



REPUBLIC OF SLOVENIA
MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS



ENSURING THE SECURITY, PROSPERITY AND REPUTATION OF THE REPUBLIC OF SLOVENIA AND ITS PEOPLE

SLOVENIA:
SAFE,
SUCCESSFUL, GLOBALLY
RESPECTED
The Foreign Policy of the Republic of Slovenia

Ljubljana, 2015

1	Background	6
1.1	When a people of language and culture becomes a nation	6
1.2	Sovereign in changed circumstances and in facing new challenges	7
	Changed international circumstances	7
	Slovenia's national interests	10
1.3	Foreign policy working in synergy with domestic policy	10
	The culture of foreign policy	10
	The central role of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs	10
	Foreign policy in a plural society	11
2	The concentric circles of foreign policy – priority areas	13
2.1	In Europe and the Euro-Atlantic region	13
	Europe	13
	European policies: at the heart of a developed, deepened and enlarged European Union	13
	Bilateral cooperation in Europe	15
	EU enlargement and the European Neighbourhood	16
	The Russian Federation	16
	Slovenia as part of Central Europe	16
	The Euro-Atlantic region	17
	Slovenia as a NATO ally; NATO – a pillar of national and transatlantic security	17
	Transatlantic relations	17
	The United States	18
2.2	The neighbourhood	20
	Cooperation at the junction of the Alpine, Adriatic and Danube regions	20
	Neighbouring countries	20
	The Mediterranean	21
	The Western Balkans	22
	The Alps	22
	Slovenians in neighbouring countries – a shared ethnic, cultural and linguistic context	23
2.3	Farther afield	25
	Asia	25
	Africa	26
	Latin America	26
3	Foreign policy in close-up – priorities	28
3.1	Consolidating the multilateral system and managing globalisation	28
	Peace and security	29
	Human rights	30
	International law	30
	Development cooperation and humanitarian aid	31
	Environmental diplomacy of a country with abundant natural resources	32
3.2	Successful, open, innovative, confident	34
	Diplomatic support for the economy, development, education, science and culture	34

Economic diplomacy.....	34
Science diplomacy.....	35
Cultural diplomacy	35
Assistance to Slovenian nationals abroad and support to ensure safe migration	36
Slovenia's global standing.....	37
Public diplomacy and branding Slovenia	37
3.3 Diplomatic infrastructure	39
Foreign diplomatic representation and soft power.....	39
Towards a modern, efficient, professional and well-equipped diplomatic service.....	39
The importance of residential representation.....	39
The professional, career and personal development of staff.....	40
Slovenians in EU institutions and other international organisations	41

Key messages

- The primary goals of Slovenian foreign policy are to ensure **peace, security, prosperity and good bilateral relations**, to work towards a **strong European Union** and a **strong multilateral system**, as well as to consolidate **Slovenia's international standing**.
- Slovenia is one of the world's safest countries, which, however, is not a given fact, as its **security** requires an active foreign policy, responsive to the **changing international and security circumstances**. **NATO** forms the foundation of Slovenia's national security.
- The **European Union** has experienced significant changes since the publication of Slovenia's last document on foreign policy strategy, as well as since Slovenia's accession to the Union, and it will continue to change in the future. Slovenia will work towards a stronger and more cohesive, efficient and transparent European Union that will consolidate its global position to protect its values and interests. To ensure that Slovenia enjoys a **central position in the EU** it is essential to strengthen the **coordination of EU affairs between its government departments**, particularly the coordination of those EU affairs of high importance to Slovenia, and to incorporate EU affairs into the work of all state institutions.
- To facilitate Slovenia's development it is particularly important in the context of EU policies that **Slovenia be included in the Trans-European Transport Network (TEN-T)**, as the TEN-T is closely connected to Slovenia's central geographical location and the **Port of Koper**, and **linked with the Baltic-Adriatic Corridor**, and consequently with Slovenia's location in the **Alps-Adriatic-Danube region**, as well as in **Central Europe** and the **Mediterranean**. These geopolitical areas, representing Slovenia's key markets and a common cultural area, will be a focus of Slovenian foreign policy.
- Slovenian foreign policy will continue to have as one of its pillars support for the private sector, focusing on ensuring **the quality of economic diplomacy services**, providing training for economic advisers, and strengthening the **engagement of honorary consuls** in this context. Slovenian foreign policy will support the interests of the economy, education and science; it will strive to pursue the **national transport and energy strategies**, and encourage the promotion of promising start-up companies in order to establish their presence in foreign markets. Close cooperation between all Slovenian government departments, notably those responsible for the economy, technology and science, is crucial in providing the private sector with coordinated and comprehensive support. Slovenia will employ its diplomatic network to strengthen its **science and cultural diplomacy**, provide support to the cultural and creative sectors, and encourage networking between Slovenian actors in the educational, research and innovation processes and renowned actors from other countries.
- Slovenia will strengthen its presence in the **Western Balkans**. The emphases of bilateral relations with Western Balkan countries will be the **rule of law, protection against extremism and organised crime**, and a **comprehensive settlement of succession issues**. Slovenia will continue to provide support to Western Balkan countries in their integration into Euro-Atlantic structures, and will act as their liaison with the European Union, primarily via the **Brdo Process**.
- It is a matter of vital national interest to Slovenia to ensure that the **autochthonous Slovenian national minority** continues to live and prosper in **Slovenia's four neighbouring countries**. The minority also plays an important role in all-round cross-border cooperation –

important to both Slovenia as a whole and its border areas, which constitute a major portion of Slovenia's territory.

- It is in Slovenia's interest that the **European Union maintain a strong Common Foreign and Security Policy** ensuring strategic partnerships between the Union and global players, and that the rule of law, respect for human rights, and sustainable growth are pursued at the global level. Slovenia will be involved in global players' initiatives in Europe (regional platforms), and will act at the bilateral level whenever it proves necessary, and possible, to promote its interests.
- Slovenia has traditionally been a strong advocate of **women's and children's rights**, and it has also become actively engaged in promoting issues concerning the **elderly population**; Slovenia will play an active role in multilateral forums in addressing the issues of **national minorities**. Slovenia will support the ambitions of **ITF Enhancing Human Security** in post-conflict rehabilitation. In the context of the **fight against terrorism**, Slovenia will prioritise **preventing radicalisation** and the recruitment of foreign terrorist fighters, particularly in cooperation with Western Balkan countries. Slovenia has been an advocate of the work of the **International Criminal Court**, and, moreover, it will work with its partners to develop a **new mechanism of international legal assistance**. Slovenian foreign policy actors have identified **intercultural dialogue** as one of the niche areas of Slovenian foreign policy. Slovenia is a promoter of **effective multilateralism**, with the UN as its central pillar.
- In the coming years, Slovenia will need to **considerably expand the range of its development cooperation**.
- In its **action against climate change**, Slovenia will focus on preserving biodiversity and addressing forest and water issues, particularly in the Alpine and Adriatic territories.
- Slovenian foreign policy will devote greater attention to **the newly-formed community of Slovenian emigrants** and the complex phenomenon of **migration**, principally migration in the Mediterranean.
- Establishing a successful foreign policy requires that the **Slovenian Ministry of Foreign Affairs play a central role** in Slovenia's international relations and that all government departments effectively coordinate their activities. Slovenian foreign policy needs to be taken in a **new direction**, guided by **national interest**, the **continuity of priorities**, **broad political consensus** on key foreign policy decisions, and **career diplomacy**. In the long term, Slovenian foreign policy (including development cooperation) will require **real growth in funding**, and particular attention should be devoted to the **human resources** of the Slovenian Foreign Ministry.
- Slovenia will create an environment that **encourages foreign residential diplomatic representation in Slovenia** and attracts a greater number of Slovenian and foreign organisations operating in the wider sphere of international relations (soft power). It will also reinforce the reputation of the **Bled Strategic Forum** as a prominent international conference in the region.

1 Background

1.1 WHEN A PEOPLE OF LANGUAGE AND CULTURE BECOMES A NATION

Compared to other European nations, the Slovenian people made a late, but swift, entry into the international arena as a sovereign nation. In less than a century, Slovenians succeeded in securing their existence against 19th-century nationalist movements and Nazi fascism, participated actively, and as an independent entity, in the democratisation of Central and Eastern Europe, and used their culture to establish their nation state. Slovenia's path to full international subjectivity was firmly built on its gaining independence and introducing parliamentary democracy.

A quarter century of independence and parliamentary democracy, a decade of EU and NATO membership, a quarter century since the fall of the Berlin Wall, 40 years of the Helsinki Final Act, the 100th anniversary of the outbreak of the First World War, the 70th anniversary of the end of the Second World War, and the anniversaries of the Austrian State Treaty and the Treaties of Osimo – these constituted the historical framework and the essence of how Slovenia established international relations. These anniversaries also call for Slovenia to rethink its foreign policy, its foreign policy strategies, and its position in the international community, especially following a decade of EU and NATO membership, and considering the changes and the new, notably security, challenges in the international environment arising after the publication of Slovenia's previous strategic document on foreign policy.

In 1999, the Republic of Slovenia set out its foreign policy priorities in the Declaration on the Foreign Policy of the Republic of Slovenia, but continued with their strategic development even after its publication, preparing several documents, among which mention should be made of An Appropriate Foreign Policy – Basic Elements of the Foreign Policy of the Republic of Slovenia upon Its Integration into Euro-Atlantic Structures, adopted in 2002; of particular importance for Slovenia's foreign policy strategy is the 2010 Resolution on the National Security Strategy of the Republic of Slovenia, which contains important foreign policy highlights. It describes Slovenia as a continental and maritime country situated at the junction of Central European, South European and Mediterranean geostrategic regions. The Resolution identifies South Eastern Europe and the Western Balkans as the most important regions in terms of Slovenia's security, while in the global context, it recognises climate change and financial, economic and social issues as threats and risks to national security. As stated in the Resolution, in the short- and long-term, Slovenia is under no direct military threat, which, however, could change in substantially altered international circumstances. Slovenia is heavily dependent on imported raw materials (and to a lesser extent on imported energy), which is why a stable and adequate supply of these resources is vital to the country's national security.

Slovenia's strategy documents also define its engagement in international development cooperation.

Furthermore, Slovenian foreign policy is included in the 2010 Strategy of the Participation of the Republic of Slovenia in International Operations and Missions, which identifies South Eastern Europe (Western Balkans), Eastern Europe, the Caucasus, the Mediterranean, and the Middle East as Slovenia's strategic geographical areas of focus.

Slovenia's international relations are also discussed in strategy documents addressing foreign policy only indirectly. Particularly important, especially in the context of Slovenia's maritime strategy and the Mediterranean dimension of Slovenian foreign policy, are the 1991 Resolution on Maritime Strategy of the Republic of Slovenia and the 2009 Resolution on the Strategy for the Adriatic Sea. Also, background documents on Slovenia's long-term development strategy emphasise the need to raise awareness of Slovenia's place in the global community, to derive

benefit from the country's geostrategic location and export-oriented economy, to meet other nations' cultures, and to understand the importance of international relations.

Similar weight may be ascribed to the 2013 Slovenian Industrial Policy, which, in the context of Slovenia's international dimension, emphasises the importance of stimulating the internationalisation of business and deriving benefit from the impacts of globalisation, and underlines the role that effective economic diplomacy plays in this regard. An important document on Slovenia's international economic relations is the Programme of Stimulating the Internationalisation of Business 2015–2020, which was prepared by taking account of the new Slovenian Transport Development Strategy. An important strategy for promoting Slovenia's know-how through its foreign policy was developed in the Resolution on the National Research and Development Programme 2011–2020. Furthermore, the principles important to Slovenian foreign policy are also provided in the Resolution on the 2014–2017 National Culture Programme.

The new Declaration on the Foreign Policy of the Republic of Slovenia and this new strategy document draw on the goals achieved, the changing international circumstances, and new foreign policy challenges, principally international security challenges. This strategy document looks into Slovenian foreign policy, identifying the means and methods to achieve the goals and to perform the priority tasks set out in the Declaration on the Foreign Policy of the Republic of Slovenia. The Declaration will provide the basis for further defining those means and methods in the implementation plans drawn up by the Slovenian Foreign Ministry.

1.2 SOVEREIGN IN CHANGED CIRCUMSTANCES AND IN FACING NEW CHALLENGES

Changed international circumstances

In the short period of Europe's widespread support and historic enthusiasm for the EU and NATO enlargement, Slovenia seized the comparative advantages deriving from its history and its readiness for EU and NATO membership, which was the country's foreign policy priority after its gaining independence and international recognition. In the ten years following Slovenia's entry to the European Union, much changed both in the Union and its Member States, and for the first time since the Second World War, Europe is not convinced that the next generation will live in better circumstances than today's. Given the known facts and circumstances, there is no question as to whether the Union will continue to exist; nevertheless, the Union needs to carefully consider its long-term internal and external image. But more importantly, the Union requires the consolidation of European values, democracy, identity, institutions, economic power and global competitiveness, innovation, creativity and global political role. Furthermore, the global challenges and greater security risks demand that the European Union become not less, but more open.

In various parts of Europe and in diverse circumstances, the European Union is witnessing populist activity stemming from different ideologies, which in the long term, and if not effectively and decisively confronted at the national and EU levels, could pose a risk to the Union's global standing, as well as the standing of Slovenia and other Member States. It is therefore important to take further the initiative to oversee compliance with the rule of law in the EU Member States. In this context, it is disturbing to note the pressure on the free movement of workers within the European Union, which is sometimes uncritically and superficially linked with migration, or even intercultural, issues. The Union's fragmentation (a multi-track or multi-speed Europe, or even the exit of a Member State from the European Union) would probably undermine its global reputation, and thus possibly affect Slovenia's international position. In any event, the European Union of the next decade will be different from today's, and Slovenia should be prepared for it.

A quarter century after the Cold War, international relations were infused with idealism, while the world and Europe of today place greater emphasis on realism-based national interests. The strong foundations laid by treaties, conventions and institutions and the strong economic cooperation made Europe seemingly immune to military threats, but have proven to be

insufficient. The Ukrainian crisis shook Europe's security foundations, laid in Helsinki 40 years ago, and was a warning about the potential political and economic instability of the area that once formed the Soviet Union, in which Slovenia, too, seeks business opportunities. Slovenia believes that in the coming years the European Union and other global players will be deeply engaged in finding solutions to the challenges facing that region.

Slovenia remains one of the world's safest countries according to global security standards; nevertheless, it has never before been more conscious of global security challenges. Also, Slovenia is increasingly aware that security must not be taken for granted, but must be ensured through an active foreign policy approach. Considerable changes in the wider international environment also have an important influence on the Union and Slovenia. Some of the new (security) challenges facing the European neighbourhood and the wider international community include: the economic crisis, growing global mobility and migration flows, radicalisation and terrorism, a growing number of fragile states, increased inequality and poverty at the global level, the negative effects of globalisation and its management, negative demographic trends, the brain drain, attacks on cyber security, infectious diseases (e.g. the impact of Ebola on international relations), major natural disasters, energy security and other energy issues (e.g. the use of non-conventional energy sources, new conventional energy sources), climate change, 'hybrid' threats, and cross-border organised crime. In this context, it is important to understand that Slovenia's security depends on the security of its allies and partners, so it is vital that Slovenia is part of NATO's collective defence system. Furthermore, a crucial role is also played by other collective security mechanisms in Europe and beyond.

The publication of the 1999 foreign policy declaration was followed by a further aggravation of security challenges in the Middle East and its neighbourhood and their overspill into Europe. The process of political transition in the Arab world has not been concluded. Armed conflicts in the Islamic world fought over religious ideas present a challenge to the very concept of the state as a sovereign and responsible member of the international community. The birth of the Islamic State, foreign terrorist fighters, radicalisation, Islamic militancy, as well as other disturbing populist and authoritarian tendencies in Europe and beyond, are long-term threats requiring comprehensive solutions through security measures, the prevention of creation of conditions favourable to radicalisation and extremism, intercultural dialogue enhancing religious tolerance, and the integration of immigrants into a society based on European values.

There is still a long way to go to solve the problem of migration in the Mediterranean region, which is related to the growing, but otherwise welcome, global mobility, high unemployment rates for young people in North Africa and unsettled issues in Sub-Saharan Africa. Despite having a few thriving economies, Africa still faces poverty and political instability, while also being threatened by the growing power of terrorist groups. Peace and security in the Mediterranean region are also vitally important to Slovenia as a Mediterranean country.

The United States remains the world's only superpower, while Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa (BRICS) are creating a multipolar world, an endeavour not without obstacles and challenges. Relations between the United States and China and between Russia and China will have a long-term impact on Eurasia, the Atlantic region and the world in general. China has not only become the world's strongest economy, it has also been strengthening its position in Europe. Our system of values is being challenged by some of the fast-growing countries' attitudes to liberal democracy and the degree of their (un)willingness to assume a share of global responsibility corresponding to their power.

In economic terms, the world will continue to revolve around countries not members of the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). Greater attention should be paid to Central Europe, also part of the OECD, which even during the crisis demonstrated high degrees of strength and maintained economic growth; it has considerably reduced its lag behind average EU development rates in the last 25 years, and it is also among Slovenia's important traditional markets. It should also be noted that Central Europe's role in transport connections is vital to Slovenia.

Putting an end to the global recession is a task to be fulfilled also by diplomacy. In this regard, it is very important that economic diplomacy follow the progress made by global economic institutions, which should aim at bridging the gap between economic globalisation and the role of countries and international organisations in managing this phenomenon. Slovenia is part of the transatlantic region and as such attaches great importance to the trade agreement between the European Union and the United States. Great emphasis is also placed on EU trade relations with Japan, Turkey and other promising regions of the world.

In a world in which new centres of power (i.e. new poles) have been emerging, the task of ensuring security through a multilateral approach is more difficult than it was in a bipolar world. Today's world has an ever-growing need for international cooperation. International relations will continue to have the prohibition of the use of force and the conclusion of trade agreements as their guiding principles. Meanwhile, the multilateral approach is an attempt to overcome new restrictions, which is evident from the rising influence of new group actors, i.e. various G groups and regional coalitions, particularly in the field of international economic relations. Also, a matter to be addressed urgently is the reform of the United Nations, which should be implemented in consideration of the changed circumstances in the international community.

Substantial progress has been made in international criminal justice, notably with the establishment of the International Criminal Court and its several important achievements, despite the fact that the Court's jurisdiction remains limited. In addition, a major step forward has been taken with regard to some of the new multilateral concepts such as the Responsibility to Protect. The entire system of international relations is being challenged by major non-state stakeholders and their global influence.

Globalisation, the changed relations in the international community, and environmental, economic and social challenges are facts requiring that our economies, institutions and societies be reformed if we are to achieve long-term sustainability for all. This is envisaged in the Post-2015 Agenda through the goals of poverty eradication, sustainable development and respect for human rights. Globalisation requires management – all these issues will continue to gain weight in foreign policy. This also applies to climate change: scenarios up to 2050 show that temperatures in Slovenia will continue to rise and the amount of precipitation will continue to grow in winter, while it will further fall in summer in the south of Slovenia.

Slovenia is a member of the European Union and NATO, thus demonstrating that it forms part of the Western European circle of values. Through its EU and NATO membership, Slovenia has also enhanced its political weight, security and responsibility. It has only just opened two important chapters of Slovenian foreign policy: in the two forums, Slovenia must constantly prove itself, establish and strengthen its position, and, while promoting community interests, seek to pursue its own. Slovenia's membership of other international organisations is somewhat similar. In the long term, Slovenia cannot expect other major foreign policy events, such as joining the EU and NATO. After a quarter of a century important to Slovenia for acquiring its international recognition, its inclusion on the political map of the world, its accession to international organisations (the EU, NATO and the OECD), and the successful establishment of its reputation within these structures (Security Council membership, OSCE chairmanship, EU Council presidency, with which Slovenia was entrusted as the first among the countries in transition, and the chairmanship of the Council of Europe's Committee of Ministers), the emphasis falls on raising the visibility and profile of Slovenia as a state that is successful, especially economically, and in ensuring the all-round prosperity of its people, as well as responsible and active at the global level.

Diplomacy is a means of foreign policy, and as such it constitutes a key instrument for promoting national interests in international relations. To be successful in this task, diplomacy needs to be supported by the country's robust financial and economic situation, political stability, the rule of law and respect for human rights, social cohesion, the consciousness of a nation and a people, and defence forces that are able and ready to make a contribution to the joint responsibility for global security. In this regard, Slovenia is aware of the limitations of its foreign policy, such as the country's size (considering Slovenia's foreign policy capacities and its influence in the international community), but it sees them as an opportunity to establish an

authentic, pragmatic and flexible approach and identify the niche areas of Slovenian foreign policy.

Slovenia's national interests

Slovenia's national interests are built on what the state and its citizens value most and on what makes up the identity of a nation and a people. National interest may be defined as democratically established internal control of conditions that enable the reproduction of a state and society and their infrastructure.

Slovenia's vital national interest lies in the country's existence, sovereignty, territorial integrity and political independence, respect for the fundamental values and principles of the Constitution of the Republic of Slovenia, as well as the existence of the Slovenian nation and national minority and Slovenian culture and language.

Slovenia's strategic interests are: to ensure security and stability around the globe, but particularly in Europe; to maintain good bilateral relations; to establish an effective UN-led multilateral system; to strengthen the European Union and ensure that NATO play a global strategic role; to achieve the country's sustainable development, including the protection of waters as a resource of an increasing value for the future; to achieve the economic and general prosperity of the country and its people; to maintain the country's status as a crossroads of the European transport network; to ensure the country's energy, resource and food security; to fight extremism, terrorism and organised crime; to build a strong civil society; and to ensure the effective rule of law, good governance and social cohesion.

Values and interests are intrinsically intertwined in one single pillar of modern foreign policy, which seeks to create a safe and stable international environment through multi- and bilateral activities and to further open the country to Europe and the world, thus providing support to the business sector, which is important not only in economic and financial crises, but also in resolving other development and social issues. Foreign policy is an important building block for a nation's future.

1.3 FOREIGN POLICY WORKING IN SYNERGY WITH DOMESTIC POLICY

The culture of foreign policy

The central role of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Foreign policy forms the foundations of the state and its sovereignty, and is integrated into national security policy. Slovenia takes coordinated actions in the international arena, an approach essential to a country with limited resources. The consistency and coherence of Slovenian foreign policy raise the visibility of Slovenia's comparative advantages in international relations, which lie primarily in the country's geostrategic location and its particular historical and cultural aspects.

As stipulated in the Slovenian Foreign Affairs Act, the work of the Slovenian Foreign Ministry is vital for the country's international relations; the Ministry plays a key coordinating role, and other ministries and public bodies plan their activities in the international arena, including visits, in coordination with the Foreign Ministry. Good cooperation between government departments, efficiency in forming positions, and the regular flow of information between government departments are also vital. To this end, the Slovenian Government will encourage the secondment of the Foreign Ministry's diplomats to other ministries and other ministries' staff to the Foreign Ministry.

The coordination of foreign policy activities requires the special involvement of the Slovenian National Assembly, primarily its two committees on foreign policy and EU affairs, the Office of

the President of the Republic of Slovenia, and the Office of the Prime Minister of the Republic of Slovenia. Also included in Slovenian foreign policy is the Slovenian National Council, while the Slovenian Ministry of Economic Development and Technology plays a special role in establishing international economic relations.

Foreign policy in a plural society

Foreign policy challenges have the potential to significantly strengthen the fundamental national consensus and encourage reconciliation. The culture of foreign policy calls for the principled stand of politicians, the continuity of principles and values, career diplomacy, the pursuit – formalised if necessary – of a broad consensus on the primary foreign policy objectives and decisions and key candidatures within international institutions, and the demonstration of a unified national interest by Slovenia's representatives abroad.

In raising awareness within society of the importance of foreign policy, the Slovenian Foreign Ministry will call on the media (particularly the public media) to devote appropriate attention to issues of foreign policy and international relations.

Summary of key points

- **Peace, security and prosperity are the three pillars of Slovenia's foreign policy.**
 - **The international arena, including the EU, is undergoing considerable changes, which have important consequences, for which Slovenia must be prepared.**
 - **Slovenia is still one of the world's safest countries, which, however, is not a given fact, as its security requires an active foreign policy, placing more emphasis on security issues.**
 - **By defining its vital and strategic national interests, Slovenia ensures its participation in international processes and relations of particular importance to the country.**
 - **The Slovenian Foreign Ministry plays a central role in establishing Slovenia's international relations, while closely cooperating with other government departments.**
 - **The culture of foreign policy calls for a principled stand on the part of politicians, continuity, professionalism, pluralism, unity, and policy coordination regarding key decisions and candidatures within international institutions.**
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2 The concentric circles of foreign policy – priority areas

2.1 IN EUROPE AND THE EURO-ATLANTIC REGION

Europe

European policies: at the heart of a developed, deepened and enlarged European Union

It has been over a decade since Slovenia joined the European Union, the country's value, political and legal framework. EU affairs are comprehensively dealt with by all government departments and other public bodies. The guidelines for Slovenia's activities in EU institutions are detailed in a special declaration, which is prepared on a regular basis by the Slovenian Government and adopted by the Slovenian National Assembly.

The benefits of Slovenia's membership of the European Union, the Eurozone and the Schengen Area go beyond economic and security aspects: Slovenia envisions the European Union as a family of nations. The values underlying the Union are human dignity, freedom, democracy, equality and the rule of law, including minority members' rights and the preservation of cultural diversity and language equality, and these are common to the Member States and their citizens. The dynamics of changes in the Member States, the Union, and farther afield requires that strong political will be demonstrated to ensure respect for the common values and fundamental freedoms of the EU internal market, of which the free movement of workers is of great importance to Slovenia.

Slovenia is an advocate of a stronger, more integrated, efficient and transparent Union. The principle of subsidiarity laid down in the Treaty on European Union, as well as the principle of proportionality, should remain guiding principles in areas in which the European Union does not have exclusive competence, e.g. in criminal justice, and national parliaments and the Court of Justice of the European Union should continue to have a key role in monitoring respect for the principle of subsidiarity. Full respect for the principles of subsidiarity and proportionality and democratic legitimacy should be guaranteed as the deepening of the Union continues. Considering the present level of integration, it would be reasonable to continue the Union's consolidation on the basis of the existing founding treaties. In addition, Slovenia will strive to contribute to improving the Union's efficiency in the changing circumstances in Europe and around the globe.

Slovenia will continue to form flexible alliances, while enhancing its cooperation with individual Member States or groups of Member States that are guided by similar interests in establishing European policies. In this, Slovenia's priority fields will take account of the country's developmental, social, environmental, historical, cultural and other characteristics.

An effective response to global economic and financial challenges would be to ensure that Member States' economic policies are better harmonised, that greater responsibility is taken in implementing them, following jointly agreed guidelines, and that a commitment is made to practice mutual solidarity. In this context, Slovenia will devote special attention to investment, including investment linked with EU funds, and to improving the investment climate. It is also vital to the European Union and Slovenia to ensure financial stability and the long-term sustainability of public finances; to this end, Slovenia will continue to support the completion of the Economic and Monetary Union, in which the euro will maintain price and currency stability.

To achieve prosperity for all, Europe needs to ensure economic growth and development, improve the EU's competitiveness, reduce unemployment, and consolidate the internal market. In this regard, Slovenia aims to achieve the average EU development rates, so it is important that Slovenia at its present level of development, i.e. in the mid-term, maintain its position as a net recipient. Slovenia will also continue to pursue its key priorities, among which are negotiations on the EU budget, including cohesion policy funds, and the country's activities in this field. Furthermore, it is important to plan economic policies taking account of social policies – and in this context Slovenia will strive to improve the quality of life, also with support from the European Union – and environmental policies – in this respect, Slovenia will call for an environmental footprint reduction and the sustainable renewal of primary resources, as well as the preservation of cultural heritage and support for the cultural and creative sectors. The European Union's internal market gives Slovenian companies unrestricted access to the world's largest economic area, which is vitally important for the Slovenian economy due to its export orientation. Slovenia will continue to provide active support for the completion of the single internal market.

The common trade policy of the European Union facilitates Slovenian companies' access to third country markets, which is vital in today's world of increasing globalisation. Slovenia will continue to strive for an open, ambitious and balanced trade policy which fully respects the European standards that have already been achieved. In this endeavour, Slovenia will protect its cultural identity against the impacts of globalisation by protecting its cultural heritage.

The EU Member States create high added value through their joint fight against cross-border crime and terrorism, cross-border judicial cooperation in civil, corporate and criminal justice matters, border protection, and the management of migration flows. In the context of justice and home affairs, an important contribution to security and the free movement of people within the European Union has been the Schengen Agreement. With the future shifting of the Schengen border, it is Slovenia's goal to at least maintain the country's current level of protection, particularly against organised crime. With regard to the negative effects of migration, Slovenia will call for comprehensive responses, which are only possible if the cause is eliminated and which require close cooperation with the countries of origin. Furthermore, it will devote its attention to the humanitarian dimension of migration and the potential positive impact of migration on employment and demographic policies.

Slovenia will provide its support for strengthening the Union's civil protection mechanism.

Considering Slovenia's geographical position and transport capacities, it is the country's goal to be included in the modern and effective Trans-European Transport Network (TEN-T), as envisaged in the 2015 Strategy of Transport Development in the Republic of Slovenia. Also, Slovenia will promote measures taken as part of the Integrated Maritime Policy of the European Union that support Slovenia's maritime strategy.

Slovenia will strive to ensure that the full integration of the internal energy market, ambitious climate and energy goals, and ensuring energy security remain at the heart of the process of establishing a European Energy Union. Furthermore, Slovenia believes it is vital that a comprehensive approach be adopted to all aspects of energy policy and that the European Union establish a unified approach to global energy and climate issues; for this reason Slovenia promotes enhanced coordination of EU foreign and energy policies to ensure that the Union speaks with one voice at the global level.

Also in the context of EU policies, Slovenia will strongly advocate a Common Agricultural Policy that enables the sustainable and balanced development of all Europe's rural areas, while taking into account the characteristics and challenges of Slovenia's agriculture and rural areas.

Slovenia will promote the networking of all Slovenian stakeholders in research, innovation and creativity and other countries' leading stakeholders, especially in the framework of EU programmes for research and development, education and training, and culture.

Drawing on lessons learned in the past, Slovenia is aware of the importance of establishing in the European Union a strong Common Foreign and Security Policy and a strong Common Security and Defence Policy. Slovenia's history and geopolitical situation contribute to the benefits that Slovenia can offer in this regard. The European Union makes our voice stronger globally. In co-shaping these EU policies, Slovenia will devote particular attention to horizontal and regional issues of strategic interest to Slovenia. Taking account of the needs of the Union and its own interests and capacities, Slovenia will participate in civilian missions and military operations in crisis areas. It will continue to take particular interest in the Western Balkans, the situation in the region, and cooperation with Western Balkan countries.

To facilitate Slovenia's successful participation in EU institutions, it is necessary to ensure the effective coordination of EU affairs between Slovenian government departments. The coordination process will be further enhanced and will focus on matters of vital importance to Slovenia. It is important to take a proactive approach already in the course of preparing legislative initiatives and to provide timely and well-reasoned national positions, coordinated between government departments, on legislative proposals and other EU initiatives, and, later on in the Council, to participate in the policy-making process and to promote national interests. Ministries should ensure their regular and active participation in Council sessions at all levels, including the highest. To strengthen the European Union's democratic legitimacy, it is essential that the National Assembly of the Republic of Slovenia, the organisations concerned and civil society be included in preparing Slovenia's positions at an early stage. In this context, primarily to facilitate the process of endorsing positions by the Slovenian National Assembly, timely and good background information needs to be provided, particularly when Slovenia's priority issues are being considered. Equally, in considering EU matters, it is important to draw on expert knowledge.

The Slovenian Foreign Ministry holds regular informal consultations with Slovenian members of the European Parliament and maintains contact with the Slovenian staff in EU institutions, while fully respecting their commitment to working for the interests of the European Union.

Bilateral cooperation in Europe

Respecting the 2011 joint declaration by the Slovenian and German heads of government on the intensification of bilateral relations, Slovenia will maintain close dialogue with the Federal Republic of Germany on priority EU issues with the aim of enhancing political and economic unity in Slovenia and the stability of the euro. Slovenia and Germany are connected by history, the common wider Central European cultural space, and excellent economic relations. This cooperation is also important for Germany's ambition to assume a more active role in international relations, also in the field of security.

Based on the political declaration on Slovenian-French partnership, Slovenia and France maintain their cooperation predominantly through political dialogue (focused on the Western Balkans, particularly in the framework of the Brdo Process) and partnership in the business, scientific, educational and cultural sectors, in the field of the environment, and within La Francophonie.

In pursuing its strategic interests, Slovenia maintains cooperation within the European Union with all the interested partners, and, in particular, forms alliances with like-minded countries, giving priority to the countries of Central Europe and the Visegrad Group, its neighbouring countries and smaller EU Member States. Slovenia will also devote attention to its political and economic cooperation with Poland, and will pursue its maritime strategy through cooperation with the Mediterranean EU Member States.

To ensure Slovenia's presence in European countries, the Slovenian Foreign Ministry will seek to adopt innovative and unconventional approaches to determining the size, scope and type of representation to meet the needs. Throughout this endeavour, the Ministry's guiding principle will be that Slovenia's interests are not promoted and protected efficiently if the country is not represented by at least one career diplomat in countries that are bigger than, or similar in size to, Slovenia.

An important interlocutor in Europe, and farther afield, is also the Holy See, particularly on the issues of peace, development, freedom of religion, intercultural and interfaith dialogue, cultural identity, and humanitarian and other global issues that are important to the current pontiff. Dialogue with the Holy See is held as part of bilateral relations, as well as based on the provisions of the Lisbon Treaty.

EU enlargement and the European Neighbourhood

Slovenia will continue to promote EU enlargement, particularly to the Western Balkans, as the European Union's strongest geopolitical mechanism and as one of the most effective means of enhancing political and economic stability and security, while advocating that new memberships should truly constitute the enlargement of an area that builds on common values, notably the rule of law and minority rights, and that they must contribute to the region's and Europe's political stability and security. To prove their readiness for EU membership, candidate countries should both adopt and implement the EU acquis and make some social changes during accession negotiations. The Slovenian Government will prepare a thorough analysis of the impacts of EU enlargement to the Western Balkan region. In addition, Slovenia will provide support to Western Balkan countries acceding to the European Union through the Brdo Process.

Both Slovenia and Europe attach high importance to Turkey's aspirations to accede to the European Union and adopt its values. Slovenia is enhancing its economic cooperation with Turkey; in the medium and long term, the two countries have the possibility of cooperating in third markets. Also, Slovenia is an advocate of upgrading and modernising the EU-Turkey Customs Union.

In seeking to achieve its foreign policy goals that concern the Eastern and Southern European neighbourhood and the wider region, Slovenia will also pursue the EU's Common Foreign and Security Policy.

It is a priority for Slovenia that security, stability and democracy be maintained in the wider neighbourhood, and therefore Slovenia strives to nurture good relations with Eastern Partnership countries and to encourage these countries to undertake reforms to strengthen democracy, the rule of law and respect for human rights. Slovenia will provide support to those countries in the Eastern neighbourhood aspiring to become EU Member States that are the most ambitious in this process, notably Ukraine, Moldova and Georgia. In addition, Slovenia has identified opportunities for cooperation with Eastern Partnership countries on the economy and energy.

The Russian Federation

Russia is an important market for Slovenia, which seeks cooperation opportunities in tourism, agriculture, and culture and education, especially in the linguistic and technical fields. Slovenia will therefore make long-term endeavours within the European Union to encourage Russia to join the circle of shared European values with a view to establishing a long-term EU-Russia partnership that enhances Europe's global reputation. Furthermore, Slovenia will call on the players in the post-Soviet region to establish cooperation, while showing respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of all the countries of the region.

Slovenia as part of Central Europe

Slovenia is a Central European country and enjoys historical, political and cultural ties woven through many centuries with the region's other countries. Central Europe is the cradle of our cultural heritage and collective memory. Further, Slovenia is closely connected to this region in economic and transport terms. Central Europe is furthermore the natural hinterland of the port of Koper, representing the core port of the TEN-T. Central European countries are marked by their political stability, security, ambitious economic policy, and a relatively high level of

purchasing power and shared cultural characteristics, which affirms the importance of their political and economic roles to Slovenia. Its status as a Central European country provides Slovenia with many opportunities, which it will seek to seize more actively.

Slovenia will strengthen its political cooperation with all Central European countries, notably Austria, the Czech Republic, Hungary, Slovakia and Poland. Slovenia's geopolitical situation makes it only natural for the country to cooperate with the Visegrad Group with a view to strengthening cooperation on the economy, transport (in particular, to establish a rail connection between the port of Koper and Central Europe) and energy between the Baltic and the Adriatic.

There is also potential for cooperation with Central European countries and within Central European regional organisations to strengthen the coordination of activities in the European Union, the Western Balkans, the Eastern Partnership and within other multilateral organisations, to ensure protection against natural and other disasters, and to promote tourism. The fact that Central European countries share common cultural characteristics requires Slovenia to enhance its cultural promotion in these countries.

The Euro-Atlantic region

Slovenia as a NATO ally; NATO – a pillar of national and transatlantic security

It was its commitment to collective defence that led Slovenia to become, by its sovereign will, a member of the NATO alliance. Despite the fast-changing security environment and limited national resources, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization remains the most effective and efficient system of ensuring Slovenia's national security. NATO membership ensures security for Slovenia to a degree that cannot be attained by Slovenia even if it were to multiply its defence funds several times, since countries are unable to address the myriad of new challenges on their own. The changed security environment in Europe, the Middle East and beyond demonstrates the long-term need for democratic states to form a defensive alliance and for Slovenia as a NATO Member Country to participate in ensuring global and regional security by fulfilling its commitments and burden-sharing within the Alliance. Slovenia makes an important contribution in the Western Balkan and Mediterranean regions, as well as to post-conflict reconstruction and civil protection.

Foreign policy is aimed at raising awareness of NATO's role and importance, demonstrated by the Alliance's participation in protecting common values, and reinforcing public trust in the Alliance and collective defence, which forms part of joint efforts to safeguard international peace and security, which should be achieved to the greatest possible extent within the United Nations. To this end, Slovenia will build on its successful cooperation in missions.

Slovenia is a trustworthy ally and a reliable member of NATO and will continue to fulfil its NATO membership commitments. It will actively support NATO's capacity-building efforts aimed at protecting NATO Member Countries, including Slovenia, against new threats, and it will participate in strengthening traditional collective defence capacities. It will encourage unity within the Alliance and solidarity between its allies, especially with those that believe to be in particular danger. Slovenia will call for NATO's enhanced cooperation with other international organisations, and it will continue to actively engage in pursuing NATO's open-door policy and to strongly support NATO enlargement to countries that meet the conditions and whose membership would be beneficial to the Alliance. Finally, Slovenia will continue to advocate the importance of political dialogue and practical cooperation with partner countries.

Transatlantic relations

Transatlantic relations with the United States and Canada are key aspects of the Alliance and have become increasingly important in the changed security environment. Equally, the upgrade of a single transatlantic economic region has great strategic importance in relation to the world's other growing powers, as well as in terms of maintaining the standing of the Euro-Atlantic region in a multipolar world. Therefore, acting as an EU Member State, Slovenia will seize the

opportunity to participate in a project that is intended to set development guidelines for the 21st century's global economic and political relations.

The United States

Europe, with Slovenia as part of it, and the United States are bound together by common core values, roots of civilisation, and security and economic interests. Again, due to the changing security environment, Europe's security issues should be drawn to the attention of the United States. In the light of this, Slovenia believes that relations with the United States are of crucial strategic importance.

Slovenia and the United States enjoy close relations, established through NATO and Slovenian emigrants and through successful cooperation on defence and nuclear energy. These, and the United States' continued global position, require that new and close political dialogue be established between Slovenia and the United States and that the economic and scientific and technical potential be exploited more effectively. Slovenia is therefore in favour of negotiations on establishing a transatlantic trade and investment partnership between the European Union and the United States that takes account of the interests and specifics of the Union and its Member States. Furthermore, economic diplomacy will provide support to Slovenian companies wishing to seize the opportunities opened up by the partnership.

Summary of key points

- **EU affairs should be incorporated into the work of all state institutions; it is essential that Slovenia strengthen the coordination of EU affairs between its government departments.**
 - **The goal is to create a stronger, more integrated, efficient and transparent European Union.**
 - **With the Schengen border shifting, it should still be ensured that at least Slovenia's current level of security is maintained.**
 - **It is important that Slovenia be included in the Trans-European Transport Network and for support to be provided for Slovenia's maritime strategy.**
 - **Place emphasis on bilateral cooperation within the European Union, especially cooperation with key partners.**
 - **It is important that new memberships constitute the enlargement of an area that builds on common values. Provide support to Eastern Partnership countries aspiring to become EU Member States, notably Ukraine.**
 - **Encourage Russia to make a long-term commitment to shared European values, and ensure respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of all post-Soviet states.**
 - **Strengthen cooperation with Central European countries, particularly on the economy, transport and culture.**
 - **Slovenia in NATO: a trustworthy ally, an active and reliable member.**
 - **Slovenia will seize the opportunities to promote the European Union's global standing through the upgrade of a single transatlantic economic region.**
 - **Strengthen political and economic ties with the United States.**
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2.2 THE NEIGHBOURHOOD

Cooperation at the junction of the Alpine, Adriatic and Danube regions

Slovenia is a Central European and Mediterranean country situated at the heart of the Alpine, Adriatic and Danube regions, and the corresponding macro-regions, and at the junction of Western and South Eastern Europe. Slovenia, with the Czech Republic, is the westernmost of the Slavic countries. Its position at the intersection of three geographical and five language areas (Germanic, Romance, Rhaeto-Romance, notably Friulan, Finno-Ugric and Slavic) offers Slovenia excellent opportunities for economic, political and cultural cooperation. This space is also of concern to the autochthonous Slovenian national minority living in Slovenia's four neighbouring countries, which together with Slovenia form a single ethnic, cultural and language area whose preservation is of immense national importance. The autochthonous Italian and Hungarian national communities, as well as the Roma community, also play important roles in this region.

This area's natural centre is Slovenia. The area is of greatest importance to the Slovenian economy, and it is closely connected with the port of Koper; Slovenia's territorial waters are Slovenia's and Central Europe's gateway to the world.

With a view to maintaining this favourable position and seizing the opportunities, Slovenia – in addition to nurturing bilateral relations with neighbouring countries – enjoys high-level political ties with regions and federal states both at the bilateral and macro-regional levels (Alpine, Adriatic-Ionian and Danube macro-regions) and within various structures of regional cooperation. Slovenia attaches great importance to cooperation with the federal states of Carinthia, Styria and Burgenland, the Free State of Bavaria, the State of Baden-Württemberg, the regions of Friuli-Venezia Giulia, Veneto and Lombardia, the Vas and Zala counties, and the Istrian and other Croatian border regions. Cooperation with the border regions will become even more important once regions as political units are established in Slovenia which would become interesting partners for mature cross-border dialogue and would have the gravitational potential to establish successful cross-border cooperation. Due to the fact that border areas constitute a large portion of Slovenia, cross-border cooperation is of particular importance.

Neighbouring countries

Centuries of shared history and the presence of the autochthonous Slovenian minority in the Austrian federal states of Carinthia and Styria make Austria Slovenia's leading partner among its neighbours. Slovenia's foreign policy priorities will continue to include economic cooperation, the development of road and rail links, the full implementation of the Agreement on Cooperation in Culture, Education and Science, and the cultural and tourist promotion of Slovenia. Slovenia's national interest lies in the presence and progress of the Slovenian national minority in Carinthia and Styria, particularly its identity, integrity and autonomy stemming from the Austrian State Treaty. Slovenia insists that Article 7 of the Treaty be implemented consistently concerning the equal status of the Slovenian and German languages in the courts, administrative authorities, and other institutions of national, state and municipal administration. In addition, Slovenia will advocate a self-governing Slovenian national minority, and will press for the Slovenian language to be granted an appropriate status even outside the area of traditional settlement. Also, the natural disasters of recent years have shown how important enhanced cooperation is between Slovenia and Austria in this regard, primarily cross-border water management.

In its relations with Italy, Slovenia focuses on economic cooperation, the establishment of transport links, energy, the environment, the cultural and tourist promotion of Slovenia, the return of cultural property to the countries of origin, addressing the issue of the use of frequencies along the border and the issue of the Slovene Permanent Theatre in Trieste, and the promotion of cross-border regional and local cooperation. In addressing Slovenian national minority issues, Slovenia will advocate that the legislation protecting the minority should be fully

implemented throughout the entire area of settlement, putting particular attention on resolving the issue of the minority's status in the Province of Udine. Slovenia will also continue to pursue a policy of overcoming historical conflicts as laid down in bilateral agreements between Italy and the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, succeeded by Slovenia, and reaffirmed with the report of the Slovenian-Italian historical-cultural commission and through bilateral contacts in recent years.

In addition to enhanced economic cooperation, in its relations with Croatia, Slovenia's short- and medium-term focus will be on the implementation of the arbitration decision concerning the land and maritime border and the full settlement of the Ljubljanska banka issue in the context of succession. Slovenia will promote close cooperation with Croatia in the management of Krško Nuclear Power Plant, with an emphasis on finding permanent solutions to the issues of radioactive waste disposal and the decommissioning of the Plant, to which both Slovenia and Croatia committed in the interstate treaty on Krško Nuclear Power Plant. In the long term, the quality of relations between Slovenia and Croatia depends on the two countries' ability to identify the tangible strategic interests they have in common, such as economic cooperation, the protection of the Adriatic Sea, cooperation within the European Union, the establishment of transport links between the countries and further with South Eastern Europe, and energy. An important role in relations between Slovenia and Croatia will be played by public and cultural diplomacy. In addition, Slovenia will advocate that the standards applying to other national minorities in Croatia should also apply to the Slovenian national minority.

Hungary is Slovenia's only neighbour that is also a member of the Visegrad Group, and in relations with Hungary Slovenian foreign policy will keep in constant focus the following areas: transport, economic cooperation, new energy links, cooperation in Central Europe, cultural cooperation, and the enhancement of the two countries' knowledge of one another. Concerning the Slovenian national minority in the Raba Region, Slovenian foreign policy will support endeavours to revive the Slovenian language as the mother tongue there, and will call for establishing an appropriate range of protection regulations and ensuring the minority's appropriate representation in the Hungarian parliament.

The Mediterranean

In the Mediterranean region, Slovenia has been an active member of the Union for the Mediterranean and the Adriatic and Ionian Initiative. It strives to contribute to the initiative by establishing a close connection between the initiative and the EU Strategy for the Adriatic and Ionian Region. Also, Slovenia has developed good relations with the Adriatic states and Turkey, and will continue to strengthen them, as well as its bilateral relations with other countries of the European and Southern Mediterranean. It will remain a participant in various informal networks of cooperation between Mediterranean states.

Slovenia is an Adriatic and maritime country, with its Mediterranean dimension stemming from the port of Koper, a Mediterranean logistic centre of Central Europe. It is a connecting point between Central Europe and the Mediterranean. Hence it is vital that an appropriate transport link be established between the port of Koper and its Central European hinterland in order to strengthen Slovenia's position in this region.

It is in Slovenia's interest to ensure the comprehensive and sustainable management of the Adriatic Sea and coastal areas. The Adriatic region is also of great value to Slovenia due to its energy dimension. In addition, it has been dealing with the migration issue, which carries risks and responsibilities, as well as opportunities, for Slovenia.

An important demonstration of the Mediterranean dimension of Slovenian foreign policy is the hosting of the Euro-Mediterranean University (EMUNI) in Portorož, with the University being among the priority projects of the Union for the Mediterranean. Slovenia's contribution to the Mediterranean region may also be through intercultural dialogue.

The Western Balkans

The human and economic dimensions of Slovenia's ties with Western Balkan countries continue to provide a sound basis for intensified cooperation in all fields. The foundations to build on include the 2010 Declaration on the Western Balkans, the Guidelines for Slovenia's Policy in the Western Balkans, and the experience gained in the Brdo Process. Slovenia's activities in the Western Balkans also involve other EU Member States. In addition, Slovenia participates in forums looking into the region's future.

All this offers an important platform for Slovenia to maintain its position as a political, economic and development partner and adviser to the region in the process of transition and drawing closer to the European Union and NATO, also in terms of pre-accession assistance. Slovenia will promote enhanced cooperation between the European Union and the Western Balkans, particularly in running economic, transport and energy projects along the West–East axis, as well as in ensuring security and civil protection and protection against natural and other disasters. Slovenia also has direct experience to share in providing minority protection. To ensure the success of Slovenia's activities in the region, it is vital to establish cooperation between all Slovenia's government departments.

The presence of well-established Slovenian retailers and trademarks in the Western Balkans is a breakthrough, which, however, needs to be upgraded by taking advantage of Slovenia's favourable geographical location and the benefits of being a eurozone economy and by taking into account that capital flow in the region is no longer a one-way process. The presence of the Made in Slovenia label in the region in the long term depends on Slovenia's development strategy, the stability and productivity of the Slovenian economy, export diversification, and the pace and intensity of the processes of political stabilisation and transformation in the region.

The attractiveness of Slovenia and anything Slovenian in Western Balkan countries is above all due to Slovenia's EU and NATO membership, as well as to the country's trustworthiness and reputation as an economically successful Central European country fulfilling its well-established role as the region's true friend which openly pursues its strategic interests. In this regard, Slovenia will devote its attention to reviving and furthering contacts with individuals and institutions which established personal or institutional connections with Slovenia in the past and now have important positions in politics, the economy, science or culture; in particular, Slovenia will devote special attention to cooperating with younger generations without such personal experience of Slovenia.

The future of bilateral relations with Western Balkan countries greatly depends on the dynamics and quality of resolving succession issues and the aim of truly and fully implementing the Agreement on Succession Issues, as these pave the way to settling important legal relations and substantial financial obligations arising from the dissolution of the common state, as well as demonstrating political responsibility. Slovenia will look into all material and legal aspects of succession and associated issues, in particular those concerning Slovenia's vital interests.

Additionally, Slovenia will focus on the business environment in Western Balkan countries, institutional capacity-building, good governance, and the fight against organised crime. It will closely follow new security challenges caused by radical movements. Slovenia attaches great importance to the security situation in the Western Balkans, but the necessary political stability has not yet been established throughout the region. In this regard, a vital means of ensuring stability in the region is the continued strengthening of regional cooperation, and Slovenia will take part in this endeavour. Regional cooperation is aimed at ensuring mutual respect and recognition between all Western Balkan countries (as well as all EU Member States) and promoting their accession to key international organisations. Finally, Slovenia will continue to cooperate on international missions in the Western Balkans.

The Alps

Alpine countries share cultural characteristics, living conditions, and challenges associated with development efforts which aim to preserve biodiversity and the richness of natural resources.

The wider Europe is supplied with drinking water from Alpine rivers. Also, the intersection between transport connections between the south and the north of Europe, as well as between continental Europe and the Adriatic and Mediterranean lies in the Alps.

In the Alpine neighbourhood, Slovenia has used the framework of the Alpine Quadrilaterale to establish close cooperation with Switzerland, Liechtenstein and Austria, while the cooperation platform for the wider Alpine region is the Alpine Convention, whose priorities include spatial planning and sustainable development, the conservation of nature and landscape protection, alpine farming, alpine forests, tourism, energy, soil conservation, transport and mobility, water management, and climate change.

With Slovene as one of its official languages, the Alpine Convention is an important framework for Slovenia to maintain its presence in the region as a political, economic and development partner and to ensure this region's sustainable development. Slovenia will therefore further strive to maintain and strengthen the role of the Alpine Convention, also with a view to establishing connections between the European Union and the Alpine region within the new EU Strategy for the Alpine Region. In this context, it is of particular importance that Slovenia establish cooperation on the sustainable management of natural resources, especially water and biodiversity, transport, natural disasters, and green economic development.

Slovenians in neighbouring countries – a shared ethnic, cultural and linguistic context

The formation of an independent and democratic Slovenia and its accession to the European Union and the Schengen Area have consolidated the unity of this shared ethnic, cultural and linguistic space. The border areas have achieved considerable progress; nevertheless, Slovenia must strive more to ensure that the Slovenian national minority is recognised by society and that Slovene is used in public in the relevant areas.

The priorities of Slovenia's foreign policy concerning the Slovenian national minority include ensuring its adequate legal protection in all four neighbouring countries in compliance with domestic and international law, and pursuing administrative, educational, cultural and other policies to prevent assimilation. To this end, Slovenia will strive to enhance minority protection regulations through the mechanisms of multilateral organisations, primarily the Council of Europe.

Slovenian foreign policy will raise awareness of the importance of the shared ethnic, cultural and linguistic space, also with a view to enhancing Slovenia's reputation in the immediate neighbourhood and promoting the all-round progress of the Alps-Adriatic-Danube region. In the light of this, special opportunities are created by the business entities of the Slovenian national minority's members. Slovenia will be an active promoter of cross-border and all-Slovenian economic, cultural and other projects.

Based on its specific characteristics, Slovenia developed measures to regulate minority rights decades ago, by introducing exemplary practice, establishing a solid legal basis, developing expertise and setting up research institutions, which are good mechanisms and constitute a niche area of Slovenian foreign policy in regulating the status of both the minorities in Slovenia and the Slovenian national minority in neighbouring countries and farther afield.

Summary of key points

- **Slovenia – at the heart of the Alpine, Adriatic and Danube regions.**
 - **Good neighbourly relations; close cooperation with neighbouring countries' border areas.**
 - **Promote the strengthening of transport connections with neighbouring countries.**
 - **Cooperation with neighbouring countries on natural and other disasters and on climate change and environmental protection.**
 - **The return of cultural property to the countries of origin.**
 - **The continuation of arbitration on the border with Croatia, the settlement of the issues of Ljubljanska banka and Krško Nuclear Power Plant; the identification of shared interests within the European Union, in the Adriatic region and in the field of energy.**
 - **Koper – a Mediterranean logistic centre of Central Europe.**
 - **Strengthen bilateral relations in the Mediterranean.**
 - **The Adriatic and Ionian Initiative in close association with the macro-region.**
 - **The Brdo Process – connecting the European Union and the Western Balkans.**
 - **Enhance Slovenia's activities in the Western Balkans.**
 - **Slovenia – the Western Balkans' true friend, which openly pursues its strategic interests.**
 - **A comprehensive settlement of the succession issues has great importance for bilateral relations.**
 - **Regional cooperation in the Western Balkans is intended to promote mutual respect and recognition and accession to international organisations.**
 - **The Quadrilaterale, the Alpine Convention and the EU Strategy for the Alpine Region.**
 - **Adequate legal protection for the Slovenian national minority in all four neighbouring countries; the strengthening of protection through multilateral mechanisms.**
 - **A shared ethnic, cultural and linguistic area as a vital national interest and the driving force of development in border areas.**
 - **Slovenia's knowledge and experience in minority protection – a niche area of Slovenian foreign policy.**
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2.3 FARTHER AFIELD

Slovenian foreign policy, supported by the Slovenian Ministry of Economic Development and Technology and other stakeholders, will identify and promote the economy's actual interests and capacities for entering remote markets. It will take innovative approaches in economic diplomacy to establish business contacts, also by means of digital diplomacy, and make use of the trademarks of some Slovenian enterprises in those markets. Moreover, Slovenian foreign policy will nurture ties with the Slovenian community abroad, as it may act as an important lever for Slovenia in distant countries, particularly in those where Slovenia has no residential representation. Also, it will support the Slovenian émigré community, including the newly-formed community, and its development, while simultaneously promoting its members' return to Slovenia, and it will work to preserve its heritage. Importantly, Slovenian foreign policy will ensure the protection of Slovenian citizens. In performing economic diplomacy activities and ensuring consular assistance in distant countries, it will draw on the assistance of honorary consuls. It will also provide political and diplomatic support to Slovenians participating in international operations and missions.

Slovenia will pursue its foreign policy goals and assume its responsibility at the global level not only through bilateral political cooperation, but also through the European Union's Common Foreign and Security Policy, in the formulation of which Slovenia participates actively. A solid Common Foreign and Security Policy and an efficient European External Action Service (EEAS) are important for ensuring that Slovenia is well-informed of, keeps pace with, and participates in, current global developments. Slovenia wishes to see the European Union become a determined and visible player in the international arena. It is Slovenia's goal that the Union build solid and reliable strategic partnerships with global players which are also the leading regional powers in Africa, Asia and Latin America, and it believes that such partnerships should primarily aim to create an international environment conducive to security, universal sustainable growth, the rule of law, and respect for human rights. To this end, Slovenia will cooperate with the European External Action Service and EU delegations to third countries.

Furthermore, the membership of other international organisations also offers possibilities for consolidating cooperation and establishing dialogue with countries where Slovenia has no residential representation.

Finally, it will be important for cooperation at the global level to include reviving and furthering contacts with individuals and institutions which in the past had an established connection with Slovenia and now hold positions in politics, the economy, science or culture in the countries of Asia, Africa and Latin America.

Asia

Slovenia's leading Asian partners include India, Japan, and China as the world's economic superpower. Slovenia's economic interests in Asian countries are closely associated with the port of Koper, Slovenian railways, the Slovenian automotive industry, and high-tech cooperation. The highly important segments of Slovenia's cooperation with Asia concern the fields of science, development and innovation.

In fostering contacts with its Asian partners, Slovenia will secure a strong position in various initiatives through which the Asian partners establish cooperation with Central, Eastern and South Eastern Europe, as well as in initiatives promoting strategic cooperation between the European Union and Asian partners. An example of a regional platform for cooperation with India – as well as other non-European countries – is the International Center for Promotion of Enterprises (ICPE), which is the only intergovernmental organisation with over 40 years of experience in Slovenia.

Vitally important for Slovenia's standing in Asia is the country's participation in Asian-European forums (ASEAN, ASEM, ASEF) at both the political and working levels.

Slovenia will establish solid political and economic contacts with certain leading economies in Asia, particularly in Southeast Asia. It will devote greater attention to Central Asia as a promising market, with an increasing geopolitical significance, and enhance its presence in the Gulf, at both the political and economic levels.

In the light of Australia's solid strategic ties with Southeast and East Asia and Australia's location in Oceania, as well as the Slovenian community's presence in Australia, it is important that Slovenia ensure its residential representation in Australia.

Slovenia's residential representation in several Asian countries will be complemented by non-residential representation through the Slovenian Foreign Ministry. Ensuring the protection of Slovenian citizens in Asia is an important issue due to Slovenia's poor residential representation in the region.

Africa

Seeking new markets is Slovenian diplomacy's main task on the African continent. In compliance with the development guidelines for development cooperation policy, and building on the tradition of humanitarian action undertaken by Slovenian missionaries, Slovenia will intensify its development cooperation in Sub-Saharan Africa both in the medium and long term. Great potential for future contacts may be found in the active cooperation established in the fields of the economy and education at the time of the former Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. To this end, Slovenia will strive to build its contacts on the African continent with the help of the African diaspora in Slovenia. Also, it will continue to organise the now traditional Africa Day event, which has proven an effective means of public diplomacy.

Furthermore, in multilateral forums, Slovenia deals actively with issues such as human security, children's and women's rights, water supply, and demining, which constitute important niche areas in political relations with African countries. For example, Slovenia has been participating in the International Organisation of La Francophonie, which has helped the country in its relations with Francophone Africa.

Special attention will be given to protecting Slovenian citizens (tourists, individual travellers, humanitarian aid workers and missionaries, and larger Slovenian communities) on the African continent, primarily by securing a more favourable status for them concerning the visa requirement. In African countries, too, Slovenia's residential representation will be complemented by non-residential representation through the Slovenian Foreign Ministry.

Latin America

Slovenia's strong ties with Latin America are built on the region's cultural connectedness to Europe, its constantly consolidating political standing at the global level, particularly that of Brazil, economic potential, and the presence of a large Slovenian community in some countries of the region, notably Argentina. To enhance its visibility in the region and, in particular, to increase the effectiveness of its work there, Slovenia will more readily seize the available mechanisms of the European Union, other multilateral organisations and the regional financial institutions. Great emphasis will be placed on providing Slovenian citizens with consular assistance. Importantly, the Slovenian community in Latin America may also provide opportunities for Slovenia to intensify its economic cooperation with the region.

Summary of key points

- **A strong Common Foreign and Security Policy; solid strategic partnerships between the European Union and global players; security, sustainable growth, the rule of law, and respect for human rights at the global level.**
 - **Slovenia's involvement in global players' initiatives in Europe (regional platforms).**
 - **Enhance development cooperation with Sub-Saharan Africa; establish economic contacts in Central and Southeast Asia and the Gulf.**
 - **Focus on the port of Koper, Slovenian railways, the Slovenian automotive industry, science and development.**
 - **Revive "Slovenian contacts" in third countries; cooperation with the African diaspora in Slovenia.**
 - **The Slovenian community abroad – an important lever for diplomacy and the economy.**
 - **Roving ambassadors (ambassadors-at-large) resident in Ljubljana who are accredited to countries in Africa and Asia.**
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3 Foreign policy in close-up – priorities

3.1 CONSOLIDATING THE MULTILATERAL SYSTEM AND MANAGING GLOBALISATION

Engagement at the multilateral level is a pillar of Slovenian foreign policy, demonstrating Slovenia's solidarity and consciousness of its global responsibility. A multilateral approach opens a window of opportunity for countries like Slovenia, and the ability to quickly adapt to a changing world enables Slovenia to enhance its visibility and reputation and promote its values and interests. In this regard, it is important to be consistent in fulfilling international obligations, including financial obligations, and to adapt the national legal order.

Slovenia is a promoter of effective multilateralism, with the United Nations as its central pillar. However, the global environment must be reformed and reinforced through new mechanisms if it is to face new security and other challenges. To this end, Slovenia supports the reform of the UN Security Council and the admission of new permanent members. Slovenia is actively involved in the work of the United Nations and its specialised agencies, complementing this engagement with its activities within other international organisations that ensure a stable international environment and human security, notably the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) and the Council of Europe.

In the OSCE, Slovenia is active across all three OSCE dimensions: the politico-military, the economic and environmental, and the human. It is actively involved in all areas in which it has the potential to make a responsible contribution to overall security, and in matters central to Slovenia's foreign policy interests.

In the Council of Europe, Slovenia is actively involved in the protection of the rights of national minorities, women, children, Roma and other vulnerable groups.

The Slovenian Foreign Ministry and other bodies of the Republic of Slovenia coordinate their activities within the Council of Europe, including the planned presentation of Slovenia's best practices. Slovenia fulfils its obligations under the European Convention on Human Rights, which is a fundamental instrument of international law providing a basis for human rights protection in Europe after the Second World War, and other conventions to which Slovenia is a party; furthermore, it makes effective use of the Council of Europe monitoring mechanism. Slovenia also supports reform of the European Court of Human Rights in order to increase the Court's efficiency, and attaches particular importance to cooperation with the Court.

Slovenia demonstrates that it shares global responsibility and international solidarity through its active involvement in focus areas, as well as those in which it offers comparative advantages. It also participates in international operations and missions in accordance with the national strategy and foreign policy interests, thus making its contribution to conflict prevention, stabilisation and post-conflict reconstruction. It pursues its interests by nominating candidates to various bodies of international organisations. Slovenia's activities are based on an awareness that security, development, human rights and the rule of law are all interrelated.

In international forums, Slovenia also deals with intercultural dialogue, particularly in the Western Balkans and the Mediterranean region. Moreover, Slovenia would be pleased to share with the international community its experience of undergoing the transition process and building a state, as well as protecting language, culture and cultural heritage as the foundations of national identity.

Among the systemic multilateral organisations of which Slovenia is a member, the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) has particular importance, providing analysis of Slovenia's policies through comparison with other states and guidelines on promoting economic and social development. In the OECD, Slovenia has established contacts with the most developed countries and the world's leading economic players. If Slovenia is to seize the potential offered by OECD membership, it is essential that Slovenian government departments ensure that their representatives be actively involved in the work of OECD bodies and that Slovenia accept OECD recommendations.

In this context, it is important to mention the World Trade Organization (WTO). Slovenia closely follows its regular activities and takes part in ongoing negotiations aimed at ensuring further liberalisation and improving regulations, thus striving to promote and protect the interests of the Slovenian economy.

In UNESCO, Slovenia will nominate candidates and submit nomination proposals for its tangible and intangible heritage, and cooperate in the inclusion of transboundary regional heritage on UNESCO's World Heritage List, with a view to adding visibility to Slovenian heritage (e.g. the work of Slovenian architect Jože Plečnik). In addition, Slovenia will strive to promote the application of the UNESCO Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions.

All issues of global significance are discussed by the Slovenian Government on a regular basis, with the participation of Slovenian and foreign non-governmental organisations and the interested expert public. A special role in this regard is played by organisations based in Slovenia that deal with a wide scope of human security.

Peace and security

Slovenia aims to ensure and consolidate international peace, national security, and security and stability in the wider European region, the European neighbourhood and the world. To this end, Slovenian foreign policy seeks to maintain good bilateral relations, to ensure Slovenia's active participation in multilateral organisations, and to encourage development cooperation.

Slovenia will continue to support efforts for the peaceful resolution of conflicts and conflict prevention, including mediation and capacity-building at the national, regional and international levels. Furthermore, Slovenia's contribution to ensuring international security also consists in the country's participation in international operations and missions of the United Nations, the European Union, NATO and the OSCE. The increasingly complex security environment requires a responsive and comprehensive approach, a wide range of military and civilian capacities, development assistance and other forms of assistance, and the cooperation of various ministries and other stakeholders outside the state administration.

In response to new security challenges, Slovenia not only takes national measures, but also participates in the work of international organisations and forums, which primarily concerns arms control, disarmament, weapons of mass destruction non-proliferation, the fight against illegal trafficking in arms and dual-use items, the total prohibition of anti-personnel landmines and cluster munitions, the settlement of the issue of small arms and light weapons, and the fight against all forms of serious and organised crime.

In the light of the changing security environment, Slovenia will attach great importance to combating extremism, terrorism and radicalisation and preventing the presence of foreign terrorist fighters in crisis areas. The most important documents binding on Slovenia and defining its anti-terrorism measures include the relevant UN Security Council resolutions, the Council of Europe Convention on the Prevention of Terrorism, and the EU Counter-Terrorism Strategy. Within these global efforts, Slovenia attaches particular importance to regional cooperation with Western Balkan countries, with an emphasis on the transfer of best practices and increased adherence to EU standards. In this regard, Slovenia will devote particular attention to eliminating circumstances conducive to the rise of radicalisation.

Slovenia is an active supporter of the work of ITF Enhancing Human Security (ITF), a humanitarian non-profit organisation achieving excellent results in addressing the effects of anti-personnel landmines and other unexploded remnants of war, destroying conventional weapons and munitions, and helping mine victims, which proves that states like Slovenia can make a significant contribution to international humanitarian action. ITF's areas of focus include efficient and transparent management, expertise, integrity, capacity-building, greater national ownership, and enhanced regional cooperation. ITF is expanding its activities from the Western Balkans to Central Asia, the South Caucasus, North Africa and the Middle East. Slovenia supports ITF's ambition to become a leading international actor in the field of post-conflict rehabilitation.

Human rights

The Republic of Slovenia was built on respect for human rights, severing its ties with the federal state which lacked such respect. In the light of this, Slovenia strives for the further development, promotion and protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms, drawing on its own experience, as well as its past and future challenges in human rights protection. Slovenia pursues the principles of the universality, interdependence, indivisibility and inalienability of human rights, while also respecting the principle of the inherent dignity of every human being.

Furthermore, Slovenia is an advocate of the principle of equality regardless of gender, race, national origin, language, age or any other personal circumstance.

Primarily, Slovenia stands for respect for the rights of children, women and the elderly, and is involved in the field of minority protection. It also promotes human rights education at home and abroad. It advocates the right to a safe and healthy living environment, the right to safe drinking water and sanitation, and the right to a decent standard of living. Slovenia calls for the abolition of the death penalty worldwide, and seeks to integrate the issue of human rights into an interdisciplinary approach to combating trafficking in human beings.

In particular, Slovenia deals with the prevention of gross human rights violations and mass atrocities. It promotes the realisation of the Responsibility to Protect and the early detection and warning of mass human rights violations, with a view to preventing future humanitarian disasters and armed conflicts.

Slovenia is obliged to fully meet all its international commitments on human rights, and engages in dialogue with its partners in the international community to encourage them to also fully respect theirs. It also promotes greater respect for human rights through the Common Foreign and Security Policy of the European Union, regional and multilateral cooperation, the exchange of experience and best practice, and development and humanitarian aid projects.

Importantly, Slovenia is a strong advocate of human rights protection and promotion in multilateral forums such as the United Nations, the Council of Europe and the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe, and actively participates in the UN Human Rights Council as the central human rights body of the UN system. Slovenia stands for the independence and work of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights and the Office.

International law

It is an obligation, value and interest of Slovenian foreign policy to promote respect for international law, as a safe and stable international environment can only be safeguarded through respect for international law. To this end, Slovenia strives for the reinforcement of the rule of law at both the national and international levels, as the rule of law is a pillar of Slovenia's foreign policy. In this endeavour, it is important that Slovenian public bodies coordinate their activities, and for educational and scientific institutions and civil society organisations to be included in the process.

Slovenia devotes special attention to the codification and progressive development of international law, including the work of the UN International Law Commission, while also raising

awareness of the importance of international law through the publication of the International Law Series. The role of the Slovenian Foreign Ministry is to act as an international law coordinator for the state administration, also concerning the conclusion of instruments of international law and the settlement of matters relating to international agreements.

In addition, the Slovenian Foreign Ministry seeks to maintain and advance the level of expertise and experience in international law, and to encourage its experts in international law to provide valuable and valued contributions to international law at both the national and international levels. A solid legal framework will be established to encourage and make it easier for Slovenian representatives to become candidates for, and to participate in, international organisations and international judicial bodies.

Slovenia calls for strengthening mechanisms of peaceful conflict resolution. It will also nurture and broaden the knowledge and experience gained in the process of resolving international legal disputes, including in international arbitration and within other judicial bodies. In this regard, a systemic definition will be provided as to the role of the Slovenian Foreign Ministry in proceedings to which Slovenia is a party, including through the creation of appropriate structures within the state administration and the Foreign Ministry. Slovenia will look into the aspects of the optional clause of compulsory jurisdiction of the International Court of Justice in The Hague.

With regard to international criminal justice, Slovenia is not only an active member of the Assembly of the States Parties to the Rome Statute, but also a member of the Bureau of the Assembly of the International Criminal Court in the 2014–2017 period. Also, it addresses the issue of institutional capacity-building, and, in the long term, will participate in the debate on defining the criminal liability of legal persons in international law. Simultaneously, Slovenia will continue to be among those states encouraging the establishment of a new mechanism of mutual international legal assistance in prosecuting war crimes, the crime of genocide and crimes against humanity. It will strive for the moral and legal heritage of the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY) to be preserved and the prosecution of crimes under ICTY jurisdiction to continue at the national level.

Slovenia is aware that corruption is a major threat to peace, stability, and human rights development and protection, and it will therefore actively support international and non-governmental organisations in their endeavour to enhance the effectiveness of anti-corruption measures.

Finally, regarding the law of the sea, Slovenia will step up its activities within the United Nations and at the regional and sub-regional levels, ensure the safety of navigation, the development of fisheries, and the conservation of marine living resources, and promote measures against crimes that endanger the safety of navigation and the marine area.

Development cooperation and humanitarian aid

International development cooperation and humanitarian aid are integral to Slovenia's foreign policy and a demonstration of solidarity and interest in this time of unequal and unbalanced development and crises threatening global peace, security and stability. They are important contributions to consolidating Slovenia's bilateral relations and standing in the world. And if they also make use of the capacities of the public, private and non-governmental sectors, science, innovation and technology, they provide Slovenian business and other entities with an opportunity to establish themselves abroad.

Slovenia identifies its priorities and the geographical areas of focus that require its international development cooperation and humanitarian aid in the light of Slovenia's values, development strategy and capacities, the international community's goals, primarily those of the United Nations and the European Union, as well as the priorities and geographical areas of focus of Slovenian foreign policy. Importantly, activities aimed at promoting development are planned and performed with the active involvement of Slovenian diplomatic missions. In identifying the scope and means of development cooperation, Slovenia will pay special attention to the

development and involvement of those professions which can appropriately address development issues.

Slovenian development cooperation is based on the legal orders of the Republic of Slovenia and the European Union, the standards and criteria of the OECD Development Assistance Committee, the principles of development policy coordination and development cooperation efficiency, and Slovenia's experience and comparative advantages.

Slovenian humanitarian aid is a demonstration of Slovenia's solidarity with countries and individuals that face extraordinary circumstances (natural and other disasters in which relief assistance is necessary, armed conflicts, etc.). Slovenia's response is coordinated and directed by the Slovenian Foreign Ministry in accordance with the humanitarian principles of philanthropy, neutrality, impartiality and independence, while taking account of the magnitude of the humanitarian crisis, the needs of the affected population, guidelines from international organisations, and the priorities of Slovenian humanitarian aid.

As the coordinator of Slovenian development cooperation, the Slovenian Foreign Ministry ensures that all these issues are addressed with the involvement of other government departments, professionals and civil society. It also pays special attention to raising awareness among the public of the importance of development cooperation and global learning, with a view to promoting the understanding of global developments, the driving force behind them and their implications, and raising awareness of the relation between local and global dimensions.

Environmental diplomacy of a country with abundant natural resources

An abundance of natural resources provides Slovenia with an excellent starting point from which to realise its "green development breakthrough". To this end, Slovenia is actively involved in intensified foreign policy dialogue on climate change and the associated challenges. In the light of this, environmental diplomacy takes into account the interconnectedness of security, environmental, economic, development and other policies, and the importance of coordinating these policies to ensure that sustainable development goals are achieved at the global level.

Slovenia is very rich in forests, and with over half a century's experience in sustainable forest management, cooperates with countries on raising awareness of the importance of forests for the global environment, climate change, the conservation of biodiversity, and the economy. Concerning the conservation of biodiversity, it is important to mention the initiative to urge the United Nations to declare 20 May as World Bee Day. The second most important area where Slovenia has significant comparative advantages is in waters. Two international basins – the Danube basin (the Mura, Drava and Sava basins) and the basin of the Adriatic rivers (the Soča River) extend over Slovenia, in addition to the sea. Slovenia makes its contribution to resolving global environmental issues by actively addressing the issues of the sustainable management of drinking water resources, water supply, droughts and floods, and cross-border river management. Furthermore, as a maritime country, it deals comprehensively with environmental issues in the North Adriatic, with a view to ensuring synergy between biodiversity, the sectors of tourism and energy, other business sectors, and maritime infrastructure. Slovenia is also involved in the EU Strategy for the Adriatic and Ionian Region, and prioritises issues concerning the Alpine environment. Moreover, Slovenian foreign policy supports the development of green or sustainable tourism.

Summary of key points

- **Effective multilateralism – a foundation of, and a window of opportunity for, Slovenian foreign policy.**
 - **Promote intercultural dialogue.**
 - **Seize the potential that the OECD has to offer.**
 - **Add visibility to Slovenian cultural heritage through UNESCO.**
 - **Fight against terrorism: cooperation with Western Balkan countries, the prevention of radicalisation and the recruitment of foreign terrorist fighters.**
 - **Support ITF's ambition to become a leading international actor in the field of post-conflict rehabilitation.**
 - **Preventive diplomacy: early detection of human rights violations, mediation.**
 - **Human rights: children, women, the elderly, vulnerable groups, minorities.**
 - **The abolition of the death penalty; fight against trafficking in human beings.**
 - **Active involvement in the development of international law.**
 - **A valued contribution of Slovenian diplomacy to international law at both the national and international levels; encourage Slovenian representatives to apply for posts with international organisations.**
 - **Intensify Slovenia's activities in the field of the law of the sea.**
 - **Support the work of the International Criminal Court.**
 - **A new mechanism of international legal assistance to prosecute the most serious crimes of international concern, e.g. genocide.**
 - **The preservation of the moral and legal heritage of the ICTY.**
 - **The management of globalisation.**
 - **Development cooperation: a demonstration of solidarity, a means of sustainable development and consolidating Slovenia's standing in the world.**
 - **Environmental diplomacy: biodiversity, forests, waters, the Alps and the Adriatic, and World Bee Day.**
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3.2 SUCCESSFUL, OPEN, INNOVATIVE, CONFIDENT

Diplomatic support for the economy, development, education, science and culture

Economic diplomacy

The activities of Slovenian diplomacy are crucial for strengthening Slovenia's reputation and economic success abroad. Slovenian foreign policy and diplomacy focus on contributing to a stable and secure international environment, consolidating Slovenia's standing in it, and actively promoting the country's values, which include the values of the market economy, thus creating the preconditions for Slovenia's successful international economic cooperation, as well as cooperation on science, development, research and education. Effective political diplomacy goes hand in hand with effective economic diplomacy (broadly meaning all diplomatic activities in the wide areas of the economy, finance and entrepreneurship, and narrowly meaning commercial diplomacy), which focuses on providing direct assistance to enterprises. Slovenian economic diplomacy is complemented by the consular services of the Slovenian Foreign Ministry.

Furthermore, Slovenian economic diplomacy attentively follows the close interconnection between foreign policy and international relations on the one hand, and, on the other, between Slovenia's economic interests and the interests of Slovenian business entities concerning international economic relations. Also, it follows the interests of Slovenia's existing and potential economic partners and their political, economic, scientific and research development, while paying attention to anything that could damage Slovenia's interests. Slovenian diplomacy monitors the human rights situation in countries with which Slovenia has established economic partnership, and, based on this aspect, makes its decisions to enter new markets. It makes an important contribution to Slovenia's favourable international assessments, thus promoting the country's good standing in international financial markets. Economic diplomacy can only be successful in performing all of its tasks if guided by clear national policies on development, trade, investment and industry which are focused on key markets and on increasing business competitiveness.

In consideration of Slovenia's obligations arising from international economic cooperation, the Slovenian Foreign Ministry is allocated adequate funds for economic diplomacy activities; in the coming years, however, funding should be increased.

Economic diplomacy cooperates with the government department responsible for the economy to coordinate international economic cooperation actors and to provide support to the competent institutions and enterprises in diversifying Slovenian exports and foreign investment. It also identifies new, concrete and potential business opportunities, and determines the geographical areas of focus in close cooperation with other institutions and the business sector, taking account of focus markets and political and security considerations. Economic diplomacy promotes the attraction of foreign direct investment, primarily of strategic importance, in pursuit of the relevant national strategies. Furthermore, it engages in networking and collects information on the economic, business, scientific, and development and research environments of the source country to provide support for Slovenian enterprises and the Slovenian science sector. In particular, economic diplomacy plays a key role in weaker environments and economies with strong government intervention.

Economic diplomacy works in cooperation with the Slovenian Ministry of Economic Development and Technology, other government departments, chambers and other economic associations, Slovenian and foreign business clusters, and national and foreign specialised institutions.

In pursuit of Slovenia's energy and transport strategies, Slovenian foreign policy forms partnerships and enhances political contacts along geopolitical axes, which in the long term ensure a secure energy supply and good transport connections.

The Slovenian Foreign Ministry will promote the secondment of economic advisers to enterprises (and scientific and research and development institutions) before they are assigned abroad, emphasising the importance of practical work experience. Economic advisers are public officers, and their work is complemented by that of locally engaged staff. Connections in the economic, scientific, research and development, and educational sectors can be further enhanced by Slovenians working abroad (migrant workers and emigrants). In addition, the focus areas of the work of honorary consuls also concern economic diplomacy.

Slovenia's economic standing in the international arena can be consolidated through OECD membership, primarily through active participation in OECD committees and working groups.

Economic diplomacy is committed to promoting Slovenia's national interest and high standard of integrity in the public service.

Science diplomacy

Slovenian diplomacy closely cooperates with the relevant government departments to enhance the standing of Slovenia's science, innovation and higher education sectors and to promote their internationalisation. It encourages the exchange of knowledge, and promotes the interests of the Slovenian scientific, academic and educational communities in the European Union and the wider international context. The value of Slovenian science diplomacy lies primarily in exploiting Slovenia's innovation potential, scientific and technological and educational achievements, and start-up potential, attracting foreign investment to Slovenia, encouraging excellence in science, facilitating the mobility of students, lecturers and researchers, and the exchange of knowledge and ideas in Slovenia and farther afield, and promoting Slovenia's scientific and educational excellence. Slovenia ensures that its diplomatic representatives are adequately trained to work as ambassadors of Slovenian science and to engage in science diplomacy and cooperation in education.

Cultural diplomacy

Culture is both an integral part and a medium of foreign policy. Through cultural diplomacy, Slovenia achieves its goals in the international arena and consolidates its global standing, particularly in those geographical areas where the country's positive public image facilitates political and economic contacts. To this end, Slovenian cultural diplomacy strongly promotes international cultural relations. It ensures that the international public is exposed to different cultural and artistic forms of expression from Slovenia, and that their presentation, prepared with Slovenia's help, is an authentic demonstration of artistic autonomy and social diversity.

Slovenian foreign policy protects and promotes cultural and linguistic diversity, concerning both different cultural and artistic forms of expression and the protection and promotion of the cultures of different social groups.

The main tasks of Slovenian cultural diplomacy include forwarding and disseminating information on, and knowledge of, the particularities of Slovenian cultural history, the richness of Slovenian cultural heritage, and Slovenian cultural achievements. These are also of great significance for the development of cultural tourism.

An important mission of Slovenian cultural diplomacy is to consolidate the position of the Slovene language in the world, especially as an official EU language and in terms of promoting the use and learning of Slovene, particularly in places where Slovenian communities live. It is in Slovenia's national interest and in the interest of Slovene language studies to promote the Slovene language globally. Slovenia offers support to Slovene language courses at foreign

universities, the activities of the Centre for Slovene as a Second and Foreign Language, scientific cooperation, networking and other forms of learning Slovene abroad.

Slovenia appoints cultural attachés and establishes cultural centres in key locations (which may be responsible for several countries or a region), and provides adequate training for diplomats appointed as Slovenian cultural ambassadors. To ensure synergy, visibility and cost-efficiency, cultural ambassadors are part of the network of diplomatic missions and consular posts. Exceptionally, or if the circumstances so require, a separate cultural centre may be established (modelled on the Slovenian Culture and Information Centre in Vienna), or as part of the Slovenian House. In this respect, the geographical areas of focus include those countries which are Slovenia's traditional markets and countries with a Slovenian national minority. The efforts of Slovenian cultural diplomacy are complemented by those of cultural, minority and other entities.

Assistance to Slovenian nationals abroad and support to ensure safe migration

Consular services form an integral part of diplomatic activities and are vital to Slovenian diplomacy's reputation at home and abroad.

The focus will remain on providing the widest possible range of consular services to Slovenian nationals requiring protection and assistance abroad. In this context, special attention is devoted to members of the traditional Slovenian communities of migrant workers and emigrants. Also, Slovenia will place great emphasis on the particularities in consular services concerning today's migrant workers and emigrants. They are all part of the global Slovenian community, which may act as an important lever for Slovenia in the world.

Due to increasing mobility in the Schengen Area, to help Slovenian nationals, Slovenia will promote cooperation across the full spectrum of civil law, with an emphasis on family law.

In providing consular services in countries where it has no residential representation, Slovenia will cooperate with other EU Member States. Where possible, Slovenia will adapt the legal framework to allow for the assistance of honorary consuls in certain consular activities. It is also possible to establish new forms of cooperation by making better use of outsourcing, notably external service providers, other countries' diplomatic missions and consular posts, and honorary consuls. In addition, the use of digital technology opens up further possibilities in providing consular services.

In the long term, the Slovenian Foreign Ministry will examine if it is sensible to support potential EU proposals to allow for certain forms of urgent consular assistance provided to all EU citizens by EU delegations in third countries (where Slovenia has no residential representation), while respecting Slovenia's sovereignty and legal order and ensuring the protection of personal data.

At the EU level, Slovenia will advocate a visa regime that facilitates foreign tourist visits, international cooperation in the economic, scientific, educational and cultural sectors, as well as contacts with the Slovenian diaspora, and supports the European Union's and Slovenia's employment policies. If no additional funds are allocated to the consular infrastructure, it will be impossible to establish a denser network of consular posts which, as expected by the business sector, issue visas to foreign businesspeople at new and more distant locations worldwide.

Slovenian foreign policy will ensure that Slovenian diplomatic missions and consular posts work towards effectively implementing Slovenia's migration policy. In the process, it will place great emphasis on security, respect for human rights and the law, Slovenia's international obligations, international burden- and responsibility-sharing, the obligation to provide protection and help to refugees, the fight against trafficking in human beings and illegal migration, especially where women, children and other vulnerable groups are concerned, and prevention of the exploitation of foreign workers. To ensure the efficient management of migration, Slovenian foreign policy will enhance cooperation on migration and mobility at the EU level and in dialogue with third countries.

Slovenia's global standing

Public diplomacy and branding Slovenia

Strategic communication and public and cultural diplomacy are integral to Slovenian foreign policy's soft power. In order to consolidate Slovenia's economic standing, it is vital for the country to be recognised as safe, open, responsible, rich in culture and successful. To this end, Slovenian public diplomacy mainly works in Slovenia's key markets in cooperation with Slovenian government departments and agencies, using the traditional means of promotion and digital diplomacy. Among public diplomacy priorities is the promotion of tourism, aimed not only at the target business groups, but also at the widest public. In the short term, Slovenian public diplomacy needs to be allocated more funds from the Foreign Ministry's budget.

It is vital in this context for efforts to be well coordinated, hence the involvement of other government departments' and agencies' representatives responsible for promotion in the work of Slovenian diplomatic missions and consular posts. In the medium term, we will discuss what the needs and opportunities are to ensure Slovenia's presence in the form of clusters such as the Slovenian House in certain locations of high economic and political importance in the proximity of Slovenian diplomatic missions (e.g. in Brussels). However, if Slovenia is to ensure its all-round presence (in political and diplomatic, economic, educational, scientific and cultural terms), it is crucial that the economic, scientific, educational and other entities concerned provide financial support. A Slovenian House may also be a temporary project, such as in connection with important international events, especially sporting events (the Olympic Games and world and European championships).

Other key aspects of Slovenia's overall image involve the country's cultural and natural heritage, its specific geographical and transport location, biodiversity, waters, forests, Slavic heritage (Forum of Slavic Cultures), language, the Slovenian national minority in border areas, migrant workers and emigrants. Furthermore, Slovenia's image is built by Slovenian nationals and Slovenes by birth who have achieved success abroad in business, culture, science, education or other fields. Slovenia also attaches great importance to international cooperation on sport and the contribution of Slovenian sportsmen and women to the country's reputation. Slovenian public diplomacy considers all these aspects.

Slovenia's overall image is captured in the "I Feel Slovenia" brand. The government department responsible for developing Slovenia's overall image and branding works in close cooperation with the Foreign Ministry.

Summary of key points

- **Effective political diplomacy goes hand in hand with effective economic diplomacy.**
 - **Economic diplomacy coordinates international economic cooperation.**
 - **Economic diplomacy works in cooperation with chambers, economic associations and business clusters, and in close cooperation with the government department responsible for the economy.**
 - **Foreign policy efforts in support of national transport and energy strategies.**
 - **Ensure high-quality economic diplomacy services and training for economic advisers, including their secondment to enterprises.**
 - **Strengthen the engagement of honorary consuls.**
 - **Real growth in funds for economic diplomacy.**
 - **Science diplomacy.**
 - **Cultural diplomacy.**
 - **Consular services: special attention to travellers and to traditional and newly-formed Slovenian communities abroad.**
 - **EU visa regime that facilitates economic cooperation and effective migration management.**
 - **Greater attention to migration in the Mediterranean.**
 - **Public diplomacy efforts to ensure Slovenia is recognised as safe, open, responsible, rich in culture and successful.**
 - **Slovenia's "I Feel Slovenia" brand.**
 - **Slovenia's overall image also built by Slovenian nationals and Slovenes by birth who have achieved success abroad.**
 - **Consolidate the status of Slovene as an official language in the EU and in places where there is a Slovenian community.**
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3.3 DIPLOMATIC INFRASTRUCTURE

Foreign diplomatic representation and soft power

The enhancement of foreign diplomatic representation and the presence of international organisations in Slovenia are of great importance for Slovenia's standing and international economic cooperation, as well as the international character of the City of Ljubljana and Slovenia's ambition to establish itself as a regional multilateral centre. Such representation is further consolidated by other countries' honorary consuls. Slovenian and foreign international organisations, both governmental and non-governmental, agencies and other institutions, universities, and other organisations for international cooperation are important soft and indirect instruments for pursuing Slovenia's foreign policy and establishing its international relations. These include the Agency for the Cooperation of Energy Regulators, ITF Enhancing Human Security, the International Center for Promotion of Enterprises, the Center of Excellence in Finance, the Euro-Mediterranean University, the Centre for European Perspective, the Centre for International Cooperation and Development, the Centre for Arab, Islamic and Middle Eastern Studies, the Slovenian Association for International Relations, the Club of Former Slovenian Ambassadors, the United Nations Association of Slovenia, the Strategic Council for Foreign Affairs, the Slovenian Pan-European Movement, the Slovenian Emigrant Association, the emigrant association 'Slovenia in the World', the Centre for Slovene as a Second and Foreign Language, etc. Also, the Bled Strategic Forum, a leading international conference in the region, is an integral part of Slovenian foreign policy.

Slovenia will create the conditions to facilitate the smooth operation of these organisations, especially foreign diplomatic missions, and to attract new ones. To this end, the Slovenian Government will identify and strengthen Ljubljana's (and Slovenia's) comparable advantages, promote Slovenia as a springboard for South Eastern and Central European countries, consolidate Slovenia's relations with countries with non-residential representation for Slovenia, pursue a policy of increasing the number of flights from Slovenia, ensure good international primary and secondary schools, and maintain dialogue with the Municipality of Ljubljana about the practical aspects of foreign diplomatic representation and the representation of international organisations.

Towards a modern, efficient, professional and well-equipped diplomatic service

Key factors determining Slovenia's capacity and ambition to influence, and participate in, decision-making at the European and global levels which also concerns Slovenia include the quality and range of Slovenian diplomacy and the quality of its human resources and equipment. Therefore, sufficient funds need to be allocated for the operation of the network of Slovenia's diplomatic missions and consular posts, the pursuit of foreign policy, and the operation of the Slovenian Foreign Ministry's infrastructure. In the medium and long term, the Slovenian Government will ensure adequate real growth in funds for the Foreign Ministry to enable Slovenian diplomacy to ensure a range and quality of activities equal to those of comparable diplomatic services.

The importance of residential representation

Diplomacy plays a major role in a country like Slovenia, which pursues a policy of an open-market economy in an exposed, favourable geopolitical and transport location at the heart of Continental Europe. It is therefore vital to ensure representation in countries where decisions are made concerning our shared political and security space and where Slovenian enterprises do business. The efforts to rationalise Slovenian diplomacy involve engaging in those priority areas which directly concern pursuing Slovenia's strategic foreign policy and economic interests, as well as Slovenia's national interest and values. The structure and capacity of, and funds for, Slovenian diplomacy must correspond to Slovenia's foreign policy goals. Slovenia will never have an immense diplomatic and consular network, which requires that quality is put

before quantity. Serving the public interest is the primary mission of the Slovenian diplomatic and consular network.

Priority will be given to ensuring the widest possible residential representation, i.e. establishing a network of embassies and consulates extending as far afield as possible. In the process, economic and political interests will serve as the primary criteria. In finding practical solutions, the basic principles followed will include adaptability to circumstances and needs, innovation, resourcefulness and efficiency. Such solutions involve appointing non-residential ambassadors based at the Foreign Ministry, co-location with other EU Member States and NATO Member Countries in third countries, co-location with the European External Action Service, etc. Exceptionally, a mission with only one diplomat may be established which performs only a narrow range of diplomatic and consular activities.

Slovenia's medium-term plan is to open an embassy in the Gulf, Central Asia and Sub-Saharan Africa, while in the long term, a Slovenian embassy is envisaged in Southeast Asia. Also, the Slovenian Government will explore the possibility of reopening embassies which were closed in 2012 and 2013.

Establishing and maintaining Slovenia's diplomatic network abroad primarily involves ensuring adequate premises (preference will be given to permanent solutions and ownership, especially in Slovenia's focus countries), a sufficient number of visa sections using modern equipment, and an advanced information and communication system which forms Slovenia's critical infrastructure enabling the country to maintain contact with its missions abroad in any circumstances. Attention will also be given to decorating Slovenian missions with representative works of art.

The professional, career and personal development of staff

People are diplomacy's greatest asset; they are a store of knowledge of, and experience in, the diplomacy of a country as a whole. The medium- and long-term plans should include creating more favourable conditions for foreign and internal service staff, principally to the advantage of the foreign service. It is also necessary to consolidate the foreign service to enhance economic diplomacy. In the medium term, it is necessary to ensure regular annual recruitment on the basis of public calls for applications, and the testing of candidates' knowledge and personal qualities (i.e. the annual recruitment of at least five young diplomats).

Human resource development is closely connected with the increased loyalty of the Foreign Ministry's staff, notably its diplomats. The functioning of diplomacy and the selection of diplomatic service candidates is built on a professional and career system based on knowledge, personal respect for Slovenia's values and its foreign policy values, and excellence. The ethics and integrity of Slovenian diplomats are the diplomatic service's core values.

Furthermore, a separate definition will be added to the system of public officers for the profession of a diplomat, taking account of the specifics of a diplomat's work, particularly during secondments abroad (when diplomats are constantly available, often work outside their normal working hours, meet special conditions for their secondment, and face the particularities of working abroad and in very small teams). At the Slovenian Foreign Ministry, a difference will be made between officials and diplomats, taking account of the scope of their work. The Slovenian Foreign Ministry will promote the regular rotation of diplomats between internal organisational units, thus seeking to meet Slovenia's needs for diplomats generalists.

The focus of diplomats' work will be on networking, good diplomatic reporting, analytical skills, team work, personal initiative, taking personal responsibility for their work, and management skills. In addition, the Slovenian Foreign Ministry will encourage the learning of non-European languages and acquisition of specialist knowledge of non-European environments. It will also promote the learning of English and French, as well as other European languages.

As regards the field of analysis, it is necessary to concentrate Slovenian knowledge institutionally (in the form of a think-tank or a national foreign affairs council) in order to ensure

the coordination of expertise of the Slovenian Foreign Ministry and Slovenia's soft power in the area of international relations. In this field, special attention will be given to the study of the standing and role of countries comparable to Slovenia and diplomatic services comparable to Slovenia's.

A separate organisational unit of the Slovenian Foreign Ministry will organise specialist training, which will be taken into account for promotion, secondments abroad and rewards and which will also be open to external candidates; the unit will also be responsible for establishing a corpus of the Ministry's theoretical and practical knowledge and enhancing the Ministry's analytical capacities. Moreover, education and training will also be provided by renowned Slovenian and foreign institutions. Mid-level and senior diplomats will have the possibility of temporary secondment to other government departments and the business sector if the latter are interested in having support (from diplomatic advisers) in international relations or in order to enable diplomats to gain new work experience; furthermore, needs and opportunities will be identified for other bodies' public officers to gain new experience at the Foreign Ministry. The Slovenian Foreign Ministry will provide the specialist training of diplomats in cooperation with other government departments which can offer specialist knowledge.

The medium-term plans involve adapting regulations to meet the Slovenian Foreign Ministry's needs concerning benefits for diplomats on secondment abroad, which will be determined by paying special attention to working in very challenging environments (security risks, the climate, geographical distance, lack of interest of staff in a particular secondment), the needs of diplomats' families, adequate health care and health insurance for diplomats on secondment abroad, and pension insurance for diplomats' partners.

Slovenians in EU institutions and other international organisations

Taking account of the priorities and the geographical areas of focus of Slovenian foreign policy, the Slovenian Foreign Ministry will use its implementation plans to identify postings of interest to Slovenia at all career levels in international organisations in the field of foreign affairs, primarily in the UN (and its specialised agencies), the EU, NATO, the OSCE and the OECD, and, in cooperation with other government departments, in multilateral organisations whose fields of work correspond to those of other ministries and public bodies. In the latter context, priority will be given to EU institutions, NATO, and international law institutions. The Slovenian Foreign Ministry will identify suitable candidates and actively support their candidatures. Furthermore, during the secondment of successful candidates, it will maintain regular contact with them, while fully respecting their commitment to professional independence.

At the EU level, Slovenia will advocate a policy of seconding national diplomats to the European External Action Service, which recognises their value to the EEAS and, based on relevant agreements with EU Member States and funds allocated from the EU budget, enables the EEAS to be flexible enough in assigning the diplomats to posts, while ensuring that EU Member States constantly participate at all career levels with a proportional share of seconded national diplomats.

Summary of key points

- Create the conditions for maintaining foreign diplomatic representation and foreign policy's soft power.
 - Bled Strategic Forum – a leading international conference in the region.
 - Real growth in funds for foreign policy.
 - The importance of residential representation: expand the Slovenian diplomatic network to pursue Slovenia's political and economic interests.
 - Ensure adequate diplomatic infrastructure.
 - Provide training for junior diplomats and regular training for the staff, and establish a separate educational unit at the Slovenian Foreign Ministry.
 - Enhance the Slovenian Foreign Ministry's analytical capacity, ensure its strategic consideration, and concentrate diplomatic knowledge institutionally.
 - Increase staff loyalty and consolidate the professionalism and integrity of Slovenian diplomacy.
 - Provide a regulatory definition of the specifics of the diplomatic profession and work.
 - Provide systematic support to increase the number of Slovenians in international bodies, principally the EEAS, NATO, and international law organisations.
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