

## **DECLARATION OF FOREIGN POLICY**

On the basis of Article 2 of the Law on Foreign Affairs (Official Gazette of the RS, no. 1-I/91) and Article 169 of the Rules of Procedure of the National Assembly of the Republic of Slovenia, the National Assembly of the Republic of Slovenia, at a session held on 17 December 1999, adopted a Declaration of Foreign Policy of the Republic of Slovenia, which reads as follows:

### **INTRODUCTION**

Endeavouring to consolidate the international position and standing of the Republic of Slovenia as a democratic, stable and successful central European state, and in order successfully to pursue its fundamental foreign policy interests and objectives, the underlying orientations of its foreign policy activity must be defined and coordinated. These orientations are based on wide political consensus among the parties in the National Assembly, as the body with responsibility for the foreign policy of the Republic of Slovenia, and on a wide consensus of representatives of civil society active in the field of international relations.

In identifying its foreign policy priorities, the Republic of Slovenia considers the current situation and the possible development of the international political, economic and security situation in Europe and in the world, and proceeds from these to the values, interests and aims which are vital for the development of the Slovenian nation and Slovenian state. Slovenia is aware that this development is guaranteed by lasting peace and stability both in Europe and in the world.

Slovenia's foreign policy must guarantee two fundamental values: the security and the welfare of the state and its citizens. Slovenian foreign policy is based on maintaining the Slovenian national identity and, at the same time, an openness to the world. A successful foreign policy must be an effective instrument of the development of the Slovenian economy and Slovenia's promotion in the world.

The Republic of Slovenia bases its foreign policy on the fundamental principles of the constitutional system of the state and generally applicable principles of international law. It strives to strengthen Slovenian statehood, which is based on the national, cultural and linguistic sovereignty of the Slovenian nation and the guaranteed rights of the Italian and Hungarian ethnic communities. The Republic of Slovenia monitors the position of the members of the Slovenian minority in neighbouring countries and upholds their endeavours to have the countries of their residence respect international obligations relating to their protection. It will assist them in strengthening ties of emigrants and migrant workers with Slovenia and promote their endeavours to preserve a Slovenian identity.

In the field of international relations, the Republic of Slovenia strives for a peaceful settlement of conflicts and renounces the use of force. It supports arms control, disarmament and the non-proliferation of arms of mass destruction.

The Republic of Slovenia respects and upholds the right of nations to self-determination.

The Republic of Slovenia upholds the strengthening of cooperation and trust and overall respect for human rights as laid down in international agreements and other international acts or customary international law. It pays special attention to control mechanisms and the settlement of the human rights issue throughout Europe.

The Republic of Slovenia strives for the settlement of succession issues in accordance with international law, taking into consideration the dissolution of the former state, equal treatment of all newly independent successor states and proportionate assumption of succession rights and obligations.

In the field of global and regional international economic relations, the Republic of Slovenia upholds solutions which guarantee full employment, a higher quality of life and conditions for economic and social progress and development.

The Republic of Slovenia supports combat against terrorism, drugs trafficking and all other forms of international crime in accordance with the Constitution and international law.

Given the ever closer economic and security-defence linkages between European countries, the strategic development and security interest of the Republic of Slovenia is focused on integration into the European Union, Western European Union and NATO. In order to accelerate economic development and strengthen its international role, the Republic of Slovenia seeks to achieve active cooperation on an equal footing in prominent international organisations and institutions.

The basic guidelines of Slovenian foreign-policy activity include guaranteeing national independence, Slovenian national identity and security as well as protection of the interests of the Slovenian state and its citizens, both those at home and those abroad. The prime foreign policy task of the Republic of Slovenia remains however, the settlement of relations with neighbouring countries based on mutual trust and respect as well as good cooperation in economic and other fields. The Republic of Slovenia will settle the position of national minorities in accordance with the Constitution, UN Charter and Conventions of the Council of Europe.

## **EUROPEAN UNION**

One of the priority tasks of Slovenian foreign policy is full membership of the Republic of Slovenia in the European Union. Slovenia's decision to join the European Union is based on the Slovenian cultural and civilisational position in the European area covered by the EU and which is also reflected in close political, economic and cultural cooperation with the European Union, its institutions and Member States.

The Republic of Slovenia pursues the same objectives and fundamental principles as the EU, among them the underlying principle of full equality between all Member States and respect for this principle in the integration of new states in the EU. Slovenia is harmonising its legislation with the EU *acquis* in order to create the conditions for the free movement of goods, services, capital and persons. The Republic of Slovenia wishes to join the EU at the currently achieved level of economic and political integration. At the same time, it wishes to participate in the process of enlargement and enhancement of integration in accordance with the goals of the Treaty on the European Union. The legal basis for cooperation between the Republic of Slovenia and the EU is the Europe Agreement. The

Republic of Slovenia has already submitted an application for membership and entered into negotiations on full membership. In compliance with the declaration of the National Assembly of the Republic of Slovenia, adopted in 1996, the citizens of Slovenia will decide on integration into the EU in a referendum.

The implementation of the Europe Agreement, negotiations and the implementation of the pre-accession strategy represent three interrelated parts of the process of Slovenia's integration into the EU. The Republic of Slovenia's National Programme for the Adoption of the Acquis envisages that Slovenia will meet all conditions for full membership at the end of 2002.

The pre-accession strategy and negotiations have become inseparable constituent parts of the process of integration into the EU. The Accession Partnership and the National Programme for the Adoption of the Acquis, together with strengthened pre-accession assistance, are a new element in relations between Slovenia and the EU, which must form the basis for the long-term development of the Republic of Slovenia and cooperation with the EU and its Member States. Their implementation is a priority task which will prepare Slovenia for full membership in the EU.

The Republic of Slovenia upholds the common foreign and security policy of the EU, endorses its further strengthening and, even prior to becoming a full member, increasingly complies with EU principles and decisions in conducting its foreign policy.

## **NATO AND SECURITY POLICY**

One of the fundamental values to be guaranteed by the foreign policy of the Republic of Slovenia is certainly its secure position in the international community. Slovenia is not exposed to direct security challenges, although unforeseen security challenges in the coming century are possible. The fact remains that the Republic of Slovenia is situated on the edge of the unstable area of the Balkans and Southeast Europe. Its Mediterranean position dictates it to pay special attention to strengthening its security position in the long run.

As a relatively young country with limited armed forces of its own, the Republic of Slovenia can guarantee its long-term security foremost through settled relations with its neighbours, integration into reliable alliances and active participation in the systems of collective security.

In the present international situation and looking a few decades ahead, NATO seems to be such an alliance. Integration into NATO is therefore one of the basic strategic national interests of Slovenia and its foreign policy. The realisation of this national interest, which is also confirmed by conclusions of the National Assembly, requires that the Republic of Slovenia cooperates actively as a partner with NATO now and integrates into its structures and participates in its activities, including the Partnership for Peace.

In periods of international stability, the security of smaller countries is not questionable. However, as proven by the history of our century, it is small countries which are most exposed to dangerous security challenges in periods of international crises, if they are not firmly rooted in strong and reliable alliances. By upgrading its own armed forces and particularly through relevant foreign policy decisions, Slovenia strengthens its position as a

future NATO member. This implies that Slovenia confirms its partnership with NATO through concrete foreign policy positions, measures and activities. Of special importance to upgrading our partnership with NATO is the active role and cooperation of the Republic of Slovenia with NATO in its endeavours to eliminate trouble spots in the Balkans.

In the process of establishing a new European or transatlantic security architecture, the WEU and the OSCE are assuming an ever more important position. Integration of the Republic of Slovenia into the WEU, which, together with NATO (and in cooperation with it) is evolving into an important factor of European security, is likewise a strategic goal of foreign and security policy, the implementation of which will run parallel with integration into the EU.

Slovenia will be active in the OSCE and will realise its interests in partnership with the EU and NATO and will actively seek to find unanimous and effective solutions, particularly as regards security issues in Southeast Europe. In addition, Slovenia will advocate the integration into the OSCE of all newly independent democratic states which have emerged on the territory of the former SFRY.

## **NEIGHBOURING COUNTRIES**

The Slovenian strategic interest and the key element of security is settled relations with neighbouring countries based on mutual trust and intense comprehensive cooperation. Such a concept of the interest of the Republic of Slovenia is directed at safeguarding territorial integrity and continuity of internationally recognised state frontiers, protection of rights of national minorities and their overall development, strengthening of economic ties and more developed forms of economic, informational and cultural as well as all-round cooperation between local communities and regions, construction of modern road, rail and other communications, as well as strengthening trilateral and similar links which are an important factor and element of the future European, political, economic and security structure. Slovenia bases its relations with neighbouring countries on tolerance, mutual respect and a search for mutually acceptable solutions.

### ***Republic of Croatia***

The Republic of Slovenia and the Republic of Croatia are connected by the longest stretch of Slovenian frontier and numerous economic, cultural and other links. The Republic of Slovenia is therefore striving to strengthen and develop good neighbourly cooperation. Cooperation with Croatia is diverse and intensive, and exemplary in a number of fields. Cooperation between the two countries is particularly successful in the multilateral field. Their bilateral cooperation, however, is marked by the solving of certain outstanding issues caused by the dissolution of the SFRY. One of the most important issues for Slovenia is the settlement of property issues. The Republic of Slovenia will protect its vital interests relating to outstanding issues concerning the frontier in Istria by all legal and political means available to each member of the international community. The vicinity of the Balkan crisis area makes it additionally essential for Slovenia to have settled relations with neighbouring Croatia, since the stability in Croatia crucially affects the stability of the entire region. Croatia remains one of the most important long-term economic partners of Slovenia. Slovenia is strategically interested in the integration of Croatia into Euro-Atlantic structures, since such an orientation of Croatian foreign policy can greatly contribute to the consolidation of security and stability in the broader region and to the favourable development of bilateral relations between the two countries. Slovenia will strive for all

forms of regional and border cooperation with Croatia which can considerably improve the conditions for the population in the border region. Slovenia will furthermore cooperate with organisations of Slovenians living in Croatia and will strive for recognition of their minority status.

### ***The Italian Republic***

As one of the founding members of the EU and NATO, and as a neighbouring country, Italy is one of the most important partners in the political and economic fields. By gradually overcoming and solving outstanding bilateral issues on the basis of respect for international treaties in force, the two countries have recently established a strong partner relationship. This relationship considerably strengthens regional cooperation and common endeavours at ensuring stability and security in the region, in which both Slovenia and Italy equally realise their own long-term interests. Among all the western allies, Italy has given our integration into the Euro-Atlantic structures the firmest support, since this is in Italy's direct regional interest. An important factor of bilateral relations are the national minorities. The Italian Government has drafted and submitted to parliamentary procedure a draft law on global protection of Slovenians, which for the first time provides recognition of the rights of Slovenians in the Udine province; this law, however, has not yet been adopted. This outstanding issue is burdening the otherwise good bilateral relations between the two countries. Slovenia, together with the organisations of the Slovenian community in Italy, will insist that such legal protection be adopted as corresponds to the needs of the Slovenian community in Italy and is comparable to the legal protection of the Italian minority in Slovenia in terms of quality and scope of rights.

### ***The Republic of Austria***

Relations between the Republic of Slovenia and the Republic of Austria are intensive and cooperative in both bilateral and multilateral fields. The quality of these relations and endeavours towards their further improvement, which is in the mutual interest of both countries, constitute an important factor in the support Austria has been lending to our integration into the EU. Austria remains one of the most important Slovenian foreign trade partners. Slovenia anticipates that Austria, both at federal and provincial levels, will make additional efforts comprehensively to discharge the as yet unfulfilled obligations to the Slovenian minority in Carinthia and Styria, provided by the Austrian State Treaty. As one of the successor states to the SFRY, Slovenia is entitled to succession of the Austrian State Treaty, which binds Austria to fulfilling its international legal obligations concerning protection of the Slovenian minority.

### ***The Republic of Hungary***

Relations between the Republic of Slovenia and the Republic of Hungary are very good in most fields. In accordance with a signed agreement, Slovenia strives for further consolidation of the position of the Slovenian minority in the Porabje region and for the improvement of economic cooperation between the two countries, particularly in the border region. Slovenia and Hungary - which is a full member of NATO - share a common strategic goal - full membership of the EU, which requires an increasingly intensified partnership between the two countries and enhanced cooperation in all fields, particularly in providing peace and stability in Southeast Europe.

### ***Regional initiatives***

Slovenia will cooperate with the neighbouring countries in further strengthening regional initiatives. In this context, it will continue to devote special attention to trilateral cooperation with Italy and Hungary, with particular stress on the strategic and security field and

integration into the EU and NATO. Within its abilities, Slovenia will participate in initiatives for trilateral cooperation between neighbouring regions in the border triangle Slovenia-Austria-Hungary and in the border triangle Slovenia-Austria-Italy. In order to strengthen the economic transport axis along European Corridor V, Slovenia will cooperate with all the countries covered by the axis.

## **EUROPEAN COUNTRIES AND THE USA**

### ***European countries***

The priority goal of the Republic of Slovenia is integration into political, economic, and security flows and structures in Europe. This goal is reflected in a balanced approach to ensuring good and stable relations and in cooperation with European countries, particularly EU members. Relations between the Republic of Slovenia and Germany, France, and Great Britain, in addition to Italy and Austria, are particularly important from the aspect of economic and political interests. Relations between the Republic of Slovenia and candidates for EU membership are also of great relevance.

### ***Central European countries***

The Republic of Slovenia is a Central European country also linked to the European part of the Mediterranean. Since a major part of its history is linked to this area, Slovenia seeks to make itself recognisable on the basis of its Central European identity; it is, however, open to the entire European area.

Slovenia, therefore, finds cooperation and linking with the countries of Central Europe, in particular in the economic and cultural fields, to be an important part of its foreign policy activity, both bilaterally and multilaterally (CEFTA, CEI, the Alps-Adriatic Working Community). As a coastal state, it is also engaged in multilateral links in the Mediterranean area. It is further linked with numerous Central European countries through the preparations for full EU membership.

In the economic sense, the Republic of Slovenia tries to benefit from its geopolitical position at the juncture of the axes linking the Western Mediterranean with the Ukraine, and the Baltic with the Adriatic.

### ***The United States of America***

The altered international situation following the fall of the Berlin Wall has further strengthened the US role as the major world power. This, of course, is very relevant for the foreign policy of the Republic of Slovenia. The position of the US is specially relevant for our country in particular with reference to issues of European security, our relations with international financial organisations, and our integration into NATO. The US plays a leading role within the Alliance, and successful cooperation and enhanced bilateral relations, therefore, increase our chances of joining the North Atlantic Alliance. Active endeavours of the US towards stability in Southeast Europe, which is also in the interest of Slovenia, is a further reason to deepen and strengthen our alliance with the US. Continued development and enhancement of good bilateral relations is, therefore, extremely important for the Republic of Slovenia. In addition to political interstate contacts, cooperation in economic, scientific, research, technical, and cultural fields must also be expanded.

On the basis of cooperation with the US as a strategically relevant partner, the US presence in Slovenia should be strengthened through attracting new investments.

### ***The Russian Federation***

Further development of good relations with the Russian Federation, in particular in the economic field, is in Slovenia's interest. Slovenia is interested in the long-term in economic and political stabilisation of the situation in the Russian Federation.

### **SouthEast Europa**

Through its successful development and foreign policy, the Republic of Slovenia has established itself as a Central European country. This has resulted in necessary conditions and expectations of the international community for its active engagement in the crisis area to the south-east of its borders.

#### **Solving of succession issues**

On the basis of the plebiscite decision in favour of independence and by resisting aggression, Slovenia, within the process of the dissolution of the SFRY, established itself after 1991 as a new successful state, one of the equal successors to the former state. Based on the constitutional and international legal supposition that five equal successors, new states have been established, the Republic of Slovenia entered the UN and other international organisations, settled its relations with international financial institutions, and is realising its interests within the succession negotiations. Slovenia consistently realises and advocates a position based on the opinion of the Badinter Commission.

#### **Political, security and economic interests of the Republic of Slovenia**

The stability of Southeast Europe is in the vital interest of the Republic of Slovenia. Slovenia and its strategic partners have to become recognisable as an important international factor precisely in this part of Europe. Slovenia's active role in this area, particularly in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, and in solving the Kosovo issue, has established Slovenia as an important partner of NATO, the EU and the USA, and, together with its activity in the UN Security Council, has proved that Slovenia is a reliable partner in settling the situation in this part of Europe.

Political, security, economic, and other interests and reasons require Slovenia's active involvement in Southeast Europe. Slovenia, therefore, supports all endeavours and initiatives by the international community towards stabilisation and development of this area. Slovenia participates in the Stability Pact for South-Eastern Europe together with the EU, US, RF and other participants in the Pact, with special emphasis on economic projects, protection of human and minority rights, and in the humanitarian field in eliminating the consequences of war. It is in its interest to develop relations with both entities of Bosnia and Herzegovina (Federation and Republika Srpska), firmly supporting, at the same time, the implementation of the Dayton Agreements, and to continue to develop its relations with Macedonia, Albania and other countries in the region. Through its active role and support to democratic processes in this area, Slovenia is establishing itself as an important and reliable partner of the international community in settling the situation in this part of Europe.

Slovenia is interested in the development of economic, cultural, and other cooperation with partners in Serbia, similar to that which has already been developed with partners from Montenegro. With appropriate protection of its interests, the Republic of Slovenia will endeavour to normalise its relations with the FRY, including the establishment of diplomatic relations as soon as a democratic system is established in Serbia.

### **NON-EUROPEAN STATES**

The Republic of Slovenia will continue to strengthen all-round cooperation with non-European states. As an active member of the international community, Slovenia will continue to conduct dialogue with the most important countries and regional initiatives and organisations in this part of the world. Slovenia will further build its presence in carefully selected locations in which there are ample needs and possibilities for economic cooperation. Considering the strategic opening of the European Union to non-European states and within the framework of the globalisation of the world economy, the Republic of Slovenia will pay special attention to its presence in individual regions of the world and in non-European states.

Particular attention will be devoted to cooperation with the People's Republic of China as a permanent member of the UN Security Council and to those countries in which live large communities of Slovenian emigrants.

### **GLOBAL POLICY**

Slovenia implements its basic foreign policy goals and interests by its membership in the United Nations and other important international organisations. This is at the same time the basic framework of the implementation of Slovenia's global policy of strengthening its international position and promoting its national interests. As a non-permanent member of the UN SC, the Republic of Slovenia gained an opportunity for long-term reinforcement of its international position and reputation, as well as for promoting its interests in relations with individual countries. Slovenia's global policy is based on selectivity as a method of maximum exploitation of the above mentioned national resources and criteria of defining and realising foreign policy interests. The European and Euro-Atlantic dimensions of global policy are the most important for Slovenia. Slovenia realises its vital political, economic and security interests by participation in the EU, NATO, OSCE and the Council of Europe. These interests will be fully realised by its membership in the EU, NATO, WEU, OECD and ILO.

### **REGIONAL POLICY**

Regional policy and relations with its neighbours are important elements of Slovenia's European- and Euro-Atlantic-oriented policy. Slovenia's regional policy comprises the regions in its direct vicinity, in Central and Southeast Europe. Through active involvement in various forms of regional cooperation, Slovenia has an opportunity to identify itself in the region and strengthen its position within the wider Euro-Atlantic policy. Slovenia will continue to follow this direction and will actively participate in various forms of trilateral cooperation with neighbouring countries, the CEI, CEFTA, SECI, Royaumont initiative, the

Alps-Adriatic Working Community and the emerging Adriatic initiative. The strengthening of cooperation with Central European countries is also part of this action.

The Republic of Slovenia is also cooperating with regions in individual countries, in particular with regard to promoting economic and other ties (Bavaria, Catalonia, Baden-Wuerttemberg, and Lombardy).

## **CONCLUSION**

Following the basic values and long-term interests, the priority goals of the foreign policy of the Republic of Slovenia include: the consolidation of its international position and reputation; stable and good neighbourly relations with all countries in our immediate vicinity; full membership of the EU, NATO and the WEU; membership in the OECD; the active role in the UN, OSCE, WTO, CEFTA and in relations with EFTA; closer cooperation with the countries of Central Europe within the CEI framework, within the framework of trilateral cooperation (Italy, Slovenia, Hungary) and other similar ties; active participation of Slovenia in the stabilisation of the region of Southeast Europe and strengthening of economic cooperation.

On the basis of geographical, political, economic, cultural and historical facts, the Republic of Slovenia adheres to the basic principles of international law, endeavours to respect basic human rights at home and abroad and offers its good services in settling complex situations in its neighbourhood and elsewhere. The Republic of Slovenia can realise its national interests by the power of its arguments, availing itself, in a balanced manner, of alliances of states, associations and international institutions. The basic values Slovenia follows are: peace, security, prosperity, territorial integrity and protection and development of national identity. Democracy, respect for human rights and the rule of law will always remain the underlying principles of activity of the Republic of Slovenia in international relations.

[Quelle: [www.sigov.si/mzz/eng/foreign-poli/declaration\\_of\\_fore\\_poli.html](http://www.sigov.si/mzz/eng/foreign-poli/declaration_of_fore_poli.html)]