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SLOVENIA: A VIBRANT YOUNG DEMOCRACY OFFERS NATO A CENTRAL EUROPEAN AND MEDITERRANEAN ELEMENT

Manfred Sadlowski
Editor-in-Chief



Eleanor Herman
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The Alliance, now 53 years old, is a flexible organisation, growing and changing to meet new challenges as a result of worldwide developments. After the fall of the Berlin Wall, many questioned NATO's continued existence. Was NATO still relevant in the post-Cold War era?

The events of September 11 were historic for NATO. Only one day after the attacks in New York and Washington, the Alliance immediately offered the United States concrete and full support by authorising the declaration of Article 5 – an attack on one NATO member was an attack upon them all. NATO sent seven AWACS aircraft from Europe to patrol American skies. NATO offered increased intelligence support, blanket overflight rights, and access to ports and airfields. On October 10, President Bush said in a joint news conference with NATO Secretary General Lord Robertson, "This has never happened before, that NATO has come to help defend our country, but it has happened in this time of need and for that we are grateful."

The main lesson learnt from these tragic events was that global security -- including the battle against international terrorism -- requires allies worldwide, allies with political, geographical and manpower support. The map of Europe indicates that in order for the Alliance to become an even more efficient geo-strategic power, it must invite some states to become full members as soon as possible. One of these states is Slovenia, which offers NATO both a Central European and Mediterranean element. As a Partner for Peace, Slovenia has already been working with NATO in many areas. For instance, during the crisis in the former Yugoslavia when NATO served as a powerful political and military instrument on behalf of the world community, Slovenia stood by her side. A nation of only two million, Slovenia is well-versed in the languages and cultures of the Balkans, and today serves as a force for stability and peace in this still troubled area.

In selecting new members, NATO considers not only geopolitical factors but other criteria as well. In its Membership Action

Plan (MAP), NATO stipulates realistic annual goals that each candidate country must work to achieve. For instance, is the country practising democratic and parliamentary procedures? How are the Armed Forces structured? Is the parliamentary "civil control" over the Forces and their leadership guaranteed? Is the economy healthy? Is there growth in the industrial base? A vibrant young democracy, Slovenia has earned top marks in all these areas.

The people of Slovenia have already proven their willingness to defend their independence and cultural heritage. In 1991 they were attacked by the Yugoslav Army in the so-called "War for Slovenia". Clear underdogs, Slovenian courage, determination and cleverness won the day, launching a future of independence and freedom and a return to European institutions and values. In the past 11 years, Slovenia has worked hard to speed its return and sees NATO as the central institution towards building peace and security in Europe.

This is the second edition of NATO'S NATIONS & PARTNERS FOR PEACE about Slovenia. The first one came out in 1999 at the Washington Summit. Slovenia has made tremendous progress in the past three years, and I am sure you will enjoy reading about this spirited young nation in this issue. I would like to thank our partners who contributed to this project -- mainly in Ljubljana but also in Washington and Brussels. We enjoyed working with the Slovenian diplomats and officials who -- with typical Slovenian charm -- made the issue happen.

Welcome to NATO and we look forward seeing you in November in Prague.

Manfred Sadlowski
Editor-in-Chief



MILAN KUČAN,
PRESIDENT OF
THE REPUBLIC OF SLOVENIA

INTEGRATION IS IRREVERSIBLE

Our world is not a safe and peaceful one. On the contrary, its global nature gives rise to contradiction and conflict. The appearance of geographical distance is deceiving – what happens of any corner of the world happens to each and everyone of us. Therefore, Slovenia is under threat as much as any other nation. Armed conflict is but one of many threats – international crime, illegal immigration, terrorism, ecological disaster and the profound imbalance of resources. Challenged by these threats, no nation may live in isolation. Each carries responsibility for itself, for others, and for the future of the world.



The fall of the Berlin Wall and September 11 both gave Euro-Atlantic integration processes new momentum and all Europeans were faced with new challenges. The process of integration is irreversible. The vision of a united and free Europe of peace and security is coming true, in spite of the problems. With full respect to other European and regional organisations, NATO and the European Union are the principal factors in this integration process. Their enlargement leads to a single security, economic and political area – an area of common values. NATO is becoming the central institution of common efforts towards building peace and security in Europe, and remains the only security and defence organisation with a proven ability to create and preserve peace in Europe – events in South-Eastern Europe are witness to that.

In future, Slovenia can be a safe, peaceful, democratic and developmentally successful country as an equal part of that same Europe, as a member of the European Union and NATO. In the current situation and in the future, as is already detectable from global events, NATO membership ensures for Slovenia the highest possible level of national security through collective defence. It allows Slovenia to decide on security and policy issues in the Euro-Atlantic arena together with the most developed and most influential states, thus enhancing the geo-political position of the community on the one hand and that of Slovenia on the other. NATO membership is a mutually binding commitment to

good, clear political relations with Italy and Hungary, who are NATO member states, and enhances Slovenia's relations with Austria and Croatia, who are not members. At the same time, it expands the stable part of Europe, wherein Slovenia will find a definite place. NATO membership increases Slovenia's influence in bringing peace to South-Eastern Europe, as well as its responsibility to do so. It provides for more effective cooperation in the fight against international crime and terrorism. It paves the way into the world of high technology.

One cannot put a price on guaranteed safety for a state and its citizens. These are values that cannot be expressed in terms of money. NATO membership is one such guarantee of safety. It means that what happened to Slovenia in 1991 and what happened for a long time (and is still happening) in South-Eastern Europe, on the territory of the former Yugoslavia, cannot happen to us again.

Slovenia knows what it still has to accomplish in order to meet the membership criteria and in order for our expectations of receiving an invitation to join NATO this autumn in Prague to be justified. This mainly regards Slovenia's ability in military terms to contribute to the strengthening of NATO's common defence. Never before have we worked as diligently to meet this requirement as we have done over the past year. We have fine-tuned our defence doctrine and our plans for the development of the Slovenian armed forces. Slovenia – and NATO – can now expect results.





DR. JANEZ DRNOVŠEK,
PRIME MINISTER

EQUAL AMONG EUROPEAN NATIONS



For Slovenia, 2002 is a year of great challenges as well as great expectations. This year we wish to conclude accession negotiations with the EU and receive an invitation to join NATO at the Prague summit. If we are to attain our objectives in both the domestic and foreign political spheres, a great deal of effort will be required – not only from Slovenian diplomats, the Ministry of Defence, the government and National Assembly – but also from the wider professional and general public.

It is our desire to be an equal among European nations and within the international community. This is something we can achieve with membership of the new enlarged NATO. Membership of any organisation brings with it rights and obligations, benefits and restrictions. Of course, the desire of every individual, nation and state is to live in an ideal world with nothing to agitate, trouble or threaten it. Let us be realistic. We live in a position that has been and will be exposed to potentially harmful influences due to our geographical and political role and status. We are at a crossroads of cultures, regions, politics, faiths and religions, nations and nationalities, different economic systems and important transport routes. For many we are a window and a gateway to Western Europe, Central Europe, the Balkans and the Mediterranean. It would therefore be ridiculous for us to persist in some imaginary ideal world. As an independent, democratic and internationally recognised state, we have put down roots in a very exposed location between the Alps, the Hungarian plain, the Balkans and the Adriatic. Through this region many pass, or even flee, who desire democracy and freedom. There are also those who are looking for new commercial and political challenges. And finally, some of the routes of international crime and terrorism also pass through this region. We can only hold firm in such an exposed environment through strong ties with an international community that protects democratic values, recognises equality and cooperation, provides internal security, and

actively participates in resolving political, economic and military crises.

There is an urgent need to consider the processes of globalisation, particularly the many consequences of September 11, the new interdependencies of nations, and the inviolability of peace. But we must not forget that a safe Europe also means to a great extent a safe and forward-looking Slovenia. On this is founded a deep conviction that the future of the European continent and the future of Slovenia are closely tied to the decisions to be made this year on NATO and EU enlargement. For our part we want to tell the world that we wish to join NATO and to take on, responsibly and in line with our capacities, our share of the obligations that this entails.

If we desire equal treatment for Slovenia within the international community, we will have to overcome our preconceptions about being small, and responsibly, equally and seriously take part in demanding dialogues within the international community. Only in this manner can we openly answer the question posed by the Slovenian public as to whether all states, even the smaller ones, have the ability and opportunity to make their contribution to forming a new friendly, stable and safe international and European environment. We wish to remind the sceptics at home and abroad that a united, stable and creative international environment offers great opportunities to all, including smaller countries such as Slovenia. And it undoubtedly presents new challenges too. Global, regional and national interests must become factors and promoters

of international cooperation, so we must not allow them to become factors of separation and generators of tension and conflict.

The success of the European and world model of peace, security and stability is partly dependent on our capacity and readiness to leave a fixation with the past and its wounds behind and to take on the burden of the future with responsibility. A stable economic, political

and security environment is an important condition for the successful and rapid renewal of countries in transition.

A YOUNG INDEPENDENT STATE

Slovenia, as a young independent European state, is well aware of its new role. We are a Central European country with a Mediterranean element. We are a part of Europe that geographically, economically and strategically links West, Central and South-Eastern Europe. We are an important marker for security and stability in this area. These are the basic elements of our geopolitical status; these determine our objectives and our actions.

These are the principle reasons that persuade me that membership in NATO is our most effective guarantee of security and independence. We know that these are things that cannot be assessed in financial terms. These are democratic values and ethical principles and, as such, can only be measured by other criteria. I am sure that the strategic characteristics that Slovenia enjoys, and which it is responsibly ready to share with the international community, will be suitably appreciated by NATO. Indeed, these have already been recognised through Slovenia's active participation in the Partnership for Peace.

Slovenia continues to be a serious candidate for the next round of NATO enlargement. We expect the alliance to take a decisive step beyond the Madrid and Washington summits. We are actively involved in a range of political and military activities that present an opportunity to show our partners within NATO that Slovenia is a suitable candidate for membership. We intend to further strengthen our activities in the coming days, weeks and months. We do not want to engage in this process as mere pupils or as a testing ground for political machinations. Nothing to date has come to us as a gift. On the contrary, we have done it all ourselves, thoughtfully and responsibly – and this includes our independence when the Yugoslav army publicly expressed



its intention to use force to oppose the decision we had taken in favour of democracy, freedom and independence. We are realists and we expect realism from others. We must be responsible to ourselves, to Slovenes, to the international community, where work, freedom, equality and the measurability of efforts invested are the key values of coexistence and creativity. This is a matter of national pride and responsibility that no mature nation or politician can or should reject, much less obstruct others from attaining.

A CLEARLY MARKED DESTINATION

NATO membership is a fundamental foreign policy objective for the Slovenian government and a clearly marked destination on the horizon. That objective has never been in question within the government, although at times we have often been reproved for the modest level of public support and its fluctuations. These fluctuations are of course understandable if we consider what a sensitive issue this is and that it has been going on for almost ten years. Retaining national identity is an extremely important issue for Slovenia given its small size and its historical experiences. Yet, despite this, public opinion polls show that the majority of voters are in favour of Slovenia deepening its Euro-Atlantic ties, and of protecting its independence, democracy and sovereignty within that framework. It would be strange indeed if Slovenia's policy had overwhelming public support and if it was not under the constant gaze of a critical, sceptical and cynical public. It is a good state of affairs to be in, as this is the way to hone and refine our historical objectives, expectations and political actions.

I would like to underline with regard to full NATO membership – as I have on many occasions – that the reason for joining is not the sense that we are under threat. Membership of the alliance would provide conditions that enable us to cooperate more effectively in security operations in those environments where a threat to Slovenia's security exists, and in the wider world. Furthermore, membership would be a challenge and encouragement to our industries and our economy, and bring international recognition to our policies and social groups. Finally, it would offer the chance to participate at the international level to every professional soldier, police officer and specialist, and even every Slovene and citizen of Slovenia.

Two key reasons for NATO membership remain. The first is the strategically and politically based realisation that, as a small country, Slovenia is better off if it resolves issues related to its military security in an integral

and long-term manner and with the maximum professionalism demanded of any military component of NATO. We know NATO to be an effective, well-functioning organisation that we can also trust because of its democratic values. The second reason is the logical conviction that we could organise our external security more effectively as a member of NATO than on our own. We must not forget that we are on the edge of the unstable Balkan region and are not so far from the Middle East. We must not forget 11 September and the massacres that occurred not so long ago and not so far from us.

Slovenia is economically capable of bearing the cost of NATO membership independently. As a member we would contribute to security in this part of Europe and provide a territorial link between present and future

Prime Minister Janez Drnovšek talking to the press at the main entrance to NATO Headquarters. (Photo: NATO)

members. These are powerful reasons – above and beyond the fact that we fulfil the democratic criteria – for us to expect to be among those invited to join at the Prague summit.

We must remember that the world has never, in human history to date, been so interdependent and linked as it is today. The end of the second millennium brought great changes to human life and exceptional development, especially in the fields of economics, technology and information. Until the Second World War the world was largely divided into separate, self-contained worlds that lived independently and introspectively in accordance with their own spiritual, cultural and political traditions. Although this was also the case in Europe, it has experienced a developmental explosion in the last few centuries in particular and, through technological inventions and the discovery of the New World, has become, alongside the United States, the developmental generator of modern human civilisation. This is the new challenge for Europe and the new opportunity.





Cultural- and Congress-Center, Ljubljana.
Throughout history, Slovene culture
has established exceptionally close links
with foreign cultural circles.

EUROPE FACES A NUMBER OF HISTORICALLY IMPORTANT DECISIONS

Europe is faced with a number of historically important decisions today. These have appeared at a point in time when one stage of Slovenia's development is coming to a close and the next is gradually beginning. The course the next stage will take depends on how Slovenia cooperates in the two key processes now unfolding in Europe – the enlargement of the European Union and the enlargement of NATO. And a third dimension is opening up today: how will Slovenia contribute to preserving peace, stability and above all human dignity in South-Eastern Europe? The deci-



sions on Slovenia's participation in these processes depend partly on us and partly on outside factors that we cannot directly influence.

Experiences gained in NATO operations in the Balkans have revealed the growing importance of hitherto unfamiliar forms of cooperation, such as temporary bases (land, air and sea), transshipment facilities, transit concessions (airspace, road and rail links, sea transport), access to national strategic intelligence, joint exercises in specific conditions, linguistic and other forms of civilian-military cooperation, medical services and so on. The status of individual members within the alliance will

be far more defined by the highest quality military equipment and weaponry, and having expert personnel at its disposal who are capable of managing high-tech systems than by the number of brigades, tanks or aircraft.

We are aware that with our work today we are also deciding on the fate of future generations. EU and NATO membership is something we can give them that we have not had. Through membership we will ensure for posterity the international recognition of a secure, free, independent and democratic Slovenia.





In 2002 Slovenia finds itself at the crossroads of numerous important decisions. This year will choose the path that leads our country towards safety and prosperity.



The Slovenian National Assembly will conduct a constitutional debate. We will also conduct, encourage and widen the European debate, organising a Slovenian convention to deal with questions related to the future of Europe – our own future. We recently organised a public presentation of opinions on Slovenia’s accession to NATO, the beginning of the finale of this strategic question.

We will be witness this year to numerous demanding tests; these will contain a great many problems and a great many opportunities. Whether we create problems from the opportunities, or opportunities from the problems for the successful future of our state and its people, will depend on our overall political maturity, respect for difference and the ability to achieve sensible political compromises.

In any case we are certain that we will perform all these tasks more satisfactorily if people have a better understanding of them and if we have their support and trust. We in the National Assembly have therefore also decided to define the strategic themes and decisions, above all those which are, in many ways, irreversible and require wide national agreement, and to conduct wide-ranging public debates on them, respecting differences of opinion and in the end building wide political support for the final decision.

Slovenia’s membership in NATO is one of these themes. This is a strategic matter of primary national importance. Slovenia did not receive an invitation during the first round of enlargement to Central and Eastern Europe – nor was there an invitation two years later at the Washington meeting. But for many reasons we

can expect that Slovenia will be invited to join this autumn at the Prague summit.

WE MUST NOT WAIT UNPREPARED

It is not just a matter of fulfilling material conditions but also of strengthening national agreement regarding the benefits of this decision for NATO and for Slovenia. The large majority of parties represented in the National

Assembly support Slovenia’s accession to NATO, but public opinion is far from united. With the recent public presentations of opinion and with all the other political activities that we will carry out this year, we wish, first, to encourage debate and, second, to strengthen the unity of our people in support of Slovenia’s accession to NATO.

In some respects Slovenian politics is taking a risk with public debate and the building of political unity among people, raising the threshold of expectation that Slovenia will certainly be invited to become a member in the autumn. There is no such guarantee. However, the decision in favour of public debate and the strengthening of agreement is nevertheless a sensible decision and represents a reasonable risk. It would be a great deal worse, and essentially more impermissible, to avoid the confrontation of arguments and the task of strengthening unity, and for the invitation to membership to find us unprepared.

NATO – NOT A NARROW MILITARY QUESTION

I am sure that the great majority of our people, after fundamental and exhaustive debate, will understand that Slovenia’s accession to NATO is not merely a narrow military question but a broad strategic matter. It concerns the position of our country in the international community in general, a question of who we wish to share responsibility with, as allies and partners, for common peace, security and well-being, and from whom we can expect help and

who we are prepared to help. It is thus a crucial question of our basic identity in the international community, as we see it and as the international community sees it.

The debate will clearly be dynamic and polemical. There is no harm in that. Some questions which are raised in connection with security and defence, in connection with European security identity or the role and future of NATO, are not just our own questions here in Slovenia. Member states themselves are also raising them. In this sense this debate seems to



**BORUT PAHOR,
PRESIDENT OF THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY**

**AT THE
CROSSROADS**



SLOVENIA AND NATO

me a very constructive one. Not least, it will also strengthen our awareness that we are entering the alliance as an active partner.

During the debate we will certainly hear demands for a referendum on this question. Here and there it is possible to understand them as the only way of preventing politicians from deciding instead of and on behalf of the people. Divided public opinion is again put forward as the justification. My own modest opinion is that advocates of accession to NATO could also, to the same or even greater extent, espouse a refer-

endum – not merely because it would remove criticism of a lack of democratic decision-making, but also because a well-conducted debate would strengthen people’s unity of support, meaning that implementation of all the preparations for membership would be so much more successful.



**... for a successful future
of our state and its people.**





DR. DIMITRIJ RUPEL,
MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS

SLOVENIA AS AN ALLY



Last year Slovenia celebrated ten years as an independent country. One of the main features of our short history as a state is our strong determination to join Euro-Atlantic structures. Slovenia wishes to join NATO because of common security and political interests; Slovenia's statehood is based on the same values as NATO – the rule of law, market economy, democracy and the protection of human rights.

After the tragic events of September 11, we have been confronted with serious threats to global peace posed by international terrorism. We are all aware today that a high level of national security can no longer be achieved merely by individual measures; instead, we have to act together within a comprehensive system of collective defence at the international level. Slovenia sees NATO as

the main safeguard of peace, security and stability in the Euro-Atlantic area. NATO is an Alliance based on the principle of international solidarity, a principle that has also been observed by Slovenia's foreign policy.

Slovenia, as a serious NATO candidate, endeavours to contribute its share to ensuring security and stability in the vicinity and in the wider region. A nation of two million will

never be a superpower, but that does not mean that we are hoping for a "free ride" from NATO. On the contrary, Slovenia is willing to assume its share of responsibility for ensuring security and stability in the Euro-Atlantic area.

In the process of drawing closer to NATO, Slovenia has proved several times as a member of the Partnership for Peace that it will assume its obligations as a partner and ally with responsibility. Slovenia's foreign policy supports all international endeavours to stabilise the situation in the Balkans. Slovenian diplomacy is making efforts to maintain high-level bilateral contacts with the countries of South-Eastern Europe and to take an active part in different regional initiatives (Stability Pact, SECI, etc.). At the initiative of Slovenia and Lithuania, NATO candidate countries established the "Vilnius Group", which acts in the spirit of partnership and supports the efforts invested by NATO in expanding the area of security and stability in Europe.

Within its regional activities, Slovenia devotes special attention to post-conflict rehabilitation. It established "Together" – The Regional Centre for the Psycho-Social Well-being of Children – with the aim of improving the mental health of children affected by the armed conflicts in South-Eastern Europe. The International Trust Fund for Demining and Mine Victims Assistance is operating successfully in the countries of South-Eastern Europe.

Slovenes hope to receive an invitation to join NATO at the Prague Summit this year. However, we do not wish to be a member on paper only but an ally on an equal footing – and one whose activities will enhance the international reputation of the North-Atlantic Alliance.



**Minister Rupel
meeting
NATO Secretary
General Lord
Robertson.**



DR. ANTON GRIZOLD,
MINISTER OF DEFENCE

A CREDIBLE PARTNER



During the NATO summit meeting in Prague this year, Slovenia expects to receive an invitation to become a member of the North-Atlantic alliance. So far Slovenia has always been very frank in expressing its interest in becoming a full member of NATO by meeting the democratic norms, demonstrating credibility and reliability, and fulfilling the conditions necessary for the implementation of the set development plans.

Slovenia has been a member of Partnership for Peace since the very beginning. It also started to participate in the force-planning system conducted by NATO with partner countries in the early phases. When Slovenia first gained its independence after the end of the Cold War, it was left, like the majority of European democracies, with attitudes towards defence and a pool of military capabilities that were no longer adequate for the changed security situation. Since 1994 Slovenia's

efforts have been directed towards partnership and towards joining the alliance. On the basis of international relations and various forms of military cooperation, we have acquired important experience and paved the way from being a Partnership for Peace member to becoming a serious candidate for NATO membership. Initial Partnership for Peace activities were followed by a planning process with the PpP PARP (Planning&Analysing Review Process), which signalled the beginning of the

accelerated adaptation of the structure of the Slovenian armed forces and their participation in international military cooperation. Lessons learned in the Alba peacekeeping operation in Albania in 1997, in UNFICYP operations in Cyprus, and in SFOR and KFOR operations in the Balkans were, and still are, of considerable importance.

We know that all systems naturally tend towards balance. If we translate this rule into a defence system, this results in a minimum number of radical reforms, changes and new attitudes. Impulses for change therefore always have to be initiated from the outside. If not, everything seems to be perfect on the surface while real defence capabilities exist only on paper. In the Slovenian case, this invaluable impulse, which was a necessity as it provided a critical reflection of Slovenian efforts in the area of defence, was a result of our participation in the PARP process. The image we saw was not always pleasing, but it was an incentive to start working seriously on defence reform.

Slovenia is still working on the establishment of a comprehensive national security system which will, taking into consideration Euro-Atlantic political and defence integration, ensure a higher level of security for all its





Defence Minister Dr. Anton Grizold meeting NATO Secretary General Lord Robertson.



citizens. In the area of defence we are establishing links between the various elements of the defence system into a consistent, rational, efficient and cost-effective institutional framework, which is Slovenia's strategic goal in the period up to 2004.

In the military and defence area, Slovenia is conducting preparations for NATO membership, in particular by utilising the tools and mechanisms provided for by Partnership for Peace through consistent compliance with the criteria set out by NATO in the Membership Action Plan. We are aware of the fact that these criteria are rational and proven under the conditions of parliamentary democracy that have been developed and strengthened throughout the ten years of Slovenia's existence.

Slovenia has always fostered an open and honest attitude towards NATO; therefore, it is not giving promises it knows in advance cannot be carried out. Slovenia offers only as much as its material, financial, human and other resources allow. This is especially demonstrated in the participation of Slovenian

units in NATO-led peacekeeping operations in the Balkans, where Slovenia contributes a considerable share with regard to available resources and capabilities.

Although Slovenia does not face any direct threats, its actual security environment is less stable than during the Cold War.

A key characteristic of the modern security environment is the complexity of threats at

all levels – that is, at individual, local, national, international, regional and global levels.

In light of the threats that have emerged in the 21st century, NATO, as a defence Alliance, has remained a central regional actor in the Euro-Atlantic environment, despite its ever-increasing political role. Through new enlargement and by maintaining an open-door policy towards those countries who have not expressed an interest in becoming either members or partners of NATO, the alliance's position, together with its partners and future members, will be even stronger.

The year 2001 was a very successful one for those working at the Ministry of Defence. We established a realistic and firm foundation for the further long-term development of the Slovenian armed forces and the defence system as a whole. This year will be critical not only in terms of further reorganising the defence system but particularly in the context of the expansion of the Alliance in Prague. Slovenia is therefore investing all its efforts in participating in ensuring international peace and security as a reliable NATO member state.

Defence Minister Dr. Anton Grizold and soldiers.





According to the Head of the NATO Assessment Team, Dr. Bv, Slovenia's Armed Forces are on the right track to become modern, well-equipped and mobile. Here the Slovenian Chief of the General Staff discusses the obstacles encountered and goals achieved so far.

NN&PP: Although Slovenia is not yet a NATO member, many Slovenian soldiers are already performing tasks within NATO. How did this occur?

Brigadier Lipič: In 1994 Slovenia began its participation in the Partner for Peace program. Since then our soldiers have been taking on more demanding tasks in NATO operations in the Middle East and Southern Europe on the territory of former Yugoslavia. In 1997 our soldiers participated in their first peace support mission, the Alba Operation. That was followed by participation in missions in Cyprus, Sarajevo, Kosovo and Skopje. At the same time we had military observers in the Middle East. We have grown in experience and I am proud of our performance.

One of our most successful joint missions was the 1998 exercise Cooperative Adventure Exchange, which was hosted by Slovenia and in which Slovenian units took an active role. Since then we have participated in numerous NATO and PFP exercises. At this moment a military police unit, experienced in multinational activities, is preparing for exercise Strong Resolve in Poland. This will be the unit's biggest exercise so far.

NN&PP: What problems have you encountered in your extensive cooperation with NATO members?

Brigadier Lipič: Our experience has been very positive. Cooperation has increased our expertise from the level of the soldier, up through the unit or com-

**BRIGADIER LADISLAV LIPIČ,
CHIEF OF THE GENERAL STAFF,
SLOVENIAN ARMED FORCES**



PRIORITY: THE REACTION FORCE





mand, to the Slovenian armed forces as a whole. Of course, we must constantly bear in mind a realistic picture of our capabilities. If we are not aware of our problems, we will not be able to resolve them. Last year we improved numerous problem areas.

Slovenia is currently establishing a Reaction Force, developing the 10th motorized battalion and the 17th military police battalion with the assistance of foreign experts. These units have been successfully participating in activities with other armed forces both in country and abroad. The Slovenian Armed Forces have shown that they are comparable to NATO members in terms of fulfilling assigned missions. This has been proven by General Robertson's request that Slovenia contribute an additional company to our SFOR contingent, a request which we are planning to comply with in the spring.

NN&PP: *In which areas must you improve in order to be more compatible with NATO?*

Brigadier Lipič: First of all, we are focusing on technical and technological interoperability with NATO. As any other military, we depend on financial resources and personnel support. Last year the Slovenian Armed Forces approved an active employment policy to modify gradually the current ratio among soldiers, non-commissioned officers and officers. The amendments to the Defence Act – which are currently being processed in Parliament – will provide for the career paths of the Slovenian Armed Forces service members. A very demanding task for the near future is how to train the whole structure of the main and augmentation forces to conduct tasks with Allies on the employment of the NATO defence doctrine ATP 35 (B).

Main Building of the Ministry of Defence.



NN&PP: *Does your NATO Membership Action Plan (MAP) define financial issues as well as equipment and personnel?*

Brigadier Lipič: Of course. We have two financial sources. The first one is the defence budget, and the second one is the Basic Development Programmes Acts 1 and 2. We receive funding from these sources primarily for equipment and modernisation. The defence budget specifies the GDP percentage required for the military. The amount of budgetary resources is increasing – last year the percentage was 1.46%, this year 1.50%, and the projected percentage for the year 2003 is 1.54%. Despite this increase there never seems to be adequate funding. But all armed forces face this challenge, including those of NATO countries. Slovenia will utilise its resources as usefully, effectively and economically as possible

NN&PP: *You've been restructuring the Slovenian Armed Forces for several years. Where are you currently in this process?*

Brigadier Lipič: We are downsizing the wartime structure from 74,000 service members to 26,000. Radical changes will be introduced in our employment policy by 2007. We currently have approximately 5,000 service members in the regular structure and will increase that figure to 7500 by 2007. The employment priority lies in the Reaction Force – the 10th battalion and the 17th military police battalion that proved their expertise while serving as military police in Sarajevo. These changes will alter the ratio between the reserve and regular structure, resulting in a better trained, better armed and more efficient reserve force. With regards to equipment, we are planning to modernise some weapon systems and purchase others. Last year we signed quite a few contracts, one for 30 armoured vehicles – Humvees – another contract for two Cougar AS-532-AL helicopters.

We are modernising and upgrading personal equipment and weapons. Last year we obtained 30 upgraded T55 and M55 S1 tanks. Equipment and modernisation funding through 2007 is provided by a special programme developed by the Government.

NN&PP: *In view of the 7,500 regular service members and 26,000 wartime service members serving by 2007, will you still need compulsory military service?*

Brigadier Lipič: Our concept of the Slovenian Armed Forces restructuring programme through 2004 is still based on a combination of conscripts and military professionals. As I mentioned, however, we are gradually increasing the number of career service members, and the number of conscripts is decreasing annually. But the decision about whether we will have an exclusively career military in Slovenia will be of political nature.

NN&PP: *What are your priorities during the modernisation process? Where will you begin?*

Brigadier Lipič: We have already begun. This investment is primarily aimed at the Reaction Force, followed by air traffic control, force mobility, personal equipment, logistics, air defence equipment, and armoured and anti-armour systems.

NN&PP: *Did NATO specifically mention any area where you must change or modernise?*

Brigadier Lipič: Experts from various NATO countries are consulting and advising us but have never exerted any pressure. We ourselves have asked for advice. Every decision we have made in the area of restructuring was discussed in advance with experts from different countries. Our mission statement is: "We will become a small, well-trained and efficient military." We would like to achieve this primarily

for our own national defence and then as part of our responsibilities as a future NATO member. There are still challenges to overcome, but with the assistance of international experts we are well on the way.

NN&PP: *Which countries are providing you with special assistance?*

Brigadier Lipič: We enjoy excellent cooperation with the United States, the United Kingdom, Germany, Belgium and France. We have, of course, developed very good cooperation with our neighbouring countries as well. We have formed a trilateral coop-



eration initiative with Italy and Hungary to set up a battalion for crisis response operations. But the level of cooperation depends on the particular area as well. For example, we work with the United Kingdom in force structure development, with the Netherlands in air force matters, and with the United States in education and training.

NN&PP: How would you define your cooperation with the Slovenian defence industry?

Brigadier Lipič: Due to the small size of our domestic defence industry, we do purchase equipment on the international market. However, because we want our industry to prosper, we insist on an off-set programme when signing a contract with a foreign company. In terms of production, the Slovenian defence industry is small but it produces some products essential to our armed forces. One example is Valuk, which modernises the T55 tank and artillery system. Other Slovenian companies make quartermaster equipment, ammunition, safety and protection equipment. This industry is growing a bit every year.

NN&PP: Are you acquiring air defence systems from abroad?

Brigadier Lipič: We purchased the Roland system which is already being introduced. We are also considering a future purchase of medium-range air defence systems. But the purchase of supersonic planes would not be realistic for Slovenia at this time. We will, however, continue to develop rotor wing aviation and, as

The helicopter unit of the SAF is participating in the Joint Forge operation in Bosnia and Herzegovina since 1997.



Honour guard during the visit of the German Minister of Defence.

I said, have signed a contract for two helicopters.

NN&PP: What role does Slovenia's geo-strategic position play in your arguments for joining the Alliance?

Brigadier Lipič: As far as the geo-strategic situation is concerned, Slovenia will be connecting two NATO member countries, Hungary and Italy. We're in the close vicinity of the Balkans, an area still considered to be in crisis, and we can be of extreme help in stabilising the area due to our knowledge of culture, language

and people. Additionally, we can serve as a model to the other former Yugoslav republics for the democratisation of the armed forces and a comprehensive national security system.

NN&PP: What do you see as Slovenia's contributions to NATO?

Brigadier Lipič: Our contribution to the Alliance may not be as high as that of some other countries, especially in the number of service members, units, and weaponry. But our contribution will be an important one and the Alliance will be able to rely on us. For instance, it is true that only three Slovenian helicopters and one transport aircraft are flying under the SFOR flag, but this is 40% of our helicopter capability. Our allies have always evaluated our cooperation as outstanding, professional and reliable. Slovenian service members are posted in SFOR, KFOR, as military observers in the Middle East, and have served in Cyprus and Albania.

We can contribute also on Slovenian soil. In 2000 the Slovenian Military School of Foreign Languages was recognised by the North-Atlantic Council as the Partner for Peace Language Training Centre providing language and teacher training to the whole EAPC environment; we have already started the same procedures for the Simulation Centre and the Mountain School. Sometimes a smaller and highly-specialised military offers unique capabilities, and these capabilities are what the Slovenian Armed Forces are prepared to offer NATO.





JELKO KACIN, MP, CHAIRMAN,
FOREIGN POLICY COMMITTEE
IN THE PARLIAMENT

WE DO PLAY AN ACTIVE ROLE



As Slovenia prepares for the new round of NATO expansion, we can look back on our efforts in 1997 to be included in the first round, efforts which were ultimately unsuccessful. We were an excellent candidate until we joined a “package” of mutual support with other NATO candidate countries. This time, while supporting the entry of other nations into NATO, Slovenia stands on her own merits.

Also at that time, wounds from the Balkan wars were still fresh. We tried to distance ourselves from our Balkan neighbours, in some respects denying our history. Now we are assuming a new mantle of responsibility as a former Yugoslavian country actively participating in the stability and economic prosperity of South-eastern Europe. Slovenian peace-keeping troops, fluent in the local languages, are currently serving in former Yugoslavia, Bosnia, Kosovo and Macedonia. In Bosnia, Slovenian soldiers are serving in the front lines of the SFOR troops.

Slovenia, a nation of only two million, cannot play a vital role in international affairs far from its territory. But we are in a unique position to serve and influence our own region. Stability and peace are often related to economic prosperity. Slovenia is proud to be the number one investor in Bosnia, contributing widely to rebuilding and revitalising the Bosnian economy.

For a decade Slovenia had no formal relations with Yugoslavia. We have recently established diplomatic ties and are working to improve our relations. Yugoslavia, like Bosnia, is in desperate economic straits and Slovenia, though small, can contribute greatly to strengthening the economy. We also contribute to the creation of strong democracies. Slovenia is currently discussing another fact-finding mission to Kosovo, and a visit to Macedonia to help strengthen the role of the Macedonian Parliament. Without the rule of law,

there can be no effective Government. Without effective Government, there is no escape from the present untenable situation.

When we discuss NATO membership, we do not focus solely on military aspects but more on the political environment and strategic foreign policy objectives. We look at ways to make South-eastern Europe a stable and prosperous region as a whole.

In addition to NATO membership, we have made EU membership a major priority. Slovenia's EU membership will assist our neighbours to transition to stable democracies. These new nations will see that Slovenia – like themselves a new nation formerly part of the Yugoslav state – is welcomed everywhere once it changed direction. Slovenia's EU entry will encourage political leaders in South-eastern Europe to change their priorities, create long-term objectives, and lead their people into a new national consciousness.

Slovenia's goal is to help our neighbours prepare for a new future. That is why we will not rest content once we have joined NATO and the EU. We look forward to seeing our neighbours join these organisations once they, too, have fulfilled the membership requirements. The conditions necessary for accession to both groups – democracy, stability, economic prosperity – are the only solutions to heal ancient wounds and create for our neighbours a happy and prosperous future. Slovenia remains committed to this goal.





RUDOLF PETAN,
CHAIRMAN OF THE PARLIAMENTARY
DEFENCE COMMITTEE

ACCESSION TO NATO



As President of the Committee for National Defence of the Republic of Slovenia, I am also a member of the Social Democratic Party which strongly supports NATO accession. Five years ago the Social Democrats proposed a declaration in support of Slovenia's accession to NATO as a priority objective. The other two priorities are the EU and improved relations with our neighbouring countries. This declaration was signed and adopted by all Parliamentary parties except one small party. The Slovenian Government receives strong support for these three objectives particularly from the Social Democratic Party of Slovenia, which is the largest opposition party.

Support among Slovenian citizens is also essential. The task of our high-level politicians is to inform the public of the benefits of NATO membership. On January 16, 2002, the Parliamentary Defence Committee held a public presentation entitled "Slovenia before the NATO Prague Summit." The Slovenian public showed great interest in this debate due to the high-level officials involved – the President of the Republic, Milan Kucan; Prime Minister Janez Drnovsek, Minister of Foreign Affairs Dimitrij Rupel, Minister of Defence Anton Grizold, former Defence Minister and President of the opposition party Janez Jansa, and several other members of the opposition. Members of the opposition joined in the debate and, surprisingly, almost all of them strongly supported Slovenian accession to NATO. President Kucan stated, "If there are some people who have doubts about this, I must say, *I am for NATO.*"

This debate on NATO accession was broadcast on Slovenian national television and, I believe, resulted in increased public support for membership in the Alliance.

Slovenia celebrated its 10th anniversary as an independent nation in 2001. We are continuing to build up our Armed Forces. Last year Slovenia enacted a special law to provide funds for the purchase of defence equipment, funds earmarked for equipment purchases only which may not be used for administrative costs.

Slovenia is located quite close to the Balkans and until its independence was part of Yugoslavia. We cannot choose our neighbours, but we can strengthen our Armed Forces, work hard to bring peace to this region, and help create prosperity. Slovenia is in a unique position to help create a lasting peace. We know this region quite well and understand the mentality of our neighbours. Emotions still reign over reason in many areas, but we are also aware of the strong abilities of the communities involved.

Slovenia is a proud contributor to the Partnership for Peace Programme. Our Armed Forces have served in peace-keeping units in Bosnia, Macedonia, Albania, Kosovo and

Cyprus. Funds have been made available to complete our 10th Battalion and form the 20th Battalion, whose purpose is to cooperate with international peacekeeping forces.

NATO membership means collective defence. But we are not joining NATO in the expectation of receiving something. Slovenia wants to contribute to the Alliance, and one of our earliest contributions is to NATO peacekeeping forces. We are in the process of raising the level of our Armed Forces to meet NATO standards and fulfilling the requirements of the Membership Action Plan (MAP).

The Social Democratic Party has reminded the Government on numerous occasions that we would like to see an all-professional Armed Forces, though there is some debate as to whether we should professionalise just a part of them. We feel that without well-equipped and professional Armed Forces we cannot meet the required standards – especially in the wake of September 11 which created new challenges for us. These events proved that security is not something imaginary, but a very concrete need across the globe. As a result, we have increased our budget funds for defence equipment and the Armed Forces.

Particularly after September 11, it is clear that nations cannot work alone to guarantee their own security, but must cooperate in international alliances. This is why membership in NATO and other international organisations is essential. We have made great efforts to educate the Slovenian public on the advantages of NATO membership for our national security. We know that security is not cheap and must, therefore, increase the amount of our GDP devoted to the Armed Forces. For instance, last year 1.22% of the GDP was devoted to defence, and we want to increase it to 1.56% in 2005 to meet NATO requirements.

The military will continue to restructure the Armed Forces and continue our reforms. With regards to the Slovenian public, we will continue to prepare them for NATO accession by keeping them well-informed of our political goals and the benefits our citizens will receive.





BY IGNAC GOLOB, STATE SECRETARY, MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS

MEMBERSHIP IN NATO: NEITHER PRIZE NOR ENTITLEMENT

Slovenia has been pursuing membership in NATO ever since it gained its independence. In 1994 and 1996 the National Assembly unambiguously declared that it supports membership in NATO. The government of Slovenia dedicated its focused and consummate attention to this end. Today, all political parties in the National Assembly, bar one, are committed to membership in NATO.

In the course of five years that have elapsed since the Madrid Summit NATO leaders covered some new ground with regard to enlargement. They declared their commitment to the Open Door Policy and made it known that the zero-option was “off the table.” Last summer President Bush stated that membership in NATO is in reach of “all of Europe’s democracies that seek it and are ready to share the responsibilities that NATO brings.” It seems reasonable to expect that invitations to new members will be issued at the Prague Summit in November of this year.

Slovenia is willing and ready to become a member of NATO and to share the responsibilities for regional and global security. For Slovenia membership in NATO is neither a prize nor an entitlement. Rather it would be a crowning point of its successful transition. It is a full-fledged democracy, with transparent

and democratic civil-military relations, exemplary treatment of ethnic minorities and it boasts a successful, stable and growing market economy. Its report card is surely impressive. Moreover, in the words of a distinguished German politician it is an “exporter of stability” in Southeastern Europe.

Slovenia is enhancing without respite its ability to contribute to NATO in military terms. Never a part of the Warsaw Pact, it did not have to deal with a cumbersome military and political structure left over from the previous regime. It built its armed forces from scratch after gaining independence. Military structures that are not meeting NATO requirements are being reformed in a responsible and efficient way, leaving no stone unturned. Slovenia is forming modern, flexible, and professional armed forces.

In the aftermath of the September 11 terrorist attacks on the United States, Slovenia joined the antiterrorist coalition without delay. It has quickly enacted additional relevant legislation to do its share in the international fight against terrorism.

It is closely cooperating with NATO through Partnership for Peace. It opened its air space and allowed transfer across its territory to NATO troops involved in operations in the Balkans, and has provided NATO with logistics support for the needs of SFOR in Bosnia,

as well as routinely hosting NATO vessels. Since 2001, the Port of Koper is hosting transshipment of US military equipment destined to crisis areas in Southeastern Europe, consolidating its status as an important logistics link for this part of Europe. Incidentally, this spring the Slovene armed forces will significantly increase their participation in SFOR.

The country sits astride the rail and road links between Central and Southeastern Europe, as well as of the Alpine, the Mediterranean and the Pannonian regions. It would provide a territorial link between Italy and Hungary, both already NATO members, logically rounding off the borders of the alliance.

Its experience and understanding of the Balkans is of considerable value. It has both the capacity and the will to continue to play a helpful role in extending the area of stability, security and prosperity to its southern neighbors. It is an important trade partner and one of the largest foreign investors in the region, particularly in Bosnia and Herzegovina and in Macedonia.

The decision to invite Slovenia into NATO at the Prague Summit would be an important incentive for the countries of the region to continue along the path of reform. It would send a clear signal that the Open Door Policy is more than rhetoric. It would reassure those that are eyeing the invitation. A decision to the contrary might well engender doubts about the resolve of the Alliance regarding the enlargement process.

And finally, Slovenia is compatible with NATO ranks since it shares historical, cultural, and religious roots, as well as fundamental values with current members.

Based on its geostrategic position, its role as an “exporter of stability,” and widely recognized service in SFOR and KFOR, Slovenia is a well-qualified candidate for membership in NATO. It would be a source of net-gain for the Alliance. It is fully prepared and willing to walk an extra mile and do its part in strengthening the overall security in Europe and in building a stronger and healthier transatlantic relationship.



A member of the Slovene Military Police and a US Army security officer during the CAE exercise.
(Photo: Mönch archive)





AMBASSADOR
MATJAZ SINKOVEC,
HEAD OF THE MISSION
OF SLOVENIA
TO NATO SPEAKING
TO NN&PP
CORRESPONDENT
CLAUS-PETER MÜLLER



of the Foreign Affairs Committee in the first democratic Parliament of Slovenia in 1990, I can tell you that one of the first Parliamentary resolutions was to support the Western Coalition in the Gulf War. At the same time we were still formally part of Yugoslavia which sided against the Coalition. In the Allied Force campaign of 1998 we acted as Allies. However, it still remains a challenge to demonstrate clearly to the Allies that we have the will, the ability and the capabilities to be a true Ally. I hope that by end of this year we will have achieved that.

NN&PP: In this process the Membership Action Plan (MAP) plays a vital role. Please explain its importance for Slovenia.

Matjaz Šinkovec: The MAP, now in its third annual cycle, has proven to be a most useful tool for our preparations for membership in all specified areas, in all 5 chapters. It has helped us to organise ourselves and establish the necessary discipline of all the Government bodies concerned. The well-structured consultations with the International Staff and the 19 member states have been most helpful; they are candid and constructive. I do not doubt that this is one of the reasons for the great progress we have made so far. Because of the results achieved in the MAP and our experience in consultations, our accession process should be easier than otherwise. Both Slovenia and NATO have learned to work together.

NN&PP: How do you co-operate with the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Co-operation (EAPC) and the North Atlantic Council (NAC)?

Matjaz Šinkovec: Slovenia sees the EAPC as an important mechanism in the field of security, trust, confidence building and transparency in the Euro-Atlantic area. Its multi-layered structure enables us to choose those areas to which we can add value, and we also benefit from it in a broader sense for our preparations for NATO membership. Besides its general Euro-Atlantic context, it also enables us to participate in a narrower regional context. We participate in the EAPC from the very top to the bottom – from the Ambassadorial level to the very technical levels. The EAPC has proven its value and significance. You can hardly find anywhere else such a family of nations that works and consults together on common issues. It is important for Slovenia to participate in the decision-shaping process. The EAPC is a living mechanism that evolves every day to meet new challenges and perspectives.

With regards to the North Atlantic Council, I work closely with their permanent representatives on a regular basis. This is an excellent opportunity to inform the Council about our work and progress.

TO BUILD THE FUTURE TOGETHER

NN&PP: Excellency, Slovenia will join NATO in the near future. What has been your greatest challenge for this decisive step?

Matjaz Šinkovec: I sincerely hope that what you say is true. I have been involved in the process of Slovenia's emancipation and Euro-Atlantic integration for over a dozen years now. I believe I can vouch for the fact that our basic thinking has not changed in all this time. Slovenia's independence meant not an end in and of itself but also a chance for our nation to play a greater role to take on greater responsibility in international affairs. The inclusion of Slovenia in international organisations will on the one hand strengthen, not weaken these organisations. And on the other hand, we will be able to contribute more once we are inside than we could do on the outside.

We have had experience as Allies with NATO countries before, including World War II and shouldered our part of the burden then. Furthermore, we were never part of the Warsaw Pact, never adversaries. As the Chairman



NN&PP: *During the 1999 Washington Summit, Slovenia failed to win an invitation to join NATO. What was the reaction of the Slovenian people?*

Matjaž Šinkovec: I would not agree that Slovenia failed. I would say that an opportunity was missed to invite Slovenia, as occurred in 1997 at the Madrid Summit. However, in 1999 the Slovenian public understood that the Summit priority was not enlargement so much as the situation in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. I am not crying over spilt milk, but I believe that Slovenia would have progressed even further, especially in the fields of defence and military, if it had already been invited to join the Alliance. As a member of NATO, we could already have played a greater role in our common endeavours to increase the security and stability of the Euro-Atlantic area. However, since then we have been everything but idle. We have made tremendous progress and we will not let up either before or after Prague. This fact should be recognised at the Prague Summit by issuing an invitation to Slovenia to join the Alliance. An invitation would signify a mandate that we can progress even faster.

NN&PP: *How do you explain Slovenian public opinion regarding NATO membership?*

Matjaž Šinkovec: Slovenian public opinion is too often judged on the basis of polls performed on very small samples. However, the latest authoritative poll showed that there was more than a 2:1 ratio of people supporting NATO membership to those opposing it, actually 53% in favour and 24% against. Or to be even more exact, only 4% of Slovenians do not believe that we will ever become a NATO member. Pretty impressive. However, this poll was taken before the Government's public awareness activities began. I believe we can build on this bedrock of staunch support for membership, which has not failed us in past years, even during the Allied Force campaign when Slovenians fully understood that we were already acting as Allies. You should also not forget that all Parliamentary parties, except for a small one, have supported membership in the Alliance for almost a decade now.

NN&PP: *How can Slovenia demonstrate readiness for NATO membership? Can Slovenia solve the deficits before the Prague Summit?*

Matjaž Šinkovec: The principles outlined in the "Study on NATO Enlargement" endorsed by the Allies and published in 1995, still remain the basis for NATO's approach to inviting new members to join. Slovenia with its democratic political system, highly successful market economy, clear record of human rights and minorities protection, and

strong commitment to the peaceful settlement of disputes – be they internal or with other states – clearly meets the criteria set by the Study. Slovenian willingness and ability to meet commitments of future membership in the Alliance in practice and not only on paper are, in our view, a critical factor which qualifies Slovenia as ready to join. Our defence reform, which is proceeding in accordance with plans and timelines, agreed too by the Allies, plays a central role in achieving what constitutes "a readiness" for becoming a NATO member. That is Slovenia's defence effort, which is strategically acceptable not only by the Alliance but also in the eyes of our public, and at the same time affordable to Slovenia.

I do not like to think in terms of solving deficits up to the Prague Summit. We are not interested in some minor and easy "quick fixes" which would artificially create a better picture of our situation than exists in fact. We have unquestionably achieved a great deal already but at the same time we prefer to think in the long term. A sustainable commitment rests on sound defence planning for years to come.

Here is a quote from NATO's latest progress report: "Slovenia continues to make significant progress in development of its armed forces with a focus on the development of capable and deployable reaction forces in accordance with NATO standards and strategy, so reflecting its strategic goal of Alliance membership." This confirms that we are on the right track but we have to keep the commitment. And I believe we are doing exactly that.

NN&PP: *Please explain the geo-strategic situation of Slovenia. How are your relations to neighbouring countries?*

Matjaž Šinkovec: After September 11 the geo-strategic situation, as that of other countries, has changed considerably. If we could have talked about Slovenia not facing any direct threat previous to the terrorist attacks in the United States, it is clear to all of us now that threats do not have recognisable faces or borders any longer. Contrary to what some "Natosceptics" say, there is even more reason now to be part of the Alliance. Only by working together we can face and defeat these new threats to the security of our nations.

At the same time Slovenia, a Western Central European nation, bordering on South-Eastern Europe, is in a unique position to play an even greater role in our neighbourhood. We have developed excellent relations with our immediate neighbours, Alliance members Italy and Hungary amongst them. We have invested a lot in helping stabilise the Western Balkans, both in defence, de-mining, humani-

tarian activities and, I would stress, in the economy. For instance, we are the largest foreign direct investors in Bosnia-Herzegovina. We have also shown to some of these troubled nations, by our example, that there is a "light at the end of the tunnel". Slovenia's inclusion in NATO would send a clear signal to them that the door to the Euro-Atlantic community is open to them once they fulfil the necessary criteria.

NN&PP: *Slovenia's Armed Forces have upgraded the equipment to meet NATO standards. What are the priorities?*

Matjaž Šinkovec: Priorities are clearly given to the development of deployable and sustainable reaction forces, air defence and surveillance, Host Nation Support, C³I and deployable Combat Support and Combat Service Support elements. The entire modernisation programme is driven by the implementation of the Partnership Goals agreed mutually by NATO and Slovenia, and is, much to our satisfaction, proceeding broadly according to our plan. The planned modernisation programme is progressing in accordance with financial projections and assisted by a special law (the Law on Basic Developments Programmes through to 2007) which has provided an additional US\$259 million for equipping and modernising the Armed Forces during this period. The funds will be used primarily to support the implementation of those Partnership Goals that are indispensable for the obligations of future NATO membership. Those projects include the procurement of telecommunications and secure CIS equipment, connectivity with NATINEADS, new infantry and anti-tank weapons, acquisition of a tactical mobile tele-communications network and hand-held combat radios, the purchase of additional Light Armoured Vehicles (Valuk, HMMWV), additional helicopters (Cougar), and modernisation of air defence assets.

NN&PP: *What is your vision for the future?*

Matjaž Šinkovec: We will be joining NATO, hopefully soon, the NATO as we know it now. Europe and the wider international community need NATO, a collective defence organisation that is concerned with wider international security and stability. If there were no NATO we would have to invent it. The transatlantic link is irreplaceable. History has demonstrated that more than once. The role of the United States is vital. It is also clear that Europe needs to improve on its capabilities. And Russia needs to be as involved as possible. We are aware of the internal debates on NATO's future role and its internal mechanisms. We believe we can participate constructively in these debates. We want to build the future together.





SLOVENIA'S WAY INTO NATO

Slovenia is carrying out intensive preparations for and activities connected with integration into the Alliance in political, legal, security, defence, military, financial and other fields.

Slovenia fulfils the basic criteria for NATO membership, published in the NATO Enlargement Paper in 1995:

- **stable democratic social and political system;**
- **functioning market economy;**
- **respect for human rights;**
- **civilian control of armed forces;**
- **good relations with neighbouring countries.**

Slovenia is aware that the tasks and goals set out in the Annual National Programme for the Implementation of the Membership Action Plan (ANP/MAP) 2001-2002 must be implemented, and that this will be under the constant scrutiny of NATO. One of the most important activities of this kind was the NATO team of experts' visit to Ljubljana, from 12 to 15 February 2002, during which Slovenia's membership preparations in individual areas were closely examined.

An analysis of the ANP/MAP 2001-2002 so far shows successful implementation of tasks and goals. Yet at the same time Slovenia is aware that some improvements have to be

made, among them in the field of public support for NATO membership. The effort to increase the public awareness and support was strongly and unequivocally demonstrated by the public presentation of opinions in the National Assembly on 16 January 2002 entitled: Slovenia prior to the NATO Summit in Prague, at which the President of the Republic, the Prime Minister, the Speaker of the National Assembly, the Foreign and Defence Ministers, the Chief of the General Staff of the Slovenian Armed Forces, the opposition leader in the National Assembly, the Director of the Public Relations and Media Office, numerous deputies and others resolutely

30th March 1994 – Signature of the Partnership for Peace Framework Document by Slovenia. Signed by Janez Drnovsek (Prime Minister). (Photo: NATO)





advocated Slovenia's membership in NATO. Opponents of Slovenia's membership also presented their views, including two National Assembly deputies. The Director of the NATO Office of Information and Press, Dr. Jamie Shea, appeared as a special guest. The event was broadcast live on national TV.

PUBLIC OPINION

The most extensive public opinion poll in the past few years (on this question) was conducted in 420 places throughout Slovenia in November 2001 by the Public Opinion Poll Centre. The results were published in January 2002 and showed that 53% of the persons polled supported Slovenia's joining NATO, 24% were against it and 23% were undecided. Only 4% of the persons interviewed believed that Slovenia would never join NATO; 24% believed that Slovenia would become an Alliance member by 2004; 33% thought that this would happen sometime during the years 2005 to 2008; and 7% believed that this would happen after 2008.

SLOVENIA AND SEE

Slovenia is well aware of its role in contributing to security in the region of South-East Europe. In this spirit it has been actively participating in NATO-led peace support operations. There are 110 Slovenian Armed Forces members and 20 civilian police officers within the SFOR, KFOR, UNMIK and other organizations (OSCE in Kosovo and Macedonia). In addition to the present contribution, Slovenia will assign an additional Combat Company from the 10th Motorized Battalion to SFOR. This company, consisting of 109 troops, will be trained for action in compliance with Article 5 of the Washington Treaty providing collective defence for Member Countries, thereby attaining one of the partnership goals.

Slovenia is also active in the Stability Pact for South-Eastern Europe (in which it participates as a contributor and carries out economic and other projects), as well as SECI, the CEI and the NATO initiatives SEEGROUP and SEECAP. Slovene companies are among the

most important investors in the SEE region, particularly in Bosnia-Herzegovina where Slovenia is the leading foreign investor.

HARMONIZING THE LAWS

On November 28, 2001, the National Assembly adopted the "Long-Term Program for Restructuring the Slovenian Armed Forces". The aim of the program is to form a modern, efficient and realistic force which will provide national defence, participate in the system of collective defence and contribute to security in the region.

In March 2002 the Parliament passed the law eliminating the ban on the entry of nuclear powered combat ships or ships with nuclear weapons in Slovene waters.

AFTER SEPTEMBER 11

Slovenia has been actively engaged in the fight against terrorism through the exchange of intelligence information, the prevention of money laundering and illegal immigration, etc.

After the September 11 attacks in the USA Slovenia was also among the first countries to offer support to the US (plasma, forensic experts and assistance in search and rescue operations).

On November 7, 2001, the House of Representatives in the US Congress adopted the Gerald B. Solomon Freedom Consolidation Act supporting further NATO enlargement. According to this Act, Slovenia should receive USD 4.5 million in assistance in the fiscal year 2002. A similar act was also adopted by the Senate Committee on International Relations.

In June 2001, an agreement was reached between the US Army and the Port of Koper on the use of the port as a logistics base for the supply and transport of US military units within SFOR. This was carried out successfully from 20 August to 6 October 2001.

Thanks to the International Military Education and Training Program (IMET), 200 Slovenian Army officers, taking part in one-month or longer training programs, have received training in the US since 1993.

COOPERATING WITH ITALY, HUNGARY AND CROATIA

Slovenia has been cooperating with Italy, Hungary and Croatia in the "Quadrilateral Initiative", and Italian-Hungarian-Slovenian Multinational Land Force is being formed within this cooperation.

THE ITF

The International Trust Fund for Demining and Mine Victims Assistance (ITF), headquartered at Ig near Ljubljana, has demined more than one half of the entire cleared territory in Bosnia-Herzegovina. The ITF, also active in Croatia and Albania, has concluded its activities in Kosovo and started demining operations in Macedonia. It has also signed a cooperation agreement with the FRY. So far, the ITF has received donations of over US\$75 million from 23 countries and 25 donor organizations and companies.

In December 2001, the US Congress allocated USD 14 million for matching donations in the fiscal year 2002 defence budget.

TO ENSURE SLOVENIA'S OWN SECURITY

In January 2001, the non-partisan Slovene Committee on NATO was established, in which most members are representatives of the civil society, of academia and intellectuals. The task of the committee is to promote support for Slovenia's accession to NATO and to organise different public panels, meetings and discussions. Slovenia is one of the initiators of the Vilnius Group of candidate countries for NATO membership. In April 2001, a meeting of political directors from foreign ministries of the Vilnius Group was held, in which Croatia took part for the first time. In October 2001, a meeting of ministers of foreign affairs of the Vilnius Group was held in Bled, at which a joint statement was adopted. The main focus of the meeting – in addition to NATO enlargement – was joint combat against terrorism.

Slovenia is well aware of the fact that, despite evident progress made, it cannot indulge in self-satisfaction but must continue to endeavour to meet membership criteria to the best of its abilities.





SLOVENIA – AN ACTIVE MEMBER OF THE VILNIUS GROUP

As part of their efforts to achieve greater political influence over NATO's enlargement strategy, the nine candidate countries for NATO membership have agreed on a number of joint activities. In May 2000 two of the aspirants, Lithuania and Slovenia, organised a joint conference in Vilnius on issues pertaining to further NATO enlargement. It was attended by the foreign ministers of all nine candidates for membership or their deputies. The ministers also adopted the Vilnius Statement, which expresses the political solidarity that exists between the candidate countries and reflects their willingness to continue the process of integration and achieve the criteria for membership of the Alliance.

**Dr. Dimitry Rupel,
Slovene Foreign Minister,
hosting the meeting of the Vilnius Group,
October 4th Bled, Slovenia.**

In Slovenia's view the Vilnius meeting showed the Alliance that the aspirant countries were not merely passive applicants but were willing and able to participate in NATO-related activities. The Vilnius initiative should therefore be maintained with regard to political solidarity and joint activities with the Alliance.

In this sense Slovenia regards the political dimension of the group as an expression of solidarity between the candidate countries in their desire to complete the democratic transformation of Europe.

Slovenia understands the commitment to cooperation between the aspirant countries as a sharing of views and experience gained in implementation of the Membership Action Plan (MAP).

However, Slovenia also believes that each candidate country should qualify individually for membership on the basis of its own merits and that any decision to invite an aspirant to begin accession talks with the Alliance should be made on a case-by-case basis. Inviting any

of the aspirant countries into the Alliance should be regarded as success for all.

In the spirit of the Vilnius Statement, Slovenia has participated in all Vilnius Group activities and will continue to do so in the future. Among other it organised a meeting for political directors from the foreign ministries of the aspirant countries (April 2001, at Brdo pri Kranju, in which Croatia officially took part for the first time), as well as a meeting of the foreign ministers themselves in October 2001 in Bled.

At the latter a Joint Statement was adopted in which the countries of the Vilnius Group expressed solidarity with and support for the United States following the September 11 terrorist attacks.

In 2001 Slovenia also participated in the Bratislava Prime Ministers' Summit (10-11 May), and the heads of state meeting in Sofia (5 October), and in the meeting between Vilnius Group foreign ministers and US Secretary of State Colin Powell in Brussels (7 December).





ZORICA BUKINAC CIMPERŠEK
COUNSELLOR TO THE GOVERNMENT, MINISTRY OF DEFENCE



THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE 2001-2002 MEMBERSHIP ACTION PLAN, ANNUAL NATIONAL PROGRAM

After the last wave of NATO enlargement in 1999, NATO demonstrated its continued open door policy by initiating the Membership Action Plan (MAP) for candidate countries. The MAP is the single most important measure by which NATO assesses a country's readiness for full membership at the Prague Summit. Each country develops an Annual National Program (ANP) to implement its MAP. The ANP MAP develops real capabilities for NATO missions.

This year (2001-2002) Slovenia is implementing its third annual ANP MAP. Several factors contributed to this year's program – the results of last year's MAP, dialog with NATO and bilateral consultations with individual NATO member states.

Our dialog with NATO regarding the MAP is conducted at various levels. Our ANP MAP is first presented to the NATO Senior Political Committee. Working with Slovenian authorities, the NATO team produces a draft assessment which then goes to the NATO Political-Military Steering Committee. The Slovenian delegation meets with this Committee, and the draft assessment grows to an overall progress report. This report is then discussed with Slovenia in North Atlantic Council. Based on these discussions, NATO adopts the final report on the progress of Slovenia's ANP MAP implementation.

DRAFTING OF THE 2001-2002 ANP MAP

In our second MAP (2000-2001) we examined the requirements of our defence system in a changed security environment, the size and structure of our armed forces, their level of training, the procurement of weapons and equipment, and the military budget necessary to perform these tasks. The questions presented in our second MAP were no longer "what" but "how".

The 2001-2002 ANP MAP differs from the two previous ones as we move from quantity to quality in a new cycle of defence reform. Although the ANP comprises an ambitious list of objectives, since its adoption some of the most important milestones have already been reached.

REVIEW OF THE 2001-2002 ANP MAP

Slovenia has assumed the role of security contributor in Southeastern Europe by increasing deployment of Slovenian Armed Forces (SAF) in peace support operations, through post-war rehabilitation projects and through assistance and investments in the region's economy. Slovenia actively contributes to the Stability Pact for Southeastern Europe. As a founding country of the International Trust Fund for Demining and Mine Victims Assistance, it assists in the rehabilitation of mine-afflicted countries in the Balkans and other regions. Furthermore, Slovenia has created a humanitarian organisation to rehabilitate the most vulnerable population – children – suffering from the psychological affects of the Balkan wars. Slovenia is active in numerous initiatives in Southeastern Europe, many of them launched by NATO itself.

ECONOMY

Slovenia has a strong macro-economic stability and a stable growth of 3.6%-3.7%. Our past deficits have practically disappeared. The 8.5% inflation rate reported in 2001 is significant, but controlled.

LEGAL ISSUES

By the end of 2002, various laws will be amended allowing Slovenia unimpeded ratification of the Washington Treaty. An amended Defence Law will be in effect by the end of this year which will, among other things, adapt the procedures of deployment of the Slovenian Armed Forces.

SECURITY ISSUES

Slovenia has adopted the "Law on the security of confidential documents" and established a National Security Authority (NSA). The NSA is taking over from an interim body with well-established procedures, so that the NSA can focus immediately on the most challenging tasks.

PUBLIC RELATIONS

In 2001 we adopted a Public Relations Strategy to increase public awareness and support for NATO Membership. We already enjoy staunch support from nearly all Slovenian political parties. To increase public understanding, the Parliament organised a presentation in which advocates and opponents discussed NATO accession. This event launched in earnest our Public Relations program and was attended by the highest representatives of public and political life in Slovenia.



The most relevant public opinion poll on national security issues was conducted in November 2001 by the Public Opinion Poll Centre of the Faculty of Social Sciences at the University of Ljubljana. The results, published in January 2002, showed that 53% of the respondents supported NATO membership; 24% were against it, and 23% were undecided. Only 4% of those interviewed believed that Slovenia would never join NATO. Some 24% believed that Slovenia would join the Alliance by 2004; 33% thought that membership would occur between 2005-2008, and 7% believed it would happen after 2008. The same research indicated that 73% supported a referendum on Slovenia's accession to NATO.

Slovenia has continued to progress in the ANP MAP fields of politics, law, security and economics, but was already reasonably well developed in these areas. Perhaps more encouraging is the progress demonstrated in the area of national defence, where it has had steeper mountain to climb.

MEETING NATIONAL DEFENCE CHALLENGES

In June 2001 the Slovenian Parliament approved a Resolution on National Security Strategy and adopted a new defence strategy which assumes that Slovenia will soon join NATO and the EU. In addition, Slovenia adopted the Armed Forces General Long-Term Development and Equipment Programme. The Parliament has also decided to approve a rolling two-year defense budget which will improve financial predictability for defence planning.

RESTRUCTURING THE SLOVENIAN ARMED FORCES IS THE PRIMARY GOAL

The purpose of the revised defence concept is, on the one hand, to create more mobile, deployable reaction forces with a larger professional element and a streamlined command structure and, on the other hand, to significantly reduce wartime organization. The new force structure is designed to carry out the two basic missions of the SAF, providing the capability to 1) resist aggression against our national territory and 2) deploy forces for NATO operations.

The reform process has several phases:
2002-2004: restructuring
2004-2007: increasing the capabilities of rapid reaction forces
2007-2010: implementing reforms throughout the entire SAF.

The crucial period is the first, restructuring, which from now until 2004 will transform the SAF and reduce the wartime structure to correspond to that of comparable NATO members. We will increase our peacetime formations and channel development, equipment and additional staff primarily towards reaction forces. Our new structure will consist of main defence, reaction forces, and augmentation forces.

By the end of 2002, the new force structure will produce the first fully manned professional battalion – 10th motorized battalion. A fully professional Reaction Force of three battalions will be complete by 2008. There will be a single operational force command. Our goal is to have 1,800 professional military personnel assigned to the SAF Reaction Forces. The SAF will reduce its wartime structure to 26,000 by 2004, at which time it should have increased the number of professional personnel in the peacetime structure to over 6,000. In order to decrease the size of the SAF wartime structure, we will reduce the number of combat brigades from five to three, and reduce territorial units from 16 to 6 regiments. Within the main forces, all battalions without a peacetime nucleus will be abolished within a year.

Slovenia has decided to increase its contribution to regional security by sending an additional SAF platoon to SFOR in Bosnia and Herzegovina. In early 2002, 112 SAF personnel and 22 police officers were involved in peacekeeping operations. Some 93% of our participation in peacekeeping and humanitarian operations will be directed towards the Balkans. In addition to the personnel already present in these operations, the Government has decided that by May 1, 2002, an additional combat unit – a company of the SAF from the 10th Motorized Battalion – will be ready to deploy to SFOR.

REGIONAL COOPERATION

As part of our involvement in stabilising Southeastern Europe, Slovenia is intensively cooperating in the area of civilian-military crisis management. We have taken a leading role in the field of environmental protection within the armed forces. As part of our participation in the Central European Nations' Cooperation in Peace Support (CENCOOP), Slovenia is the 2002 chair of the Political-Military Steering Committee. Slovenia will focus on forming a multi-national land force of units from Italy, Hungary and Slovenia. Military cooperation within this trilateral brigade has already begun in the form of military exercises which will intensify further in 2002. Since September 2002, two officers and one

noncommissioned officer of the SAF have been employed at the multi-national forces' command center in Udine.

FINANCIAL RESOURCES

The Slovenian Government has adopted the financial measures necessary to achieve the goals of our 2001-2002 ANP MAP and have projected our defence expenditures through 2007. These measures have considerably improved military planning and Parliamentary support of defence spending. To ensure the planned development of the SAF, especially major modernisation projects, Parliament extended the law on Basic Development to run through 2007 and provided an additional SIT 65 billion funded by loans over the next five years. Through these measures, Slovenia will achieve moderate growth in defense expenditures to between 1.5% and 1.6% of its GDP.

CONCLUSION

When producing the current ANP, we did not look from the present to the future – as we have in our earlier plans – but from the future back to the present. It is clear that while the plan is supposed to cover 2001-2002, it is expected to equip Slovenia for challenges after 2002 and the Prague Summit.

The ANP MAP is by its definition one of the more measurable elements of NATO candidacy. It is designed to offer a certain degree of objectivity, especially in the areas of defence and resources. Other areas, however, offer less tangible elements that are still essential for NATO membership. These elements can only be demonstrated in action, such as Slovenia's stabilising efforts in Southeastern Europe, our support of the anti-terrorist coalition, and our vision of how to meet the challenges of the future.

Another intangible is the ability to embrace the culture of NATO decision-making, consultation and consensus-building. The ANP MAP cannot measure these elements adequately. Yet no MAP country could hope to join NATO without exercising these less tangible elements. A successful implementation of the ANP MAP is not possible without understanding how the Alliance functions, without reforming the defence system and, in Slovenia's case, without participating in the Southeastern Europe stabilisation process. This is a continuous effort in which everyone is required to pull his own weight. Slovenia is ready, able and willing.





WE CONTRIBUTE TO THE STABILITY PACT

From Slovenia's point of view the Stability Pact (SP) is an appropriate and efficient mechanism for achieving lasting peace, stability, democracy and development in South-Eastern Europe (SEE); this is, politically, economically and in security terms, in Slovenia's strategic national interest. Slovenia participates in the Stability Pact as an equal partner as a donor, providing assistance to a variety of projects (pursuant to the decrees of the Slovenian government and of the National Assembly) in accordance with its interests and capacities.

Slovenia has historical cultural and social contacts with South-Eastern European countries, and the Slovenian language is closely related. Therefore, Slovenia can easily contribute its knowledge and experience to its neighbours. Slovenia has been helping for several years now and will continue to bring stability and prosperity to this region.

SLOVENIA'S ACTIVITIES

We support and welcome the stabilisation and association process in SEE and hope that stabilisation and association agreements will soon be concluded with all countries that are sufficiently prepared to do so.

Slovenia actively participates in all Stability Pact structures, and is leading and co-financing many projects in the economic and security fields, as well as in democratisation and human rights processes.

As part of the Working Table on Democratisation and Human Rights, Slovenia has focused its activities primarily on the protection of human rights and minority rights. In this respect it is chairing the Task Force on Human Rights and Minorities, which has developed long-term objectives and strategies.

In the first half of 2001 Slovenia was a co-chair of the Working Table on Democratisation and Human Rights. The objectives of our co-chairmanship were to revive different activities and ensure their cost-effective management and the transparency of procedures, and to intensify the involvement of SEE countries in all these activities.

The most important single event was the meeting of the Working Table on Democratisation and Human Rights in Portoroz – on 14

NATIONAL ANTHEM

*God's blessing on all nations,
Who long and work for that
bright day,
When o'er earth's habitations
No war, no strife shall
hold its sway;
Who long see
That all men free
No more shall foes, but neighbours be.*

*Text by France Preseren
Musik by Stanko Premrl*



and 15 May 2001, where strategic priorities (return of refugees, the media, inter-ethnic dialogue and trans-border cooperation, youth and education) were adopted. Almost equally important for the further functioning of the Stability Pact was the meeting of non-governmental organisations at Brdo pri Kranju on 12 May 2001.

The central projects within this Working Table, co-financed by Slovenia, are: the establishment of the International Centre for Inter-Ethnic Studies and Minorities under the auspices of the Institute for Ethnic Studies and the "Maribor Initiative", a long-term project, lead by the non-governmental organisation ISCOMET from Maribor. Its objective is the positive contribution of different religious communities to democratisation processes in SEE countries. A project for studying the Roma issue and for psychosocial assistance to children who suffered in the recent armed conflicts are two further long-term projects. Slovenia has also provided training for local community representatives from SEE countries. The office of the Slovenian Human Rights Ombudsman is taking part in establishing similar institutions elsewhere in SEE.

In general the most tangible and useful assistance Slovenia provides to SEE countries is the transfer of its "know-how" (knowledge and experience) to their institution-building process and their Euro-Atlantic integration processes. In this respect we helped establish the Customs, Stock Exchange, Clearing

House, Statistics and Bank for Promoting Exports by transferring our "know-how" of investment, trade liberalisation and the development of small business in some SEE countries. The Bled School of Management trains managers from SEE countries; this year it is starting to train government officials. The Centre for Excellence in Finance has been established to offer training in the field of reconstruction of the financial sector and financial administration to representatives from SEE countries.

SLOVENIA ACTIVE IN THE SECURITY SECTOR

Slovenian experts actively participate in initiatives concerning home affairs, especially the Anti-Corruption Initiative and the Initiative against Organised Crime. At present Slovenia, as a junior partner to Austria and Germany, is starting a programme to train people from Croatia in the field of asylum and migration procedures and legislation. It is also active in the field of police training, where it is preparing a training module on police management. In 2001 Slovenia prepared and proposed an education module on "Disaster Preparedness and Prevention". The most prominent project by Slovenia in the security field is the humanitarian demining and mine victims assistance.

This year Slovenia will send one of its officers to the Regional Arms Control Verification and Implementation Assistance Centre (RACVIAC) in Zagreb.

In 2000 Slovenia invested a total of 4 million euros in a variety of projects, 2.7 million of which was invested in projects as part of the Working Table on Economic Reconstruction, Development and Cooperation.

A total of 2.76 million euros was allocated for 2001, 2.0 million of which was for projects as part of the Working Table on Economic Reconstruction, Development and Cooperation (humanitarian aid not included).

The estimated cost of projects for 2002 and 2003 is approximately 3.2 million euros per year.

Expert activities and other services are not included in this amount. Projects led by other participants to which Slovenia contributes offices and buildings are also not included in estimations of Slovenia's financial contribution.





SLOVENIA IN THE ANTI-TERRORIST COALITION

Slovenia most severely condemns any form of terrorism and has been actively participating in the international anti-terrorist coalition since the very beginning. On the international level, Slovenia supports and aligns itself with initiatives and measures that fight terrorism. By engaging in and implementing the measures adopted by the United Nations, the European Union, NATO, the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe, the Council of Europe, and Central, Eastern and South-Eastern European countries, the Vilnius Group, EAPC etc., Slovenia clearly and resolutely places itself on the side of the anti-terrorist alliance. The relevant UN SC resolutions and the EU Anti-terrorism Action Plan should be particularly underscored among the binding documents defining Slovenia's measures.

Pursuant to UN SC resolution 1373 (2001) and the guidance of the UN SC Counter-Terrorism Committee, Slovenia has submitted to the UN a comprehensive report on the concrete measures and legislative procedures it is implementing in the fight against terrorism. These measures are carried out in compliance with the assumed international obligations and on the basis of applicable legislation, as well as in accordance with the decisions and guidelines of the Government and the National Assembly of the Republic of Slovenia.

Slovenia is a signatory to several bilateral and multilateral agreements and conventions relating to the fight against terrorism, among them four relevant conventions of the United Nations. These legally binding agreements define the obligations that Slovenia carries out with the relevant legislative and practical measures. In the fight against terrorism, action at two levels is necessary, i.e. within international organisations at the global and regional levels and at the national level in the form of relevant legislation and its efficacious implementation. The fight against terrorism comprises international and national

**Super DVOZA Mark II
Patrol Boat
from IAI Ramta Division.
(Photo: IAI)**



**BOV with
anti-riot control
forces.
(Photo: Mönch
Archive)**

measures (political, military, financial, legislative, police, administrative, etc.) which are closely co-ordinated. The raised concern for security, however, should not affect the achieved and generally applicable standards of the protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms.

JOINT FIGHTS AGAINST THE TERRORISM

On 12 October 2001 the National Assembly of the Republic of Slovenia adopted the Declaration on Joint Fight against the Terrorism, with which it shares the determination of the international community against terrorism in all its forms, and calls for the implementation of concrete measures in this fight. The Gov-

ernment of the Republic of Slovenia has adopted relevant decisions, which delegate to individual competent government bodies concrete activities in the fight against "the plague of our time". Slovenia has also joined the endeavours of the international community to mitigate the consequences of the anti-terrorist action for inhabitants of Afghanistan and the region. Slovenia has already provided humanitarian aid in the amount of over SIT 20 million to the Afghan population. The Government of the Republic of Slovenia adopted the decision on Slovenia's logistics participation in providing humanitarian aid to Afghanistan under the auspices of the UN. The assistance provided by Slovenia comprises air traffic control, air transport services, storing humanitarian aid in transit, and the setting up of a humanitarian base. Slovenia has proposed to the Board of Advisors of the International Trust Fund for Demining and Mine Victims Assistance (ITF) to examine the possibility of the ITF joining the demining efforts in Afghanistan after the situation there has stabilised.





MODERNISATION OF THE SLOVENIAN ARMED FORCES

The restructuring and equipping of the Slovenian armed forces has to be completed with the aim of obtaining a small, efficient and cost-effective armed force capable of ensuring national defence and, at the same time, enabling membership of NATO and active co-operation in NATO and in European security and defence policy. The Slovenian armed forces will be developed into recognisable armed forces interoperable with other Western European armies. The additional development of the Slovenian armed forces should conform to Slovenia's material and human resources, with the priority being the achievement of greater armed force readiness through modernisation, a better training system and a better personnel structure. The formation of Reaction Forces and greater professionalisation are key factors in the further development of the Slovenian armed forces.

PRIORITY AREA OF EQUIPPING

For the further modernisation of the Slovenian armed forces in the period up to 2007, it will be necessary to provide additional resources of SIT 65 billion (295 million euros) at prices valid at the time of programme adop-

tion. These resources will enable completion of the equipping of reaction forces, and completion of the command and control, logistics and air defence systems. A number of programmes, which started within the first phase of implementation of the Basic Development Programmes, will therefore be continued and completed. Every year it will be necessary to provide resources for the regular activity of the Slovenian armed forces from the regular budget.

The programme for the additional restructuring and equipping of reaction forces includes the additional equipping of the 10th motorised battalion and the 17th military police battalion, and the formation of the 20th motorised battalion with battle vehicles, anti-armour systems, infantry armaments, engineering equipment, transport vehicles and other equipment. The limited cost of the programme is SIT 29.5 billion (131 million euros).

The programme of the supplementation of the Command and Control System includes the establishing of compatibility and interoperability with NATO in the area of mutual exchange of messages, the establishing of the System of Frequency Management for frequency harmonisation with NATO, augmentation of the Informational Support of Command and Communications with NATO, and

the ensuring of automatic transactions and logistics reports between the highest national Logistics Commands and their subordinated units. It is necessary to complete the Tactical Communication System of the Slovenian armed forces, which it was impossible to finish within the limited implementation of recent Basic Development Programmes, and the ensuring of manual radio stations for the Slovenian armed forces. The total cost of the programme is limited to SIT 8 billion (25.5 million euros).

The programme of completion of the logistics of the Slovenian armed forces includes the establishing of Automatic Data Transfer to regional commands and inclusion in the NATO Command and Control System. It is necessary to establish the Fuel Handling System in accordance with NATO standards and to establish the national unit of Logistical Support to Forces in Peacekeeping Operations with all provided reserves and Medical Capabilities, and to supplement and equip the airport infrastructure. It should be necessary to enlarge transport capabilities and maintenance capabilities, and to ensure other equipment and spare parts for the ensuring of the required availability of Reaction Forces. The procurement of battle sets of the most important ammunition will be regularly planned. The

Slovenian Armed Forces are introducing into operational use the light armored vehicle Hummvee.



“Valuk” is the new armored personnel carrier that is produced in Slovenia.





limited cost of the programme is SIT 20 billion (88.8 million euros).

The Air Defence System will be equipped with Tactical Supervision Centres, and two units for the protection of Reaction Forces will be organised and trained. It is necessary to establish the Automatic Supervision of Air Defence Arms and to connect it to the Integrated Air Defence System. Resources amounting to SIT 7.5 billion (33.3 million euros) will be necessary.

The implementation and continuation of the above projects and programmes will be urgently needed even if Slovenia is not invited to become a NATO member. Through realisation of these projects we will ensure that the Slovenian armed forces are capable of deterring military threats, defending the state militarily and implementing the tasks specified by regulations. The Slovenian armed forces, restructured in such a manner, should be interoperable and capable of co-operating with the military organisations of NATO members.

THE DISTRIBUTION OF THE RESOURCES FOR EQUIPPING AND MODERNISING OF SLOVENE ARMED FORCES

The projection of resources needed for the development and equipping of the Slovenian armed forces for the 2002-2007 period takes into account not only the expenses of the budget of the Ministry of Defence but also funds for investment in the supplemented Basic Development Programmes of the Slovenian Defence Forces, and resources for pensions for military personnel.

The Slovenian defence industry, under competitive conditions, will be involved in the



“Roland II” air defence battery is being introduced into operational use in the SAF.

equipping of the Slovenian armed forces in accordance with its technological and similar programmes.

With those programmes the more effective maintenance of military equipment and armaments should be ensured.

The projection of the restructuring and equipping of the Slovenian armed forces for the ensuing medium-term period is based on the expected growth in defence expenditure. We are working on the assumption that, up to 2010, the total number of employees in the MoD will be 9,100, in the Slovenian armed forces 7,700 and in other parts of the Ministry of Defence 1,400. Annual budgets should cover resources for regular operation and, in addition, resources for the current maintenance of existing armaments and equipment, and the

current maintenance of those technical resources to be introduced into operative use through purchases carried out in accordance with Basic Development Programmes.

According to NATO methodology, in 2001 defence expenditures will be about SIT 66.7 billion. This is 1.46 per cent of GDP and represents an

increase on 2000. In comparison with recent years, defence expenditure fell in 2000.

These expenditures include resources for wages and for current operations and investments financed from the Ministry of Defence budget. They include expenditure for pensions and resources for current acquisitions in accordance with investments in the Basic Development Programmes of Defence Forces.

Projection of resources for the 2002-2007 period, taking into consideration the anticipated real annual growth of GDP, predicts a growth in defence expenditure to 1.6 per cent of GDP at the end of the planned period. After 2007 the defence budget should grow by 7 per cent per year, ensuring the gradual development and restructuring of the Slovenian armed forces and its participation in international operations.



Source: Long-Term Programme for the Restructuring of the Slovenian Armed Forces (adopted by the Slovenian government in November 2001).

Armoured units.



Infantry.





BENJAMIN SEVŠEK, M.SC. MINISTRY OF DEFENCE
HEAD OF PRODUCTION AND TRADE IN ARMS DIVISION

SMALL, BUT EFFICIENT

THE SLOVENIAN DEFENCE INDUSTRY

The Slovenian defence industry has developed over the last 60 years. In this period it has specialised in the high-tech production of parts, assemblies and special equipment. Nowadays the Slovenian defence industry is following the process of joining NATO by adopting NATO standards and agreements, by adopting high-quality production standards, and by internationalising and specialising in designated areas.

The defence industry is following armed forces development programmes in equipping Slovenian Crisis Reaction with defence products and services compatible with the level of NATO. The defence industry is following armed forces development programmes in the areas of the equipping of Slovenian Crisis Reaction Forces with armoured personal carriers, clothes, equipment, protection and modern communications systems. Moreover, the defence industry is modernising armoured vehicles and artillery, producing military trucks, artillery systems, supporting fire control, observation, simulation and training systems. Many products are well known and successfully used by other armed forces as well.

Taking into account Slovenia's position at the crossroads of Europe, good road, rail, sea and air traffic connections, the industrial infrastructure and a highly educated and skilled work force, Slovenia and the Slovenian defence industry offer good maintenance and logistics facilities in the Maribor, Ravne, Ljubljana and Koper regions.

There are many defence manufacturers in Slovenia; most of them are worthy of mention here in connection with different production areas.

Soldiers' and especially Alpine infantry equipment. The successful Fotona company



The Metrix, world-class hand-held rangefinder binoculars with electronic compass.



Opto -electronic devices, fire control systems for tracked vehicles and artillery, laser warning devices, range - finders, etc.

of Ljubljana manufactures world-class hand-held rangefinder binoculars with electronic compasses (Metrix).

AREX Sentjernež manufactures load-carrying and NBC equipment and soldiers' equipment. Veplas Velenje manufactures helmets and ballistic vests. Comet Zrece manufactures ballistic plates and vests. Uni&Forma Trzin manufactures uniforms. IKA Ajdovscina manufactures protective clothing. Beti Metlika manufactures special underwear. Alpina Ziri manufactures Alpine boots. Porenta Skofja Loka manufactures rucksacks. Svila Maribor and Tekstilna Ajdovscina manufacture military textiles.

Armoured vehicles and artillery systems. We shall stress here the importance of STO Ravne na Koroskem, a manufacturer, under licence, of the Valuk 6 x 6 light armoured vehicle and, in collaboration, 155mm howitzers, mortars and various components. STO is an expert in the modernisation of different types of tracked vehicles, and offers maintenance and logistics facilities for tracked and artillery vehicles.

FOTONA Ljubljana manufactures opto-electronic devices, fire-control systems for tracked and artillery vehicles, laser warning devices, rangefinders, etc.

Rotis Trzin manufactures special bearings and gears.

Communications equipment. Iskra Transmission of Ljubljana manufactures low-capacity military microwave radio and optical fibre systems, and military telecommunications system integrations.

ERO Ljubljana manufactures telecommunications-related equipment. Trival Antene manufactures military antennas, masts and accessories for radio telecommunications.

Cross-country military vehicles. TVM Maribor, an experienced successor to the TAM company, manufactures new types of cross-country military truck (3-5 tons). TVM offers experienced personnel and facilities for maintenance and logistics for wheeled vehicles.

Soldiers, load carrying and NBC equipment.





Armored vehicles.

ELQ Ljubljana manufactures single-axle, lower-capacity freight trailers. Iskra Avtoelektrika manufactures electric and electronic components for transport and armoured vehicles. LIV Postojna manufactures special-purpose hydraulic cranes and lifting devices.

Electronics, training devices, components. The Ministry of Defence & VR Elektronika Vrhnika manufacture measurement devices for the maintenance of tanks, anti-armour guided rockets and electronic simulators. Em. Tronic Maribor manufactures indoor shooting ranges for tanks, artillery and man-portable air-defence systems. Inzeniring plus of Ljubljana manufactures weapons-mounted laser training systems.

Aviotech Ptuj manufactures UAVs for surveillance and target purposes. Spinel Velenje manufactures firearms training ortoscopes. Hermes Softlab Ljubljana and Aster Ljubljana both develop software for military applications. Metrel Horjul manufactures electric regulation and measuring equipment.

3-5 t military cross country vehicle.



Valuk - 6x6 light armored vehicle (produced under license).

Parts for weapons, equipment, simulation ammunition and explosives. The Ministry of Defence in Ljubljana manufactures cold-forging barrels and different parts for small arms.

UNIOR Zrece manufactures special production machines and special tools. JE&GR Zagorje ob Savi manufactures parts for weapons and equipment. Gostol Gopan Nova Gorica manufactures kneaders and shears for powders and explosives. Arex Sentjerneje manufactures plastic training ammunition. Coal Petisovci manufactures white-pallet training ammunition. KIK Kamnik manufactures military mines and explosives training devices. TAB Mezica manufactures special-purpose batteries.

Emergency, rescue and security constructions, equipment. Trimo Trebnje manufactures living and support activities containers for military, humanitarian, emergency or rescue needs in different climate conditions. Expo Biro Maribor manufactures tents, storage facilities and different aluminium or steel construction halls. Ikor B manufactures special-purpose light containers. Induplati Jarse manufactures military, humanitarian, emergency or rescue tents.

VTZ Ljubljana manufactures security-sensor-protected palisade fences. Medicop Murs-

Cold forging barrels and different parts for small arms.



Communications equipment: military low capacity microwave radio and optical fiber systems, military telecommunications system integrations.

Weapons mounted laser training systems.



ka Sobota manufactures medical equipment. Tosama Domzale manufactures sanitary materials.

Through procurement programmes and through the policy of joining NATO, the Slovenian government stimulates the enhancement of cooperation and internationalisation of the defence industry. The defence industry is seeking long-term international cooperation for the equipping of the Slovenian armed forces, and foreign customers.



Anti personnel and anti-tank practice mines.





SAF unit in MSU, Bosnia and Herzegovina (SFOR).

COMPILED BY IVAN HOSTNIK, M.A., MINISTRY OF DEFENCE

PARTICIPATION IN PEACE SUPPORT OPERATIONS

Slovenia aims to ensure its basic security interests through participation in European institutions and NATO. Since gaining independence, Slovenia's strategic orientation has been to join the system of collective security and to become a full member of NATO and the EU. In addition, Slovenia is committed to the obligations of the UN Charter, the Helsinki Final Act and subsequent OSCE documents.

Slovenia supports international endeavours to preserve peace and stability in Europe, and especially in South-Eastern Europe. Following the new National Security Strategy, one of the main tasks of the Slovenian armed forces (SAF) is participation in international peace support operations (PSO) and humanitarian operations. Slovenia is directing its efforts

towards participation in peace support operations (PSOs) in order to assist in reinforcing peace, security and stability in its region.

Slovenia has been an active participant in PSOs conducted under the auspices of NATO and the UN since 1997, when the first SAF contingent was sent abroad to participate in a PSO. In an *ad hoc* international mission in Albania, ALBA, Slovenia participated with a sanitary unit of 25 soldiers, NCOs and officers, with medical equipment and ambulances. The unit participated independently within the Italian health station located in Tirana.

Since these successful missions, the SAF has participated with the following international forces and missions: SFOR, KFOR, UNTSO, UNMIK/UNMAS, UNMIK/CIVPOL, OSCE in Kosovo and Macedonia, and UNTAET.

Up to 2001 the number of SAF members participating in PSOs was 361.

SLOVENIAN PARTICIPATION IN PEACE SUPPORT OPERATIONS UP TO 2001

Peace support operation in Albania

From 30 May to 14 July 1999 a sanitary unit of the SAF, with 27 members, participated in the international AFOR peacekeeping force. Their tasks included the medical treatment of the civilian population and AFOR members, as well as the provision of support to civil authorities and humanitarian organisations in offering medical treatment to refugees from the region of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. The unit was active in larger groups composed of members of armed forces from Belgium, Slovakia and Latvia.

UN Peacekeeping operation in Cyprus

Slovenia has been participating in the UNFICYP peacekeeping operation in Cyprus since



September 1997. The twenty-nine SAF members (infantry platoon and staff officers) were a component part of the Austrian-Hungarian-Slovenian battalion (UNAHSB) within peacekeeping forces in Cyprus. Members of the Slovenian contingent SICON were engaged in working on observation points in the eastern part of the island (Sector 4), controlling the linking road between the Greek and Turkish parts along the SBA British base, and performed other duties, such as reserve force duties of the battalion commander in the event of the outbreak of disorder.

Slovenia completed its mission in Cyprus on 19 June 2001.

Operation in Bosnia-Herzegovina

On 1 October 1997 Slovenia began participation in SFOR peacekeeping forces implementing peacekeeping operations under NATO command on the territory of Bosnia-Herzegovina. With three helicopters and a transport aircraft they carried out transport for the needs of SFOR command. Since 2 September 1999 the SAF have contributed an additional military police unit, which is active within the framework of a multinational specialised unit (MSU) also composed of military police officers and carabinieri troops from Italy, Argentina and Romania. The unit is intended for the performance of certain tasks in maintaining law and order, as well as offering help in returning refugees and displaced persons.

In 2000 Slovenia increased its participation within SFOR with a medical team, ROLE-1, in the sanitary battalion station, and they provide medical care for SFOR staff.



Operation in Kosovo

Since 5 January 2000 the SAF have contributed six officers to KFOR international peacekeeping forces. The officers carry out various staff duties in the KFOR commands in Pristina in the province of Kosovo, and in Skopje.

UNTSO operation

Since August 1998 Slovenia has participated in the UNTSO mission (UN Truce Supervision Organisation) on the Israeli-Lebanese border, with two military observers. It is also active in the OGL observation group, with its headquarters in the city of Nahariyya in Israel.

CURRENT SITUATION WITH SLOVENIAN PARTICIPATION IN PSOS

Slovenia currently contributes 112 members of the SAF and 22 civilian policemen – a total of 134. On 1 October 2001 Slovenia increased its participation in MSU of SFOR by 23 troops. In mid-July 2001 a Slovenian officer began a term at the Office of the High Representative in Sarajevo. In 2002 Slovenia will contribute a total of 140 participants, of whom 112 will be SAF personnel and 30 from the police, to peacekeeping and humanitarian operations. Ninety-seven will be deployed in the Balkan area.

In addition to its participation in PSOs, Slovenia actively participates in three regional cooperation initiatives: Multinational Land Force (MLF), Southeastern Defence Ministerial (SEDM) and Central European Nations Cooperation in Peace Support (CENCOOP).

This year Slovenia is participating in NATO and UN-led PSOs in the following international missions: SFOR, KFOR, UNTSO, UNMIK/UNMAS, UNMIK/CIVPOL, UNTAET, and OSCE in Kosovo and FYROM.

The following table shows current SAF participation in NATO and UN led PKOs:





Mission	Slovenian police participation Participation in Multinational Specialised Unit: 46 SAF personnel are in the MSU regiment under Italian command. This unit performs general police tasks, patrols, information gathering, the protection of areas and people, and the maintenance of peace and order; it also participates in training. Three officers perform tasks in the HQ of the MSU regiment.
SFOR	ROLE-1 Medical Unit: 12 SAF personnel provide general and emergency medical aid to members of SFOR in Sarajevo and partly to the civilian population. Aircraft-Helicopter Unit: 41 SAF personnel conduct transport tasks for military and civilian personnel. The unit also performs aerial reconnaissance for the needs of the SFOR HQ in Sarajevo, and medical evacuation.
KFOR	Six officers in KFOR HQ in Kosovo (Pristina) and KFOR REAR HQ in Macedonia (Skopje).
UNTSO	Two SAF officers participate in the UNTSO (Egypt, Israel, Lebanon and Syria) as observers.
UNMIK/UNMAS	One SAF officer participates in the mining activities co-ordination cell (MACC) for demining in Kosovo.
OFFICE OF THE HIGH REPRESENTATIVE (OHR)	Since July 2001, one SAF officer has been working in the OHR in Sarajevo.

Slovenian civilian police officers in international peacekeeping missions

The Slovenian police are forming a 40-member police unit to be included in the EU police units system. Ten per cent of the unit will be ready for immediate deployment to crisis areas.

The current participation of the Slovenian police in PSOs is shown in the following table.

In 2002 the Slovenian police are planning to increase their participation in international peace support operations. The targets are the OSCE missions in Yugoslavia (two to four offi-

cers) and FYROM (two officers), and UN missions in the Middle East and Africa (two to four officers).

TRAINING AND SELECTION OF SOLDIERS FOR PSO OPERATIONS

The selection of SAF personnel for participation in PSOs is based on the principle of voluntary choice. Participants in peacekeeping missions are selected from members of the permanent formation staff of the SAF on the basis of

Mission	Slovenian police and its participation
UNMIK/CIVPOL	There are 15 Slovenian police officers active in UNMIK. They perform traditional police tasks and participate in the training and work of Kosovo police officers.
UNTAET	Two officers are active in East Timor: one at Dili police station and the second in a court police unit.
OSCE in Kosovo	Four police instructors work at the police academy in Vucitrn – one as head of the personnel and candidate selection section, the others as instructors in traditional police tasks, border control, and immigrants and crime. One Slovenian police expert is an OSCE observer.
OSCE IN FYROM	
WEU MAPE	Two police advisers were working in Albania until June 2001.

their consent and with the signing of a contract. Slovenian legislation does not currently provide for the participation of national servicemen in peacekeeping operations.

Before departing for PSO, members of the contingent must undergo the necessary training. The conducting of training is one of the basic duties of the commands and units during peacetime. The staff and units of the permanent formation are trained in accordance with programmes for basic, supplementary and regular training, as well as during exercises. The purpose of the regular training of the permanent formation staff is to maintain the psychophysical and military expert capabilities and skills of the units at the level required for guaranteeing combat readiness. Training covers approximately 30 per cent of working time.

In accordance with bilateral programmes and individual partnership programmes between NATO and Slovenia, SAF staff and units take part in various forms of training and in exercises abroad. Members of the contingents that participate in peacekeeping operations also receive training in international military exercises and through various courses: Esperia 97; Co-operative Nugget 97 – Louisiana, USA; Co-operative Guard 96/97 – Germany; Co-operative Lantern, Trilog 98; Strong Resolve 98; Esperia 99 – representatives of Slovenia appeared for the first time in the role of commander of a peacekeeping battalion.

During the regular training of the units which send personnel to peacekeeping missions, tasks similar to those of the programmes of the peacekeeping missions are also performed in order to ensure that personnel are well prepared. Before departure for a particular peacekeeping mission, specialist training is also conducted either at home or abroad.

Many lessons have been learned from our participation in PSOs. Officers and units have returned from PSOs with many new experiences. It is especially important that officers who participated in different HQs gained a great deal of experience in NATO operational and logistics procedures. In addition, our participation in NATO-led PSOs (SFOR, KFOR) demonstrates that SAF units could be easily integrated and be interoperable with NATO forces.

Slovenian participation in operations to build peace in the Balkan area is specially appreciated by our partners. Our military personnel have a considerable advantage over the personnel of other NATO nations because of their greater knowledge of the local languages and of their culture and value systems.

Slovenia will help the international community to bring peace and prosperity to South-Eastern Europe and to the whole of Europe in the future as well.





DE-MINING AND MINE VICTIMS ASSISTANCE

The International Trust Fund for Demining and Mine Victims Assistance is a non-profit organization established in March 1998 by the Slovenian Government with the aim of helping Bosnia and Herzegovina in its mine clearance and mine victims assistance efforts. In two years of its existence it spread its operations region-wide. ITF is at this moment working in Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia and FR Yugoslavia (Kosovo).

ITF headquarters are located in Ig. In addition to the main office ITF also opened an implementation office in Sarajevo and Zagreb.

ITF is financing demining and mine victims assistance activities in the region of South-Eastern Europe from the donations raised by ITF for this purpose. One of the reasons for the success and very good results of the ITF in the field of mine action in the region of South-Eastern Europe is the “matching fund” mechanism provided by the United States government. The “matching fund” mechanism means that every dollar contributed to the ITF triggers an additional dollar from the United States. This means that the effect of the original donation is in fact doubled as the matching fund is used for mine action activities in the region of South-East Europe. Until January 2002 ITF managed to raise altogether more than 75,7 million US dollars from the 23 donor countries and 25 donor organizations and companies.

The matching fund is not the only reason for the success of the ITF. The main advantages that contributed substantially to the evolution of the ITF into one of the most important players in mine action in the region of South-Eastern Europe are: close co-operation of ITF with the responsible authorities in the countries where ITF conducts its operations, cost-effectiveness, transparency and low cost of operations.

Until December 2001 ITF managed to clear more than 22,6 million square meters of mine and UXO contaminated land in the region of South-Eastern Europe. In the field of mine victims rehabilitation ITF rehabilitated more than 600 mine victims in the Slovenian Institute for Rehabilitation and the rehabilitation centers in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The regional component is a very important dimension of the ITF activities. We believe that regional co-operation is necessary and that this region can solve a lot of its problems more efficiently and also more cost-effectively if the countries in the region would help each other towards their common goal of mine-free land. The exchange of experience, information, excellence and know how is crucial in achieving these goals. ITF was thus the initiator of the establishment of the South-Eastern Europe Mine Action Coordination Council (SEEMACC) that includes the directors of the Mine Action Centers in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Albania and Federal Republic of Yugoslavia.

THE “TOGETHER” REGIONAL CENTRE FOR THE PSYCHO- SOCIAL WELL-BEING OF CHILDREN

In cooperation with the non-governmental organisation Slovene Philanthropy and the City of Ljubljana, Slovenia is establishing a Regional Centre for the Psychosocial Well-being of Children – “Together”. The task of the centre is to step up cooperation, successful so far, between the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Slovene Philanthropy in the field of human rights, particularly the rights of the child in armed conflicts.

The objective of the centre is to set up a framework for ensuring a comprehensive, continuous and organised approach to providing protection and psychosocial assistance for children affected by the wars in South-Eastern Europe and to developing professional and social concepts linking the psychosocial wellbeing of the individual to social recovery and development.

By establishing the centre, Slovenia wishes to contribute its share to the psychosocial well-being and improvement of the mental health of children affected by armed conflicts in South-Eastern Europe. Slovenia believes that social reconciliation in the region depends on the psychosocial profile of the younger generations. We would like to offer our expertise and experience in the field of children’s mental health and our in-depth knowledge of the situation, culture and tradition in the region, and to pool the available resources of the international community to the benefit of children.

The centre will be engaged in promoting better contact between people and organisations active in the field of psychosocial assistance and in collecting the resources required for the development and implementation of programmes in the region, taking the needs of the region into consideration by actively involving local communities in the programmes. Through its activities the centre wishes to assist traumatised children in the region in a more effective way, ensuring better conditions for the psychosocial development of children after the end of armed conflicts and in the accompanying social crisis and, through these approaches, to contribute to human security and stability in the region.

Although the centre has not yet been formally established – it is expected that the registration procedure will be concluded early this year – its activities are already underway within Slovene Philanthropy. The centre will function on the basis of the Slovene Philanthropy’s ten years of experience in the field of psychosocial assistance in South-Eastern Europe. To carry out its activities it will use the network of cooperation developed by the Slovene Philanthropy in South-Eastern Europe, particularly the centres that form part of the “social reconstruction network in the former Yugoslavia”.



The Republic of Slovenia's accession to NATO is a priority of Slovene foreign policy; it enjoys the support of the governing coalition as well as the majority of parliamentary parties. With regards to the Slovenian public, opinion polls show that the majority of respondents support membership. According to the most recent public opinion survey conducted in November 2001, Slovenia's endeavours to join NATO are supported by 53% of the population. The Government places special emphasis on informing both the Slovenian public and the international community about activities related to Slovenia's NATO membership. A special communications programme approved by the Government of Slovenia was launched in 2001.



Dr. Alja Brglez,
Director of the
Government
PR & Media Office

NN&PP: Dr. Brglez, how did you manage to turn the initial enthusiasm of your 1991 independence into a continuous movement for democracy and modern economy?

Dr. Brglez: Prior to reaching independence, Slovenia was the most developed republic in former Yugoslavia. With only 8.3% of the Yugoslav population, Slovenia produced up to 18% of the Yugoslav GDP and up to 25% of total exports. A diverse industrial history, a tradition of openness to the world and a well-managed state economic policy contribute to the

The youth show great interest in Slovenia's future development as well as concern.





DR. ALJA BRGLEZ,
DIRECTOR OF THE GOVERNMENT
PR & MEDIA OFFICE

PUBLIC INFORMATION AND THE INTEGRATION PROCESS



fact that Slovenia is among the most successful countries in transition from a socialist to a market economy.

Slovenia's Gross Domestic Product has shown stable growth and, according to Dun & Bradstreet's analysis of risk levels of transitional countries, Slovenia has the lowest level of risk. As a democratic and stable country with a well-developed economy, Slovenia is working to fulfil all the necessary criteria and adjust to NATO economic standards.

NN&PP: How is the Government of Slovenia promoting accession to NATO and the EU?

Dr. Brglez: We are running two separate public awareness programmes on Slovenia's accession to the EU and NATO. The Public Relations and Media Office assumed the task of informing the Slovene public about EU integration in 1997, while the communications programme on NATO accession started in 2001. With these programmes the Government wishes to contribute towards greater awareness, understanding and public discussion of the integration process into the EU and NATO. We also want to make known the consequences of membership in these Euro-Atlantic associations for Slovene citizens as well as the consequences of non-membership.

NN&PP: Which organisations assist in the public awareness campaign?

Dr. Brglez: The task of informing the Slovene public about EU integration has been entrusted to the European Affairs Department in the Government PR & Media Office. The NATO information programme is being run by the Information and Communications group (IC), which consists of representatives from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA), the Ministry of Defence (MD) and the Government Public Relations and Media Office (GPRMO). In addition to the basic IC group, others participating in the 2002 programme include representatives of public relations services of ministries and government bodies, the Office of the President of the Republic of Slovenia, the Prime Minister's Office, the National Assembly and Slovenian embassies.

NN&PP: Are there any fears or unpleasant feelings among the population towards plans for EU and NATO membership?

Dr. Brglez: In a sound democracy, no decision, especially a historic one, can have unanimous support. However, public opinion in Slovenia is generally stable and in favour of NATO enlargement. Public opinion polls in recent years show that Slovenes feel safer than they did in the past. They are increasingly aware of non-military threats, notably ecological and socio-economic threats, while other sources include crime, natural and man-made disasters, the sale and use of drugs, internal political instability, the possibility of social unrest, and lagging behind in science and technology. Respondents do not attribute major importance to external military threats.

The attitude of the Slovenian public towards NATO membership has been monitored regularly since 1997 through public opinion polls carried out by the Public Opinion and Mass Communication Research Centre of the Faculty of Social Sciences in Ljubljana. Public support fluctuated between 62% and 55% in 1997. After the Madrid Summit, the Slovenes expressed a certain disappointment that we were not invited and support dropped a bit to about 55%. In recent years, it has been between 50% and 55%.

NN&PP: What are the latest figures?

Dr. Brglez: In 2001, we took a monthly phone poll to survey the attitude of the Slovene public and the percentage of those who gave a positive response was, on average, between 50% and 55% – occasionally slipping below 50%, but always remaining very close to this figure. Support reached its peak in June 2001 at 55.3%, whilst the lowest level of support was recorded in November 2001 at 48.4%. We must be aware that these results oscillate as a result of current events and reflect wider socio-political developments that influence views on NATO membership. More stable and relevant are the results of the bi-annual public opinion field survey conducted in November 2001 where support reached 53%.

NN&PP: What is the reaction of Slovenian youth to NATO membership?

Dr. Brglez: The youth show great interest in Slovenia's future development as well as concern. In cooperation with the Youth Section of the Atlantic Council of Slovenia, we are

organising round tables and debates on various aspects of national security, including Slovenia's membership in NATO.

NN&PP: Which members of the Slovenian public are the most critical and indecisive with regards to NATO accession? What is the correlation among supporters of NATO accession and EU accession?

Dr. Brglez: Support for EU membership is slightly higher (57%) than for NATO membership. Statistically, there is a high level of correlation of support for Slovenian membership in both the EU and NATO. The overlap of both groups of supporters is 78%; that means that 78% of those supporting EU membership are also in favour of NATO membership. But overall, Slovenia's joining the EU is supported by slightly better educated people, with a somewhat better socio-economic status and from slightly more urban areas, whilst Slovenia's NATO membership is supported by people with a somewhat lower education, who belong to the middle social classes and appear further to the right of the political spectrum. Women do not oppose NATO membership in considerably greater numbers, although there are more undecided among women than men.

NN&PP: What are the main elements of your communication strategy?

Dr. Brglez: The communication strategy relies on a range of communication tools such as TV discussions and other mass media appearances, organisation of public round-table debates throughout Slovenia, preparation and distribution of printed information materials, and a direct toll free telephone line. Also a special joint web site (<http://nato.gov.si>) in Slovene and English has been launched. This website plays an informative and communicative role and represents a rapidly growing database of information on NATO and Slovenia's preparations for membership.

With all these activities we want to contribute towards greater awareness, understanding and public discussion of the process of NATO integration. We believe that those who are better informed about NATO are more likely to support Slovenia's membership in the Alliance.



Special website <http://nato.gov.si> is a great database in Slovenian accession into NATO.





DR. EDITA ŠTOK
COUNSELLOR TO THE GOVERNMENT
AT THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH,
LJUBLJANA



NN&PP: Which institutions and organisations in your service have already had experience in co-operating with other countries?

Dr. Štok: Cooperation with neighbouring countries is arranged through international agreements. The Ministry of Health has started a joint project with Italy on cooperation in the health field, including emergency and disaster medicine. Additionally, there are a number of health institutions and services with

ACTIVE MEDICAL CO-OPERATION

NN&PP: How is your medical service organised?

Dr. Štok: Within our Ministry of Health we have a department called “Military and Disaster Medicine” responsible for preparations of the health care system in case of war and disasters.

The tasks of the Ministry of Health derive partly from our heritage as part of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, where the committee of health was responsible for organising medical services of territorial defence units. As a state of 2 million inhabitants, with approximately 4,000 doctors in a medical system of 37,000 employees, we are forced to treat our human resources extremely carefully. We realize that we have a momentous responsibility during both peacetime and military operations.

We have excellent relationships with the military medical service since most of our personnel, working in health care centers and private clinics, are reservists. The civil-military co-operation in medical areas will always work out fine especially when looked upon from the financial and professional side.

The Ministry of Health also cooperates in disaster relief planning. The plans are prepared in cooperation with different ministries, under the leadership of the Administration of Protection and Rescue, within the Ministry of Defence. In the event of a disaster of an extensive nature, cooperation of different services is organised by the headquarters of civil protection, established by the Government and communities. A representative of the

Ministry of Health cooperates in the Civil Protection Headquarters on the national level.

NN&PP: Do you have different medical organisations, e.g. for civil defence protection? and for purely military purposes?

Dr. Štok: We do have “Civil Protection”, we also have a “Civil Defence System”. Civil Protection is dealing with major accidents or catastrophes, such as e.g. earth quakes, nuclear incidents, floods etc., and Civil Defence in our country is – according to the Law on Defence – classified as Support of the Community to the Armed Forces.

The Ministry of Defence is responsible for co-ordinating and supporting all tasks in this area for all ministries. We have a strategy for a wartime health care system, but these plans were directed only towards enemies from abroad attacking our nation.

But now, preparing to join NATO, we have new tasks.

NN&PP: In case of war would you integrate more personnel from the civil side to the military side?

Dr. Štok: Right now, our system is still actually more oriented towards reserve. In case of war, reserve doctors will join the Military Medical Corps.

international reputation and experience – the World Health Organisation reference lab for hemorrhagic fever, the burns department of the Medical Center in Ljubljana, ophthalmology clinics, etc...

NN&PP: What is your experience in Pfp exercises and other international events?

Dr. Štok: Since 1994 when Slovenia joined the Partner for Peace programme, we have been active in various committees and in numerous exercises, and have attended seminars. There is much that we can learn so we are very keen on this cooperation.

I am a member of the Joint Medical Committee (JMC). The Slovenian Representative and Head of the Military Medical Service is the member of the Slovenian delegation with the JMC. On the other hand, the Head of the Military Medical Service will always be the Head of delegation at COMEDS/PfP meetings, accompanied by a representative of the Ministry of Health. This way we guarantee an optimal flow of information.

We are actively involved in the preparation and execution of different workshops and conferences. In 2002, at the first conference on disaster and military medicine, we hosted surgeons general of some NATO countries and Switzerland, who presented the current organisation and planned changes of their military medical corps. We also discussed Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD) and presented the organisation of civil defence, protection and rescue, as well as the military defence in Slovenia.

In September this year, we are hosting the first NATO medical symposium which will be attended by experts from medical logistics, WMD, blood-provision and experts for diagnostics. The symposium is organised by NATO Joint Medical Committee.

We are eager to bring top experts to Slovenia who offer us the expertise of other countries, aiding Slovenia – as well as other PfP countries – to further develop their medical services.



Medical unit Pall 1 in Sarajevo.





DR. ZORAN STANČIČ,
STATE SECRETARY FOR SCIENCE,
MINISTRY OF EDUCATION,
SCIENCE AND SPORT



RESEARCH POTENTIAL IS SUBSTANTIAL

NNPP: Could you briefly describe the scientific organisations, institutions and agencies related to the defence sector?

Dr. Stančič: There are five types of scientific organisations in Slovenia: the universities (Ljubljana and Maribor), national research institutes and other institutes in the public sector, private non-profit institutes, and research units in the business sector. There are altogether 278 research establishments in Slovenia, 18% of them in the public sector, 13% in the higher education sector, 65% in the business sector, and 4% in the private non-profit sector.

The research potential of Slovenia is substantial in relation to the size of the country. Slovenia is well aware that its intellectual potential is the basis for its future. For example, in 1999 gross domestic expenditure on R&D was 1,51% of the GDP (latest available year). In some areas, such as biochemistry, physics, biology, chemistry, new materials, ICT and mathematics, the research groups in Slovenia have achieved scientific excellence according to international standards. Some of them have established relations to the defence sector. Most active in this context is the Chair of the Defence Studies at the Faculty of the Social Sciences (University of Ljubljana) with the expertise in related socio-economic research and strategic studies including the impact of NATO membership. Slovenian leading national research institutes, which are very strong in basic science, co-operate with the defence sector in finding possible applications of the research results in the defence field. One of the examples is the research on advanced procedures for mine detection based on different nuclear methods led by the Laboratory for Magnetic Resonance at the Institute Jozef Stefan. There are also some excellent technological development units in the business sector working in the field of defence.

Some of the research groups in the field of natural and engineering science are directly connected on a contract basis to the defence sector.

NNPP: How is your military R&D tied to these organisations?

Dr. Stančič: The main instruments of scientific policy in Slovenia managed by the Ministry of Education, Science and Sport are the following: programmes for basic and applied research projects, young researchers training programmes, and programmes for support of the research infrastructure including financing of research equipment. The main selection criteria are the scientific quality and the relevance of the proposal for Slovenia. In the framework of these programmes the proposals relevant for defence are considered.

In addition there is a special instrument of targeted research programmes. The programmes are designed to stimulate the financing of research and development activity by other ministries to support the development goals of Slovenia. They are designed on the principles of interdisciplinarity and interinstitutionality. An increased range of the target research programmes is planned as a support to national, regional and sectoral development. Last year one of the targeted research programmes started in the field of international relations and national security. This particular targeted research programme is jointly prepared and supported by the Ministry of Defence and Ministry of Education, Science and Sport. In the framework of this research programme there are public tenders published for specified topics. In the joint evaluation procedure the Ministry of Defence guarantees the relevance of the topic and the Ministry of Education, Science and Sport guarantees the scientific quality of the proposals and the proposers.

NNPP: Does the defence budget include the necessary allocation for scientific research?

Dr. Stančič: The Ministry of Defence allocates some of its budget to the joint activity within the framework of the targeted research programmes. In the field of international relations and national security the share of the Ministry of Defence amounts to over 50%.



Some of the research groups are directly supported by the Ministry of Defence.

NNPP: Did you already have a chance for co-operation in scientific areas with NATO or in other international organisations?

Dr. Stančič: In 1996, Slovenia as a NATO partner country, could for the first time apply for the individual forms of participation within the NATO Science Programme, and it actively participates in the NATO Science for Peace Programme. Slovenian scientists are participating in all available sub-programmes including the Science for Peace sub-programme. In 1997, 5 projects out of 31 applications from Slovenian organisations were approved and financed in the amount of 641,000 Euros. In 2000, 4 of the Slovenian projects are in the final step of the evaluation procedure.

In the multilateral field Slovenia promotes and supports the participation of Slovenian R&D organisations in projects financed or co-financed by the European Commission, agencies of the United Nations, and other international and intergovernmental organisations. Since its independence in 1991, Slovenia has been participating in the European Union programmes (ACE, partly in the 3rd Framework Programme and in the 4th Framework Programme with 54 projects, in TEMPUS with 83 projects, in PECO with 58 projects, in INCO-COPERNICUS with 84 projects, in COST with 179 projects). In 1999, Slovenia formally joined the 5th Framework Programme and thus became a partner country in the European R&D activities. Taking into account the response to all calls in 1999 and 2000, 197 projects were retained for EU co-financing. In 1994, Slovenia became a full member country of the EUREKA initiative with 49 projects. Since 1992, Slovenia is a full member of the United Nations Organisation and cooperates with UN specialised agencies, funds and programmes on a regular basis.

NNPP: How do you organise scientific support in your procurement procedures?

Dr. Stančič: In order to encourage and assist our researchers to participate in national or international research activities, different support measures are taken at the Ministry of Education, Science and Sport, such as contact persons for specific programmes, information days, workshops, seminars, information brochures and web pages.

NNPP: In which way do you guarantee that civilian scientific work and ideas are integrated in military R&D?

Dr. Stančič: It is guaranteed by the joint activities of the Ministry of Defence and the Ministry of Education, Science and Sport, mostly through the common target research programme.

NNPP: Would you be prepared to send scientist also to NATO organisations?

Dr. Stančič: Although the participation of the research sphere in Slovenia within the NATO Science Programme is quite good we are trying to increase the number of future applications by different promotion actions. Last year the Ministry of Education, Science and Sport received a request to propose some Slovenian scientists for the Associated Members in the Selection Panels, one for every thematic panel. The NATO Science Committee approved two of the proposed scientists.

In general we are encouraging our scientists to participate with the NATO organisations in every possible way.

NNPP: What are your plans for future co-operation in the science field?

Dr. Stančič: Stimulating international scientific co-operation is one of the priority tasks of Slovenian science.

In order to increase the participation of Slovenian researchers in the NATO Science Programme activities the Ministry of Education, Science and Sport is planning to encourage its regular promotional activities. Further on, the information on the activities of the NATO Science Programme and Slovenian participation in them will be included in the process of raising awareness of the general public in Slovenia about NATO and the significance of becoming a NATO country.

In the framework of bilateral co-operation our priority is to stimulate applied and basic international projects, which could evolve into multilateral or regional projects. Accordingly, Slovenia is trying to be an active and contributing partner in the process of the development and enforcement of the common European research policy called "Towards a European Research Area".





DR. JANEZ ŠUŠTERŠIČ, DIRECTOR, INSTITUTE FOR MACRO ECONOMIC ANALYSIS & DEVELOPMENT

ALREADY AT 72% OF THE EU AVERAGE GDP



terms since 1995) and gross fixed investment, as Slovenia strengthened cooperation with neighbouring west European economies. The transition process is gradually changing the structure of output. The share of agriculture in the economy has dropped from 3.9% of GDP in 1995 to 2.9% in 2000. At the same time, the share of industry fell slightly (from 28.4% to 27.7%), while that of services increased (from 50.4% to 52.4%), mainly

driven by transport, financial and real estate services.

NNPP: How would you describe the present economic situation of Slovenia?

Mr. Šušteršič: The general macroeconomic situation of Slovenia in 2002 can be regarded as stable. Slovenia's gross domestic product is already at 72 per cent of the EU average, that is as high as that of Greece or Portugal. Economic growth has been stable for many years, and is still stable at present. Despite the current economic slowdown in Slovenia's major trading partners, it is not expected to fall below 3,5 per cent. Unemployment has been declining for a couple of years now and is currently slightly below 6 per cent. Year-end inflation fell from 8.9% in 2000 to 7% in 2002 and is expected to reach 5.6% this year. The public finance deficit has been around 1% in recent years, but may be slightly higher in 2002 as the result of the lower growth rate due to low external demand. The current account was in balance in 2002, due to low import growth because of modest domestic consumption and a decline in investment, and is expected to remain between 1 and 2 per cent of GDP in the coming years.

NNPP: What are your primary goals in the future development of your economy?

Mr. Šušteršič: The goals are set up in the Strategy for the economic development of Slovenia and in the pre-accession economic programme, both adopted in 2001. The main task in order to secure medium term sustainability of economic growth is to continue with the remaining structural reform, such as increasing flexibility of labor and capital markets or privatization of the banks and telecommunications, and to adopt measures that will contribute to productivity growth, especially increasing investment in human capital and technology. Macroeconomic policy has the goal of increasing stability by gradually bringing down inflation and eliminating the public deficit.

NNPP: What are your plans to attract potential investors to further boost your economy?

Mr. Šušteršič: The government has adopted three groups of measures in the 2001-2004 period. The first is to remove administrative barriers that hamper both foreign and domestic investment activity, such as regulations on establishment of a business, hiring and firing of employees and zoning. The second is to set up an internationally comparable system of financial incentives. The third is to aid foreign investors in obtaining land property and building sites for their economic activity. The programme is implemented by the government's Trade and Investment promotion office.

NNPP: How could accession to the EU help to further improve the economic situation in your country?

Mr. Šušteršič: The process of preparing for accession – that is, of setting up legal and economic systems of an open market economy – has introduced the necessary dynamics and commitment in accomplishing the needed structural reforms and adjustment. Thus, even preparing for the accession already has profound economic effects. The main economic effects of the accession itself are expected to be the additional opening of EU markets for Slovenian exporters, an increased inflow of direct investment to Slovenia, and cofinancing of major development projects by structural and cohesion funds.

NNPP: Can you give us some figures on the development of your GDP, especially regarding the industrial area?

Mr. Šušteršič: After a short but deep recession in 1992, Slovenia rapidly established a robust economic growth path, expanding at close to 4% annually. Real GDP growth has largely been driven by exports of goods and services (which grew by 6.2% annually in real

NNPP: What was the impact of the market conversion on your economy?

Mr. Šušteršič: At the time of its independence in 1991, Slovenia was the wealthiest and most open Yugoslav Republic (in 1989 accounting for 17% of total output and 26% of the export of the former Yugoslavia, though for only 8% of the population), and it implemented some market oriented reforms already in the last decade before the change in the political and economic system. However, the change of the economic system, combined with the loss of Yugoslav markets, led to a short but deep economic recession in 1992 and 1993. The return to macroeconomic stability was achieved through conservative fiscal and monetary policies. For about a decade, Slovenia has run broadly balanced budgets and domestic and external debt were maintained at low levels. Thus, the recovery after the initial transformation recession was fast and sustained.

NNPP: Do you also experience the typical rural exodus of agriculturally educated people towards the cities as in many other European countries? What is the impact?

Mr. Šušteršič: As mentioned, the importance of agriculture as a share of Slovenia's GDP or employment was already rather small at the beginning of transition. Therefore, the market reforms did not trigger a typical exodus of the rural labor force to the cities. However, it is true that the capital city region is growing fastest, that regional income disparities have increased and that some areas are very scarcely populated. These issues are now being addressed by a combination of regional development, industrial restructuring and agricultural policies.





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THE PRIVATISATION PROCESS

will go down to the European level. This is around 2% – in the short term about 4-5%. And credit is just about 5% higher because the competition is very strong between European banks.

NN&PP: One of the basic criteria anyway was to change the banking system from governmental control to privatisation.

Dr. Križanič: We are now in the process of privatisation and are making good

NN&PP: Your efforts to achieve NATO membership are not placing a great burden on your country. How do your economic figures compare to the Maastricht figures?

Dr. Križanič: There are four Maastricht criteria that should be fulfilled. Slovenia fulfils the first two criteria in an exemplary manner, that on the budget and debt. But there are two other criteria: inflation and interest rates. We now have a 7% annual inflation rate. The reason behind this is that we haven't stopped indexation. This will now be stopped because the

European Union made that a financial criterion for convergence and ending this will then cause the reduction of inflation to the Maastricht level, around 2-3% annually.

And the second criteria yet to be met is interest rates which are also higher than in Europe because inflation is higher.

NN&PP: What level do you want them to get down to?

Dr. Križanič: I think because of the complete liberalisation of capital flows, the interest rates

progress. I hope that privatisation is going to improve and spread financial activities in Slovenia so that our country will remain an important regional financial centre. Privatising the banks is the final phase of the Slovenian bank rehabilitation process. The only method is to sell the banks with the objective of reducing state debt due to financing bank rehabilitation.

NN&PP: Are there any other economic measures you had to take to further improve your economy?

Koper is an important port for central european states.





Dr. Križanič: Well, we had a tax reform in 1999 when we abolished the sales tax and introduced a value added tax. The project was good, it was very well executed without any pressure. As value added tax is not paid by exporters, it was a relatively positive boost for the Slovenian exports and it caused a reduction in state revenue. This was the main reason behind the reduced trade balance deficit and the start of a budget deficit in Slovenia. So, Slovenia has now raised VAT from 19 to 20 per cent and is working towards introducing special taxes on

prices are somewhat liberalised in the sense that these prices cannot be held lower than the costs so they are allowed to make normal profits. All these enterprises are successful, but are not allowed to make even greater profits.

NN&PP: So, generally, these business areas are privatised, but there are not too many competitors. Are there still important areas not yet privatised?

Dr. Križanič: There will be a large privatisation of the production, transporting and distri-

ments are returning. In 2001 Slovenia spread its exports to former Yugoslavia markets to such an extent that it managed to avoid the worldwide recession till the end of the year.

NN&PP: Are you attracting investments from other countries? In which areas would you like more investment?

Dr. Križanič: The Stajerska region – the north-eastern part of Slovenia – desperately needs foreign investment. Unemployment is the highest in this region. There were several painful bankruptcies (including the TAM car manufacturer and the Metalna heavy metals manufacturer). Human capital is particularly concentrated in the knowledge of metal and car vehicle production as well as high quality textile products. The University of Maribor has a strong faculty for machinery with a strong textiles department. Over the last year there was improvement in infrastructure with highway connections between Maribor and Austria completed and with further improvements between Maribor, Ljubljana and Italy to be made by the end of 2005. A link between Maribor and Hungary will probably be completed around 2010. I hope the Slovenian economic policy will start a more active regional development policy including special initiatives for new investors in the Stajerska region. The unemployment problem in the Zasavje mining region (50km east of Ljubljana) is similar though smaller in size. The Slovenian Parliament has already approved a rehabilitation programme for this region to address the completely changed economic structure following the closing of the coalmines around 2007.



Iskratel Electronics Company.
(Photo: VITRUM)

petrol, beverages and cigarettes. Petrol is still relatively cheap here, almost the cheapest in Europe because of the small tax rise.

NN&PP: Until now you have not had a special tax on petrol?

Dr. Križanič: No, but we will have, although much lower than in the rest of Europe.

NN&PP: How about the pricing system? You had a problem with the liberation of prices because some prices in the past were still under government control. Are some prices still supported by the government?

Dr. Križanič: We have some prices that will remain under government supervision, for instance petrol. The supply here is provided entirely by just two enterprises. So there must be some control. Also the gas supply is provided by just one large company. There is a centre to control the prices with some governmental control or regulation of all these prices. So the

tribution of electricity. Privatisation is now underway. We are in the process of liberalising the electricity market in line with European regulations. And this year is the first that some of the large purchasers have been permitted to buy electricity abroad – they have been buying in Austria.

NN&PP: Since we realise the economy is growing in your country, can you give some concrete examples of this?

Dr. Križanič: The main indicator of Slovenia's successful transition is the almost 45% higher GDP in 2001 compared to 1992. GDP today is already higher than it was before 1991. Stagflation started in 1986. As well as growth there has been an improvement in stability (reduction of inflation and unemployment). Unemployment fell from 9.1% in 1993 to 5.9% in 2001 (ILO standard). However the greatest success was the reorientation of Slovenian trade from the markets of the former Yugoslavia to the western European market and the stable growth of exports to these markets. With the political stabilisation of the former Yugoslavia, Slovenian trade and invest-

NN&PP: Do you support special economic areas, such as agriculture, for example?

Dr. Križanič: The agricultural industry has a very powerful lobby in Slovenia. Farmers receive subsidies as a percentage and at a set level, so that each farmer now receives some money. Today they simply use European standards to promote this.

NN&PP: For economic development you need some organisational assistance. What kind of agencies or systems do you have to promote economic ideas, finance these ideas and assist industry?

Dr. Križanič: We have now established two agencies, the Agency for Regional Development and the Office for Economic Promotion and Foreign Investment. They have to deal with European standards of economic development promotion and they are both at the beginning of their work. This means that they are not yet included in the Slovenian budget as much as they should be. I hope this will be improved in the coming years.





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SLOVENIA AND NATO



According to many experts and NATO officials, an important rationale for NATO's decision to expand lies in the desire to reduce the "gray zone" of insecurity and uncertainty in Europe. While this sounds plausible in general terms, it raises some serious questions in relation to Slovenia. On the whole, the lines separating secure and insecure areas in Europe, the Mediterranean and Asia do not coincide with the division between NATO members and non-members. For decades there have been flash-points of violence and terrorism on NATO territory, such as Ulster, the Basque country, Corsica, and parts of Turkey. Conflicts have taken place or might conceivably take place between NATO member-states, such as Greece and Turkey, on Cyprus or over Gibraltar.

It is true that Slovenia is situated in the geographic proximity of recent armed hostilities in the Balkans. In fact, a string of trouble spots stretches from Bosnia and Kosovo across the "Eurasian Balkans", as Z. Brzezinski calls it, all the way to South-East Asia. However, Slovenia, together with a number of other European countries and like neighbouring Austria, belongs to an area of stability and security. Also at the level of Slovenia's intentions there is no room for uncertainty or for treating that country as part of a "gray zone" in Europe.

Full-fledged memberships in EU, WEU and NATO have been declared Slovenia's chief international objectives almost since the proclamation of its independence on June 25, 1991. Its political elite found too little comfort in relying on the country's membership in UN and participation in OSCE alone. The then ineffectiveness of the international community in dealing in 1991-1995 even with a relatively small aggressor in the Balkans has contributed to this unease. Since 1991 the Slovenian Government has abandoned ex-Yugoslavia's stance of "active non-alignment". Under the influence of the Balkan war considerable political clout of the pacifist "Greens", who advocated

Slovenia's unilateral disarmament and neutrality, has practically evaporated. Due to their demise, to the lack either of a neutralist tradition, constitutional or international legal obligations in this respect Slovenia did not opt for a defense policy of armed neutralism. However, as long as the country remained outside the only effective regional security organization (NATO) Slovenia has had no other option but to pursue armed self-reliance. In addition, the Slovenian Defense Ministry signed bilateral cooperation protocols with the defense ministries of USA, UK, Hungary, Austria, the Czech Republic etc. and a trilateral protocol on military cooperation with Italy and Hungary.

As a candidate for membership both in NATO and in the European Union Slovenia's credentials have undergone thorough examinations by a number of respectable Western institutions, by the US government, European Commission and NATO. In its published opinion on Slovenia's application for EU membership the European Commission concluded on July 15, 1997: "Slovenia presents the characteristics of a democracy, with stable institutions guaranteeing the rule of law, human rights and respect for and protection of minorities. Slovenia can be regarded as a functioning market economy... In the light of these considerations, the Commission recommends that negotiations for accession should be opened with Slovenia."

Slovenia has observed the requirement of peacefully settled disputes with neighbouring states. It has also had fewer problems related to its borders and minorities than some other NATO candidates and indeed less than two NATO members. With the neighbour Hungary, Slovenia signed a bilateral agreement providing for mutually favorable treatment of respective national minorities on both sides of the interstate border. The controversial issue of formerly owned real estate and the present right to acquire real estate by Italian citizens in Slovenia has in principle been settled through the EU-mediated "Spanish" compromise. Accordingly, the Slovenian Parliament amended an article in the Constitution. Slovenia has also conducted a responsible and constructive for-

eign policy and actively supported all international efforts to bring peace, stability and prosperity to the troubled Balkans (UNPROFOR, IFOR, SFOR, SECI, Operation Alba, UNICYP, KFOR).

It is reasonable to conclude that Slovenia has been in the group of four candidates which have earned in the West at least passing marks in fulfilling the overlapping EU criteria and NATO considerations for membership. These

were the states named in the NATO Extension Facilitation Act (NEFA) adopted by US Congress in 1996 – Poland, the Czech Republic, Hungary and Slovenia were the states named in the NATO Extension Facilitation Act (NEFA) adopted by the US Congress in 1996. The US Department of State made the same selection in its official document published in 1997. Slovenia has satisfied to the highest degree also the key NATO-specific requirements elaborated in the Study on NATO Enlargement (1995). Having adopted a Western European pattern in civil-military relations Slovenia has reaffirmed democratic civilian rule as one of its fundamental constitutional norms. Moreover, these norms as well as human and minority rights are being observed in Slovenia more thoroughly than in, at least, one present NATO member state. It goes without saying that the desired democratic standards, including those in civil military relations, ought to be equally applied to the present members and to the candidates for membership. The absence of double standards is essential for maintaining the coherence of NATO as an alliance of democracies. It follows from this brief review that Slovenia has complied with almost all, if not all publicly known requirements for NATO membership.

IN MARCH 1994 SLOVENIA SIGNED UP FOR NATO'S PARTNERSHIP FOR PEACE

The Slovenian Government's keen interest in NATO membership has not been prompted by the fears of social and political instability, by internal dangers for Slovenia's democratic order, by external military threats, unresolved conflicts with neighbouring states or by the desire to obtain sizeable funds and military hardware. Associating Slovenia with NATO has been viewed instead as all important aspect of the country's general political integration into the community of Western democratic states. In addition this association is expected to produce indirect positive security and economic effects.



Since 1996, Slovenian public opinion has largely supported the government's positions on the desirability of Slovenia's membership. A USIA-commissioned survey in April 1997 showed that 56% of respondents would vote in favor if a referendum were then to be held. Other polls showed this support oscillating between about 62% in March 1997 and 50% in January-March 2001, while the percentage of opponents has remained between 18 and 30%. This and other surveys placed Slovenia in 1997 behind the most enthusiastic Romania and Poland but ahead of Hungary, the Czech Republic and the rest of the candidate countries. The latest, July 2001 poll in Slovenia showed 56.4% respondents supporting accession and 28.2% being against. Thus although improved from the government's standpoint the predominant public attitudes toward Slovenia's NATO membership have been contradictory and trailing behind the much more enthusiastic positions held by the Slovenian political elite.

SUPPORT FOR PRO-NATO STANCE

Slovenia's membership in NATO has been most favored by students, self-employed and retired persons, males over 61 years of age, better educated, less religious and urban dwellers. The support for the government's strong pro-NATO stance has been the lowest among peasants and unemployed. Slovenian housewives more often than males could not decide on this issue. The general support for NATO has been interdependent with the support to Slovenia's membership in EU. In case of referendum on Slovenia's membership in either of the two integrations the percentage of positive votes cast will be probably higher than the polls have indicated heretofore. I suppose that many undecided and some opponents will not show up at the polling stations.

The respondents in a public opinion poll conducted in April 1999, confirmed the need for armed intervention in the Kosovo crisis to the tune of 63-70%. In Slovenia the degree of public support for NATO's action was substantially higher than in some NATO member states, notably in Greece, the Czech Republic and Hungary. At the same time, a clear majority of respondents (about 60%) supported the government's decision to allow the use of Slovenia's air space by the alliance (Slovenia was the first country in the region to grant this permission). The degree of support for Slovenia's membership in NATO has even

slightly increased compared with the pre-crisis period, contrary to the reactions in some other countries.

IN EXPECTATION OF THE NEXT OPPORTUNITY OF ENLARGEMENT

A number of Slovenian arguments used in 1997 remain valid:

- Slovenia conforms with the overlapping EU requirements and NATO expectations concerning successful reforms, functioning



NATO Secretary General Lord Robertson and Prime Minister Dr Janez Drnovsek facing the Guard of Honour of Slovenian Armed Forces on November 12th 2001.

political democracy, market economy, human and minority rights, constructive international behavior and settled relations with neighbors;

- the country complies with the NATO specific expectations concerning civilian control over the military;
- Slovenia's geographic position provides for the shortest and safest land bridge between two NATO members;
- Slovenia would be able to shoulder its membership responsibilities, including the financial ones (a reflection of Slovenia's highest GDP per capita in Central-Eastern Europe) and would not appreciably burden NATO resources;
- Slovenia's admission would make NATO enlargement more geopolitically balanced, would move the area of security and stability in the direction of the volatile Balkans and would serve as a positive incentive for good behavior of the Balkan aspirants for NATO and EU.

Although the geostrategic importance of Slovenia has been devalued since the breakdown of the Eastern bloc its space and resources could be still valuable for NATO. Slovenia's territory could usefully serve for projecting security and possibly servicing NATO's peace-making or peace-keeping activities in the Balkans Slovenian professional police and military personnel could valuably contribute to international policing and peace-keeping in the Balkans (including Kosovo), due to their language skills and knowledge about the region.

Although Slovenia is viewed by some observers as a candidate in the best position to be invited by NATO at the next turn, this prospect remains uncertain. The key general problem lies in the large disparity between the desires of the remaining Central-East European candidates, including Slovenia, to join the alliance and NATO's willingness (and some members' clear unwillingness) to expand further to the East and South-East. There are also a number of imponderables: the NATO-EU relations and the development of the European defense identity; the future of Russia; the stand of the Bush administration: the experience with the first Central East European round etc. These developments might affect Slovenia's relations with the Western integrations. The country's small size and a very modest military potential have contrasting effects on her relations with EU and NATO – facilitating the inclusion into the economic integration and serving as a disincentive for the military alliance. Consequently, at least, at present Slovenia seems to be closer to EU than to NATO membership, with her status as an EU candidate comparable or better than those of Poland, the Czech Republic and Hungary.





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THE NEW SECURITY IDENTITY

On January 24, 2002, the Slovenian Committee for NATO was established in Ljubljana. This committee is a voluntary non-profit, non-governmental association of citizens to promote Slovenia's early integration into NATO. The main task of the Committee is to inform our citizens about the advantages of early NATO membership. We notice that while many Slovenians feel strongly one way or the other about joining NATO, their arguments are often not based on facts. Our committee will inform the public about NATO – its history, organisational structure, and objectives. We will hold public events, seminars, and symposia. We will organise excursions to relevant institutions and issue NATO-related publications. Educated citizens will be in a better position to look at NATO membership and make educated choices.

Another of our Committee's goals is to promote a "state identity". Slovenia is a young nation – founded in 1991 – and we are still in the process of creating defence and security identities. It has been helpful for us to pattern ourselves after NATO member countries, to adopt their goals and principles.

At our first meeting we noticed that Committee members came from a wide slice of society – those active in Slovenian cultural, political, social, scientific, and academic life.

The day of our founding we adopted a statute recognising NATO as a democratic institution based on shared values. We see NATO as an international alliance with the highest level of solidarity among its members due to the Washington treaty principle – an attack on one country is an attack on all of them. We understand that after the fall of the Soviet Union and the Eastern Block, NATO has new roles to play and new tasks to perform. NATO is working hard to resolve the conflicts of South-Eastern Europe and to defend against the threat of international terrorism. NATO is a key mechanism for creating the secure political climate required for economic and cultural development.

Even after Slovenia is integrated into NATO, our association will continue to support NATO enlargement, especially for our neighbours. Slovenia does not want to have a monopoly in South-Eastern Europe on stability, security and economic prosperity. We will not be satisfied until the entire region enjoys these benefits.

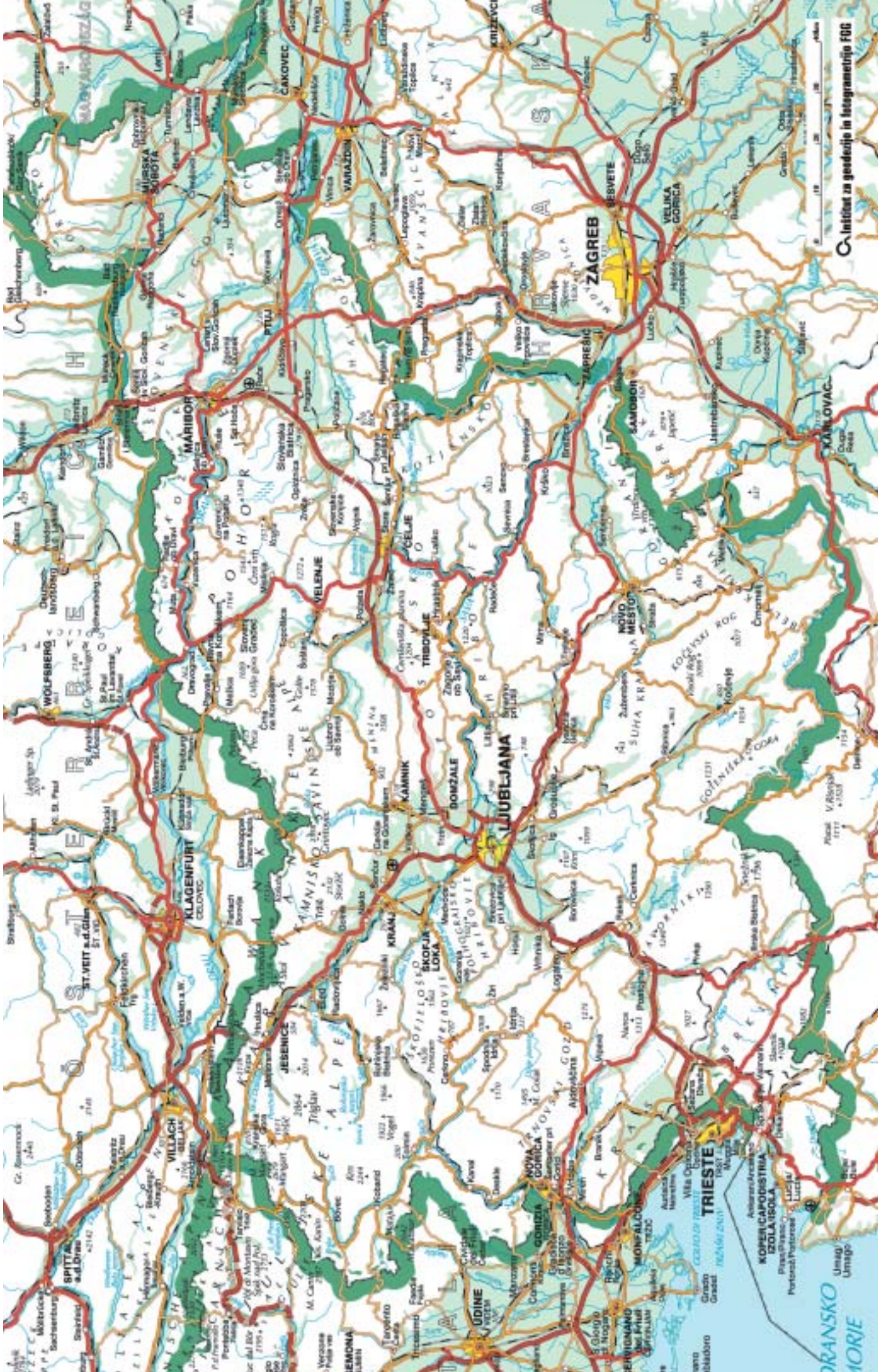




SLOVENIA

GENERAL INFORMATION

	1999	2000	2001 latest actual
Area (sq.km)	–	20,273	20,273
Population	–	1,990,094	1,992,035
Population growth (in %)	–	0.12	0.07
Density (persons/sq.km)	–	98	98
Population of Ljubljana	–	270,506	–
Origin of value added (in %):			
- Agriculture	3.7	3.3	–
- Industry	32.2	31.4	–
- Construction	6.2	6.0	–
- Services	60.3	59.3	–
GDP real annual change (in %)	5.2	4.6	3.0
Industrial production annual change (in %)	-0.5	6.2	3.2
Total employment annual change (in %)	1.8	1.7	1.7
Standardised unemployment rate (in %)	7.6	7.0	5.9
Inflation rate (in %)	8.0	8.9	8.4
General government:			
- revenue (as % of GDP)	43.7	42.7	–
- surplus/deficit (as % of GDP)	-0.6	-1.4	–
Trade balance (in USD million)	-1,537	-1,081	-501.2
Current account (in USD million)	-783	-594	99.3
Current account receipts as % of GDP	56.1	62.9	–
Foreign exchange reserves (in USD million)	4,115	4,370	5,390.8
Foreign debt (in USD million)	5,400	6,217	6,711.0
Debt servicing ratio (in %)	7.7	9.1	–
Currency unit: Slovenian tolar (SIT)			
Latest BS exchange rates:	tolars for 1 USD		251.4057
(January 22, 2002)	tolars for 1 EUR		222.1672



Inštitut za geodetiko in kartografijo FGSI

DRANSKO MORJE

Umag
Umag