



Statement by the Prime Minister of the Republic of Slovenia, His Excellency Dr. Robert Golob, at the 71st Annual Session of the NATO Parliamentary Assembly, Ljubljana, 13 October 2025

*President of the NATO Parliamentary Assembly,
Vice President of the National Assembly of Slovenia,
Delegates of the Assembly,
Excellencies,
Friends and Colleagues!*

I am sincerely pleased that, after two decades, Slovenia is once again hosting the NATO Parliamentary Assembly here, in Ljubljana. As delegates of your parliaments you are the living proof that NATO is – first and foremost – an alliance of values. You also represent the practical expression of our collective trust in the power of deliberation and in our ability to tackle all the challenges through a democratic process.

I know that during the past couple of days you had intense discussions in your five committees and that you examined all the major issues in depth. Allow me, however, to highlight in particular the work of the Science and Technology Committee. It seems to me that its deliberations go to the core of some of the major dilemmas facing our Alliance today. On the battlefields of Ukraine, we are witnessing a profound revolution in military affairs, which is already having an impact on our own security. I am talking, of course, about uncrewed warfare and the numerous dilemmas that it represents.

As we were able to observe just recently, the main issue is the problem of asymmetry: how to respond in an efficient and cost-effective manner to a challenge represented by cheap and mass-produced drones? Most of our current capabilities are high-end and in limited numbers. We therefore need to rethink not only how we fight, but also how we approach our defense planning and how we resource our militaries. The challenge that our own silo mentality represents in finding the right answers was highlighted during your deliberations and I appreciate that. We must therefore press on with the kind of open and honest discussions that you have had here in Ljubljana.

I understand that we cannot entirely replicate the speed and magnitude of innovation that is taking place in Ukraine – after all, the country is at war. We can and should, however, take full advantage of the lessons learned. I therefore cannot emphasize enough the importance that I attach to the Joint Analysis, Training and Education Centre that we established recently in Poland and to its mission of making available to all the Allies the invaluable front-line experience of Ukraine. I also believe that in the future the role of the Supreme Allied Commander for Transformation should be even more pronounced. After all,

who is to say that at this pace of development some other new weapon system is not on the horizon, utilizing not only artificial intelligence but also quantum technologies? And that is why we should also make sure that the NATO Defence Planning Process is agile and adaptable enough to be able to respond to the new realities. This is the only way to ensure that the capability targets of today will not be the legacy systems of tomorrow.

The time for action is now. I am saying this since I am convinced that in addition to the on-going Russian war against Ukraine, we are faced with at least three other areas of potential tensions. The first one is our Southern Neighborhood, because of the challenges of terrorism and migration but also because of Gaza. The campaign of destruction that Israel has waged there is not only militarily disproportionate and morally wrong, but has destabilized the wider region, creating uncertainties even for Europe – just think of the significant disruption to the merchant shipping through the Red Sea. I therefore sincerely hope that today we will finally see genuine progress towards the much needed ceasefire. All of which leads me to say that we need to be aware of these potential scenarios and prepare for them, which is why your policy recommendations are all the more important.

I think that by now many of you might be wondering why have I not mentioned the Western Balkans? After all, the biggest Slovenian military contingent abroad is in the KFOR operation in Kosovo. Let me be therefore clear: I regard the situation in the region as an internal European matter. I see all the countries there as an integral part of Euro-Atlantic and European integrations. Our main concern should be to maintain peace and stability on the ground and work towards our common goal of having the entire region join our ranks. I fully agree with the recommendation of the Political Committee that what is needed is an even deeper NATO and EU engagement. We should make sure that our joint efforts in the region are as coordinated as possible. This is not the time for any spoilers in our ranks. Bilateral disputes and ambitions should be put aside. This is the time when we really need to demonstrate our collective unity.

I am saying all of this also because NATO is at its origins a European project. Its first headquarters were in London, followed by Paris. It is therefore only appropriate that today both NATO and the EU find themselves in Brussels, since they are simply two sides of the same coin. This also means that we, as Europeans, should and must own up to our commitments. Speaking of the recent Hague Summit Declaration, I cannot but emphasize enough the importance that I attach to its call to unleash innovation. Here, we should take the Ukrainian experience to heart. The first phase of the conflict showed the importance of artillery and long-range fires. Today, we see the role played by drones, as well as the importance of space, especially in terms of communications and targeting data. These are the areas we should be thinking of when investing in our industrial base.

At the end of the day, the security of the Euro-Atlantic area post-Hague depends on us fulfilling our agreed capability targets, especially when it comes to air defense, and on our continued support to Ukraine. I am therefore proud to say that Slovenia gave a lot and quickly after the Russian invasion and that it continues to support Ukraine to this day, also through the most recent PURL initiative. This is because we understand that the best investment in our defense is by supporting Ukrainians themselves. Of course, we must also never lose sight of our own obligations. I would therefore like to point out that the Slovenian National Assembly adopted a resolution this summer, which envisions an incremental increase of our defense expenditures to 3% of GDP by 2030. I find this important, because it underscores the whole-of-society approach that we all need to have when it comes to issues of national and collective security.

Let me therefore conclude by emphasizing the importance of our close dialogue to ensure a strong NATO. Our unity is our major strength.

Thank you.