. We established a new **dialogue** on the issue of human rights, provided for the adoption of updated versions of three out of five EU guidelines, and started to implement new guidelines on children's rights. Special attention was devoted to the functioning of the EU within the **mechanisms of the United Nations**, especially in the Human Rights Council, to which Slovenia was elected a member last year and whose first proper sessions with significant content were organised precisely during the time of our Presidency.

Particular importance was ascribed to the human rights situation in different countries. Besides Iran and several other countries where we called attention to specific cases of human rights violations through démarches and public statements, we also focused on the situation in Sudan. In the EU Statement on the occasion of the anniversary of the transfer of the Sudan/Darfur case to the International Criminal Court on 31 March and in the related European Council decisions, we called upon the Sudanese authorities to fully cooperate with the International Criminal Court and stated that otherwise the EU would have to seriously consider taking measures against those responsible for the most serious violations of human rights and international law. Considerable attention was also dedicated to the human rights situation in China, especially regarding Tibet.

One of the important achievements of the Slovenian Presidency was its **comprehensive approach to the topic of human rights, establishing links between development and security policy, as was determined in the European Council decisions on children's rights, particularly of children affected by armed conflict**. This was the first time that the European Council adopted decisions on the issue of human rights.

In organisational terms, the Presidency country implements the programme and prepares and conducts meetings. It can thus directly influence the formulation of the agenda and the selection of the issues to be put on it, the order of dealing with specific issues, and thereby the adopted

decisions. All these activities are carried out through a broad framework of the permanent contacts of the Presidency country, which encompass, in addition to operational contacts with the Council Secretariat and the Member States, cooperation with the Commission, the European Parliament, and, externally, with third countries and international organisations. In relation to third-party entities, numerous meetings in different working and official formats were held during the Slovenian Presidency, mostly within the ministerial Troika and the political directors Troika. The EU + 3 summits were particularly prominent, both in terms of content and organisation. Four summits were held during the Slovenian Presidency: the EU-Japan Summit in April, the EU-LAC Summit in May, the EU-Russia Summit in June, and the EU-US Summit also in June (the last was held in Slovenia).

The Presidency was a large scale government project and for its implementation, the government established a core EU Presidency Working Group headed by the Prime Minister (the Minister of Finance, the Minister of Foreign Affairs, the Minister of Public Administration, and the Head of the Government Office for European Affairs (GOEA) at the State Secretary level were appointed members of the group). In addition, a Wider EU Presidency Working Group was set up, headed by the GOEA State Secretary and composed of representatives of various ministries. The first Working Group supervised the strategic level of preparations and the Presidency itself and made key political decisions as well, while the latter was responsible for general operational preparations and the implementation of the Presidency. The following five subgroups were established to carry out the operational preparations:

- The Presidency Programme Sub-Group (headed by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs),
- The Human Resources Sub-Group (Ministry of Public Administration)
- The Public Relations and Promotion Sub-Group (Government Communication Office),
- EU Presidency Secretariat (Secretariat-General of the Government)
- The Presidency Budget Sub-Group (Ministry of Finance)

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs headed the Presidency Programme Sub-Group, which was tasked with the drafting of the Presidency programme and calendar of all activities during the EU Presidency. The Presidency Programme Sub-Group prepared an overview of the topical issues of the Slovenian EU Presidency, identified its six-month priorities, group programmes, provisional agendas for all EU Council formations, and the calendar, defined the method of conducting the Presidency, and identified the novelties concerning holding the Presidency in view of the amended legal acts of the European Union.

In reviewing the presented aspects and experience of the Slovenian EU Council Presidency, we can clearly state that holding the Presidency is a very complex, demanding, and large-scale project in terms of content which requires a great deal of coordination at many levels. It may be defined as a point at which the structural features of Slovenian diplomacy that were crucial in the past and which should become the most important ones for its future activities were put to the test. As already mentioned, the Presidency was certainly a turning point for both the Slovenian state and its diplomacy. It represents the conclusion of a nearly 20-year period during which the fundamental structural elements and processes of Slovenian statehood and diplomacy were established and developed. Therefore, the Presidency provided an excellent opportunity for Slovenia to join the leading group of Member States which are the driving force of the integration process. This was a great challenge for Slovenian diplomacy, offering it an opportunity to co-shape European integration processes and become firmly involved in the social, personal, and diplomatic networks of the EU institutions and Member States. The ties created through the joint management of the necessary daily and strategic matters are an excellent and long-term investment for both the individuals involved and Slovenian diplomacy as a whole.

The Presidency also provided an opportunity to intensify and deepen the process of Slovenia's overall integration as a new Member State, on the one hand, and to consolidate the pattern of action of a small country in the complex and interdependent international community, on the other. This was a watershed in the development of Slovenian diplomacy, whose activities were for the first time conducted within an extensive and complex framework which included the coordination of cooperation with key global players. Slovenia passed the test with distinction.

In summary, the Presidency is undoubtedly a litmus paper whose shade indicates if a country is capable of understanding, participating in, and conducting processes, and be more than merely an almost invisible participant. Today, Slovenia is therefore a full-blooded and cool-headed Member State. What is important for its diplomacy is to maintain and develop this sense of organisational flexibility and the capability to incorporate new content into its work, and formulate policies on this basis. In brief, we enhanced our image as a serious, committed, and successfully functioning Member State.

Assistant Professor Milan Jazbec, Ph.D.
Minister Plenipotentiary
Head of the Policy Planning and Research Division



Selected Documents

Joint statements from the EU-Russia Summit



Slovenska republika EU 2008
Slovenian Presidency of the EU 2008
La Présidence slovène de l'UE 2008

IX. JOINT STATEMENT OF THE EU-RUSSIA SUMMIT ON THE LAUNCH OF NEGOTIATIONS FOR A NEW EU-RUSSIA AGREEMENT

We, the leaders of the European Union and the Russian Federation, today in Khanty-Mansiysk launched the negotiations for a New EU/Russia Agreement to replace the current Partnership and Cooperation Agreement which entered into force on 1 December 1997. We have agreed that the existing Agreement will remain in force until replaced by the New Agreement.

We agreed that the aim is to conclude a strategic agreement that will provide a comprehensive framework for EU/Russia relations for the foreseeable future and help to develop the potential of our relationship. It should provide for a strengthened legal basis and legally binding commitments covering all main areas of the relationship, as included in the four EU/Russia common spaces and their road maps which were agreed at the Moscow Summit in May 2005.

The New Agreement will build on the international commitments which bind the EU and Russia. It will contain the appropriate institutional provisions to ensure the efficient functioning of the EU/Russia relationship.

The first round of negotiations will take place in Brussels on 4 July.

Khanty-Mansiysk, 27 June 2008

eu2008.si

OFFICE OF THE PRIME MINISTER

Prešernova 20, 25, SI-1000 Ljubljana, Slovenia, Phone: +386 1 478 10 00, Fax: +386 1 478 17 21, <http://www.spu.gov.si>



Summit presided by EU 2008
Summit Presidency of the EU 2008
In Presiding country, 26 June 2008

JOINT STATEMENT OF THE EU-RUSSIA SUMMIT ON CROSS BORDER COOPERATION

The European Union and the Russian Federation, aiming to promote their strategic partnership and in line with the priorities set out in the Roadmaps of the Four EU - Russia Common Spaces announce the agreement to cooperate on seven joint Cross Border Cooperation programmes over the period of 2007-13.

These programmes will promote economic and social development in regions on both sides of common borders, environmental protection, and support cross-border "people to people" contacts.

Both sides agree that such financial cooperation is based on the principles of equal partnership and mutual interests. Local and regional actors on both sides of the borders have been working together on the joint programmes with the Russian Federation contributing 122 million €, the European Community 307 million €, in addition to contributions from EU Member States and other partner countries. The Parties intend to start implementing these Programmes in early 2009.

Khanty-Mansiysk, 27 June 2008

eu2008.si

OFFICE OF THE PRIME MINISTER

Gregorčičeva 20, 25, SI-1000 Ljubljana, Slovenia, Phone: +386 1 478 10 00, Fax: +386 1 478 17 21, <http://www.sipm.gov.si>

Stabilisation and Association Agreement between the EU and Serbia (29 April 2008)

СПОРАЗУМЕНИЕ ЗА СТАБИЛИЗИРАНЕ И АСОЦИИРАНЕ
МЕЖДУ ЕВРОПЕЙСКИТЕ ОБЩНОСТИ И
ТЕХНИТЕ ДЪРЖАВИ-ЧЛЕНКИ, ОТ ЕДНА СТРАНА,
И РЕПУБЛИКА СЪРБИЯ, ОТ ДРУГА СТРАНА

ACUERDO DE ESTABILIZACIÓN Y ASOCIACIÓN
ENTRE LAS COMUNIDADES EUROPEAS Y
SUS ESTADOS MIEMBROS, POR UNA PARTE, Y
LA REPÚBLICA DE SERBIA, POR OTRA

DOHODA O STABILIZACI A PŘIDRUŽENÍ
MEZI EVROPSKÝMI SPOLEČENSTVÍMI
A JEJICH ČLENSKÝMI STÁTY NA JEDNÉ STRANĚ
A REPUBLIKOU SRBSKO NA STRANĚ DRUHÉ

STABILISERINGS- OG ASSOCIERINGSAFTALEN
MELLEM DE EUROPÆISKE FÆLLESSKABER OG
DERES MEDLEMSSTATER PÅ DEN ENE SIDE OG
SERBIEN PÅ DEN ANDEN SIDE

STABILISIERUNGS- UND ASSOZIIERUNGSABKOMMEN
ZWISCHEN DEN EUROPÄISCHEN GEMEINSCHAFTEN
UND IHREN MITGLIEDSTAATEN EINERSEITS
UND DER REPUBLIK SERBIEN ANDERERSEITS

ÜHELT POOLT EUROOPA ÜHENDUSTE JA
NENDE LIIKMESRIIKIDE NING TEISELT POOLT
SERBIA VABARIIGI VAHELINE
STABILISEERMIS- JA ASSOTSIEERIMISLEPING

ΣΥΜΦΩΝΙΑ ΣΤΑΘΕΡΟΠΟΙΗΣΗΣ ΚΑΙ ΣΥΝΔΕΣΗΣ
ΜΕΤΑΞΥ ΤΩΝ ΕΥΡΩΠΑΪΚΩΝ ΚΟΙΝΟΤΗΤΩΝ ΚΑΙ
ΤΩΝ ΚΡΑΤΩΝ ΜΕΛΩΝ ΤΟΥΣ, ΑΦΕΝΟΣ, ΚΑΙ
ΤΗΣ ΔΗΜΟΚΡΑΤΙΑΣ ΤΗΣ ΣΕΡΒΙΑΣ, ΑΦΕΤΕΡΟΥ

STABILISATION AND ASSOCIATION AGREEMENT
BETWEEN THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES AND
THEIR MEMBER STATES OF THE ONE PART, AND
THE REPUBLIC OF SERBIA, OF THE OTHER PART

ACCORD DE STABILISATION ET D'ASSOCIATION
ENTRE LES COMMUNAUTÉS EUROPÉENNES ET
LEURS ÉTATS MEMBRES, D'UNE PART, ET
LA RÉPUBLIQUE DE SERBIE, D'AUTRE PART

ACCORDO DI STABILIZZAZIONE E DI ASSOCIAZIONE
TRA LE COMUNITÀ EUROPEE E
I LORO STATI MEMBRI, DA UNA PARTE, E
LA REPUBBLICA DI SERBIA, DALL'ALTRA

STABILIZĀCIJAS UN ASOCIĀCIJAS NOLĪGUMS
STARP EIROPAS KOPIENĀM UN
TO DALĪBVALSTĪM, NO VIENAS PUSES, UN
SERBIJAS REPUBLIKU, NO OTRAS PUSES

EUROPOS BENDRIJŲ
BEI JŲ VALSTYBIŲ NARIŲ
IR SERBIJOS RESPUBLIKOS
STABILIZACIJOS IR ASOCIACIJOS SUSITARIMAS

STABILIZÁCIÓS ÉS TÁRSULÁSI MEGÁLLAPODÁS
EGYRÉSZRŐL AZ EURÓPAI KÖZÖSSÉGEK
ÉS TAGÁLLAMAİK MÁSRÉSZRŐL A
SZERB KÖZTÁRSASÁG KÖZÖTT

FTEHIM TA' STABILIZZAZZJONI U ASSOĊJAZZJONI
BEJN IL-KOMUNITAJIET EWROPEJ U
L-ISTATI MEMBRI TAGĦHOM, MIN-NAHA L-WAĦDA, U
R-REPUBBLIKA TAS-SERBJA, MIN-NAHA L-OHRA

STABILISATIE- EN ASSOCIATIEOVEREENKOMST
TUSSEN DE EUROPESE GEMEENSCHAPPEN EN
HUN LIDSTATEN, ENERZIJD, EN
DE REPUBLIEK SERVIË, ANDERZIJD

UKŁAD O STABILIZACJI I STOWARZYSZENIU
MIĘDZY WSPÓLNOTAMI EUROPEJSKIMI
I ICH PAŃSTWAMI CZŁONKOWSKIMI, Z JEDNEJ STRONY,
A REPUBLIKĄ SERBII, Z DRUGIEJ STRONY

ACORDO DE ESTABILIZAÇÃO E DE ASSOCIAÇÃO
ENTRE AS COMUNIDADES EUROPEIAS E
OS SEUS ESTADOS-MEMBROS, POR UM LADO, E
A REPÚBLICA DA SÉRVIA, POR OUTRO

ACORD DE STABILIZARE ȘI DE ASOCIERE
ÎNTRE COMUNITĂȚILE EUROPENE ȘI
STATELE MEMBRE ALE ACESTORA, PE DE O PARTE, ȘI
REPUBLICA SERBIA, PE DE ALTĂ PARTE

DOHODA O STABILIZÁCIÍ A PRIDRUŽENÍ
MEDZI EURÓPSKÝMI SPOLOČENSTVAMI A
ICH ČLENSKÝMI ŠTÁTMI NA JEDNEJ STRANE A
SRBSKOU REPUBLIKOU NA STRANE DRUHEJ

STABILIZACIJSKO-PRIDRUŽITVENI SPORAZUM
MED EVROPSKIMA SKUPNOSTMA IN
NJUNIMI DRŽAVAMI ČLANICAMI NA ENI STRANI TER
REPUBLIKO SRBIJO NA DRUGI STRANI

EUROOPAN YHTEISÖJEN
JA NIIDEN JÄSENVALTIOIDEN
SEKÄ SERBIAN TASAVALLAN VÄLINEN
VAKAUTUS- JA ASSOSIAATIOSOPIMUS

STABILISERINGS- OCH ASSOCIERINGSAVTAL
MELLAN EUROPEISKA GEMENSKAPERNA OCH
DERAS MEDLEMSSTATER, Å ENA SIDAN, OCH
REPUBLIKEN SERBIEN, Å ANDRA SIDAN

СПОРАЗУМ О СТАБИЛИЗАЦИЈИ И ПРИДРУЖИВАЊУ
ИЗМЕЂУ ЕВРОПСКИХ ЗАЈЕДНИЦА
И ЊИХОВИХ ДРЖАВА ЧЛАНИЦА, СА ЈЕДНЕ СТРАНЕ,
И РЕПУБЛИКЕ СРБИЈЕ, СА ДРУГЕ СТРАНЕ

Съставено в Люксембург на двадесет и девети април две хиляди и осма година.
 Hecho en Luxemburgo, el veintinueve de abril de dosmil e ocho.
 V Lucemburku dne dvacátého devátého dubna dva tisíce osm.
 Udfærdiget i Luxembourg den niogtyvende april to tusind og otte.
 Geschehen zu Luxemburg am neunundzwanzigsten April zweitausendacht.
 Kahe tuhande kaheksanda aasta aprillikuu kahekümne üheksandal päeval Luxembourgis.
 Έγινε στο Λουξεμβούργο, στις είκοσι εννέα Απριλίου δύο χιλιάδες οκτώ.
 Done at Luxembourg on the twenty-ninth day of April in the year two thousand and eight.
 Fait à Luxembourg, le vingt-neuf avril deux mille huit.
 Fatto a Lussemburgo, addì ventinove aprile duemilaotto.
 Luksemburgā, divtūkstoš astotā gada divdesmit devītajā aprīlī.
 Priimta du tūkstančiai aštuntų metų balandžio dvidešimt devintą dieną Liuksemburge.
 Kelt Luxembourgban, a kétezer-nyolcadik év április huszonkilencedik napján.
 Magħmul fil-Lussemburgu, fid-disgħa u għoxrin jum ta' April tas-sena elfejn u tmienja.
 Gedaan te Luxemburg, de negenentwintigste april tweeduizend acht.
 Sporządzono w Luksemburgu dnia dwudziestego dziewiątego kwietnia roku dwa tysiące ósmego.
 Feito em Luxemburgo, em vinte e nove de Abril de dois mil e oito.
 Întocmit la Luxemburg, la douăzeci și nouă aprilie două mii opt.
 V Luxemburgu dňa dvadsiateho deviateho apríla dvetisícosem.
 V Luxembourggu, dne devetindvajsetega aprila leta dva tisoč osem.
 Tehty Luxemburgissa kahdentenakymmenentenäyhdeksäntenä päivänä huhtikuuta vuonna kaksituhattakahdeksan.
 Som skedde i Luxemburg den tjugonionde april tjugohundraåtta.
 Сачињено у Луксембургу, двадесетдеветог априла двехиљадеосме.

Voor het Koninkrijk België
Pour le Royaume de Belgique
Für das Königreich Belgien

Deze handtekening verbindt eveneens de Vlaamse Gemeenschap, de Franse Gemeenschap, de Duitstalige Gemeenschap, het Vlaamse Gewest, het Waalse Gewest en het Brussels Hoofdstedelijk Gewest.

Cette signature engage également la Communauté française, la Communauté flamande, la Communauté germanophone, la Région wallonne, la Région flamande et la Région de Bruxelles-Capitale.

Diese Unterschrift bindet zugleich die Deutschsprachige Gemeinschaft, die Flämische Gemeinschaft, die Französische Gemeinschaft, die Wallonische Region, die Flämische Region und die Region Brüssel-Hauptstadt.

За Република България

Za Českou republiku

På Kongeriget Danmarks vegne

CE/SE/X 3

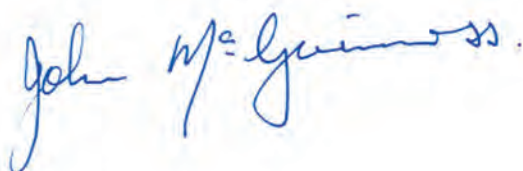
Für die Bundesrepublik Deutschland



Eesti Vabariigi nimel



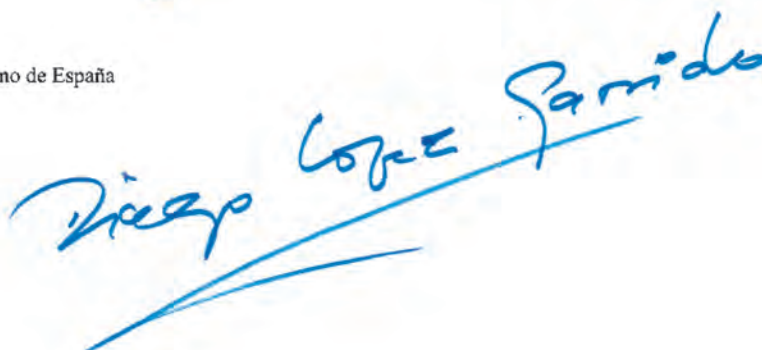
Thar cheann Na hÉireann
For Ireland



Για την Ελληνική Δημοκρατία

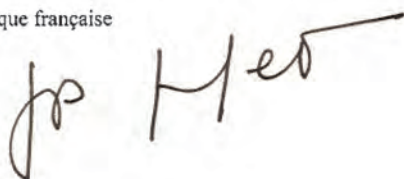


Por el Reino de España

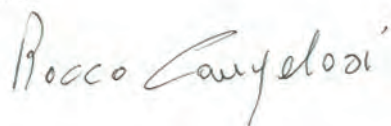


CE/SE/X 5

Pour la République française



Per la Repubblica italiana



Για την Κυπριακή Δημοκρατία



Latvijas Republikas vārdā

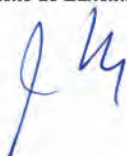


Lietuvos Respublikos vardu

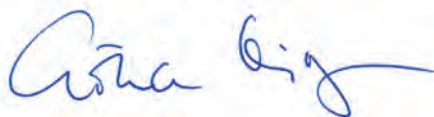


CE/SE/X 7

Pour le Grand-Duché de Luxembourg

A handwritten signature in blue ink, consisting of a stylized 'J' followed by a '4'.

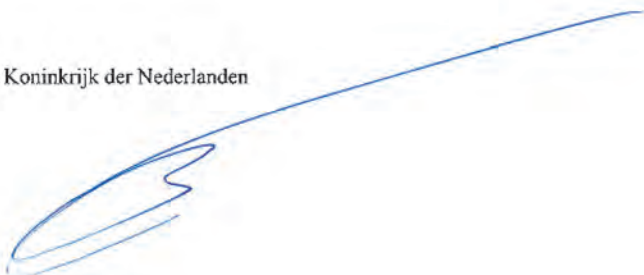
A Magyar Köztársaság részéről

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Anna Lig'.

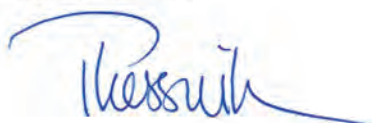
Għal Malta

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Jens Borg'.

Voor het Koninkrijk der Nederlanden

A handwritten signature in blue ink, consisting of a large, sweeping, stylized 'S' or 'N' shape.

Für die Republik Österreich

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Hesslich'.

CE/SE/X 9

W imieniu Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej

Radosław Sikorski

Pela República Portuguesa



Pentru România

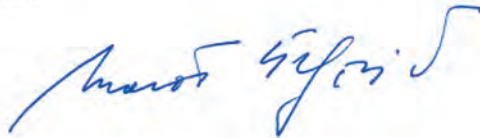


Za Republiko Slovenijo



CE/SE/X 11

Za Slovenskú republiku

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Marián Štefaniš'.

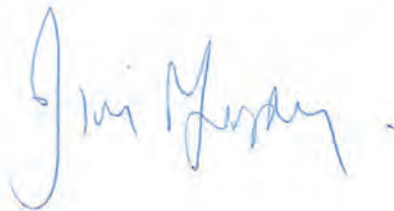
Suomen tasavallan puolesta
För Republiken Finland

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Matti Järvelin'.

För Konungariket Sverige



A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Christer Åberg'.

For the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'John Gordan'.

CE/SE/X 13

За Европската общност
 Por las Comunidades Europeas
 Za Evropská společenství
 For De Europæiske Fællesskaber
 Für die Europäischen Gemeinschaften
 Euroopa ühenduste nimel
 Για τις Ευρωπαϊκές Κοινότητες
 For the European Communities
 Pour les Communautés européennes
 Per le Comunità europee
 Eiropas Kopienų vardu
 Europos Bendrijų vardu
 Az Európai Közösségek részéről
 Għall-Komunitajiet Ewropej
 Voor de Europese Gemeenschappen
 W imieniu Wspólnot Europejskich
 Pelas Comunidades Europeias
 Pentru Comunitatea Europeană
 Za Európske spoločenstvá
 Za Evropske skupnosti
 Euroopan yhteisöjen puolesta
 På europeiska gemenskapernas vägnar

За Републику Србију



CE/SE/X 15

Stabilisation and Association Agreement between the EU and Bosnia and Herzegovina (16 June 2008)

СПОРАЗУМЕНИЕ ЗА СТАБИЛИЗИРАНЕ И АСОЦИИРАНЕ
МЕЖДУ ЕВРОПЕЙСКИТЕ ОБЩНОСТИ
И ТЕХНИТЕ ДЪРЖАВИ-ЧЛЕНКИ, ОТ ЕДНА СТРАНА,
И БОСНА И ХЕРЦЕГОВИНА, ОТ ДРУГА СТРАНА

ACUERDO DE ESTABILIZACIÓN Y ASOCIACIÓN
ENTRE LAS COMUNIDADES EUROPEAS Y
SUS ESTADOS MIEMBROS, POR UNA PARTE,
Y BOSNIA Y HERZEGOVINA, POR OTRA

DOHODA O STABILIZACI A PŘIDRUŽENÍ
MEZI EVROPSKÝMI SPOLEČENSTVÍMI A
JEJICH ČLENSKÝMI STÁTY NA JEDNÉ STRANĚ
A BOSNOU A HERCEGOVINOU NA STRANĚ DRUHÉ

STABILISERINGS- OG ASSOCIERINGSAFTALE
MELLEM DE EUROPÆISKE FÆLLESSKABER OG
DERES MEDLEMSSTATER PÅ DEN ENE SIDE
OG BOSNIEN-HERCEGOVINA PÅ DEN ANDEN SIDE

STABILISIERUNGS- UND ASSOZIIERUNGSABKOMMEN
ZWISCHEN DEN EUROPÄISCHEN GEMEINSCHAFTEN
UND IHREN MITGLIEDSTAATEN EINERSEITS
UND BOSNIEN UND HERZEGOWINA ANDERERSEITS

ÜHELT POOLT EUROOPA ÜHENDUSTE JA
NENDE LIIKMESRIIKIDE NING TEISELT POOLT
BOSNIA JA HERTSEGOVIINA VAHELINE
STABILISEERIMIS- JA ASSOTSIEERIMISLEPING

ΣΥΜΦΩΝΙΑ ΣΤΑΘΕΡΟΠΟΙΗΣΗΣ ΚΑΙ ΣΥΝΔΕΣΗΣ
ΜΕΤΑΞΥ ΤΩΝ ΕΥΡΩΠΑΪΚΩΝ ΚΟΙΝΟΤΗΤΩΝ
ΚΑΙ ΤΩΝ ΚΡΑΤΩΝ ΜΕΛΩΝ ΤΟΥΣ, ΑΦΕΝΟΣ,
ΚΑΙ ΤΗΣ ΒΟΣΝΙΑΣ-ΕΡΖΕΓΟΒΙΝΗΣ,
ΑΦΕΤΕΡΟΥ

STABILISATION AND ASSOCIATION AGREEMENT
BETWEEN THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES AND
THEIR MEMBER STATES, OF THE ONE PART, AND
BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA, OF THE OTHER PART

ACCORD DE STABILISATION ET D'ASSOCIATION
ENTRE LES COMMUNAUTÉS EUROPÉENNES
ET LEURS ÉTATS MEMBRES, D'UNE PART,
ET LA BOSNIE-ET-HERZÉGOVINE, D'AUTRE PART

ACCORDO DI STABILIZZAZIONE E DI ASSOCIAZIONE
TRA LE COMUNITÀ EUROPEE E
I LORO STATI MEMBRI, DA UNA PARTE,
E LA BOSNIA-ERZEGOVINA, DALL'ALTRA

STABILIZĀCIJAS UN ASOCIĀCIJAS NOLĪGUMS
STARP EIROPAS KOPIENĀM UN
TO DALĪBVALSTĪM, NO VIENAS PUSES,
UN BOSNIJU UN HERCEGOVINU, NO OTRAS PUSES

EUROPOS BENDRIJŲ BEI JŲ VALSTYBIŲ NARIŲ
IR BOSNIJOS IR HERCEGOVINOS
STABILIZACIJOS IR ASOCIACIJOS
SUSITARIMAS

STABILIZÁCIÓS ÉS TÁRSULÁSI MEGÁLLAPODÁS
EGYRÉSZRŐL AZ EURÓPAI KÖZÖSSÉGEK ÉS TAGÁLLAMAİK,
MÁSRÉSZRŐL BOSZNIA ÉS HERCEGOVINA KÖZÖTT

FTEHIM TA' STABILIZZAZZJONI U ASSOĠJAZZJONI
BEJN IL-KOMUNITAJIET EWROPEJ U
L-ISTATI MEMBRI TAGHHOM, MINN NAHA WAHDA, U
L-BOŽNJA U HERZEGOVINA, MIN-NAHA L-ÖHRA

STABILISATIE- EN ASSOCIATIEOVEREENKOMST
TUSSEN DE EUROPESE GEMEENSCHAPPEN
EN HUN LIDSTATEN, ENERZIJD, S,
EN BOSNIË EN HERZEGOVINA, ANDERZIJD, S

UKŁAD O STABILIZACJI I STOWARZYSZENIU
MIĘDZY WSPÓLNOTAMI EUROPEJSKIMI I ICH
PAŃSTWAMI CZŁONKOWSKIMI, Z JEDNEJ STRONY,
A BOŚNIĄ I HERCEGOWINĄ, Z DRUGIEJ STRONY

ACORDO DE ESTABILIZAÇÃO E DE ASSOCIAÇÃO
ENTRE AS COMUNIDADES EUROPEIAS E
OS SEUS ESTADOS-MEMBROS, POR UM LADO,
E A BÓSNIA E HERZEGOVINA, POR OUTRO

ACORD DE STABILIZARE ȘI DE ASOCIERE
ÎNTRE COMUNITĂȚILE EUROPENE ȘI
STATELE MEMBRE ALE ACESTORA, PE DE O PARTE, ȘI
BOSNIA ȘI HERȚEGOVINA, PE DE ALTĂ PARTE

DOHODA O STABILIZÁCIÍ A PRIDRUŽENÍ
MEDZI EURÓPSKÝMI SPOLOČENSTVAMI
A ICH ČLENSKÝMI ŠTÁTMI NA JEDNEJ STRANE
A BOSNOU A HERCEGOVINOU NA STRANE DRUHEJ

STABILIZACIJSKO-PRIDRUŽITVENI SPORAZUM
MED EVROPSKIMA SKUPNOSTMA IN
NJUNIMI DRŽAVAMI ČLANICAMI NA ENI STRANI TER
BOSNO IN HERCEGOVINO NA DRUGI STRANI

EUROOPAN YHTEISÖJEN
JA NIIDEN JÄSENVALTIOIDEN
SEKÄ BOSNIA JA HERTSEGOVINAN VÄLINEN
VAKAUTUS- JA ASSOSIAATIOSOPIMUS

STABILISERINGS- OCH ASSOCIERINGSAVTAL
MELLAN EUROPEISKA GEMENSKAPERNA OCH
DERAS MEDLEMSSTATER, Å ENA SIDAN, OCH
BOSNIEN OCH HERCEGOVINA, Å ANDRA SIDAN

SPORAZUM O STABILIZACIJI I PRIDRUŽIVANJU
IZMEĐU EVROPSKIH ZAJEDNICA I
NJIHOVIH DRŽAVA ČLANICA, S JEDNE STRANE I
BOSNE I HERCEGOVINE, S DRUGE STRANE

SPORAZUM O STABILIZACIJI I PRIDRUŽIVANJU
IZMEĐU EVROPSKIH ZAJEDNICA I NJIHOVIH
DRŽAVA ČLANICA, S JEDNE STRANE,
I BOSNE I HERCEGOVINE, S DRUGE STRANE

СПОРАЗУМ О СТАБИЛИЗАЦИЈИ И ПРИДРУЖИВАЊУ
ИЗМЕЂУ ЕВРОПСКИХ ЗАЈЕДНИЦА И ЊИХОВИХ
ДРЖАВА ЧЛАНИЦА, СА ЈЕДНЕ СТРАНЕ, И
БОСНЕ И ХЕРЦЕГОВИНЕ, СА ДРУГЕ СТРАНЕ

Съставено в Люксембург на шестнадесети юни две хиляди и осма година.
 Hecho en Luxemburgo, el dieciseis de junio de dosmile ocho.
 V Lucemburku dne šestnáctého června dva tisíce osm.
 Udfærdiget i Luxembourg den sekstende juni to tusind og otte.
 Geschehen zu Luxemburg am sechzehnten Juni zweitausendacht.
 Kahe tuhande kaheksanda aasta juunikuu kuueteistkümnendal päeval Luxembourgis.
 Έγινε στο Λουξεμβούργο, στις δέκα έξι Ιουνίου δύο χιλιάδες οκτώ.
 Done at Luxembourg on the sixteenth day of June in the year two thousand and eight.
 Fait à Luxembourg, le seize juin deux mille huit.
 Fatto a Lussemburgo, addì sedici giugno duemilaotto.
 Luksemburgā, divtūkstoš astotā gada sešpadsmitajā jūnijā.
 Priimta du tūkstančiai aštuntų metų birželio šešioliktą dieną Liuksemburge.
 Kelt Luxembourgban, a kétezer-nyolcadik év június tzenhatodik napján.
 Magħmul fil-Lussemburgu, fis-sittax-il jum ta' Ġunju tas-sena elfejn u tmienja.
 Gedaan te Luxemburg, de zestiende juni tweeduizend acht.
 Sporządzono w Luksemburgu dnia szesnastego czerwca roku dwa tysiące ósmego.
 Feito em Luxemburgo, em dezasseis de Junho de dois mil e oito.
 Înceiat la Luxembourg, la șaisprezece iunie două mii opt.
 V Luxemburgu dňa šestnásteho júna dvetisícosem.
 V Luxembourggu, dne šestnajstega junija leta dva tisoč osem.
 Tehty Luxemburgissa kuudentenatoista päivänä kesäkuuta vuonna kaksituhattakahdeksan.
 Som skedde i Luxemburg den sextonde juni tjugohundraåtta.
 Sačinjeno u Luksemburgu, šesnaestoga juna dvije hiljade osme godine.
 Sačinjeno u Luksemburgu, šesnaestoga lipnja dvije tisuće osme godine.
 Састављено у Луксембургу, шеснаестогa јуна двије хиљаде осме године.

Voor het Koninkrijk België
Pour le Royaume de Belgique
Für das Königreich Belgien

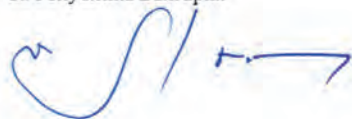


Deze handtekening verbindt eveneens de Vlaamse Gemeenschap, de Franse Gemeenschap, de Duitstalige Gemeenschap, het Vlaamse Gewest, het Waalse Gewest en het Brussels Hoofdstedelijk Gewest.

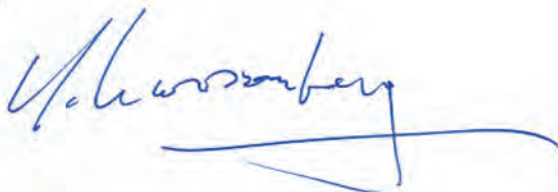
Cette signature engage également la Communauté française, la Communauté flamande, la Communauté germanophone, la Région wallonne, la Région flamande et la Région de Bruxelles-Capitale.

Diese Unterschrift bindet zugleich die Deutschsprachige Gemeinschaft, die Flämische Gemeinschaft, die Französische Gemeinschaft, die Wallonische Region, die Flämische Region und die Region Brüssel-Hauptstadt.

За Република България



Za Českou republiku



På Kongeriget Danmarks vegne



CE/BA/X 3

Für die Bundesrepublik Deutschland

Frank-Walter Steinmeier
F. Merz

Eesti Vabariigi nimel

Karv

Thar cheann na hÉireann
For Ireland

Bobby McDonagh

Για την Ελληνική Δημοκρατία

Stavros

Por el Reino de España

Alfonso

CE/BA/X 5

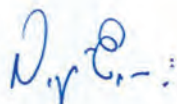
Pour la République française



Per la Repubblica italiana



Για την Κυπριακή Δημοκρατία



Latvijas Republikas vārdā



Lietuvos Respublikos vardu



CE/BA/X 7

Pour le Grand-Duché de Luxembourg



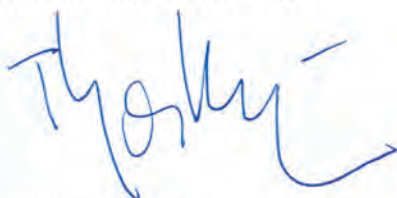
A Magyar Köztársaság részéről



Għal Malta



Voor het Koninkrijk der Nederlanden



Für die Republik Österreich



CE/BA/X 9

W imieniu Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "S. Kowalski".

Pela República Portuguesa

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "J. F. Mendes".

Pentru România

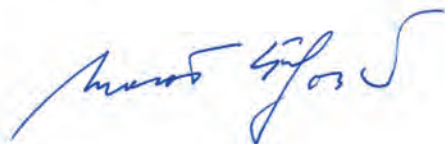
A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "C. Cioloș".

Za Republiko Slovenijo

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "L. Šturm".

CE/BA/X 11

Za Slovenskú republiku

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Marián Štefánik'.

Suomen tasavallan puolesta
För Republiken Finland

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Matti Järvelin'.

För Konungariket Sverige

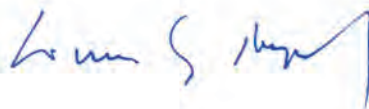
A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Emma Nilsson'.

For the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Liam Donohue'.

CE/BA/X 13

За Европейската общност
 Por las Comunidades Europeas
 Za Evropská společenství
 For De Europæiske Fællesskaber
 Für die Europäischen Gemeinschaften
 Euroopa ühenduste nimel
 Για τις Ευρωπαϊκές Κοινότητες
 For the European Communities
 Pour les Communautés européennes
 Per le Comunità europee
 Eiropas Kopienų vardu
 Europos Bendrijų vardu
 Az Európai Közösségek részéről
 Ghall-Komunitajiet Ewropej
 Voor de Europese Gemeenschappen
 W imieniu Wspólnot Europejskich
 Pelas Comunidades Europeias
 Pentru Comunitatea Europeană
 Za Európske spoločenstvo
 Za Evropske skupnosti
 Euroopan yhteisöjen puolesta
 På europeiska gemenskapernas vägnar




Za Bosnu i Hercegovinu
 Za Bosnu i Hercegovinu
 За Босну и Херцеговину



CE/BA/X 15

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<http://www.eu2008.si/en>

SLOVENIAN EU COUNCIL PRESIDENCY 2008 IN FIGURES

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EUROPEAN COUNCIL

http://europa.eu/european-council/index_en.htm

COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN UNION

<http://www.consilium.europa.eu>

EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

http://www.europarl.europa.eu/news/public/default_en.htm

EUROPEAN COMMISSION

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GENERAL AFFAIRS AND EXTERNAL RELATIONS COUNCIL

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http://www.eu2008.si/includes/Downloads/misc/program/Programme_en.pdf

