

YEARBOOK

**of Foreign Policy
of the Slovak Republic**

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Research Center of the Slovak Foreign Policy Association



Bratislava 2004

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Preface

The overall goal of the Yearbook of Foreign Policy of the Slovak Republic is to evaluate the most significant events of the foreign policy of the Slovak Republic in 2003. The Yearbook is published bilingually in both Slovak and English and also provides a contemporary source of information. It registers both developments in the field of foreign policy in periods of crucial importance for Slovakia and, in addition, the debate concerning the further development of foreign policy. The Yearbook of Foreign Policy is published after the regular Evaluation Conference on Foreign Policy of the Slovak Republic held at the beginning of every calendar period and after the approval of the Report on Foreign Policy of the Slovak Republic in the National Council of the Slovak Republic. This year celebrates the fifth annual publishing of the Yearbook.

For the years 1999 to 2003, the Yearbook was published by the *Slovak Institute for International Studies* (SIIS). From 2004, the Yearbook will be published by the *Research Centre of the Slovak Foreign Policy Association* (RC SFPA), the successor to SIIS. The RC SFPA would like to thank the former Yearbook editor Alena Kotvanová as well as former SIIS directors, Urban Rusnák and Attila Szép for creating and maintaining the tradition of a yearly foreign policy evaluation.

This publication presenting the state and development of Slovak foreign policy from the point of view of its prime players, experts and analysts has found many readers and enjoys a secure position among literature concerning the issue of foreign policy. Therefore, RC SFPA is willing to continue this successful tradition established by SIIS. Our main ambition is not only to continue publishing and thus widen the information resources in the field of foreign policy of the Slovak Republic but also to develop it further. Based on RC SFPA's proposal, the Yearbook's editorial board has been established. The members of the editorial board are: Peter Brezáni, Alexander Duleba, Ivan Korčok, Milan Nič, Urban Rusnák, Tomáš Strážay, Štefan Šebesta, Marek Šťastný and Peter Weiss.

The Yearbook consists of contributions presented at the Evaluation Conference held on 15 March 2004 and entitled *Slovakia on the Threshold of EU and NATO Accession*. The well-known structure of this publication is, with these intentions, widened to include public debate concerning selected issues as well as other relevant

information (information on the structure of state administration authorities acting in international affairs and European integration, list of embassies and consulates of the Slovak Republic abroad, list of embassies and consulates in the Slovak Republic as well as list of military missions the Slovak Republic is involved in).

The year 2003 was of great importance as far as the modern history of the Slovak Republic's foreign policy is concerned. It was the year during which the Slovak Republic successfully completed its aim of integration into the Euro-Atlantic community. Moreover, this year's issue of the Yearbook is widened to include the section *From the Public Debate*, consisting of a survey of published statements of representatives of parliamentary political parties' in the printed media towards two issues of concern last year – the EU Constitution Draft and Iraqi Crisis.

Konrad-Adenauer Stiftung (KAS) financially supported the Conference, as in previous years. We would like to thank most of all Stefan Gehrold, head of KAS for the Czech Republic and the Slovak Republic, and Agáta Pešková from the Bratislava office of KAS. It would also not be possible to organise the Conference without the diligent work of RC SFPA and SFPA employees. Publishing of the Yearbook of Foreign Policy of the Slovak Republic 2003 was financially supported by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Slovak Republic.

We strongly believe that all those interested in foreign policy will find this publication useful.

Presentation of the Chairman of the National Council of the Slovak Republic Pavol Hrušovský

Last year was no less an extraordinary and groundbreaking one for the National Council of the Slovak Republic in the area of foreign policy than it was for our Government. It was the year for the intensive final effort in the realisation of two basic strategic goals for our foreign policy.

The entry of the Slovak Republic into the North Atlantic Alliance and European Union represent a symbolic completion after an era of transition from totalitarian governed society to democracy, integrated both internally and externally. Realisation of these two vitally important goals means a new dimension for our foreign policy and also provides confirmation of important changes in the sphere of internal politics. Our legal system, our economy and our security structures are becoming part of a wider unit. This is the conclusion of a long-term, often dramatically developing effort, and it is also verification of attaining the goal of democratic change. Even though there are some questions opened concerning the future development and realisation of our national interests, they spread on doubt about the success we have reached. They only represent a natural reality that everyday policy, which gained new sources and new impulses as a result of our European and Atlantic integration, must also continue under new conditions. It is unquestionable that these conditions are better than those under which we started 13 years ago.

We may therefore congratulate ourselves on our success. Nevertheless we should not forget that our effort does not end with our entry to international organisations. This new situation also creates new challenges, and it is our duty to continue in what was our task up today – to realise the interests of the citizens of the Slovak Republic. As to NATO and the European Union, we enter on the basis of the sovereign decision of a sovereign nation and its state representation. It is to fulfil our interests with new effectiveness in co-operation with other nations who want to live freely and respect the basis of democracy, rule of law, human rights and peaceful coexistence.

During the previous year, we had to overcome many obstacles. We had to adopt many measures, often unpopular. We had to decide quickly and effectively while still bearing in mind the imperative of representation and the democratic legitimacy of our decision making. Moreover, in our integrational endeavour we were catching up with our neighbours. This is why I want to voice recognition and thanks to all who worked for our integrational goals at all levels. If there is sometimes tensions in communication between parliament, the government, president, or other institutions representing the Slovak Republic I want to stress that in the realisation of the basic aspirations of our foreign policy, our unity is under control, and that unity cannot be called into question. Discussions and polemics are a natural element of a democratic process, the substance of which is the mutual control of power. Do not let anybody doubt that the needs of our citizens are our common basic outcome, basic goal and basic standard.

I noted with pleasure the fact that on the floor of the parliament we reached basic harmony and fruitful co-operation between the parties of the government coalition and opposition in realising our aims of integration. Harmony is beneficial for everybody, and encouraging for the future.

Parliament in its relation to government represents a body whose decision taking is the most immediate reflection of the will of the people. This is also why we pursue and still pursue a clear definition of the tasks of parliament in relation to European institutions and its own government which represents us in relevant European forums and overall strengthening the role of national parliaments in the European Union. The sense of this effort can be summed up in the following principle: the process of democratic decision-making does not always need to be quick and easy. But, under all circumstances, it must always be legitimate and readable, understandable and controllable for the citizens.

This is a higher priority than the pace of decision-making. And if we agree this must be valid at the level of the nation state, there is no convincing evidence why this should not also be valid at the level of the European Union.

Alongside stating this success, I must allow myself some critical remarks.

We initiated a public discussion about the aspects of European integration; however, its results are equivocal. The fact that many of our citizens still see decision taking at the European level as something very distant and not understandable is not particularly gratifying. Equally in connection with NATO entry, we did not make a clear enough explanation to our citizens of the lasting necessity of this organisation.

To explain clearly, our membership of NATO and the measures and activities it requires are not involvement and risk to the advantage of foreign powers but are rather enforced by security challenges and threats reaching over the frontiers of individual states and as such require an internationally coordinated response. When will our citizens clearly understand that 11 September 2001 and 11 March 2004 were attacks *against us*, against world democracy?

Alongside problems directly connected with the realisation of our goals in integration projects, I would like to mention another dimension of our foreign policy

which slipped into the calendar of the National Council of the Slovak Republic. Some might find it not “realistic” enough because it does not directly concern our perceived national interests. Nevertheless, it has specific urgency. It concerns our relationship with people in parts of the world where democracy has not started writing its own history, but there are people striving for it. If we give their situation serious interest for only a moment, we may comprehend the trifling nature of many of the problems we see at home as not so immense.

But the situation of dissidents in restricted countries resembles our own recent history in many points, even in the details.

In January 2003 I met a leading representative of the Cuban Christian-democratic opposition Oswaldo Payá on the floor of the National Council of the Slovak Republic. He informed me about the situation in his country, which is not good and the latest governmental measures have even worsened it.

In the beginning of March this year, the chairman of the NC SR Committee for Human Rights, Minorities and Women’s Issues László Nagy met dissidents in Cuba, in a group of several members of parliaments of other countries. The mission was at a certain level a risky one. But it represented a stimulus for activists who face persecutions, a small stimulus given to them by world diplomacy. Today, the Cuban regime treats members of the democratic opposition as dangerous criminals. Foreign observers and diplomats often see them as naive idealists whose well meant attempts have no real chance of success. In reality they are brave, responsible and courageous citizens who deserve our highest respect, because they are the conscience of their nation. Additionally, in a few months or years they will become official representatives of a liberated Cuba and our partners at negotiating tables in the UN. This is why we shall support them more strongly and openly.

Talking about dissidents, I cannot omit, though unjustifiably short, the destiny of refugees I had the opportunity to meet in June on the occasion of presentation of material of the UN High Commissioner for Refugee’s Office. Also here we can see if we want that the problems of distant people concern us more than we sometimes admit.

Interest in freedom and the rights of others is not useless idealism. I believe that interest in these problems is part of every sound foreign policy and it is also a mark of the maturity of a nation. Problem of refugees, as we know, has visibly interfered in the life of our country for some time. The issue of spreading democracy in the world is an issue directly connected to the issue of peace and worldwide security, not even to mention the moral aspect of both these issues.

Only when we are ready and willing to communicate with other nations will we be able to better understand our own needs and become better creators of our own future.

I believe our integration into European and Trans-Atlantic structures gives us a new outcome and better prospects.

European integration is a story open to the future, and this is as it is supposed to be. But to keep and finalise a clear concept for our approach to the future way forward,

we must have our own assured vision about the goals and directions it should develop. We will have to have a standpoint to the further course of the European integration project which, as we know, does not end with the expected adoption of the constitutional document. In the foreseeable future, Union membership will make us face a number of new issues that will not be answered without us by Brussels or our partners leading member countries. Indeed, with recent political developments in the atmosphere of the Union, we ourselves – together with other accessing countries – represent an issue for our forthcoming partners with which not everybody has managed to come to terms with.

In addition, NATO is an organisation with some open questions. It expects transformation in adaptation to the new global environment. The changes it must undergo are so extensive that they have not yet come to the perception of the uninvolved public in member countries. Also in this case, I do not doubt we are still going to deal with many assignments.

Presentation of the Prime Minister of the Slovak Republic Mikuláš Dzurinda

I am really very glad we are going to evaluate the foreign policy of the Slovak Republic for last year and also talk about its priorities for this year and, of course, for many others.

I am glad because we are meeting in an extraordinarily interesting period when the dream of Slovakia, its citizens and, I believe, of many preceding generations – to include Slovakia in the family of the Euro-Atlantic community – comes to fruition. After the totalitarian regimes of fascism and communism, we now have the expectation of developing towards prosperity. But this is also an important day from a more specific point of view: a meeting of many prime ministers and presidents will be held in Bratislava. For the first time, the new North Atlantic Alliance Secretary General will come to Slovakia – we will talk about both new and current European and global challenges right here in our capital.

I would like to thank all the organisers for realising this event, most of all the Research Center of the Slovak Foreign Policy Association and the Konrad Adenauer Foundation for their endeavours. My acknowledgement also goes, naturally, to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Slovak Republic. In addition to that everything of key importance – where definitely belongs our OECD membership, and now membership in the North Atlantic Alliance and European Union, besides that everything of fundamental significance – to what I include our clearly defined political priorities – I cannot start differently but stating that in the new Europe we have the opportunity for prosperity, but we also face a huge challenge to carry our part of responsibility for development of this community.

Professor Stern has said we are going to assess the year with joy, and that is undoubtedly true. But if we only remember what happened in Madrid on 11 March and what is happening in other parts of the world, I must also note that it will not only be about comfort and not only be about a chance for prosperity but will also about bring an enormous responsibility. The responsibility to add our voice to those

formulating not only Slovak foreign policy but also the European and global one – this is a big honour and also a demanding test. To be able to formulate such priorities, to be able to formulate them correctly, to formulate them in a way that Europe becomes more and more prosperous and competitive in the global contest, and also secure.

What happened in Madrid demonstrates many serious decisions. I think we have to talk about this today; we cannot bypass it by only stating that many people died and it is one of the greatest catastrophes of recent years not only in Spain but also in the wider European arena. I believe this tragic event must be seen from several viewpoints – from that of criminal terrorism but also probably from a new viewpoint acknowledging that terrorism possibly for the first time recently has essentially influenced the outcome of an election. This is an extremely important situation – if we are not contesting with our programmes, if we are not contesting with our arguments, if we are not contesting with presenting results, but when the parliamentary democracy gets influenced by such a phenomenon as terrorism is. What happened in Madrid has one meaningful result: it questions the necessity of the free competition of ideas, of the fight for political programmes and their protagonists, because everything can be easier. The issue of what happened in Madrid and also the attitude to terrorism comprise two key imperatives – one I would call moral and the other one genuinely practical.

Let me start with the latter. I am often asked why we are putting ourselves at risk by adding our voice to the side of our allies by trying to eliminate sources of international tension and pursuing or contributing to the democratisation of the world. Why in such a way – by not giving way to evil – should we ourselves risk. Let us see what happened in Madrid – not only did Spaniards die there but also citizens of other countries. I am leading to the point that in such killings one cannot idealistically hope they will never touch us, since our young people study in Spain, in the United States, in Britain, well, all over the world, since our people increasingly travel as tourists, since our companies increasingly trade globally. I want to say that the practical message of these self-interested positions states that if the countries of the community we are a part of are threatened, we are threatened because our citizens are threatened wherever they are – in Slovakia or abroad. But the moral imperative is even stronger – whether it is right and forward looking to surrender to evil, to relativise it, to remain frightened in the hope that evil will not grow over our heads. I think these are the questions posed by the tragic event in Madrid, and these are the questions that will be faced by our foreign policy in the years to come. That it is why it is necessary not only to feel delight but also to seek solutions to these challenges, to be well prepared.

During last year, our foreign policy and Slovak policy as such was exposed to several tests.

Similarly to 1999 when we were had to take the decision of whether to support the fight of the democratic world against the regime of Slobodan Milosevic, during the previous year we had to consider how to face up to the events happening in Iraq. Also today I would like to say that our position was based on principle: it stood on the

values on which we are building our own society and also on which Trans-Atlantic co-operation is based. Thanks to this, Iraq has a much better perspective and the opportunity to administer its own events utilising its own capacities. Like Afghanistan, Iraq has also started out on a journey involving approval of their own constitution, preparation of elections, establishing who is going to represent the nations of these countries in relevant state institutions. I think it is evident – however differently we can see the practical approaches at this or that moment – that not only Iraq and Afghanistan have new hope for a better life but also that the world without a dictator such as Saddam Hussein is undoubtedly more secure and with enhanced perspective.

I do remember the year 1999 very well. Our decision making was much more sensitive and emotional because there are many Slovaks living in Serbia, and the Balkans is traditionally and historically a very close region for us. The conference *Towards a Wider Europe: The New Agenda*, which will be held in Bratislava, answers the question for us of whether we acted with principle, perspective and correctly, with values or not. I am really glad that the former opposition leader Mr. Kostunica will take part in the conference as prime minister of the Serbian government. I am glad there is much more peace in the Balkans than some years ago, that through our contribution in 1999 the nations of the Balkans have a chance to develop freely. In the conference we are going to talk about what to do to help not only the Serbs but also the Croats, Montenegrins, Macedonians, Bosnia and Herzegovina, indeed all nations of the Balkans on their road to democratisation of their societies, on their path to the communities of which Slovakia becomes a part today. While discussing the Balkans, of which prime ministers from practically all countries will come to Bratislava at the end of this week, I want to demonstrate that it is sometimes right in principle to undergo even uncomfortableness, to risk a reduction in temporary popularity, because the final result is then many times better. I am talking about this because I want it to be it apparent from the beginning that Slovak politics like Slovak diplomacy are preparing very carefully to be able to carry out its part in responsibility for world development.

During recent and previous years, I also personally ensured our ability to carry out our co-responsibility in regions where we strive to contribute actively. Two years ago I visited Kosovo, last year I paid a visit to Israel where I met our soldiers on the Golan Heights, and at the beginning of this year I visited Afghanistan, a country that with tremendous difficulties is beginning the process of forming its own future and perspective. It is very encouraging to hear and see that our missions are contributing to such a better future. I was very proud of our soldiers, and was very proud to hear commanding generals of other armies in the regions talking about the professionalism and good moral of the representatives of our armed forces. Of course, we will and we also want to take our part of responsibility at political and other levels.

I believe our foreign policy priorities will continually extend our positions of previous years. These priorities will be dominated – as I have already outlined – by our active membership in the North Atlantic Alliance, European Union, and the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development.

There are important changes anticipated in the European Union. It is certain that this year we will focus not only on the opportunity to agree on the European Constitution but will also formulate our own projects, programmes and positions for the Lisbon strategy. You all know that Europe has set an ambitious goal: to succeed in global competition not at its tail but at its forefront. This is a very serious goal. I am delighted that Slovakia is playing her part through stable economic growth with good structure – not loans but investment and production. I am glad we in Slovakia place more and more stress on economics based on knowledge, we invest more and more in education, we are not afraid to open up sensitive themes such as partially paid university education, we have the morality to talk to people and explain that we are not doing this to frustrate them but to proceed faster. It is great we are getting automobile industry, but in the same breath I add it is not enough. We want more sophisticated production, we want more production based on our actual knowledge and intelligence. In 2004 we will be very active in formulating the European Union financial perspective for the years 2007 to 2013. This is very important from the viewpoint of whether we will be able to keep the solidarity principle in the European Union, how we will be able to treat the principle of contributions to common European funds, and what kind of structure this solidarity will have during 2007 to 2013.

Of course, the relations of Europe to its neighbours and further abroad should probably be mentioned. I think this will be the basic direction of European policy, and thus also of the policy of the Slovak Republic. I think that from this viewpoint, we will be frequently active in topical discussions on how to solve or close and solve issues concerning Europe most immediately. Here, I mean closing the Kosovo issue, solving the Middle East crisis between Israel and Palestine, and, of course, the issue I have already mentioned shortly – developments in the Middle East or, better said, the wider Middle East, and developments in Iraq and Afghanistan.

Our activity in the Visegrad Four grouping is part of our foreign policy and will also remain so in the future. I am sure I do not have to explain to you at length why this regional co-operation is extremely important for Slovakia. I hope the enlarged Visegrad co-operation continues to be equally active as the co-operation we, the Slovaks, Poles, Czechs and Hungarians, enjoy. I was pleased by the meeting of the presidents of our four states at the beginning of March 2004. I was very pleased by the feedback from all four presidents about the need and perspective for co-operation in the future. And most I am pleased that on the eve of the following European Council meeting we the prime ministers are going to meet in the V4 plus Benelux format for a regional formulation of our standpoints and contribution to the solution of European issues. Unquestionably, I do not have to remind you of how happy I am that the first V4 and Benelux meeting – a meeting of the prime ministers of the seven countries in the V4 region – was held in Trenčín, Slovakia, two years ago. I see Visegrad co-operation as a very important not only as pressure for pursuing our interests but also for the ability for a more specific formulation of our goals in mutual consultations and

the possibility for supporting projects of mutual importance. And there are undoubtedly more of these than those with the different accents of individual countries.

Relationships with our neighbours will be of tremendous importance for our foreign policy. I believe it was in this hall where for the first time I expressed the idea of Ambassador Ballek, because I had heard it from him first, that the value of our house would increase with the value of the house of our neighbours. This – and also for pragmatic reasons – is why we are extremely interested in outstanding and increasingly improving neighbourhood relations. Here and there partial problems appear, but I believe it can be said that nothing dramatic has been noted in the area of neighbourhood relations, perhaps with the one exception of the fellow-countrymen law. I remember at that time I surprised some ambassadors by saying that this is an issue that disturbed me very much, that there would never be any laws valid in Slovakia other than the laws of the Slovak Republic and European Union. I am glad we fulfilled this intention and I am glad we resisted the pressure to validate such an un-European and non-perspective law in Slovakia. I think this is a very positive precedent articulating the effect of our foreign policy, which is successful when it rests on real values, genuine values, cultured dialogue, and on competition from arguments rather than the strength used for pounding the table. Along with the diplomatic success represented by the elimination of the effects and action of the fellow-countrymen law of the Republic of Hungary in Slovakia, it is necessary to say that I am disturbed by the various proclamations about the need for the application of collective rights of national minorities, because I consider it very much lacks perspective and, I will say it loudly, is an idea threatening democratic and peaceful development. I am very glad that there is good coexistence between the Slovak nation and national minorities, even though it may not be without problems.

We are both aware and worried about some tendencies during the recent period of time for disturbances and committed crime: this is never good for a country or for society. I will say it more openly. I am not satisfied with the speed at which we are solving the Roma issue, but you all know very well that right from the start, following the 1998 elections, we very genuinely opened the issue and are trying to find a solution with the doors opened and by doing our best. I am glad that in 1999 I invited Commissioner Verheugen and that we made a journey together to eastern Slovakia. I did it because I wanted to demonstrate that we do not want nor have to hide the issue – rather, we have an eminent interest in solving it. But what I have said still remains valid: relations between the Slovak nation and national minorities are very good, which can also be proved by our co-operation on a central level. On the other hand, the issue of collective rights is a non-perspective issue, an issue that is, in my judgment, the same nonsense as collective guilt. And this is why I communicate this issue very intensely, and our diplomacy and foreign policy will also communicate it very strongly. The future of Europe is not in opening the Potsdam Agreements, in opening the closed chapter of World War II, and the perspective of Europe is not about dreams about

different autonomies with no real basis. The future of Europe is in protecting the basic human rights of every man, of every individual without respect to his or her nationality, race, or religion. The freedom of an individual and their free development are our imperatives. This is why I am glad that the statement that Europe will protect the rights of citizens or individuals belonging to minorities was also adopted in the draft of the European Constitution. This is our policy, this is what we understand, and this is what we will pursue. But in the same way we refuse the nonsense of collective guilt, we also refuse the nonsense of collective rights.

In the end allow me some particular comments in relations I consider extremely important from the point of view of Slovak foreign policy.

From the viewpoint of European participation, there are two dominating areas where Slovakia wants to contribute and will contribute – first of all there is the Western Balkans and Ukraine. I am very pleased by the active co-operation of the Slovak Republic with Serbia and Montenegro, Macedonia, Albania – in this connection we want to be useful not only bilaterally but also for the European community. I think we not only understand this region but we also have very good historical, human and emotional connections.

The second vector is Ukraine. Ukraine is not only a neighbour of the Slovak Republic but has also become a neighbour of the European Union. I think I did very well when during the Slovak V4 Presidency last year I invited the Prime Minister of the Ukraine to a joint lunch. Now I am preparing for a working visit to the Ukraine. We do care very much about the democratic and perspective development of Ukraine, about its direction to a community on a similar journey as we in Slovakia took.

The second relation I want to mention is Germany. You know Germany is our most important trading partner and strongest investor today. I am not afraid even to say that Germany played the role of leader in European politics and I believe the role of a very good leader. I surely do not have to go deep into history, but I think this leadership role is also expected from Germany in coming years. I want this very deeply; I aspire after such co-operation in Slovak-German bilateral relation very much, and Slovak foreign policy undoubtedly will aspire to it. I am glad I could make a successful trip to Germany in recent weeks, visiting not only Berlin but four federal republics, and also there I was assured about the huge potential, even though the level of our co-operation is very high today. I am really pleased the Konrad Adenauer Foundation is still active on our political scene because this will assist us in this and other relations.

The penultimate relationship I would like to mention is our relationship with the United States of America. As we need leaders in Europe, we also need leaders in the world, and I believe that the United States of America showed its ability for such leadership in my understanding of responsibility for global development. We perceive the United States of America as our strong strategic ally, and strengthening Trans-Atlantic links will be part of our foreign policy. We want to participate actively on the European Defence and Security Identity. Europe needs such a new policy, needs

more integration also in these politics, but this shall never go against the Trans-Atlantic alliance. The Alliance shall never be weakened, just the opposite.

And finally I want to mention our relation to Russia, which I consider particularly important. I see the dialogues between the United States and Russia, the North Atlantic Alliance and Russia, the European Union and Russia as extremely important. Russia is a vital and key element in not only the stability of Europe but also in a wider, more global scale. This is why we will contribute to the democratic development of Russia, with plurality and a strengthening civic society. We will aspire for a dialogue, a very intensive political dialogue, but, of course, very much for the rational economic relations to the benefit of both countries.

Finally – as our ambition to become integrated into the OECD, European Union, North Atlantic Alliance is realised – there is time to be more active in other parts of the world, to be more active in Africa, and also, for instance, in Japan, South Korea, and China. Indeed, in those countries offering us a huge economic potential. You may see how we managed to win Korean investment, which was not very common in this country. I think that the potential to win more, for instance, from Japan is very solid, and as our hands are becoming freer by fulfilling our strategic goals, I believe we will also be more active in these spheres.

I am glad I could start this week and this morning right here with this theme, because it is a complex and global one since it combines everything we are doing at home. During recent years, I often heard that our reputation in the world is as such, but it is as such because we make such politics at home. This was a valid comment at that time, and it is valid also today, so this is why I am very pleased that as we are going to be formally accepted into the Alliance and European Union, we will become united in the wide arena in Slovakia. Because what we have reached as a nation, as citizens of the Slovak Republic, as a country, as a state, is great success. And perhaps we may add we managed this thanks to democratic, true, principled internal politics in the whole wide area of economic, social, health, educational, and other reforms.

Presentation of the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Slovak Republic, Eduard Kukan

Let me in the beginning thank the Research Centre of the Slovak Foreign Policy Association for organising this year's Evaluating Conference of Foreign Policy of the Slovak Republic, traditionally prepared in co-operation with the Konrad Adenauer Foundation. In previous years, the Conference was organised by the Slovak Institute for International Studies. After its transformation last year, this task is now being carried out by its successor and follower – the Research Centre of the Slovak Foreign Policy Association.

When I was considering my contribution today, I faced a dilemma. I am talking at a Conference evaluating last year's foreign policy, but at the same time my speech is with a theme and at a time that are one of the crucial moments in the history of Slovakia. I have decided not to focus on the detailed events of the previous year but rather to assess in a wider scale what the closure of the integration effort means.

It is not a long time ago when Slovakia put herself in a position of isolation through her own mistakes. Only recently we had to face *démarches* and were considered the black sheep of the European family or *enfant terrible* of Central Europe. Today, when Slovakia is in a totally different place, we shall not forget our recent history. I do not mean to irritate wounds but, rather, not to forget and realise what we have reached.

During recent years Slovakia has achieved unbelievable development. The *enfant terrible* has become the *Tatras tiger*. Many might be looking at Slovakia to ask with some challenge whether she is able to fulfil her ambitious programme. But today nobody asks the question whether Slovakia is one of the most dynamically developing, democratic, stable, and pro-reform countries of the old continent. Nobody that is, perhaps with the exception of the Slovaks themselves. It is part of our national quality that we have doubts about something that others see as a phenomenal success. On one hand this is possibly a good thing – this doubtfulness helps us stay firmly on the ground. On the other hand, it causes some permanent feeling of failure. Let me be

more optimistic in my further few sentences, which is so much more in fashion in Slovakia.

The rebirth of Slovakia did not come as such and alone. We all felt and still do feel personally what this effort has cost us. We overcame an era in our country's development, a fact which we still might not appreciate enough. Over two years the performance of our negotiating team brought us to the point which took four years for the first group of countries belonging to the so-called *Luxembourg Group*. The success of the accession process brought our country to where it belongs – to the community of the free, democratic and prospering countries of Europe.

More boldly, Slovakia contributed to the success of NATO enlargement. The May Bratislava conference in 2001 became a breakthrough in the enlargement process, seeing not only from the point of view of Slovakia but also other countries of the so-called *Vilnius Group*, which together with us will enlarge the borders of the Alliance on 20 March. After the conference, it was not a question of whether NATO would enlarge, but when and by how many countries. Today we know the answers to these questions. I believe that the Bratislava II conference will be equally successful.

The slogan of the presentation of Slovakia in the United Kingdom and Ireland is *Slovakia Goes Ahead*. It has never been more valid than today. I have heard many statements saying that European Union and NATO entry would not change anything important, and life in Bratislava would be basically the same as it is today after 29 March or 1 May. This is true up to a certain extent. But it is true as a result of the fact that we are harvesting many of the fruits of the integration effort today, before Union entry. Today, with daily news about investment, we are arguing again whether the conditions under which they are coming have been agreed to our advantage or disadvantage. We somehow keep forgetting that without the perspective of the Slovak Republic's membership in the European Union and NATO we would have nothing to argue about. No investment of such a scale would even brush us. Sometimes we forget that the adaptation of Slovakia to European standards significantly helped us transform the country to a modern functioning civic society with a market economy. We also keep forgetting that as an accession country we enjoy a great part of a credit with which the membership in the groupings is connected.

We are back where we belonged for centuries, and it is great that we are there as sovereign, free and democratic Slovakia, a Slovakia respected and occasionally even admired.

Evaluation is very easy today. It is always a good feeling to record *completed* in the list of one's own goals. This is so in the case of two major foreign policy aims and this feels very good.

But in moments like this, it is not sufficient to look back. It is much more important not to rest on our laurels but to define further steps. This is why I am very pleased Slovakia will again welcome prime ministers, ministers and high-ranking academics from the United States to Georgia, from Finland to Albania.

The conference *Towards a Wider Europe: The New Agenda* aims to draw a new vision for a new Europe. A Europe that was for centuries tossed around by wars and social unrest is a place of peace, stability and prosperity over the majority of its territory. The Western Balkans is our common task in the nearest future.

Last week's events in Madrid reminded us in a very cruel way that we here in Europe do not live outside the reality of today's world. It is only confirmation of what I have underlined several times while defending Slovak pro-integration politics, while arguing to promote the involvement of Slovakia. We are part of today's world, so to hide in isolation and false neutrality under a mask of stability, security and the prosperity of the current Europe would be irresponsible and short-sighted. Responsible foreign policy always looks to the future, anticipates possible development, and tries to find answers. Integration is such an answer.

Integration is not very often compared to globalisation or understood as one of its manifestations. But it remains true that integration is more an answer to the challenges of globalisation. I reject a *don Quixote*-type fight with globalisation equally as uncritical declarations based on statements like *we will not give ours and we do not want anybody else's*. There is no sense in fighting a phenomenon that objectively exists and is deepening. But we may search for and find answers to its negative signs. We cannot and do not want to go back, but we can and will form the world we live in.

Europe has found such an answer in integration, and Slovakia is joining it today. This does not mean that Europe is changing into a supstate, and neither would this be good. This is why from the start of the discussion about the future form of Europe we pursued an approach based on the primary sovereignty of national states. I might be immodest in stating that we contributed significantly to the current wording of the first clauses of the constitutional agreement's proposal. One can hold doubts about European diversity, and one may acknowledge that national motivation is often emotional and thus irrational. But it is not possible to ignore or reject diversity. It simply exists in Europe, and will exist here probably for a long time ahead. Diversity was and is the DNA of Europe, and attempts to clone it are, as we know, extremely dangerous.

Clinging to the absolute sovereignty of a national state also does not consider reality. The fact that a decision taken outside our borders can directly influence our everyday life is a reality of today's world. Entry into integration groupings is often interpreted as limiting a state's sovereignty. Let me disagree with this and claim that it is an enlargement of a state's sovereignty. After 29 March and 1 May, Slovakia has the opportunity to influence decisions and the direction of Europe on a much wider scale than under the conditions of the current Slovakia.

Integration brings about enlargement of freedom and space for self-realisation – so of a state as of an individual. Temporary measures limiting the free movement of labour do not change anything, even though those measures are unfair and unjustified.

In evaluating the meaning of NATO membership, let me go back to words of George Robertson, former NATO Secretary General, who during his visit last year to Bratislava defined the advantages of NATO membership as follows: Slovakia will

join the strongest and most solid alliance which has ever existed; Slovakia will sit at the head table when key decisions are taken; the voice of Slovakia in international relations will get stronger. These three points are so truthful they do not need further commentary.

Slovakia is becoming part of the modern system of international relations. It is becoming a vivid part of the unseen but close co-operation of countries appraising the same values. The credit of Slovakia will grow in a way we in Slovakia cannot even imagine. Even today we are not perceived abroad only as Slovakia but as Slovakia – a country accessing the European Union and NATO. Slovakia by its entry into these groupings gains a share of the enormous reputation these two groupings enjoy in today's world.

Let me return to last year's presentation by the Prime Minister, who specified the basic foreign policy priorities of the Slovak Republic under six points. Their confrontation with what Slovak diplomacy and the whole country reached last year will graphically show the results of Slovak foreign policy:

To the integration of Slovakia, I can add only one thing – task completed. Furthermore, there prevails harmony in co-operation with neighbouring countries, and it is without serious complications. Even more, we managed to solve one of the problems which significantly complicated our bilateral relations – the issue of the fellow countrymen law. Visegrad co-operation still works. At last week's meetings of prime ministers and presidents, we with our V4 partners agreed on the importance and further continuation of co-operation. During last year's strategic alliance with the United States, we found extraordinarily a specific manifestation in the field of the fight against global terrorism. Though stabilisation of southeast Europe and the Balkans did not continue – it must be said unfortunately – with gigantic strides, the development path is positive in this complicated territory of Europe, and Slovakia undoubtedly contributes to its direction. Relations with Russia are normal and incorporate an extraordinary potential for development after entry into the Union, where we would like to use our knowledge of relations in Russia, the language and cultural proximity, to aid active functioning within the eastern dimension of the Common Foreign and Security Policy.

Ratification of entry into NATO as well as into the European Union is completed in all countries. The only thing separating us from the historic moment of entry into these groupings is time. Today, it is a very short time. There is nothing to be added but *Slovakia Go Ahead!*

Presentation of the Chairman of the Foreign Affairs Committee of the National Council of the Slovak Republic Ján Figel'

The years 2003 and 2004 both provide continuity for the important transition and also bring about significant historical change. Likewise, the state budget, also Slovak foreign policy becomes part of European foreign policy or external relations of the European Union respectively. Since 1993 I have been dealing with the European agenda, either in relation to the Council of Europe or in bilateral relations, in the field of security issues and the creation of EU and NATO accession assumptions, both in the government coalition and in opposition. I am convinced that the development of Slovakia was largely influenced by the above-mentioned European dimension. Hence, it was more than foreign policy – it was the catalyzer for our domestic situation. At present, the same effects can be seen from the part of European institutions and their agenda in southeast Europe and Cyprus. I believe this is good because it assures us that the European idea lives and it is still real. I would like to contribute to this discussion with three themes:

1. The foreign policy of the Slovak Republic will be successful provided her European policy is successful.
2. The current interests of the Slovak Republic pose the fulfilment of universal values.
3. The accession of the Slovak Republic to the EU and NATO increases Slovakia's level of co-responsibility for development in Europe and the world.

Firstly, since World War II the development of European policy has been of an inclusive, complex and evolutionary character. It integrates more and more states. Although the current enlargement is a historic one, it is not the least significant one. Complexity is not only seen in the three EU pillars but also in a wide agenda which increases rather than reduces itself, the reforms and importance of subsidiarity or

consolidation of relations in the EU notwithstanding. Evolution is seen in the gradual development of new policies, new laws, etc. The European legislative increasingly influences the Slovak one. Parliamentary committees (e.g. for trade, economy etc.) will have to, due to their internal organisation, change their character. Their external influence on Slovakia still increases; however, on the other hand the opportunity for Slovakia to influence her surroundings is also greater. Therefore, we need coherent and timely attitudes (this means early and clearly). Only then is it possible to create successful projects or shape policies. The foreign policy of the country both starts at home and returns home in the fields of security, economy, ecology, international law, culture and so forth. Phenomena weakening and dividing Europe also weaken and divide us.

Even though Slovakia is smaller than its neighbours, I am convinced that the Slovak Republic can be a strong and influential European state by being able to compensate for its geographical, demographic and geopolitical limits through membership in the EU. Foreign policy is not the domain of the elite. European policy must be of a whole-society character because it creates opportunities for all of society. Deputies of the National Council asked several times whether Slovak citizens were not going to be second class citizens of the EU. Certainly not! These categories are not about formal rights but rather about equality and readiness, competitiveness and compatibility. There are people who will be not prepared for open competition even in 10 years, because this cannot be guaranteed by Brussels or Bratislava. Policy will only be successful if the relationship between parliament and the government is serious and synergic. It is of crucial importance to co-ordinate the activities of these two institutions together with the activities of the president of the Slovak Republic in influencing the Union. Whether the government has the majority or minority in parliament, the European agenda will be a European one, and thus also a Slovak one. We must overcome those deficits that have been accumulated in Europe – democracy deficits, legitimacy deficits, and the distance between European and national level of the decision making process. Therefore, reforms are badly needed. As we enter the Union, we should eliminate these deficiencies and shortcomings as a priority. The striving for consensus in society is an enduring challenge. Statesman-like thinking is more important than the political one. It is not part of the period between elections but is rather generational. If we can eliminate populism, unawareness and the doubts present on both sides of the Schengen border, our foreign policy will be successful.

Secondly, interests and values should not be in contradiction. Our main values should be of a human character. Not every state has reached this goal in accordance with the UN Declaration of Human Rights. Democracy is of great importance, but it is not enough. So is a lawful state. It is only the acceptance of human rights which offers the content, goal and criterion to democracy and law. I am convinced that solidarity is in Slovakia's interest. Human rights must be part of our foreign policy. This relates to European as well as non-European states. We need unity in our

approaches towards the agenda between individual ministries in order not to spread resortism outside Slovakia. The common budget financial resources should only be used by the European Union where there is common agreement, and the policy can be changed, e.g. after an election. What cannot be changed is geography, not to mention history. European unification does not concern boundary or history revision, but rather it is the answer to all that Europe went through. Trade, economy or geography is too little for the unity of Europe. It is not enough to retain solidarity among states and among nations. It must be based on the harmony of values. The credo *Live and Let Live!* speaks of tolerance but the credo *Live and Help Live* is even stronger and speaks of solidarity.

Finally, EU and NATO accession pose an increased responsibility in Europe as well as the world for the Slovak Republic. It is a new period in our history which gave us not only freedom and security but also responsibility. It cannot be said that we become involved in conflicts as an EU or NATO member state. Slovakia cannot be neutral. Through EU and NATO membership, Slovakia is in another struggle for values. This should result in peace and stability. Slovak foreign policy will then be looked on to increase reliability, professionalism, communicativeness and activity, collectiveness and responsibility. We must overcome the campaign character. It cannot be about slogans but is rather about the messages and attitudes being more social than grouped. This policy will be financially demanding, requiring the support and understanding of society. We should involve non-governmental entities, economy players, cultural institutions as well as regional and local self-governments. Are we able to imagine, considering the present disposition, the EU presidency in Bratislava? These are very hardly imaginable challenges, but we are moving to the area we are applying for such responsibility in. The relations between Europe and America are of worldwide importance. Europe plus America, not Europe versus America. All these specific steps stemming from intensive dialogue must be subordinated to achieving this goal. As an EU and NATO member, Slovakia favours such development. The USA needs a unified and operational Europe, which only then can be respected.

Smaller states have a broader sense of community because they are more based on it, they need more solidarity and integration, and they have a broader sense of the law because it protects them more than bigger states with more power. Where the rule of law prevails, the management of the community is more effective and cheaper. I hope that our strength can stem from the stability of both European as well as world approaches.

Ivan Korčok

The Slovak Republic and the Intergovernmental Conference of the European Union

Negotiations at the International Conference are currently followed by bilateral meetings of the presiding country Ireland with members of the European Union and also by meetings in various formats such as, for instance, V4 or other like-minded countries, concerning simplification, better effectiveness, and the modernisation of the legal basis of the Union. During the upcoming European Union Summit (25 – 26 March 2004), the Irish Presidency plans to inform participants about the conclusions it has reached. Nevertheless, this is not an easy task.

Slovakia together with the other nine accession countries will be able to take a fully-pledged part in such difficult negotiations. We must openly admit that the negotiations at the Intergovernmental Conference and the previous negotiation of the Convention were and are a great education about the functioning of the Union for us.

Please allow me a fleeting look back to the time before the Intergovernmental Conference – to the sixteen month long European Convention where I had an opportunity to represent the government of the Slovak Republic. I am glad that in general its work was well appraised. The proposal for the constitutional agreement of the European Union developed by the Convention represented a compromise adequate for the subject of the discussion and time available. Every participant at the Convention reached into their reservoir of compromises for the sake of producing a specific result. The result was good, and what is particularly important is the Summit of the Union at the end of the Greek Presidency marked it as an outcome for the negotiations of the Intergovernmental Conference. Some believed that the proposal would be kept to the

Ivan Korčok, State Secretary of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Slovak Republic

maximum possible extent, while others had ambitions to change the proposal where they still considered it inevitable. At that time, the Intergovernmental Conference was not merely a formal action confirming the text of the proposal that was still in front of us.

In the three month break between the closing work of the Convention and start of negotiations of the Intergovernmental Conference, we in Slovakia prepared our positions on the proposal for the constitutional agreement. Today, after some time and with new experiences, I can only remind you that the Slovak representatives in the Convention were in that group of those who wanted sufficient time to be given to individual countries for its citizens to judge all the effects and connections after the Convention. We were saying that the Intergovernmental Conference should start in 2004 and finish with the full-fledged participation of new member countries.

I want to stress that we were fully aware of the complexity and complicity of the constitutional agreement, and thus we prepared our positions. All government departments and other bodies of the central state administration were involved, and our positions were the subject of several meetings of the National Convention. We also consulted with experts from non-governmental organisations dealing with the topic and, of course, talked about the outlook of the constitutional agreement proposal with partners from other member and accession countries of the Union. The position of Slovakia on the Intergovernmental Conference negotiations was finally adopted by the government after talks in committees and the floor of the National Council.

Thus, our approved positions were consistently interpreted by representatives of the Slovak Republic in multilateral and bilateral negotiation, and there was an apparent endeavour to take into consideration national priorities and common European interests. Discussions at the Intergovernmental Conference indicated that our goals were realistically set, though we were constantly aware of the fact that for the sake of reaching a consensus we would probably have to reassess some of them.

In today's situation, when the final agreement at the convenience of all member and accession countries has not been reached, it is not possible to talk definitively about what we managed to put through and where it was not possible. I would just like to mention a statement by Prime Minister Mikuláš Dzurinda immediately after the end of the Brussels Summit where he spoke about the very high acceptability of the outline compromise for Slovakia. Here I will mention that for us the most complicated issues and important open issues remained the composition of the European Commission and the system of creation and extent of decision making by a qualified majority. Heterogeneous opinions also remained in the issue of mentioning Christian or Judeo-Christian values in the preamble to the Constitutional Treaty of the EU.

Today it is the Irish Presidency who strives to re-start the negotiation process of the Intergovernmental Conference. Through bilateral consultations with individual member countries, it identifies their current positions to open issues and considers the existence of a real political will for an agreement. Its ambition is hold on to the

immensity of what has been reached up to day. This was not inconsiderable, and was also prosperous and good for the future of an enlarged Europe.

I have in mind the replacement of the pillar structure by a singular institutional framework, the recognition of the legal subjectivity of the Union, a more clear definition of competences between member states and the European Union, and strengthening the principle of subsidiarity and provinciality. An important move was reached in the field of defence. Much was also agreed in the sensitive sphere of institutional reform. Slovakia supports the quickest possible restoration of negotiations about the constitutional agreement. But if it is to happen, there must be a real chance that the negotiations will lead to agreement. The Union cannot afford to repeat the *Brussels scenario* because this would very seriously hurt it politically. The Irish Presidency is aware of this fact, and we are pleased that practically all countries have declared their will to restore negotiations.

Let me highlight in more detail the issue where the Intergovernmental Conference negotiations stopped. It is a sensitive problem of defining the system of creating the qualified majority. However, this is part of a bulk of proposals, so it cannot be assessed separately.

Before the International Conference our mandate was clearly set: "*The Slovak Republic supports retaining the system of qualified majority definition agreed in Nice.*" This is the system which in the end can undergo some corrections and, after all, seems to be more appropriate for us and for all small- and medium-sized countries than the proposed one about the so-called double majority. Moreover, in our opinion we should try this system for a period, perhaps limited. It is very probable today that this will happen, and we will see the practical effectiveness of the decision making process according to Nice in the Union of 25 states.

At the time when negotiations about this issue did not lead to agreement and it was more and more clear that this may cause a breakdown of the Intergovernmental Conference, we listened carefully to the arguments calling for easing the voting system and simultaneously took into consideration the economic and demographic realities in Europe. At the same time, we clearly defined where our limits in negotiations about the double majority were. Its parameters – number of countries and number of inhabitants representing these countries – should be in parity. From the beginning, we interpreted this position verbally and also in written form to the Italian and Irish Presidencies.

I would like to add to the discussion about the meaning of the whole European integration that up to today has had a prime political goal of uniting the continent. This has come to fruition, and on 1 May the entry of ten new members will formally confirm it.

Now we face a much more important task – politically, economically and civically strengthen the European Union. The goal can only be fulfilled by the improved effectiveness of the Union and bringing it closer to the citizen. We shall make it more

readable. It is not the creation of a supracountry. There are still plenty of mechanisms to be applied by member countries in cases where communitarian steps seriously interfere with its national character. On the other hand, we are not entering Europe to slow it down. This is why it is important to find such a voting mechanism for decision making that will be accepted by all member states. This is also how we understand the discussion about qualified majority voting, its scale and the whole set of issues of future institutional relations.

The Slovak Republic actively and constructively participated in the Intergovernmental Conference with the aim of pursuing contemporary Slovak interests and with a view to the future. In a few weeks we will become members of the Union. We will become co-creators of Union politics. We will gain stronger tools for realising our visions but at the same time we will have to accept the relevant level of responsibility. We have already shown by our approach to the negotiations of the Intergovernmental Conference that we are competent to do this.

Peter Zsapka

Analysis of Standpoints and Outcomes of the Slovak Republic at the Intergovernmental Conference

There is no better topic to analyse the year 2003 than the negotiations over the Treaty Establishing a Constitution for Europe. Very few in fact realise that the Convention as well as the Intergovernmental Conference (IGC) have been Slovakia's first historically opportunity to become not just an object but also a subject of European history. Never before were times more favourable for us to significantly influence the future order in Europe. It is, however, not only a privilege but also a difficult and responsible task, one which fully revealed the strong and weak sides of our foreign policy as well as the ability to quickly understand and adopt to the mechanisms of functioning of the EU.

The Union has two faces. One consists of the firm and noble principles and values imprinted on European integration by the founding fathers: Schuman, Monnet and Adenauer. The second is composed of a system of complex coalitions, backstage negotiations and barter trades. Sometimes it seems rather that the spiritual founding father was the Cardinal Richelieu of France. For the first time, our representation on the IGC was actually confronted with this second face of the Union as an equal player. Even though I will focus mainly on the Intergovernmental Conference, it is important to mention its predecessor – the Convention headed by the former French President Valéry Giscard d'Estaing.

Those advocating the policy of non-interference in the text of the Constitution prepared by the Convention argue that the Convention was a more democratic forum

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than the Intergovernmental Conference. It really established a relationship between the representatives of national parliaments and governments as well as representatives of the institutions of the Union. Is, however, participation and wide representation sufficient? In my opinion it is not. I join T. G. Masaryk in saying, "Democracy is a discussion". And it was discussion that the Convention often lacked. Of course everybody had the right to express his or her opinion, but real discussion needs mutual listening. And that was not possible on the 105-member floor, cluttered up with miscellaneous agenda. Finally the responsibility for preparation of the draft was authoritatively taken over by the members of the presidium, who even at the price of not respecting some of the majority opinions (See Figeľ, 2003) created its final text.¹ The more resistant members of the Convention ceased promoting changes to the draft because they were aware that the draft would have to be approved by the Intergovernmental Conference, where there would be enough opportunity for changes.

The summer of 2003, however, brought about strong diplomatic pressure, especially from Germany, France and Italy (e.g.: Joschka Fischer, Valéry Giscard d'Estaing, Silvio Berlusconi) not to change the "agreed upon" text from the "democratic" Convention and to complete the Intergovernmental Conference by the end of the year. And this is where the first problem occurred: unsuitable threats from some politicians who linked possible changes to the Constitution with financial reprisal had no reply from our diplomacy. Another unfortunate problem was that neither completion of the work of the Convention nor the above mentioned diplomatic pressures generated wider public discussion. That is why the Constitution still remains largely a project by the political elites.²

September 2003 was a time of preparations for the Intergovernmental Conference. The Slovak government publicly presented its first proposal of *Standpoints* to this conference. The proposal had a relatively solid analytical part but failed in determining Slovakia's priorities and their order of importance. Fortunately, following criticism from experts and the National Council of the SR, an amended version was adopted that removed some of the errors.

I would divide Slovak priorities for the Intergovernmental Conference into two parts. One consists of those priorities that would probably be achieved even without activity by Slovak diplomacy³ (one country – one commissioner, the name of the treaty, veto in Common Foreign and Security Policy, taxes, criminal law, rotating chairmanship in the sectoral councils). The second consists of really sensitive priorities (God and Christianity in the Preamble, chair of the European Council, but mainly preserving the voting system from Nice – yes, our official government position was at least on paper congruent at this point with the Portuguese and Spanish). Unfortunately, we often ignored this second group of sensitive but immensely important group of priorities during the negotiations. In particular, two questions deserve more detailed mention: the number of members of the Commission and of course voting in the Council of Ministers. Surprisingly, the government chose as the highest priority to preserve the system of one country – one commissioner. Even though from the point of national

interest the commissioner does not have great importance, I understand, that protection of this post can be politically “sold” much more easily to ordinary people than the incomprehensible fight for voting in the Council. Moreover, the proposal for 15 Commissioners with the right to vote appeared in the text of the Constitution, despite the majority opinion in the Convention (see Figeľ, 2003) and the will of the Commission. It was justifiable to assume that the IGC would change this. It was also clear from the beginning that Germany and France planned in advance to retreat on the question of the Commission in exchange for a double majority in the Council. This was indirectly confirmed at the Brussels summit.

I would, however, like to focus more on the priority of preserving the voting system from Nice in the Council of Ministers, or at least improving the double majority so that it did not deform the balance of power of member states or institutions of the Union. This is the most principled and sensitive point in the debate about the Constitution. That this issue caused the failure of the IGC negotiations can serve as evidence of this fact. I consider the attitudes and declarations of our representatives regarding this issue to be very unfortunate.

I stress that “on paper” we, together with Spain and Poland, agreed with preservation of the Nice system. However, after German Chancellor visited Slovakia (29 October 2003), Prime Minister Mikuláš Dzurinda said that he “understands the German position” on the matter and he even suggested that he would try to persuade Leszek Miller to change the opinion of Poland. This goes beyond the usual way of understanding an opponent. At the Brussels summit, Prime Minister Mikuláš Dzurinda expressed willingness to sign any text of the Constitution – regardless of whether it would preserve the Nice system or introduce a double majority. This also was not the best position. After meeting with his Polish counterpart (26 February 2004), Minister Eduard Kukan declared that Slovakia again confirms its determination to defend the Nice system. On the other hand, Prime Minister Dzurinda again did not clearly refuse the German proposal of a double majority at the V4 meeting on 8 March 2004 in Prague. Such schizophrenia accompanied by a willingness to sign anything puts Slovakia in the position of a country that can be used to support any proposal. With this attitude, it is not reasonable for us to expect that partners in the Union will take us seriously and that they will offer us any advantages in dealing with a compromise package.⁴

I would also like to clarify why the system of weighted votes from Nice is more advantageous not only for Slovakia but also for the rest of Europe than the double majority system proposed by the Convention. Weighted votes guarantee more strength for smaller states when legislature is adopted in the Council. This is because here the principle of democracy meets with the principle of equality of member states – so that even the smallest have a say in the Union. The Council does not represent citizens but member states. It is difficult to understand why decision-making in the Council should be based on size of population, while in the European Parliament, an institution that actually represents citizens of the Union, the smaller states would be relatively privileged.

The double majority 50 – 60 shifts power from small member states to the big ones, and also from the Council of Ministers to the European Commission so that it is easier to adopt legislation. It thus disrupts the power equilibrium of member states as well as institutions of the Union. At the same time, the main goal is supposed to be efficiency. It is without doubt that when tested by mathematical methods, the double majority system is better than the Nice system. When the *Banzhaf and Coleman* method is used (See Baldwin, Widgren, 2003), the double majority seems a better option, while when using the *Shapley and Shubik method* (See Paterson, Silzársky, 2003), which is more suitable according to many theoreticians, the double majority seems only the slightly better option. Combinatorics however cannot sufficiently describe the functioning of any political system, which is also proved by the fact that in the case of unanimous voting in the EU-27, the mathematical probability of adopting a legal norm is smaller than the probability of jackpot in the lottery (see Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Poland, 2003). Nevertheless, unanimous voting can also be successful in a Union of 27 states.

Moreover, efficiency cannot be the only goal. A model in which *the big three* – Britain, Germany and France – decide about legislature, would certainly be efficient. But would it be desirable?

In the present Union only 9% of citizens feel more European: the Germans, Spaniards, ... (see Eurobarometer, 2000). If a handful of big states gained too great an influence on Union events, this would lead to the worthless growth of nationalism, anti-European moods and unrest in other countries. This could be even stronger in new member states, which in many areas form a natural coalition and which lose the blocking minority in the new system. Such a shift of power would not make the Union more efficient but exactly the opposite.

Doubts about the sincerity of French-German efforts are also justified by the fact that not so long ago the Nice Treaty was celebrated as the only guarantee of institutional stability and efficiency after enlargement (see European Council, 2000). Let me quote the *Declaration on the Future of Europe*, adopted after the Nice Treaty: “Conference of the delegates of the governments of member states ... underlines, that by ratification of the Nice Treaty, the EU accomplishes institutional changes necessary for accession of the new member states.” I do not understand what has changed since the adoption of this declaration – the Nice voting system did not even come into operation.

Probably the best solution to the problem of the qualified majority will be the so-called *rendez-vous clause*. The real evaluation of efficiency and suitability of the Nice system requires time. Only after one or two years of functioning will we be able to responsibly analyse all its advantages and disadvantages. Today, except for efforts by the current German and French representatives to strengthen their power, I do not see any reason to change it. While efforts to change it might be considered legitimate, they represent neither Slovak nor European interest. Our representatives should become aware of that.

If an agreement on the Constitution is not reached, we will be confronted with a *two-speed* Union. We, however, should not be discouraged by this theme. Closer integration will only be a reality when *the core* so decides. We can, however, do little about it. On the other hand, we should be satisfied by the fact that today's European integration is already so complex that it does not require further integration in any other area – perhaps in Common Foreign and Security Policy.⁵

Despite the fiasco of the Brussels summit, after its end some representatives of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the SR declared that Slovakia was one of the most successful states at the conference. In light of what has already been said, I would like to express my disagreement with such a surprising statement.

Determining Slovakia's priorities and their real defence cannot be evaluated positively in the case of the EU Constitutional Treaty; however, it is not a tragedy. We are just setting out at the beginning of our European journey, and we already had to deal with such difficult issues. With the second face of the Union, whose godfather as mentioned in the introduction is Cardinal Richelieu, we will become acquainted only slowly and painfully. I however believe that in the same way as countries that entered the Union before us, we will learn to play this game successfully.

Notes:

- ¹ The most exhaustive 3rd part of the Constitutional Treaty was presented to the Convention by the presidium only a few weeks before the end of its work of the Convention.
- ² See Eurobarometer (2004). The survey showed that approximately 75% of EU 25 citizens think the Constitution should be adopted, but only 25% of those surveyed had enough information about the Constitution.
- ³ Some of the priorities clearly had the support of the majority of the Convention and member states, others were so important that if they were not adopted, the Constitutional Treaty would almost surely have not been accepted (e.g.: the United Kingdom and the tax issue veto).
- ⁴ Insufficient understanding of the bargaining "game" was also revealed in the expressions of Minister Eduard Kukan, when he said he could not imagine that Slovakia would block IGC negotiations if her demands were not met. This might be a good attitude; however it should not be publicly presented by a high representative of one of the negotiating countries.
- ⁵ Closer integration, for example in the fiscal area, could be harmful for Slovakia

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Vladimír Bilčík

Institutionalisation of Integration Policy

In my article I would like to focus on the institutionalisation of integration policy and discuss Slovakia's limits and possibilities in the enlarged European Union. By institutionalisation I mean the various documents, structures and also persons and personalities, that formulated integration policy in Slovakia over the past years and that today are adapting to new conditions related to membership in the EU. In the following paragraphs I shall outline the problem of institutionalisation on three levels. First, up until now integration policy has principally been concerned with the one-way transfer of EU rules. Second, the demands of integration policy have affected the different domestic political actors in different ways. And last but not least, the inclusion of integration into the EU amongst top foreign policy priorities naturally begs the question about the contents and the nature of Slovakia's future foreign policy.

The Issue of One-Way Transfer

Europeanisation has become a fashionable term in analysing integration processes in recent years. In scholarly literature one can find more definitions of Europeanising trends.¹ Until now, the relationship between the EU and Slovakia has been largely characterised by a one-way transfer of EU rules and norms into the domestic Slovak legislative and political setting. The main task for Slovakia was to adapt to EU conditions. The enlargement process has necessitated the creation of new domestic

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structures and influenced the patterns of behaviour of the individuals who have shaped and facilitated Slovakia's efforts on the way to the EU.

Gradual development of official ties between Slovakia, the European Communities and the European Union² placed specific demands upon the nature of domestic politics, the quality of public administration and the content of the country's legal system. The Association Agreement, better known as the Europe Agreement, signed during the existence of the former ČSFR in December 1991 for the first time formalised Slovakia's political and economic ties with the EC countries. After the break-up of the Czecho-Slovak federation, Slovakia signed its own Europe Agreement, which established the Association Council as the main body for communication between Slovak executive and EU institutions. The political criteria for the admission of new member states, adopted at the EC summit in Copenhagen in June 1993, contributed in turn to democratic consolidation in Slovakia,³ while negotiations about the conditions for Slovakia's accession focused on the compatibility of Slovakia's legislation with EC/EU law and created pressure for the adoption of new laws and changes in the functioning of public institutions.

In short, Slovakia assumed the role of a receiver of the norms that have functioned in EU member states for decades, and the country had a very limited say in influencing the nature of these norms. Political expressions such as "we are pro-integrationist" or "pro-European" stood for the support of Slovakia's membership in the EU. Slovakia did not contribute to the integration processes within the EU, it "only" adopted existing commitments. The problems of domestic politics during the 1998 – 2002 period were thus largely subordinated to the goal of accession to the Union, and bureaucratic structures within the executive concentrated primarily on the technical aspects of the negotiations on the conditions of entry and monitored the adaptation of the Slovak Republic to the EU and EC rules.⁴

With Slovakia's entry to the Union on 1 May, 2004, the term Europeanisation has gained more complex connotations. The EU is not just a political player. Foremost, it represents an arena within which the member states can negotiate on their respective policy preferences.⁵ Therefore while the Slovak Republic still continues to adapt to EU standards today, it already possesses an opportunity to contribute to the formation of the Union's setting.

Discussions about the Constitutional Treaty became the first visible test of Slovakia's place at one negotiating table together with the other EU players. While the Convention on the Future of Europe offered the delegates from candidate countries equal political representation, the Intergovernmental Conference (IGC), which started in October 2003 and ended after enlargement – in June 2004 – provided for the full-fledged participation of both old and new member states.

Slovakia's participation in the IGC illustrated the complexity of the status in the EU's political arena. While the accession process was in many ways marked by the one-way transfer of EU know-how and experience, the formulation of Slovak priorities for the IGC placed new demands on political parties or individual ministries. At the

same time, the country found itself in the position of a possible coalition partner or opponent to other EU member states.

At home the Intergovernmental Conference represented a source of a political conflict on EU affairs, hitherto unknown among the parties in the governing coalition. The Christian Democratic Movement (KDH) opposed the inclusion of the Charter of Fundamental Rights in the constitutional treaty, while the Slovak Democratic and Christian Union (SDKU) and the Alliance of a New Citizen (ANO) spoke in favour of the Charter. At the same time, the Party of the Hungarian Coalition (SMK) wanted to include a clause on the protection of minority rights, although other coalition parties opposed this provision. In addition, various ministries put forward different viewpoints. Most extremely, the Ministry of the Interior headed by a KDH politician rejected altogether the very idea of a constitutional treaty. This diversity of opinions resulted in difficulties when it came to adopting the government's official position for the IGC. It took three different sessions of the executive before the country finally adopted its stance on 2 October 2003, two days before the start of the IGC.⁶

Opposing standpoints and lengthy negotiations are a common phenomenon in coalition cabinets, but in Slovakia's EU affairs they are a relatively new practice. However, one can expect that political and ministerial interests will play an increasing role in future debates on Slovakia's priorities in various EU working groups and Councils. The experience gained during the accession process was a rather mechanical exercise of adopting an already delineated scheme. Yet, integration often results from political struggle and difficult negotiations. Hence, if the institutionalisation of integration policy was previously geared toward effective adaptation to EU conditions, from now on Slovakia needs structures that can best facilitate frequent partisan or inter-ministerial conflicts at home and simultaneously enable constructive and effective communication with partners in the Union.

The Problem of Selective Impact

Since the institutionalisation of integration policy during the accession process had a selective impact on individual branches of state power, sufficient human resources from a broad range of institutions are an equally important precondition for the successful formulation and purposeful pursuit of Slovakia's priorities in the EU.

The government was the key actor during negotiations on the conditions of EU entry. While preparing for EU membership, Slovakia cultivated a successful *technocratic EU-elite*, as our recently deceased colleague Pavol Lukáč called it.⁷ However, it is important to underline that this technocratic elite worked with the accession agenda within the Ministry of Foreign Affairs or other ministries primarily as isolated individuals or groups and not as integral parts of the rest of the executive branch. At the same time, the dominant political players – political parties – largely

limited themselves to expressing support for membership in the EU. It was no earlier than at the start of debates about the future of Europe that the political parties, to a certain extent, began to influence the specific standpoints of Slovakia towards its partners in the Union.

While the government negotiated the terms of accession, parliament (the National Council of the Slovak Republic) adopted the legal norms necessary for Slovakia's membership in the Union. The room for discussion about EU-compatible rules was, however, very limited since Slovakia was taking on pre-existing regulations or directives. There was no real need to build an independent foundation of experts on European integration in parliament at a time when communication between parliament and the government remained confined to particular needs stemming primarily from approximation of the legal environment.

Most poignantly, the accession process placed virtually no immediate demands on the capabilities of the judicial branch. Its preparedness for functioning in the legal environment of the European Communities and European Union will undergo the first real test only during upcoming years.

Since the signing of the accession treaty on 16 April 2003 until EU entry, the Slovak Republic operated within EU institutions as an observer. In the context of this new status the Slovak government agreed on a coordination mechanism that would prepare the country's positions for COREPER (The Committee of Permanent Representatives) meetings and help coordinate the various agendas discussed at the Council level.⁸ The current scheme, by which the Ministry of Foreign Affairs acts as an interministerial coordinator, serves as an illustration of the influential status of the technocratic elite in defining the country's priorities for the EU political arena. Although the level of experience within the foreign ministry naturally predisposes Slovak diplomacy into its leading role, Slovakia's new position of an actor in the EU does bring up additional pressures towards wider institutional participation at least on two levels.

First, in the same way as the political conflict manifested itself during Slovakia's preparations for the IGC, it is bound to reappear in debates on various ministerial agendas, which will regularly be discussed at the EU level. Politicians and political parties will now more often help shape the official standpoints of the country. Hence, considering the thematic spectrum of EU agendas, where only a certain percentage of the topics deals directly with questions of foreign policy and the possible political explosiveness of agreeing on Slovak priorities, it is questionable whether the Ministry of Foreign Affairs is best suited to coordinate integration policy in the future. Should broad coalitions and conflicts among governing parties become the norm, the Prime Minister and his office may just be a better candidate for such a coordinating role.

Second, the position of Slovakia as a co-creator of EC/EU legislation binding for citizens of this country naturally raises the issue of the accountability of the members of the executive during decision making in the Council of Ministers. As a result of the domestic debate on future relations between the executive and parliament in EU matters, in June 2004 the National Council passed a constitutional amendment delineating co-

-operation between the government and parliament in EU decision-making. (See *Zbierka zákonov č. 397/2004*) Accordingly, members of parliament may be able to bind a member of the executive with a particular mandate for negotiations in the Council.

Yet, in the medium term, if the National Council – both coalition and opposition MPs – is to influence the position of Slovakia in the Council of Ministers effectively, apart from having the ability to issue a mandate vis-à-vis the executive, it urgently needs both a stronger independent expert basis in EC/EU law and politics and sufficiently early access to the proposals of the European Commission.

In conclusion therefore, the participation of Slovakia in EU institutions requires a wider and deeper institutionalization of integration policy, which will not only include more intensively the various structures of the state but will also penetrate the very nature of both the executive and legislative power.

Integration and Foreign Policy

Slovakia's entry into the EU has been one of the dominant foreign policy goals of all governments of the Slovak Republic. The country's membership in the EU accomplishes one phase in the formation of the external relations of Slovakia. Few would doubt that the problems of the European Union will soon become a much more intimate part of domestic politics. Slovakia faces an eminent challenge of how to anchor the state in and take advantage of the political setting of the Union.

The foreign policy of Slovakia is not disappearing from the EU, though it faces a new environment and new pressures. Just as the Union often searches for its own foreign policy, Slovakia is experiencing a certain reflection on the contents and form of its foreign policy activities. With reference to this problem, Jozef Bátora succinctly described the inner tensions within the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the SR that take place between the traditional agenda of bilateral relations and complex issues of European integration.¹⁰

Besides the coordinating role of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in preparing Slovakia's positions in various EU matters, Slovak diplomacy represents the key communication tool of the country's interests in the Union. As long as member states remain the constitutive units of the Union and the borders between the states do not cease to exist, the most cardinal problems of the whole EU – like, for instance, the future of the treaties – are part of discussions at the highest bilateral and multilateral diplomatic levels.

Furthermore, the context of the enlarged EU offers the Ministry of Foreign Affairs a new channel for communicating and protecting Slovak interests in relation to non-member states. Common EU strategies or positions are not formed easily, but the

example of the *Northern Dimension*, adopted during the Finnish presidency in 1999, suggests that small countries can also initiate important EU foreign policy strategies.

In recent months, Slovak diplomacy introduced its own framework strategies in relation to Ukraine, Russia, the Western Balkans, the Middle East and North Africa. While one can criticise these documents for their vagueness and often very general contents without a specific set of Slovak goals, there are also some indications of future Slovak foreign policy priorities. For one thing, there is at least talk (albeit with no official decision in sight) of further liberalisation of the present visa regime with Ukraine. Slovakia has started to implement its own program of official development assistance with a clear orientation to the Western Balkans and official assistance directed at Ukraine. The country is also sending positive signals in relation to future EU enlargements (arguably thus far the most successful foreign policy tool of the EU). Officially the country supports the accession of Bulgaria and Romania by 2007. The Prime Minister has backed the start of entry talks with Croatia and Turkey and has not ruled out the membership of Ukraine in the Union.¹¹

The Slovak Republic now has the opportunity to build upon the aforementioned positive signals towards south-eastern or eastern neighbours through specific initiatives in the EU context – ranging from positive lobbying at the level of Council working groups to specific political conclusions in the Council of Ministers. A successful realisation of Slovakia's priorities will require diplomatic skills, shrewd communication with partners in the Union and effective marketing.

But instant or visible success will not come easily for Slovak diplomacy. The achievement of EU membership has ended the period of annually declared foreign policy success of Slovakia that many used to measure regularly by citing the total number chapters closed in EU accession talks. Unlike during the past few years, the agenda of external relations of the Slovak Republic now becomes politics like any other, marked by gradual and often less visible changes.

Notes:

¹ A useful overview of the main definitions and explanatory limitations of Europeanisation offers Johan Olsen, "The Many Faces of Europeanization", *Journal of Common Market Studies*, Vol. 40, No. 5, pp. 921-951.

² The European Union was established on 1 November 1993, when the Maastricht Treaty came into force.

³ Pridham Geoffrey, "EU Enlargement and Consolidating Democracy in Post-Communist States – Formality and Reality", *Journal of Common Market Studies*, Vol. 40, No. 3, pp. 953 – 973.

⁴ A useful overview of the bureaucratic structures in the context of accession negotiations can be found in Figeľ Ján and Adamiš Miroslav, *Slovensko na ceste*

do Európskej únie. Kapitoly a súvislosti. (Bratislava: Office of the Slovak Government – SFPA – CEP 2003).

- ⁵ Menon Anand, “Governing Europe” In: Hayward Jack and Menon Anand (eds.) *Governing Europe* (Oxford: Oxford University Press 2003), p. 424.
- ⁶ For more information about the Slovak position at the IGC see Vladimír Bilčík, “Integrácia SR do Európskej únie“ In: Kollár Miroslav a Mesežnikov Grigorij (eds.) *Slovensko 2003. Súhrnná správa o stave spoločnosti.* (Bratislava: Institute for Public Affairs, 2003), pp. 383 - 385.
- ⁷ Lukáč Pavol, *Dejiny a zahraničná politika v Strednej Európe.* (Bratislava: Kalligram, 2004), p. 323.
- ⁸ See: Uznesenie k návrhu koordinácie rozhodovacieho procesu v záležitostiach EÚ a vzorových štatútoch rezortných koordináčnych skupín a Komisie pre záležitosti EÚ. (Bratislava: Government of the Slovak Republic 2003).
- ¹⁰ Bátora Jozef, “Europeanization of Diplomacy and the Slovak Foreign Ministry”, *Slovak Foreign Policy Affairs*, Vol.4. No. 2, pp. 116 – 129.
- ¹¹ Address of Prime Minister Mikuláš Dzurinda at the conference “Towards a Wider Europe: The New Agenda”, Bratislava, 18. – 19 March 2004.

Martin Fedor

Global Security Environment Change: Implications for the Position of the Slovak Republic in Security Architecture of Europe

At the beginning of my contribution, I would like to state that we perceive the Slovak Republic's security as a basic national interest. We are also aware of the fact that the understanding of security has changed significantly during recent years. A rather simple concept of security was applied during the time of the Cold War. This mainly consisted of counting the numbers of tanks, rockets and troops on both sides. However, security today is much more complicated. It includes, for instance, aspects of internal stability, economic development, demographic trends and other types of intrastate or external threats.

The tragic events of September 2001 and recent events from Madrid and other places in the world demonstrated that these new security threats are considerably different in their character, more distinct, and geographically more diverse than in the past. Without doubt, terrorism has become today the most dangerous form of modern asymmetric security threat to confront democratic societies. Unpredictability, problematical identification of demands, as well as differences in the cultural and civilisation beliefs of those who carry out terrorist actions, complicate the effectiveness of the fight of western civilisation against this phenomenon. At the same time, direct experience with terrorism and the high risk of other asymmetric threats has caused a near revolution in our understanding of security. Strategic doctrines of individual countries and defence alliances have changed together with the character and structures

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of different armed forces, all in an attempt to gain a better reaction, possibly even prior to the action, to prevent security threats.

In March 2004, Slovakia gains direct security guarantees from the most successful defence alliance in history and, without doubt, joins the cultural and civilisation environment where it naturally belongs.

Nevertheless, would NATO and the European Union strengthen our security in the world without a clearly defined opponent? There is no state or specific army that wants to attack our territory.

Let me in this connection say the following: We understand the Slovak Republic's entry into the European Union as strengthening the Slovak Republic's security, mainly meaning the elimination of threats implied from potential domestic political instability or negative economic trends. We will become part of a unique political system functioning on mutual relationships between national and supranational institutions. The balance between the different levels of decision making secures the stability of economic and political life in the Union. The Slovak Republic will also be part of a long-term zone of prosperity and stability, a fact which represents one of the basic suppositions for strengthening our security. In this context, the Union's enlargement itself can also be perceived as an effort to enlarge the zone of stability, which also increases the level of security for current member countries. Slovakia thus gains a larger extent of guaranteed security in its overall understanding through entry to the European Union and NATO. On the other hand, the security of the Slovak Republic will be much more influenced by developments in the security situation in a global dimension.

There is a generally accepted premise that Europe and thus also Slovakia are not threatened by a direct conventional danger in the medium-term horizon. This supposition is included in the strategic documents of the majority of member states of both organisations. In December last year, the European Council adopted the *European Security Strategy*, in which the principle threats to Europe are defined as: *terrorism, arms proliferation, unstable regions, organised crime, and states under the threat of political or economic collapse due to irresponsible governing*. At the same time, these new phenomena dictate the necessity to redefine the defence and security strategies and doctrines of individual member countries in both the European Union and NATO, including those of Slovakia.

Even though today's NATO is the most successful organisation of collective defence, which is the main security and guarantor in the Euro-Atlantic area, it also faces the issue of adapting to new forms of crisis situations and threats. NATO's transformation is a reply to the basic requirements of the period. The security of states is not given as the ability to defend their own territory, i.e. the territory of the Alliance. There is nobody to be resisted. So, if the Alliance is to have a meaning in the future, an ability to react to these new types of threats must be added to its defence tasks.

A conventional conflict threatening the territory of Alliance member countries is not expected in the short or medium term. Philosophically, this means leaving behind

the security concept as the concept of defending one's own territory and moving towards a more widely understood security concept considering its modern aspects. *This is why a shift from collective defence to collective security is needed!*

It is also the greatest challenge for representatives of the civilian sector, as well as representatives of armed forces of individual countries. We must stop thinking in classic categories – possibilities of averting an attack by utilising an adequate number of tanks, troops or using the doctrine of deterrent. This is not simple because a change in the long-lasting philosophy also has direct implications on the necessity for a change to the structure of army and other security forces in such a way that they are better prepared to react to these new types of security crises.

This is why we follow NATO's transformation and the European Union's effort for higher engagement in security issues. It is not possible to install increasing effectiveness and improve desirable abilities without closer co-operation and supranational co-ordination. The abilities of individual member countries are very similar and still focused mainly on the doctrine of defending their own territory. Spending on defence in these countries goes on very similar capabilities, and this results in a nearly identical structure to the armies in member countries. This is why methods of increasing the effectiveness of financial spending are being sought.

The North Atlantic Alliance and European Union are decisive institutions for security guarantees in the Trans-Atlantic arena. Both institutions were the first to react to the needs resulting from changes in the security environment. Both organisations are undergoing reforms to the security sector brought on by the joint entry of the new countries. The Slovak Republic is part of these movements, and the transformation of our security system reflects world wide trends.

Under the process of adapting to new threats, NATO focuses mainly on the following parts: *the Alliance's enlargement, change in the command and power structure, creation of NATO Response Forces, and starts to the discussion about the usability of NATO within civilian crisis management.*

In November 2002, the Prague NATO Summit adopted decisions about enlargement, reform of command structures, and transformation of the armed forces of the Alliance. Besides the invitation to seven countries, NATO agreed to the bulk of measures for improvements to military eligibility to come to terms with new challenges. It is the formation of capabilities to fulfil a wide range of modern missions for which traditional military forces are insufficient.

Creation of rapid reaction forces is one of the examples of the structural change and new quality of NATO units. These are ready to be used at anytime, anywhere and maintainable also in geographically distant regions during a needed period of time. This concept is derived from a plan by the Alliance to adapt to the requirements of commanding the war in the era of informatics and the need to cope with the asymmetric path of a war.

In addition, the European Union continues its path to a wider security concept. European security and defence policy is being developed based on the Common Foreign

and Security Policy. In the future, it will play an important role together with enlargement, despite some of the problems that occurred during 2003.

Alongside integration efforts, the European Union increases its struggle to react to new security problems of a different quality. Its abilities were developed and autonomously intervened in the relatively wide scale of the Petersburg missions. Military capacities were positioned in missions in Macedonia, though with NATO assistance. Concerning the building of European forces, it is a fact that realisation of the original plan of the Union to reach a full contingent of 60,000 men ready to be deployed at the request of the United Nations has slowed down. The plan was reduced, and in September 2003 the British-French Summit came up with an initiative to create a 1,500-strong rapid reaction force. The plan was also supported by Germany, and in April 2004 it will be the subject of negotiation for ministers of defence of Union member countries. The plan assumes the rapid reaction forces will be available from 2007. According to statements by politicians from these countries, the initiative has no ambition to compete with NATO rapid reaction forces but rather to demonstrate that the European Union can also react to the change of priorities in threats.

I would like to return to vital security threats in a few sentences. The most important threat to today's world is, without doubt, international terrorism. There is a general consensus that terrorism is not a local phenomenon any more, because its actions are more and more coordinated with the effort of reaching the greatest number of people and the possibility of a global effect.

Another threat is represented by the continuing proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. Besides those states that continue with their effort to obtain these weapons, the possibility of acquisition by non-state players has also increased. This is especially the case if access to technologies and some necessary products becomes easier. It is also known that international terrorists are trying to gain access to chemical and biological weapons in an attempt to increase their devastating capacities.

From the point of view of using an asymmetric strategy, there is an increased danger of information terrorism and the possibilities of their influence on telecommunication systems or other systems or institutions related to the security of the Slovak Republic.

Weak and badly governed states are an increasing problem. One must expect insufficient political administration, ethnic and religious bias, or economic collapses in these states, and there the situation is very close to illegal and uncontrollable migration. (Up to now, Slovakia was only expected to be a transit country; current developments show that this expectation must probably be reevaluated.)

The period of the accession process to NATO and the European Union is rapidly coming to an end, and a new stage is starting. A period characterised mainly by fulfilling legislation-technical requirements is ending, and a phase of full membership decisive for the formulation and definition of the new position of Slovakia in international security structures starts. Through her Union and NATO membership, the Slovak

Republic gains a direct approach to global security. It will be valid more than ever before that Slovakia cannot remain as merely a passive consumer of security.

The position of Slovakia in international relationships will be determined in direct dependency on our ability to be an active part of the international security community. Simply said – our will, ability and involvement in future operations are and will be factors enhancing the high credibility of Slovakia and her importance and significance in the international community.

Measure of ambitions must be set realistically. Because of the complexity of operations expected in the future, we must weigh up limits with regard to participation in missions and operations very carefully. Our ambitions to be a visible member must always be confronted with the resource capabilities we have at our disposal. Our participation in missions is very high and clashes with the capacities and financial possibilities of our armed forces.

The year 2004 will not just be a year of fulfilment for the most important foreign policy goals of Slovakia. It will also be a year of assessing the compatibility of strategic documents in the field of defence and security as well as the ability of Slovakia and the Armed Forces of the Slovak Republic to participate in the multinational effort for strengthening security in the world, a world changed by terrorist attacks and other asymmetric security threats.

The way in which Slovakia and her armed forces manage to adapt themselves to the changed security context as well as the speed with which we can implement adopted decisions to organisational controlling and commanding structures will be one of the decisive ways of evaluating our country as a relevant and reliable partner.

In the time of the accession process, we continued to fulfil our partnership goals and fulfil the reform process under *Model 2010*. The fact we are already part of the process of forces planning became a new aspect of the integration process. We started in 2003, and in 2004 the process will be completed with the goals of forces approval. This will all be reflected in actualisation of the long term plan until 2015 – including more differentiated consideration of individual goals.

The planning cycle we are starting this year includes a re-examination of strategic documents as well as of the long-term plan and of the reach of our commitments resulting from the goals of forces on the current structure of the Armed Forces of the Slovak Republic.

I believe that, after finalisation and evaluation, we will be able to say we understood the modern challenges and that our country has become a relevant and reliable partner in confrontation with the asymmetric threats so typical for the start of the new millennium.

I am sure that the quality of such a reflection will also depend on the involvement of representatives of the wider security community, spoken for also by non-governmental organisations. The result shall be then seen in a wider consensus not only in reviewing threats our country will face in future but also in setting desirable solutions. I believe this approach will win success, stability and the continuity of decisions in times characterised by a high level of instability.

Róbert Ondrejcsák

The Influence of the Iraqi Crisis on the Foreign and Security Policy of the Slovak Republic and on Relations with the United States of America

The Iraqi crisis was the most important factor essentially determining the shape of the global security environment, international relations, relations between key players in the global security environment as well as their relations with further state and non-state players in 2003. At the same time, this crisis significantly contributed to the discourse on foreign and security policy in individual states.

The Iraqi crisis can also be considered as an impulse initiating certain changes in the development of the European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP) on one hand, and Trans-Atlantic relations on the other. Moreover, it can be stated that some key breakthroughs of these processes were initiated *de facto* by issues related to the Iraqi crisis. For example, the Meeting of the Heads of State and Government of Germany, France, Luxembourg and Belgium on 29 April 2003 in Brussels¹ can be judged as a response to the so-called ESDP crisis or transatlantic relations crisis.

If the influence of the Iraqi crisis is evaluated in relation to the Slovak Republic, it can be said that this crisis significantly contributed to the shaping of Slovakia's foreign and security policy. The same refers to the other states in the region – either regarding V4 or V10 countries. It is of great importance to mention that, since either the end of the Cold War or since gaining their independence, these states were for the very first

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time in a position where their definite attitude concerning the concept and different views on the future and character of transatlantic relations, European Security and Defence Policy and relation between NATO and EU was demanded.

As for the Slovak Republic, the Iraqi crisis also influenced the whole complex of issues regarding the issues of further direction and priorities of Slovakia's foreign and security policy after EU and NATO accession. It is obvious that from certain point of view Slovakia will become a *global player* after EU and NATO accession. Certainly, this does not concern the potential of the Slovak Republic from a standard point of view such as the number of citizens, efficiency of the economy or potential and capabilities of the armed forces. These organisations have global impact and this factor is still strong – e.g. in the case of NATO this can be seen by moving operations from regional areas to the global environment, or in the case of the EU it can be seen in rising ambitions to play the key role as a global player not just in the economic sphere (see European Security Strategy²). Thus, as a new member state the Slovak Republic will gain particular instruments to shape the position of both organisations. In this context two factors should be considered.

1. The Slovak Republic will have to express her standpoints towards issues and phenomena in the regions that were not previously within the scope of Slovakia's interest as far as foreign and security policy priorities are concerned. For example, the region of sub-Saharan Africa has never been in Slovakia's interest in the field of security, international policy or economy. This situation will change after EU accession as this region poses one of the main priorities in the field of security issues for the EU. This fact is proven by the first EU military operation being held outside Europe in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Notwithstanding the fact that the Slovak Armed Forces will not be part of this operation, the Slovak Republic will have to express its standpoints on it.

2. The second, and in terms of the topic more important factor, is posed by the fact that after NATO and EU accession, the Slovak Republic will be given the opportunity to participate on creating and shaping European Security and Defence Policy and Trans-Atlantic relations.

In this matter, two issues determining the future shape and character of our policies will be of crucial significance.

1. What will the standpoint of the Slovak Republic be in discussion on the future shape and character of the Trans-Atlantic relations and ESDP? Will the Slovak Republic prefer the so-called *pro-Atlantic* or *Euro-Atlantic* approach respectively; or the so-called *pro-European* or *Euro-Autonomous* approach towards these issues? (It is worth mentioning that the terminology has not been unified regarding different concepts and the future character of Trans-Atlantic relations).

The *Euro-Atlantic* approach can be simply described as an explicit preference for the crucial role of NATO in providing security in the NorthAtlantic area. Moreover, the development of ESDP cannot replace the position and role of NATO. This concept favours a strong relationship between European allies and the USA and presents the

Trans-Atlantic region as a whole. The *Euro-Autonomous* approach favours the building of an autonomous European defence or autonomous European capacities and capabilities respectively to reach a higher degree of strategic independence. (As these definitions are simplified, they are only of an informative character for the reader.)

2. What will the Slovak Republic's approach be towards international issues and solving security issues? Active or passive?

The answer to the second question is clear. The approach of the Slovak Republic towards the Iraqi crisis significantly contributed to this fact. At present, more than 700 members of the Armed Forces of the Slovak Republic are deployed abroad. In the second half of 2003, this number reached 859.³ With respect to this fact, the limited activities of the Slovak Republic are no longer a problem. Contrary to this fact, the ambitions of the Slovak Republic are in contradiction with the actual material, personal and economic resources of the country. Besides NATO and UN operations, more than two-thirds of the members of the Armed Forces of the Slovak Republic deployed abroad are involved in UN missions. However, due to priorities this proportion will be modified in favour of NATO operations. The Slovak Republic participated in two crisis management operations – Afghanistan and Iraq. Not only did we contribute to regional stabilisation but we also showed the will and capability to participate in coalitions led by the USA. This fact significantly contributed to the confirmation of good relations with the United States. The support activities of the Slovak Republic can be characterised at several levels.

1. *Political level.* The support for the letter of eight NATO member states – United Kingdom, Italy, Spain, Poland, Denmark, Portugal, the Czech Republic and Hungary – dated January 2003. Following this letter, a Common Statement by V10 countries⁴ was made on 5 February 2003. The statement supported the American approach towards the Iraqi crisis. Thus, the V10 countries, including the Slovak Republic, joined the coalition of the United States, United Kingdom, Spain, Australia and Poland.⁵ It is necessary to mention that the first V10 countries statement on this issue was adopted at the NATO Prague summit in November 2002. In this statement, the V10 states expressed their readiness to become part of the international coalition to disarm Iraq in the event of non-compliance with the terms of UN Security Council Resolution 1441.⁶ By signing this statement, the Slovak Republic joined the vision of US Defence Secretary Donald Rumsfeld, i.e. the vision of the future shape of Trans-Atlantic relations. He stated that security threats threatening Western civilisation would create alliances. Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Slovak Republic Eduard Kukan stated that the Slovak Republic was willing to participate in so-called *ad hoc* coalitions, and that such coalitions could be created within NATO.⁷ These activities as well as other statements are of great significance as the *new allies* joined intensive discourse on the future shape and character of Trans-Atlantic relations for the very first time. Considering the future of Slovakia's foreign and security policy as well as the approach towards the future of NATO, the repeated call in both statements for the maintenance of NATO unity is very important. The

V10 states reaffirmed their strong support for a strong Trans-Atlantic alliance through elimination of tension in Trans-Atlantic relations. Specific support from the highest representatives of the Slovak Republic can also be included in this category. On 20 March 2003 (the day US president George Bush ordered the beginning of the operation *Iraqi Freedom*), three supreme constitutional officials issued a common statement in which they expressed their sorrow at the failure to reach a peaceful solution to the Iraqi crisis and stressed the threat the regime of Saddam Hussein posed for world security.⁸ At the same time, the president of the Slovak Republic Rudolf Schuster issued a statement in which it was stated that “the Slovak Republic cannot do anything other than provide necessary support and real assistance for solving the Iraqi crisis by force”.⁹ In this matter the address of the Prime Minister of the Slovak Republic Mikuláš Dzurinda delivered on Slovak Television the same day explaining the reasons leading to Slovakia’s engagement in the international coalition led by the United States is noteworthy.¹⁰

2. Permission for the transfer of allied military units through the territory of the Slovak Republic as well as approval for overflights and landing of U.S. and coalition aircraft from 29 January 2003. Here the government reflected the request of the USA, presented by the US ambassador to the Slovak Republic Ronald Weiser on 26 January 2003 asking Slovakia to consider its participation in the international coalition in the case of the military operation in Iraq.¹¹

3. *Military support.* The deployment of a nuclear, chemical and biological protection unit consisting of 75 men based on approval from the National Council of the Slovak Republic on 6 February 2003 can also be considered as this kind of support.¹² The unit’s activities were focused on emergency and humanitarian operations in case of the use or suspicion of use of weapons of mass destruction as well as on military actions enforcing UN Security Council resolutions in Iraq. The unit was formed based on order No. 15/2003 by Ivan Šimko, minister of defence of the Slovak Republic, on the establishment of the unit and integration into the First Czech and Slovak Nuclear, Chemical and Biological Protection Battalion, and on 6 March 2003 it achieved operational readiness.¹³ The unit was originally deployed from June 2003 to 31 December 2003. In September, the Army Corps of Engineers was sent to Iraq and was reinforced at the beginning of 2004. At present, 105 members of the Armed Forces of the Slovak Republic are deployed. The participation of Slovakia’s Armed Forces in the military operation Enduring Freedom in Afghanistan can be placed in the same category.¹⁴ Currently, the deployment of members of the Armed Forces of the Slovak Republic (a 17-man mine clearing unit) in Afghanistan under the *ISAF* operation is being prepared. Based on the above mentioned, it can be stated that the Slovak Republic considers its relations with the United States a strategic one, i.e. the USA is a key partner in the field of foreign and security policy.¹⁵ Such a character to Slovakia’s foreign and security policy was also expressed in other statements by leading officials. Prime Minister Mikuláš Dzurinda in the above-mentioned TV address stated that, “the government supported, supports and will

support the United States".¹⁶ Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Slovak Republic Eduard Kukan said that "the Slovak Republic's relations with the USA are very good, and Slovakia has no intention of changing this. The USA will always be seen as a partner for Europe, not an enemy". (Sme daily, 12 March 2003)¹⁷ This survey partially answers the second important question: whether the Slovak Republic favours the *Euro-Autonomous* or *Euro-Atlantic* approach of foreign and security policy. The Slovak Republic explicitly favours the *Euro-Atlantic* approach, obviously supporting further ESDP development. There must be no conflict in the goals of both organisations. The building of ESDP should be complementary to the development process of Trans-Atlantic relations.¹⁸ The *Euro-Atlantic* approach of the Slovak Republic was also confirmed by the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Slovak Republic Eduard Kukan when he answered the question of whether Central European policy is closer to that of the USA or that of Germany and France. He said: "We are very sorry for Europe's division. In this situation, candidate countries must make their own decision when considering what is right. The Government of the Slovak Republic adopted the decision to support the USA because we think that it is right according to our historical experience."¹⁹

These factors should be included in amended text of the Security Strategy of the Slovak Republic. First of all, the amendment reflects two factors:

1. The modified character of global security environment and the modified emphasis placed on specific security threats;
2. The new position of the Slovak Republic after EU and NATO accession.

2003 can be considered as significantly important as far as the foreign and security policy of the Slovak Republic is concerned. It was particularly important due to the clear expression of the Slovak Republic's attitudes towards key issues of international relations and determining factors in the global and regional security environment.

The most important factors concerning these can be summarised as follows:

1. The Slovak Republic expressed the *courage* to actively participate in shaping the security environment, the *capability* as well as the *will* to take its part of responsibility in ensuring the stability and peace in regions of tension. The missions in the Balkans, Middle East as well as Afghanistan can be considered clear evidence of this. Besides the fact that participation in these missions strengthened the credibility of Slovak diplomacy, this has definitely answered the question of whether to pursue an active or passive approach to foreign and security policy.
2. The Slovak Republic sided with the so-called *Euro-Atlantic* approach in discussions on the future character of Trans-Atlantic relations and ESDP, with support for further development of the ESDP while considering NATO a central element of our own and European security. Therefore, Slovakia sees the strengthening of Trans-Atlantic relations as the aim of our policy.
3. 2003 brought about further strengthening of relations between the Slovak Republic and the United States. These relations are of a strategic character to the Slovak Republic as far as the Slovakia's as well as Europe's security is concerned.

Notes:

- ¹ See: Meeting of Heads of State and Government of Germany, France, Luxembourg and Belgium on European Defence, 29 April 2003 in Brussels. In: *Internationale Politik/Transatlantic Edition*. (Berlin: DGAP 15. December 2003).
More: Press Conference with French President Jacques Chirac, after the Meeting of the Heads of State and Government of Germany, France, Luxembourg and Belgium on European Defence, 29 April 2003 in Brussels. Source: French Foreign Ministry, Paris www.diplomatic.gouv.fr.
- ² "As a Union of 25 states with over 450 million people producing one-quarter of the world's GNP ... the European Union is inevitably a global player", A Secure Europe in a Better World: European Security Strategy. (Brussels: 12 December 2003) www.europa.eu.int.
- ³ Official web site of the Ministry of Defence of the Slovak Republic: www.mod.gov.sk.
- ⁴ The V10 consists of seven new NATO member states including the Slovak Republic and Croatia, Albania and Macedonia. It is an informal association of states named after the conference of nine states (without Croatia, who associated in May 2001 in Bratislava) held in Vilnius, capital city of Lithuania on 18 – 19 May 2000.
- ⁵ The statement by V10 states' Ministries of Foreign Affairs to Iraq on 5 February 2003. Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Slovak Republic, www.foreign.gov.sk.
- ⁶ Statement by the heads of state and government of Albania, Bulgaria, Croatia, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Macedonia, Romania, Slovakia and Slovenia on the occasion of the NATO Summit in Prague, 21 November 2002, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Slovak Republic, www.foreign.gov.sk.
- ⁷ *Sme Daily*, November 25, 2002, www.sme.sk.
- ⁸ Common Statement by President of the Slovak Republic Rudolf Schuster, Chairman of the National Council of the Slovak Republic Pavol Hrušovský and Prime Minister of the Slovak Republic Mikuláš Dzurinda, 20 March 2003, Ministry of Defence of the Slovak Republic, www.mod.gov.sk/irak/vyhlasenie01.asp.
- ⁹ Statement by the President of the Slovak Republic Rudolf Schuster on the Iraq issue, 20 March 2003. Ministry of Defence of the Slovak Republic, www.mod.gov.sk/irak/vyhlasenie01.asp.
- ¹⁰ Address delivered by Prime Minister of the Slovak Republic Mikuláš Dzurinda on Slovak Television on 20 March 2003. Government Office of the Slovak Republic. www.government.gov.sk.
- ¹¹ Korba Matúš: "Slovakia and the Iraq Crisis", In: Marek Šťastný (ed.): *Iraq Crisis and Politics in USA, Europe and V4 Countries*. (Bratislava: Institute for Public Affairs, Edition Studies and Opinions 2003).
- ¹² Resolution of the National Council of the Slovak Republic No. 166 on the proposal for the deployment of a nuclear, chemical and biological protection unit of the

Armed Forces of the Slovak Republic within common operations concerning the Republic of Iraq. www.nrsr.sk

- ¹³ Official web site of the Ministry of Defence of the Slovak Republic: www.mod.gov.sk
- ¹⁴ For details see the official web site of the Ministry of Defence of the Slovak Republic: www.mod.gov.sk
- ¹⁵ The Government Declaration of 2002 states: “The government is interested in further successful development of the partnership with the USA and in keeping this relationship at the highest possible level”. www.government.gov.sk
- ¹⁶ Address delivered by Prime Minister of the Slovak Republic Mikuláš Dzurinda on Slovak Television on 20 March 2003. Government Office of the Slovak Republic. www.government.gov.sk
- ¹⁷ See, for example, the statement by the Prime Minister of the Slovak Republic published in *Sme Daily* on 25 November 2002: “Who is the leader of the democratic world? Who has got the highest level of economy and material responsibility for solving the crisis? We should not hesitate in answering these questions. We should clearly say – the USA, the leader of the democratic world. Therefore we are willing to be a strong ally of the USA.” Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Slovak Republic Eduard Kukan made his statement in a similar manner: “The USA is a key ally of the Slovak Republic and the most important among Slovakia’s interest.” (SITA November 26, 2002).
- ¹⁸ The Government Declaration from 2002 states: “The strengthening of the Trans-Atlantic relation belongs to the priorities of the Slovak Republic as it is the cornerstone of security in Europe.” Furthermore, “The Government considers NATO the only efficient collective organisation able to guarantee the security of the Slovak Republic”. www.government.gov.sk
- ¹⁹ *Sme Daily* online discussion with Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Slovak Republic Eduard Kukan, July 4, 2003. www.sme.sk

Oľga Gyárfášová

Public Opinion and Foreign Policy

Slovakia has successfully closed an important period in its modern history – it is entering the European Union and NATO. We all know that concluding this epoch does not bring about the *end of history*. On the contrary, I consider the present and upcoming times to be equally important, but they are also more complex and more demanding on the scale and depth of foreign policy resources. Goals, issues and challenges will grow in number, not diminish. This can be seen from at least two perspectives. Firstly, integration itself is important since we have become part of a greater whole – its players, partners and opponents. The second factor is the global, very dynamic international situation, characterised by new threats. Integration into the Union and NATO is not a ticket to a comfortable life with guarantees of prosperity and security. On the contrary, it is a ticket to active membership and greater responsibility.

The Slovak Republic started creating its foreign policy with limited resources – personal, institutional and financial. The key players in foreign policy creation are elites and institutions. A more and more important role is however played by civic society – the public in the broadest sense. Even here we need to catch up on empirical resources, the lack of sufficient information, and especially the contextual perception of foreign policy as well as wider public discussion about international relations. Our position of anticipating membership and period of catching up for lost time will continually change into a full membership identity in the EU and NATO.

In my article, I would like not to focus on numbers from public opinion polls but rather on some deeper features of Slovak nature, which can be observed from more polls on various topics. This *cultural capital*, whether in good or bad terms, represents one of the internal sources of Slovak foreign policy.

Oľga Gyárfášová, Institute for Public Affairs

Public Opinion – to Follow or to Ignore?

How does the public and especially public opinion influence foreign policy? Is it actually relevant to seek public opinion on complex foreign policy issues? Not so long ago, politics, and especially foreign policy, was closed in lobbies, cabinets, far from the reach or concerns of ordinary citizens and also from their opinions on events at home or in the world. Today, differences between domestic and international politics are disappearing, and foreign policy issues more and more often become themes for electoral competition.

The influence of public opinion on politics (politicians) was considered to be very limited and weak in the past, especially when it came to foreign policy. Today it is often regarded as a powerful force, the ignoring of which might be of great risk for politicians. This fascination with the strength of public opinion led to various simplified linear interpretations and the establishment of a very black and white understanding of this relationship.

On one hand, politicians are depicted as slaves of public opinion, while on the other they are perceived as cynical manipulators who use the research only to serve their PR and campaigns in order to make people see things the way the politicians do (Kennedy – La Balme, 2003). In reality, the relationship has more nuances and is far more complex. The causality is not a one-way street – politicians react to public opinion but they also create it. We can speak about two theoretical models – pure responsiveness and responsibility accompanied by leadership.

The classic of the theory of democracy, Giovanni Sartori, has a very unflattering attitude to direct democracy and the influence of the public on politicians. He speaks about so-called *cognitive incompetence*, that is being put aside by electoral, representative democracy, because it does not require voters to be too informed and competent (Sartori, 1993).

A meaningful way out from the “follow” or “ignore” dilemma is the thesis: polling can help determine “the language” of politics but not its content (Kennedy – Le Balme, 2003). This also means that politicians can take over leadership and try to change the attitudes of the public, to get citizens to support their decisions, visions or projects.

Value and Cultural Resources or What We Carry to the EU and NATO

I will focus only on those aspects that can become problematic during “digestion” of our membership in the Union and the Alliance, during the formation of the “new responsibility” of a country that is starting up development aid and is assisting other

countries in the democratisation process. These aspects are also important from the point of establishing a self-conscious attitude to Slovakia's place in the enlarged Europe and transatlantic community.

I chose the following six phenomena:

1. *Weak self-reflection of our own history* – the historical memory of the Slovaks has several “holes” and is characterised by a certain indulgence towards totalitarian regimes, especially the communist era. No sooner than two to three years ago did we witness the Slovak political elite endorse all our history, including contradictory moments (as an example, the speech of National Council Chair, Pavol Hrušovský, on the 10th anniversary of Slovakia's independence.)

2. *“Non-interventionism”* – expressed also by popular saying “Do not scratch what does not itch”, which means that one should not interfere with issues that do not directly concern him. In Slovak society, the opinion that events in each country should be considered its own internal affairs is quite widely accepted. Very strongly felt is also the uncivil, unsympathetic attitude that *people should solve their own problems by themselves* – and also the opinion that countries should not undertake steps against other countries or in other countries. Slovakia is still too much self-centred; it does not have the will to take an active role in the events of neighbouring or more distant countries. This phenomenon of “non-intervention” does not only reflect a stereotype – *what can such a small country as ours do anyway* – but it also shows we are too wrapped up in our own problems.

3. *Receiver mentality is more pervading than donor mentality*, which means that Slovaks are less willing and able to help others despite the quite widespread (almost major) perception of the need to give and not only consume security. In spite of that, the most frequent answer to the question of *how Slovakia can contribute to NATO activities* in 2002 was the helpless “I do not know” and the second most frequent answer was “with specially trained military units and technology”. At the same time, Slovakia can be proud of its contribution to international security – in the second half of 2003 it had approximately 850 soldiers in different missions abroad. Research by Národné osvetové centrum (National Cultural Centre) from December 2003 repeatedly confirmed the relatively high public support for Slovak participation in foreign missions. Less unambiguous is the *yes* for sending military units to defend another member state, participation in action in a non-member state, or opening up air space during the time of military action. Although the *no* answer does not prevail, circumstances matter.

4. The key argument for our entry into NATO was security. But how do citizens perceive security? Do they consider Slovakia to be a safe country? Public opinion research shows that the Slovak public is mostly preoccupied with living standards and corruption. This corresponds to long-term elevation in sensitivity on social problems. With respect to security, the Slovak public emphasises mostly *internal sources of threat*. External threats or dangers that could come from outside the *borders* are

perceived as less urgent, even though sensitivity has increased in the last two years. But one can still note disconnectedness in the public perception of internal and external threats. This research is from 2002, which means it was carried out after 9/11. It is however possible that today (also under the impression from 11 March 2004 in Madrid) we shifted towards greater sensitivity with respect to external threats).

5. A “shallow” transatlantic identity – aversion on the part of population towards the United States. Even though open anti-Americanism is not widespread, under certain circumstances it can be an easily mobilised emotion. Behind unclear or openly rejecting attitudes, one can often find insufficient information that is not only substituted by myths and stereotypes but also lacks contextual perception. From a number of polls carried out to uncover the attitude of the Slovak public to NATO entry, it is clear that the relationship is significantly more dramatic, polarising and changing than the one on EU membership. In the last five years, support for NATO membership has had a few peaks and falls. It went from more than 60% to less than 30%. In addition, this simple comparison clearly shows that identification with the transatlantic community is still shallow and depends with many on what is happening in the world at a given moment.

6. Similarly to other accession countries, a large segment of Slovak society felt that they would be *second class citizens* in the Union (according to the survey by the Institute for Public Affairs in the summer of 2003, approximately two-thirds of Slovaks hold this opinion). This feeling is on one hand strengthened from outside (“well meant” advice by some West European politicians). There is not much we can do about that. It is also, however, created by domestic politicians and the media, i.e. by rhetoric that tries to “protect” us before the Union or warn us. At the same time, political elites and opinion leaders should act against inferiority feelings and emphasise that *we are now also Europe, we are Brussels*, and we are not only an object but also a subject of what is happening in the Union and what is being decided in Brussels. Pavol Lukáč wrote very eloquently that “the risk of second class citizenship does not come from the Union but from our complex political and conceptual unpreparedness on all aspects of our membership”. (Lukáč, 2004, s.323)

Conclusion

What will the European face of Slovakia be? How will Slovakia *define* itself? This question resonates more often and more urgently not only on various domestic scenes but also from outside. Until now, Slovakia was primarily focused on entry to the Union, fulfilment of all criteria, and closing all the chapters of a common legislature. No energy remained to deal with questions such as post-accession strategies, priorities

or partnerships. Also because of this, Slovakia is still not legible enough. It is clear that sharper attitudes can grow after a wider qualified discussion about European topics on domestic soil. Nobody will do this discussion and searching for us. Heather Grabbe, a British expert on European politics, comments very accurately that “the role of Slovakia will depend on the decisions *her* people make about how they want to benefit from membership”. (IHT, 14. 1. 2004) It can be expected that this discussion will be much more differentiated than the general consensus during pre-accession.

Public attitudes to foreign policy issues are created on the background of deeper value and cultural orientations. Since topics are often too distant from everyday life, peoples' opinions are more than anything else a reflection of the opinions of politicians, the presence of themes in the media, and public discourse. Elites are of extraordinary importance in the process of forming attitudes. Reflections on the European and Trans-Atlantic future of Slovakia, her responsibility beyond her own borders are already present in various forums, and discussions on these topics are accelerating at a great speed. I consider this to be a notably positive shift in the thinking of political elites. We should not, however, forget that this turn should not remain only in political or expert lobbies and cabinets but it is important to gradually *infect* the public with it.

Notes:

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Jozef Banáš

Slovakia and its Elites in the Global Environment

The topic of my presentation might appear to go beyond the main scope of a conference about Slovak foreign policy. We analyse and reflect on the status of Slovakia as a sovereign, co-creator of a globalising Europe and world. Our historical development, whether in the former Austria-Hungary or later Czecho-Slovakia, rooted in us an attitude that goes from modesty through to defeatism or fatalism. When determining the fate of the communities to which we belonged, we always played a submissive role at best. Eleven years ago, we attained real state independence for the first time in our history. We confirmed this in our constitution, in our clear determination to join international co-operation; however, it seems to me that have not yet confirmed this in our minds and self-confidence. Changes to the economic and political system can be brought about simply by amending laws, but changes in attitudes and thinking require a longer process. Ralf Dahrendorf states: “Six months is enough to reform political systems, six years suffice to change economic systems, but sixty years will be necessary for the revolution in the minds and hearts of humans.” Although I am not ready to fully accept Dahrendorf’s thesis, it is without doubt that it will take some time before the thinking of both the elite and the citizens are transformed. It is therefore justifiable to ask what Slovak politics should do in order to minimise Dahrendorf’s prediction to the largest extent possible. I hope all of us are aware that Slovakia will only be respected in the globalised world to the degree that her representatives are respected. Personalities accrue from a self-confident nation that is composed of self-confident individuals. Let us leave aside the basic premise of our own personal growth based on freedom of the individual. Let us rather look at the criteria that must be fulfilled by Slovakia’s political elite in order that they can reassert themselves in international forums in a

Jozef Banáš, Deputy of National Council of the Slovak Republic

way that would represent Slovakia with dignity. Besides other postulates, the enlarging Europe and North Atlantic Alliance primarily have in common one thing – the same democratic values. Even if Europe has more and more features of federalism, it will never become a nation state. The more, therefore, we need to take advantage of people, whose self-confidence is based on education, life experience, language skills, contacts, communication skills, charm and strength of personality, patriotism, moral principle, etc. Štefánik's idea: "He who acts and is conscious of his destination, controls his fate almost entirely," was maybe never more valid than it is now. There are many conditions we need to discard so that the elite are given space. Of these, I would include envy, jealousy and trying to be equal to the best, not by working hard to attain their level but by trying to put them down. Political conditions are also very important, and I would like to make some remarks on them here. In my opinion, this is mostly the egoism of political parties but some part is also played by the media and public. There is an inability to support and respect personalities where they hold opposite political convictions. I am speaking about the ability to support them, I disallow efforts to eliminate or remove this elite. It is almost typical for Slovakia that it excels in the removal of its intellectual elites after every change to the social system. It is even sadder when we take into account that Dahrendorf's thesis about the inevitability of a generational time for a change in thinking is valid. I think it would not be contradictory to say that outside our borders nobody judges representatives of states according to their political affiliation but rather according to their skills and competence. Here I ask directly: "Do we have enough professionals who would be able to, until such a time when the new generation who do not carry the burden of the past grows up, represent the *interests* of Slovakia not only at a bilateral but especially at an institutional level?" Based on my own experience of working in two important international institutions, the parliamentary assemblies of NATO and Council of Europe, I can claim that only a person equipped with language skills, charisma and a strong personality is able to hold an opinion. And especially a person who has a warm relationship with his homeland.

In the history of European politics, one can find examples that prove important politicians can come from small nations. I do not have in mind only Austrian Bruno Kreisky, Czech Tomáš Garrigue Masaryk or Hungarian Arpád Göncz but especially Slovaks – Milan Rastislav Štefánik, Milan Hodža, Ján Papánek, Alexander Dubček and others.

It is however necessary to emphasise that the differences between countries' political, social, academic, cultural or sporting representations will diminish with progressing globalisation. If a nation is to fully realise its cultural needs, a fact which will gain more importance with growing welfare, it has to emancipate among the world representation of nations not only politically but mainly with its ability to contribute to the common good of the community. Slovakia must ask itself a basic question – where are its best assumptions to be able to help strengthen the European Union and the North Atlantic Alliance so that it is respected and so that its contributions

gain reciprocity. It is a fact that the personal representation of a nation is determined primarily by the citizens in elections. The representation of Slovakia in international institutions results from the outcome of elections and the ability of the parties to choose the most qualified candidates. In a system of proportional representation, the citizen however influences only the choice of parties and can only influence the choice of specific people to a very minimum extent. The greater, therefore, must be the responsibility of the top leaders of political parties in placing the candidates on ballots and later in appointing them to domestic and international institutions. We need to ask whether political parties are aware of this responsibility. Based on my own parliamentary experience, I can state they are not. As an example, I would highlight the selection of candidates for the European parliament. Choosing the order of candidates according to their personal and professional merits was the exception; the rule was to choose candidates according to their relationship with the heads of political parties and movements. Here again, insufficient responsibility for the state and nation is revealed. We grasped the EP elections as, metaphorically expressed, a competition between premier league football teams. The parties are again trying to prove which is better, more popular, or has the best known candidates. As if somebody knew "our people" outside Hainburg! It is a pity the parties did not understand that we must be represented by the best in the highest legislative body of Europe. Whether we want it or not, they will represent us by their actions, communication or presentation in Brussels and Strasbourg. Since the candidates in most cases did not go through strict professional, language and personal criteria, I am afraid their results in the international arena will not be the best. I wish I were mistaken on this point. (One point of satisfaction for us might be that, according to my information, the selection of candidates in other countries takes place in a similar way.)

Perhaps, after the change to the social system, it is time to create an environment that will not eliminate the intellectual elites after every change in the political system. History teaches us that changes to the political system occurred more in sensitive central Europe, Slovakia's home, than in other regions of the continent. In this region, states were established and then ceased to exist; the nation however remained. It is without doubt that the nation would be stronger and more self-conscious if each social change did not automatically bring about elimination of the professional social and political elite. I believe this is one of the great tasks that needs taking by the democratic leadership of the country. I am convinced that if we are able to find mutual understanding and respect, then Slovakia will be a more sovereign and respected state in the eyes of international community. And since the social systems that existed in Slovakia over the past sixty-five years and that we did not choose ourselves harmed our citizens, it will be necessary to find also uncommon courage, so that historical Slovak-Slovak conciliation took place. To do this we need nothing but courage and meekness. Let me quote Pavol Vilikovský: "All nations want to leave a deep trace in the history of mankind, they want to rise beyond themselves despite the fact they still do not rise to their own heels. Only Slovaks, God's children, see the meaning of their

existence in their mere Being. Who else can be so naively happy as a child: a hundred years have passed and we still are! Then we are not vain! We are, and that means something! And immediately, full of excitement they fix a clear goal: Let us be more!”

Today the member states and candidate countries struggle mainly for the number of votes in the Council; that is they fight about influence. I would however like to say that even if Poland had not twenty-seven but fifty cards held in the hands of weak, inapt and worried players, it would not help them one bit. If you can't play cards, jokers are of no use. Therefore, it is even more important to emphasise the quality of our people. Slovakia will have seven votes in the decision-making body of the Union. Is this too little? It definitely is if the votes are held by competent people. Those who have experienced international confrontation know that politics (and not only European) is done by personalities. Based on my experience in the Council of Europe and Parliamentary Assembly of NATO, I estimate that real personalities make up ten percent at most of every institution. When representatives Jurgens, Holovaty, Eorsi, Davis, Hancock and others speak on the floor of the Council of Europe or representatives Bereuther, Palombo, Pasztusiak, Lammers, Meckel, Andersson, Lelouche, Viggers, Ozerov speak in the Parliamentary Assembly of NATO, everybody listens with attention. In both institutions a group of representatives, who belong to certain elite circle without regard to their state or even partisan (fractional) affiliation, was gradually formed. What they have in common is that they are good and recognised.

It is without doubt that the European Union as well as NATO will place pressure on us which will result into imperative for government to search for the best and most competent people without regard to their partisan affiliation, to represent us in Euro-Atlantic structures. Slovakia does not have as many possibilities to choose qualified people as countries with a larger population.

Slovaks are only just in the process of establishing their political community. The formation of a sovereign nation will however be more complicated and demanding in a common Europe – from many aspects. One of them will be the ability to find a dignified place for the intellectual elite of the nation.

Habermas's thesis that a political community is created in the public discourse is a direct challenge for political elite of our state. It is necessary to appoint the best of the best to positions where Slovak opinion will be confronted with the opinion of Europe or the Alliance. After accession to the EU and NATO, there is no greater priority for Slovakia's political leadership than to defend and pursue our national and state interests. Such a challenge was never before present in Slovak history. The necessity to formulate our opinions will not only result from our internal need but will be a natural requirement of the international community. If we are unable to formulate and pursue our opinions, Slovakia and its following generations will find themselves on the verge of European and world events. It will be as many times in the past – “about us without us” – but this time entirely by our own fault. It is necessary to realise that our state sovereignty will, from May 2004, not be formed in an autonomous environment, which is the way traditional European states developed, but in direct

confrontation with the strongest European competition. The Slovak issue will not be accomplished in the Slovak but rather in the European environment. Paraphrasing Pavol Viličinský – our ambition cannot be just *to be*. Slovakia must be conscious and self-conscious, active and initiative, sovereign and with confidence in her own abilities. If we choose the best to present and communicate Slovak interests, I will not be worried about our successful functioning in the European Union and North Atlantic Alliance.

From Public Debate

1. Constitutional Treaty of the EU Draft

Aliancia nového občana – ANO (New Citizen's Alliance)

27 May 2003, Hospodárske noviny, p. 1

ANO supported remodelling the EU into a union of national states with legal subjectivity and strong institutions. The present decision making system by consensus should be replaced with a system whereby a qualified majority decides. The positions of the regions should also be strengthened. ANO is against the creation of new EU institutions.

4 June 2003, Hospodárske noviny, p. 2

The New Citizen's Alliance likes the draft of the Preamble formulated by the presidency of the Convention, i.e. without mentioning God. According to Jozef Banáš, they are also willing to support other compromises. "It will all depend on the formulation. If it is – as František Mikloško said in an interview for SME some time ago – the *Catholic God*, it would be difficult to agree with it. The roots of Europe are represented by Greek philosophy, ancient Rome, Christianity and Judaism. If we need to write down anything, then I would support mention of these four pillars.

6 October 2003, Pravda, p. 1

Without respect to party allegiance, Slovak politicians wish mainly to preserve the right to have a fully-fledged member in the European Commission: "The principle of one country – one Commissioner should be preserved", said Jozef Banáš.

Kresťanskodemokratické hnutie – KDH (Christian Democratic Movement)

10 September 2003, Národná obroda, p. 2

The Home Department rejects on principle harmonisation in the field of home and justice, joint control of the outer borders of the Union, and removal of border controls

between member states.” It is also against the centralisation of common immigration policy and the formation of common police and customs units.

19 September 2003, SME, p. 2

“The basic approach of KDH is clear: the European Union yes, a European state no!” said Hrušovský. Therefore KDH has a few important comments: Reservations concern mainly the way of defining so-called majority voting in the decision making of the European Union and enlargement of majority voting on sensitive issues. It suggests preserving a rotating presidency of member countries of the Union and to maintain the principle of one country – one commissioner within the European Commission. In the text of the Preamble, KDH supports a comment about God and Christian values. It rejects denoting the document as a Constitution and insists on the term Constitutional Agreement. It also wants to omit the Charter of Fundamental Rights from its content. Instead, KDH recommends the Union’s future accidence to the European Agreement on the Protection of Human Rights and Freedoms.

KDH proposes a quorum of two-thirds of countries and citizens for a qualified majority. At the same time, it also supports maintaining the principle of unanimity in spheres such as asylum and migration, culture, social security, and justice and police co-operation.

24 September 2003, Nový deň, p. 8

Ján Figeľ, Chairman of the Foreign Affairs Committee of NC SR, supported maintaining the current influence of smaller states in EU decision making processes by the so-called qualified majority. The government should also pursue the rotating presidency of EU member countries and the principle of one country – one commissioner within the European Commission. He again presented KDH’s opinion that some parts of the draft of the constitutional agreement characterise the EU more as a state than a contractual community. He requested maintaining the unanimity principle in EU decision-making in sensitive areas such as asylum and migration, culture, social security, and justice and police co-operation. According to KDH, the Preamble should include a note about God and Christian values and omit the Charter of Fundamental Rights.

10 October 2003, SME, p. 2

Chairman of KDH Pavol Hrušovský states that important documents such as the constitutional agreement should be determined by the citizens. It is an important decision concerning the sovereignty and further action of Slovakia in the European Community.”

Komunistická strana Slovenska – KSS (Communist Party of Slovakia)

24 September 2003, Nový deň, p. 8

Jozef Ševc declared his support for the principle of one country – one commissioner as well as the principle of equality and the right of national veto. His party agrees to the proposal of a referendum on the accepted constitutional agreement.

7 October 2003, *Nový deň*, p. 3, public inquiry: Should there be a referendum held in Slovakia about the European Constitution?

Karol Ondriáš: “KSS will support the referendum. A vote was held in NC SR about the Accession Agreement of the SR to the European Union, and KSS deputies were the only ones who voted against it. There were several things with which we did not agree. All deputies of NC SR voted for it, and only now do some discrepancies appear that they would like to solve. So we are for the referendum in all cases.

Ludová strana – Hnutie za demokratické Slovensko – LS-HZDS (People’s Party – Movement for a Democratic Slovakia)

16 June 2003, *Hospodárske noviny*, p. 8

In addition, the deputy of HZDS, Irena Belohorská, considers the draft of the constitution as a good basis. “I am satisfied because a condition I put in the group of national parliaments was fulfilled. It was the condition of one commissioner for one country,” she said. “I am glad that the formulation of “fair rotation” was changed to “equal rotation” she added. Belohorská, contrary to the government’s line, pursued a strong Council President for the EU, which finally appeared in the constitutional draft. “From the beginning I pursued a strong position for the president, because I believe that a unit with 450 million inhabitants should have one representative,” she explained.

17 June 2003, *Hospodárske noviny*, p. 2

Irena Belohorská: “The text of the constitutional agreement is written in a simple way and is easily understandable. I want a referendum held on this issue.”

24 September 2003. *Nový deň*, p. 8

Vladimír Mečiar resolutely defended the text of the European Constitution with only minor changes. He also criticised the requirements for individual legislation in social affairs and recalled that we have an interest in the free movement of labour. He asked how deputies could request a dual regime in the social sphere, other incompatible principles of social security, and simultaneously the free movement of labour. “There is an effort to exclude Slovakia from the general rules for upholding human rights in spite of enhancing Slovak political thinking to a European level,” said Mečiar. He pointed out that now someone wants to discuss and review something already accepted. He said it was decisive that the agreement moves individual member and candidate countries forward. His standpoints clarified: “I support the fact there is mention of God, the preserved principle of one country – one commissioner, but let’s not enlarge our requests.”

Ludová únia – LÚ (People's Union)

24 September 2003, *Hospodárske noviny*, p. 2

Rudolf Žiak declared that the draft prepared by the Convention about the Future of Europe cannot be an EU constitution because it is too wide ranging and places European institutions in a superior position over the bodies of independent countries. He suggested a resolution binding the Slovak delegation to request anchoring the right of veto in defence of the national interests of the Slovak Republic.

1 October 2003, *Hospodárske noviny*, p. 18

Rudolf Žiak: "In our opinion the submitted draft of the constitutional agreement does not fulfil an assumption to be a constitution for Europe as it is marked, neither by its wide extend nor by content. European integration shall not lead to imposed uniformity and overregulation. We believe it is not in the interest of Slovakia to support the creation of a suprapstate but a union as a supranational body with legitimacy derived from the primary legitimacy of member states. We cannot allow the building of a European identity in opposition to or to counterbalance the USA. We support pursuing the principle of equality of member states and the right of veto in spheres concerning national and state interests.

Slovenská kresťanská a demokratická únia – SDKÚ (Slovak Democratic and Christian Union)

2 October 2003, *Hospodárske noviny*, p. 1

Minister of Foreign Affairs Eduard Kukan again diplomatically refused the request of his Hungarian departmental colleague László Kovács that the Rome Intergovernmental Conference also be concerned with the issue of the protection of the rights of national minorities. According to him, issues already sufficiently discussed by the Convention should not be negotiated. He stressed that every Slovak government rejected the principle of collective rights of national minorities.

He reacted to KDH's proposal that Bratislava requests omission of the Charter of Fundamental Rights from the draft of the constitutional agreement. Kukan is concerned that it is "unrealistic and unfair to open these issues". He also confirmed that Slovakia has no interest in transforming the European Union into a "suprapstate".

2 October 2003, *SME*, p. 2

Minister Kukan believes that the rights of national minorities are satisfactorily protected. He evoked the words of the Chairman of the European Convention, who declared that the rights of national minorities are anchored in the Charter of Fundamental Rights, which is already part of the draft of the constitution.

7 October 2003, *Nový deň*, p. 3, public inquiry: Should there be a referendum held in Slovakia on the European Constitution?

Tomáš Galbavý: “Concerning the referendum, I subscribe to the notion that a referendum on these issues is not necessary now. We would have difficulties passing a referendum. We had much work to do to make the referendum about the SR’s entry into the EU valid. Now we should prepare a separate referendum about the European constitution? Can you imagine what could happen if we reject the European constitution in a referendum?”

29 December 2003, *SME*, p. 8

The principle of a binding mandate is refused mainly by SDKÚ. A minister from this party warns that “the rigid binding of recommendations would significantly lessen the possibilities for decision making in EU bodies”.

Smer (Direction)

17 September 2003, *Nový deň*, p. 3

Monika Beňová: “I brought attention to it some time ago when the Convention was coming to certain conclusions. The binding proposal only came from the last meeting. But the positions that were to be held by those representing Slovakia were never specifically defined through parliament. There was no discussion, and thus I am surprised that now, when on the 4th October the International Conference starts, we open this discussion in parliament. I think the positions of constitutional lawyers should have been clear by now: they are the first to say where the document clashes with the Constitution of the SR and what it means if we give up part of our decision-making rights. Now it seems to me it is going to be only done in a hurry.”

6 October 2003, *Pravda*, p. 7

Monika Beňová: “I do not see any reason why we should stubbornly insist on something and we are not ready to support the final draft. The proposal that came from the Convention meeting is, I believe, a great compromise. If we say that every country shall have one commissioner, this is more a prestigious issue than the issue of national interests. The Commission cannot pursue national interests.”

Strana maďarskej koalície –SMK (Party of the Hungarian Coalition)

3 June 2003, *SME*, p. 2

After the referendum about the accession of Slovakia to the European Union, we might be having another – this time about the European constitution. The Chairman

of SMK, Béla Bugár, thinks that “to bother people with a referendum is not necessary”. Besides, such a concern is premature because “there is no information about the constitution”.

1 July 2003, *Národná Obroda*, p. 7

If the future order in Europe is to be discussed, the strong position of national states and their parliaments should be a basic notion according to Bugár. “But also here it is, of course, necessary to talk about a compromise satisfying all political parties. As I perceive it, some strongly insist on it while others don’t. This is where we shall search for a solution for a while,” says Bugár.

1 October 2003 *Hospodárske noviny*, p. 18

Arpád Duka-Zólyomi: “National minorities represent 15% of the inhabitants in Slovakia. SMK proposes a resolution by which parliament asks the government to pursue inclusion of the principle of the protection of rights of national minorities into the constitutional agreement of the European Union in the international conference. SMK supports the creation of a strong Commission by the principle of one country – one commissioner, or at least fair rotation. Though in the Preamble there is a note about the religious heritage of Europe, SMK supported the initiative for emphasising European history and development under the meaning of Christian values.

27 November 2003, *Národná obroda*, p. 9, “Will Minority Rights be in the Preamble?” The Chairman of SMK, Béla Bugár, thinks it is good if such a notion appears. “We must study it in more detail, but we perceive it positively. It is some progress,” said Bugár.

2. Iraqi Crisis

Aliancia nového občana – ANO (New Citizen’s Alliance)

19 March 2003, TASR

Chairman of the New Citizen’s Alliance Pavol Rusko stated it was a sad occasion that an agreement about a peaceful solution to the Iraqi crisis was not reached. But the main guilt is on Saddam Hussein, who managed to divide the world and fail the UN. After the speech by American President G. W. Bush, Rusko does not believe that conflict can be prevented. He stresses that if war starts it should only do so at the cost of a minimum of civilian victims. “Every prognosis about whether the war is going to be held only in Iraq or might cross its borders and also about its duration would be very advantageous now,” says ANO’s leader.

9 June 2003, Nový deň, p. 3

Imrich Béreš: “The war in Iraq was not only a war for finding weapons of mass destruction. UN Resolution 1441 was only a follow up for the failure to fulfil other resolutions, based on which the USA attacked Iraq. It can be said that weapons of mass destruction were only one of the reasons for the attack by the United States.”

Kresťanskodemokratické hnutie – KDH (Christian Democratic Movement)

František Mikloško, in a speech read in a NC SR meeting negotiating a proposal to send a chemical unit to Iraq

“...deputies of KDH will vote against sending the Slovak unit to Iraq by a majority. We are doing so aware that it was a decision of the superior political body, which is presidency of the Movement. ... We are aware of the great sensitivity of this issue; it is a situation the Slovak Parliament has not been confronted with since November 1989, so we gave some freedom to our deputies and members of the government. The majority is going to be against sending our troops after balancing each member’s conscience.”

Daniel Lipšic, Vice Prime Minister, Minister of Justice of the SR and Vice Chairman of KDH, in a speech read in a meeting of the NC SR negotiating a proposal to send a chemical unit to Iraq

“...I believe that the potential war you are going to vote on about sending our soldiers is a fair war. I also believe that if you vote as statesmen, this means with deliberation in your minds and justice in your hearts, you will support the participation of our armed forces in the intervention against the regime in Iraq.”

Komunistická strana Slovenska – KSS (Communist Party of Slovakia)

2 May 2003, Nový deň, p. 2

In Bratislava 1 May celebrations were organised by KSS in SNP Square. Its chairman, Jozef Ševc, confirmed the party’s rejection of the SR’s accession to NATO and denounced the attack on Iraq.

9 June 2003, Nový deň, public inquiry: How do you see the fact that the weapons of mass destruction, the reason for the war in Iraq, were not found? On the contrary, an examination of the intelligence services and their handling of the information is being prepared.

Vladimír Daďo: “To me it is confirmation of the fact that it was not about weapons of mass destruction in Iraq nor about the danger posed, but rather the interest of the

United States. This was proved by the course of the war and also by the current events there. Today, pretexts are being searched for. Perhaps there would be something brought there, some wagon or something else, but something will have to be found. I evaluate it very negatively.”

9 June 2003, *Nový deň*, p. 2

The communists reject sending the engineering unit to Iraq because it was not proven that Iraq possessed weapons of mass destruction.

Ludová strana – Hnutie za demokratické Slovensko – ĽS-HZDS (People’s Party – Movement for Democratic Slovakia)

9 June 2003, *Nový deň*, public inquiry: How do you see the fact that weapons of mass destruction, the reason for the war in Iraq, were not found? On the contrary, an examination of the intelligence services and their handling the information is being prepared.

Irena Belohorská: “I am following the whole situation that was created in this connection in the United Kingdom. It is too early to talk about it, but we will see what is found. I consider it counterproductive because the war as such has ended. I believe it should be left for history, which might view it in a fairer light than today, when you may get your fingers slapped long after the war was over.

Slovenská kresťanská a demokratická únia – SDKÚ (Slovak Democratic and Christian Union)

7 April 2003, *SME*, supplement *People*, interview with Eduard Kukan: About the war? USA, Oil and UN, p. 14

The liberation of the Iraqi people is being talked about, but they resist the Americans. How do you as a long-time diplomat and Minister of Diplomacy see this concerning the USA and outside?

“The mood and thinking of the Iraqi people are a result of the long-lasting dictatorial, authoritarian influence of Saddam Hussein as head of state. He has been there for 24 years. Those are long years for people to fear and not be able to express open resistance to the regime. There are known cases of merciless dealings with opponents of his policy. The goal of the war is also to provide the Iraqis breathing room and life. It is going to be a while before they psychically reorient themselves for the opportunity of a different life without blind adherence to dictatorial authority.”

Several months ago you told SME that you agree with the politics of G.W. Bush because he takes into maximum consideration the needs of his country. The statement today in

connection with the war in Iraq can have two meanings. On one hand there is real threat of terrorism, on the other there are suggestions that it might be about oil. How should the USA deal the war?

“I believe talks about oil as a reason for the war are neither right nor truthful. The Americans have been involved in other regions of the world without the suggestion of oil. The method of reconstruction and rebuilding Iraq will be very important. The United States will have an interest in holding all reconstruction activities under the UN mandate.

9 May 2003, SME, p. 2

“I want our troops to be present in Iraq as soon as possible,” Prime Minister Mikuláš Dzurinda said on Wednesday. The Ministry of Economy and SARIO Agency have chosen 66 firms, but nobody wants to publish the list yet.

Whether Slovak firms will manage to procure orders in the reconstruction of Iraq is questionable. After wars in recent years, they also tried to get orders in destroyed countries but never managed it on a large scale.

“We are already preparing an engineering unit. We are very close to joint action with the Poles in Iraq,” confirmed Dzurinda in up-to-date speculations that engineers removing mines from several parts are nearly ready to departure.

9 May, Národná obroda, s. 10

Prime Minister Mikuláš Dzurinda also declared financial assistance for firms applying for conveyance to Iraq, but failed to specify the sum or method of financing.

22 October 2003, Hospodárske noviny, p. 1

Kukan insists that the position of Slovakia concerning Iraq was right, despite the fact that “the situation is more complicated in post-war reconstruction”.

Smer (Direction)

31 March 2003, TASR

Recalling the chemical unit from Iraq or more detailed specification of the mandate of its action will be asked by opposition party Smer in a parliamentary meeting to be held Wednesday next week. “If we do not manage to pursue recalling our soldiers, we will ask for positioning of our unit in Kuwait in accordance with the paragraph of the Constitution of the SR which allow only humanitarian assistance. Slovak soldiers should under no circumstances cross the Kuwait-Iraq border,” says Chairman of SMER Robert Fico. Fico sees a problem in the contradictory mandate of the UN Security Council, which part of the government coalition considers sufficient for the presence of our unit in Iraq. Smer thinks that there is no mandate for our presence without a new UN resolution.

10 April 2003, TASR

Despite the positive vote for the agreement, Smer will never change its approach towards the Iraqi crisis because it believes that the demilitarisation of Iraq can be accomplished in a peaceful way. Fico expressed his concern that the government of the SR did not find the courage to strongly condemn the killing of civilians. "It is not an advantage to join the stronger but to pursue the principles of international law, etiquette and humanity and talk about things that do not necessarily always please stronger countries," emphasized the Chairman of Smer. He feels sorry that Slovakia is becoming one of countries looking forward to their participation in Iraq's reconstruction but is afraid these expectations will not be real. It would be more sincere if the government admitted it was joining the Allies for this reason.

Strana maďarskej koalície – SMK (Party of Hungarian Coalition)

6 February 2003, Speech by Chairman of SMK Béla Bugár in the NC SR plenum.

... it is necessary to get involved based on our possibilities and abilities in a coalition of democratic states that are able under joint power to protect the freedom and security of all free countries.

It is evident that Iraq under the leadership of Saddam Hussein threatens this security. The Iraqi dictator has at his disposal everything necessary to threaten the security of the Middle East, Europe and, through contacts with terrorist organisations, the whole world. First, there is clear proof of the aggressiveness of the Iraqi regime and its strong links to the use of war as a means to pursue its power goals in the region. Second, Iraq still has the means to threaten the security of the region. Third, it is also necessary to remind ourselves of the determination of Saddam Hussein to use these arms.

The Main Activities of the Slovak Republic in Foreign Policy

3 – 11 January On the occasion of the 10th anniversary of diplomatic relations, the President of the Slovak Republic R. Schuster paid an official visit to the People's Republic of China including the special administrative region of Hong Kong. The Slovak delegation was represented by the Minister of Culture of the Slovak Republic R. Chmel, the Minister of Agriculture of the Slovak Republic Zs. Simon, the Minister of Transport, Posts and Telecommunications of the Slovak Republic P. Prokopovič, the State Secretary of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Slovak Republic J. Berényi, the Chairman of the ZMOS Association of the SR M. Sýkora, and a group of nine businessmen.

21 January The Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Slovak Republic, E. Kukan, paid a working visit to the UN Office in Vienna. During his visit, E. Kukan held talks with leading representatives of international organisations, the Secretary General of the UN Office in Vienna, as well as with the UN Office of Drugs and Crime Executive Director A. M. Costa, Executive Secretary of the Preparatory Commission for the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organisation W. Hoffmann, and the Secretary General of the UNIDO C. A. Magarinos.

27 January The Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Turkey B. Ilkin paid a visit to the Slovak Republic. During his visit he held the working consultations with the State Secretary of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Slovak Republic J. Berényi. Besides consultations, B. Ilkin was received by the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Slovak Republic E. Kukan. The main points of the negotiations focused on bilateral co-operation, co-operation within international organisations, and the ongoing integration process.

Source: Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Slovak Republic

29 January At the invitation of the President of the Slovak Republic R. Schuster, the President of the Czech Republic V. Havel paid an official visit to the Slovak Republic. The President of the Czech Republic V. Havel held negotiations with the President of the Slovak Republic R. Schuster. Besides negotiations, he met the Chairman of the National Council of the Slovak Republic P. Hrušovský and the Prime Minister of the Government of the Slovak Republic M. Dzurinda.

30 January The President of the European Parliament P. Cox paid an official visit to the Slovak Republic. The main goal of his visit was opening the Information Office of the European Parliament in the Slovak Republic. During the visit, P. Cox met the President of the SR R. Schuster, the Chairman of the National Council of the Slovak Republic P. Hrušovský, the Prime Minister of the Government of the Slovak Republic M. Dzurinda, and the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Slovak Republic E. Kukan.

January 30 – 31 The State Secretary of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Slovak Republic I. Korčok paid a working visit to the Hellenic Republic. During the visit, he negotiated with the new Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Hellenic Republic T. Giannitsis, the Vice-chairman of the Parliament of the Hellenic Republic and the Chairman of the Permanent Committee for European Affairs C. Vrettos, the Chairman of the group of Greek-Slovak Friendship of the Parliament of the Hellenic Republic M. Karchimakis, and the Deputy Minister of the National Defence L. Apostolidis.

6 February The Deputy of the European Parliament and European parliament's rapporteur for Slovakia, J. M. Wiersma paid a working visit to the Slovak Republic. He was received by Prime Minister of the Slovak Republic M. Dzurinda. The main topics of the talks were the issues related to the preparation of the accession of the Slovak Republic to the European Union, the current political situation, and the accession process of the Slovak Republic to the European Union.

6 – 7 February At the invitation of the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Slovak Republic E. Kukan, the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Islamic Republic of Iran K. Charráží paid an official visit to the Slovak Republic. K. Charráží was received by the Prime Minister of the Slovak Republic M. Dzurinda, the Chairman of the National Council of the Slovak Republic P. Hrušovský, the Vice-Prime Minister and the Minister of Economy of the Slovak Republic R. Nemcsics. During his visit, K. Charráží held negotiations with the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Slovak Republic E. Kukan and the State Secretary of the Ministry of Economy of the Slovak Republic E. Šimková. The main aim of the meeting was to inform the partners about bilateral co-operation, regional problems and the standpoint on the current political situation.

9 – 10 February The Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Slovak Republic E. Kukan paid an official visit to the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

During his visit he was received by the Chairman of the Foreign Affairs Committee of the House of Commons of the Parliament of the United Kingdom D. Anderson, the Minister of Foreign Affairs J. Straw and an aide to the British Prime Minister for Foreign Policy Issues D. Manning.

10 – 11 February The Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Slovak Republic E. Kukan paid an official visit to the Republic of Ireland. E. Kukan met the Chairman of the Oireachtas R. O'Hanion, the Chairman of the Oireachtas Joint Committee on Foreign Affairs and Chairman of the Oireachtas Committee for EU Affairs G. Mitchell.

11 – 12 February At the invitation of the Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Belgium G. Verhofstadt, M. Dzurinda paid an official visit to the Kingdom of Belgium. Besides negotiations with G. Verhofstadt, M. Dzurinda met representatives of the Parliament of the Kingdom of Belgium and representatives of Belgian regions and communities, the President of the Federation of Enterprises in Belgium L. Vansteenkist and the Mayor of the City of Brussels F. Thielemans. M. Dzurinda was accompanied by the Minister of Transport, Posts and Telecommunications of the Slovak Republic P. Prokopovič, the State Secretary of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Slovak Republic J. Berényi, and the State Secretary of the Ministry of Economy of the Slovak Republic E. Šimková.

13 February At the invitation of the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Swiss Confederation M. Calmy-Rey, the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Slovak Republic E. Kukan paid an official visit to the Swiss Confederation. Talks were focused on bilateral questions between Slovakia and Switzerland as well as co-operation within international organisations, issues relating to the European integration process, and developments in crisis regions of the world, primarily Iraq. E. Kukan also met the President of the National Council of the Swiss Confederation Y. Christen.

13 – 14 February The Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Kingdom of Norway J. Petersen paid an official visit to the Slovak Republic. During the visit he held negotiations with the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Slovak Republic E. Kukan. Norwegian J. Petersen was also received by the Chairman of the National Council of the Slovak Republic P. Hrušovský and the Deputy Prime Minister for European Integration, Human Rights and Minorities P. Csáky. The main points of negotiations were bilateral co-operation, the accession of the Slovak Republic to NATO and the EU, as well as current developments in crisis regions of the world.

16 – 17 February At the invitation of the Prime Minister of the Republic of Portugal J. D. Barros, the Prime Minister of the Slovak Republic M. Dzurinda paid a working visit to the Republic of Portugal. During the visit M. Dzurinda was received by the President of the Republic of Portugal J. Sampaio, the Chairman of the Assembly of

the Republic of the Republic of Portugal J. M. Amaral. M. Dzurinda also negotiated with the Prime Minister of the Republic of Portugal J. D. Barros and met the Head of the Episcopal Conference of the Republic of Portugal the Patriarch J. C. Policarpo.

18 February The Prime Minister of the Slovak Republic M. Dzurinda took part in the meeting of prime ministers of governments of candidate countries to the European Union held in Brussels. At the meeting, the Prime Minister of the Hellenic Republic K. Simitis informed about the results of the Summit of EU member country representatives concerning the Iraqi crisis. The talks also concentrated on the current international and security situation in Europe and the world. The President of the European Commission R. Prodi, High Representative of the EU for Foreign and Security Policy J. Solana and EU Commissioner for External Relations C. Patten also took part in this meeting.

19 – 20 February The State Secretary of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Slovak Republic I. Korčok paid a working visit to the Federal Republic of Germany. Besides negotiations with the State Secretary of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Federal Republic of Germany K. Scharioth, I. Korčok met the Chairman of the Foreign Affairs Committee and the Committee for Defence and Security of the German Bundestag V. Ruhe and R. Robbe and other representatives of the Federal Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Federal Republic of Germany and Office of the Federal Chancellor.

27 February At the invitation of the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Slovak Republic E. Kukan, the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Hungary L. Kovács paid a working visit to the Slovak Republic. Both representatives discussed the issue of the further activities of the Slovak-Hungarian Commission for the Affairs of National Minorities as well as evaluating the need for support of culture and education of the Slovak national minority living in Hungary and vice versa.

28 February The Prime Minister of the Slovak Republic M. Dzurinda received the Secretary of Commerce of the United States of America D. Evans. The talks focused on the issue of bilateral co-operation development, strengthening of common trade contacts between countries, and current international policy issues.

28 February On the initiative of the Federal Republic of Germany, a meeting of state secretaries of ministries of foreign affairs of V4 countries took place on the floor of the European Parliament in the Convention on Drafting the Future Design of the EU with German Minister of Foreign Affairs and German representative in Convention J. Fischer. The Slovak Republic was represented by the State Secretary of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Slovak Republic I. Korčok. The points of negotiations were issues relating to the Convention on Drafting the Future Design of the EU.

28 February – 1 March The Minister for Integration of the Republic of Albania S. Nakol paid an official visit to the Slovak Republic. Besides negotiations with the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Slovak Republic E. Kukan, S. Nakol was also received by the State Secretary of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Slovak Republic J. Berényi. He also held negotiations with the Chairman of the Foreign Affairs Committee of the National Council of the Slovak Republic J. Figeľ and the Chairman of the European Integration Committee of the National Council of the Slovak Republic M. Beňová.

3 – 7 March The President of the Slovak Republic R. Schuster paid an official visit to the Republic of Uzbekistan and the Kyrgyz Republic. Talks were focused on bilateral co-operation, especially in the field of trade and economy. Both representatives also focused on current international issues, especially the fight against terrorism.

3 – 4 March At the invitation of the Prime Minister of the Slovak Republic M. Dzurinda, the Prime Minister of the Government of the Kingdom of Denmark A. F. Rasmussen paid an official visit to the Slovak Republic. A. F. Rasmussen was received by the Chairman of the National Council of the Slovak Republic P. Hrušovský and negotiated with the Prime Minister of the Slovak Republic M. Dzurinda. The negotiations concentrated on issues of bilateral relations, Euro-Atlantic integration and the situation in Iraq.

4 – 5 March The State Secretary of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Slovak Republic J. Berényi paid a working visit to Geneva. J. Berényi led the delegation at the 58th Annual Session of the UN Economic Committee for Europe concerning sustainable development in the EEC region.

5 – 6 March At the invitation of the Prime Minister of the Slovak Republic M. Dzurinda, the Prime Minister of the Government of the Romania A. Nastase paid an official visit to the Slovak Republic. Besides negotiations with M. Dzurinda, A. Nastase met the Chairman of the National Council of the Slovak Republic P. Hrušovský. The main topics of the negotiations were the status of the ongoing accession process of the Slovak Republic and Romania to the EU and NATO, current international issues, and possibilities for wider Slovak-Romanian political and economic co-operation.

7 March The State Secretary of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Slovak Republic J. Berényi received the delegation headed by the Deputy of the National Assembly of the Republic of Korea Y. J. Yoon. The main points of the meeting focused on further development of co-operation and current political development in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. Both sides agreed on intensification of co-operation within the international organisation.

10 March The Secretary General of the NATO Lord G. Robertson paid a working visit to the Slovak Republic within his tour to the seven candidate countries. The main aim of the visit was focused primarily on support for the accession of the Slovak Republic to NATO. During the visit, Lord G. Robertson met the highest state's representatives.

11 March The Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Federal Republic of Germany J. Fischer paid a working visit to the Slovak Republic. During the visit he was received by the President of the Slovak Republic R. Schuster and met the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Slovak Republic E. Kukan. The negotiations concentrated on the current international situation concerning the Iraqi crisis as well as institutional reform in the EU.

18 March At the invitation of the President of the Slovak Republic R. Schuster, the President of the Czech Republic V. Klaus paid an official visit to the Slovak Republic. He was received by the President of the Slovak Republic R. Schuster, the Chairman of the National Council of the Slovak Republic P. Hrušovský, and the Prime Minister of the Slovak Republic M. Dzurinda. The points of the negotiations included the issues of the development of the bilateral relations as well as the issue of the integration of the Slovak and Czech Republic into the EU, co-operation between V4 countries, and the current international situation.

19 – 20 March The State Secretary of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Slovak Republic J. Berényi paid a visit to the Republic of Albania. During the visit he negotiated with the Minister of Foreign Affairs, the Minister of Economy and the Minister of Integration of the Republic of Albania. J. Berényi also met members of the People's Assembly of the Republic of Albania.

26 March The special session of the North Atlantic Council (NAC) at the level of ministers of foreign affairs of the Republic of Bulgaria, the Republic of Estonia, the Republic of Latvia, Romania, the Slovak Republic and the Republic of Slovenia took place in Brussels. The session completed the first period of accession for the seven aspirant countries to NATO. The permanent representatives of the 19 NATO member countries signed an individual Protocol of Accession. The official delegation of the Slovak Republic was led by the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Slovak Republic E. Kukan.

2 April At the invitation of the State Secretary of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Slovak Republic I. Korčok, the State Secretary of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Slovenia S. Žbogar paid a working visit to the Slovak Republic.

The meeting focused on the future membership of the Republic of Slovenia in the EU and NATO as well as an evaluation of the bilateral agenda. S. Žbogar was received by the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Slovak Republic E. Kukan.

2 – 4 April The official delegation of the Slovak Republic led by the Prime Minister of the Slovak Republic M. Dzurinda took part in the spring meeting of the European Council. The main points of the programme were to adopt the decision concerning future EU development in the field of the economy as well as the social and environmental field with the aim of achieving the best assumptions for the Lisbon Strategy. The Slovak Republic was represented by the Minister of Finance of the Slovak Republic I. Mikloš and the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Slovak Republic E. Kukan.

4 – 5 April At the invitation of the Prime Minister of Romania A. Nastase an informal meeting of the prime ministers of governments of candidate countries to NATO took place in Snagov. The overall aim of the meeting was to discuss NATO integration issues and to coordinate the common effort in the ongoing process of ratification. The delegation of the Slovak Republic was represented by the Prime Minister of the Slovak Republic M. Dzurinda.

5 – 8 April The President of the Slovak Republic R. Schuster paid a working visit to Canada. During the visit he met the Prime Minister of Canada J. Chrétien, the Governor General of Canada A. Clarkson, the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Canada W. Graham and the State Secretary of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade of Canada G. Knuts. R. Schuster also visited the fellow-countrymen in Halifax, Montreal and Ottawa. Within the economic part of the programme, he also met representatives of the Bombardier Company.

7 – 8 April The State Secretary of the MFA SR J. Berényi took part in the conference *The Enlarged EU – a Partner of the Developing World*, organised by INWELT, Germany. The representatives of member and candidate countries took part in the conference. The key topic of the negotiations was the accession process of candidate countries to the EU, problems of development assistance, and the deepening of co-operation in the EU.

7 April The Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Slovak Republic E. Kukan received the Minister of Defence of the Kingdom of Denmark S. A. Jensby. Both representatives confirmed their interest in further development bilateral relations. S. A. Jensby stressed that EU and NATO enlargement were foreign policy priorities of the government of the Kingdom of Denmark at a time when the process were coming to a conclusion.

7 – 9 April At the invitation of the Prime Minister of the Russian Federation M. Kasianov, the Prime Minister of the Slovak Republic M. Dzurinda paid an official

visit to the Russian Federation. During the visit he was received by the President of the Russian Federation V. Putin. M. Dzurinda held also negotiations with the Prime Minister of the Russian Federation M. Kasianov and the Mayor of Moscow J. Lužkov. The negotiations concentrated on current bilateral co-operation, primarily in the field of economy and trade. They also focused on the issue of EU enlargement and its possible impact on trade between the Russian Federation and new EU member states.

8 – 13 April The president of the Slovak Republic R. Schuster paid a working visit to the USA. During the visit he met the President of the USA G. Bush and the US Secretary of State C. Powell. He also held negotiations with US Senators and Congressmen, the Secretary of Commerce of the USA D. Evans and the Vice-President of the Motorola Company R. L. Barnet. The visit confirmed good bilateral co-operation and great assumptions for its further development in the field of politics, economy and trade.

8 April The Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Kingdom of the Netherlands J. H. Scheffer paid a working visit to the Slovak Republic. The main points of the negotiations with the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Slovak Republic E. Kukan were issues of EU integration, the Iraqi crisis, OSCE, Chechnya, the Convention on Drafting the Future Design of Europe, co-operation between V4 countries as well as bilateral relations between the Slovak Republic and the Kingdom of the Netherlands.

13 – 15 April At the invitation of the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the State of Israel S. Shalom, the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Slovak Republic E. Kukan paid an official visit to the State of Israel. Besides negotiations with S. Shalom, E. Kukan met the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Industry and Trade of the State of Israel E. Olmert, Leader of the Parliamentary Opposition A. Mitz, and Chairman of the Foreign Affairs and Defence Committee of the Knesset Z. Shteinitz. E. Kukan was also received by the President of the State of Israel M. Katsav.

28 – 29 April At the invitation of the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Croatia T. Picula, the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Slovak Republic E. Kukan paid an official visit to the Republic of Croatia. Besides the main negotiations with his partner, E. Kukan met the President of the Republic of Croatia S. Mesič, the Chairman of the Assembly of the Republic of Croatia Z. Točić as well as the Deputy Prime Minister of the Republic of Croatia G. Granič. Talks concentrated on options for further development of bilateral co-operation, future membership of the Slovak Republic in the EU and NATO as well as Croatian EU and NATO integration ambitions.

1 – 4 May The Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Slovak Republic E. Kukan took part in the meeting of the ministers of foreign affairs of member and candidate states held in Rhodes and Kastellorizo (Hellenic Republic). The main points of the discussion

were international policy issues, especially the Iraqi crisis, The Middle East peace process, strengthening of EU capacities in the context of a Common Foreign and Security Policy, European Defence and Security Policy.

5 May At the invitation of the Deputy Prime Minister of the Slovak Republic P. Csáky, the Deputy Prime Minister of the Italian Republic G. Fini paid a visit to the Slovak Republic. He negotiated with Deputy Prime Minister P. Csáky, the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Deputy Prime Minister E. Kukan, the Chairman of the Foreign Affairs Committee of the National Council of the Slovak Republic J. Figeľ, the Chairman of the Committee for European Integration of the National Council of the Slovak Republic M. Beňová. The main points of the negotiations were issues of bilateral relations as well as the integration of the Slovak Republic into the EU and NATO. G. Fini was also received by the President of the Slovak Republic R. Schuster.

5 – 6 May The EU Commissioner G. Verheugen paid a visit to the Slovak Republic. During the visit he met the President of the Slovak Republic R. Schuster, the Prime Minister of the Slovak Republic M. Dzurinda, and the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Slovak Republic E. Kukan as well as the members of the Committee for European Integration and the Foreign Affairs Committee of the National Council of the Slovak Republic, the Mayor of Bratislava M. Ďurkovec, and representatives of non-governmental organisations. The overall aim of the visit was to explain the importance of the EU accession referendum.

7 May The Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Slovak Republic E. Kukan paid a working visit to the USA. He met the ministers of foreign affairs of NATO candidate countries. E. Kukan took part in the festive ceremony at the US Senate and vote on their NATO accession. The ministers of foreign affairs of NATO candidate countries were received by the President of the USA G. Bush. The Slovak delegation was represented by E. Kukan, State Secretary of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Slovak Republic I. Korčok, the State Secretary of the Ministry of Defence of the Slovak Republic R. Kačer, and the Chairman of the Foreign Affairs Committee of the National Council of the Slovak Republic J. Figeľ.

9 May During the tour through member and candidate countries, the Chairman of the European Council and Prime Minister of the Hellenic Republic C. Simitsis paid a visit to the Slovak Republic. The aim of the negotiations with the Prime Minister of the Slovak Republic M. Dzurinda was to inform Slovak representatives about the programme for the next session of the European Council and learn the standpoints of the Slovak Republic to the main issues of the session.

11 – 12 May At the invitation of the Prime Minister of the Slovak Republic M. Dzurinda, the Prime Minister of the Republic of Portugal J. M. D. Barros paid a working visit to

the Slovak Republic. Besides negotiations with M. Dzurinda, he met the President of the Slovak Republic R. Schuster and the Chairman of the National Council of the Slovak Republic P. Hrušovský. Talks concentrated on current European integration issues, the future membership of the Slovak Republic in the EU, and bilateral co-operation.

14 May At the invitation of the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Slovak Republic E. Kukan, the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Slovenia D. Rupel paid an official visit to the Slovak Republic. Talks concentrated on the future membership of the Slovak Republic and the Republic of Slovenia in the EU and NATO as well as the issues of bilateral co-operation. D. Rupel was also received by the President of the Slovak Republic R. Schuster, the Chairman of the National Council of the Slovak Republic P. Hrušovský and the Prime Minister of the Slovak Republic M. Dzurinda.

19 – 20 May The regular meeting of the EU Council for General Affairs and External Relations took place in Brussels. The Ministers discussed the issue of EU summit preparation as well as EU – Russia bilateral relations, the issue of development assistance, European Defence and Security Policy, and EU political activities towards third states. For the first time, the ministers of foreign affairs of the ten candidate countries took part in this meeting in the role of observers. The Slovak delegation was headed by the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Slovak Republic E. Kukan.

23 – 24 May At the invitation of the Prime Minister of the Czech Republic V. Špidla, the Prime Minister of the Slovak Republic M. Dzurinda paid an official visit to the Czech Republic. Besides negotiations with V. Špidla, M. Dzurinda was received by the 1st Vice-President of the Senate of the Parliament of the Czech Republic P. Sobotka and the Vice-Chairperson of the Chamber of Deputies of the Parliament of the Czech Republic J. Kasala. The talks primarily concentrated on bilateral co-operation, Euro-Atlantic integration, V4 co-operation as well as the problem of Slovak Roma migration to the Czech Republic.

2 June At the invitation of the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Kingdom of Spain A. Palacio, the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Slovak Republic E. Kukan paid a working visit to the Kingdom of Spain. During his stay E. Kukan was, besides negotiations with his counterpart, received by the Chairman of the Congress and Senate of the National Assembly of the Kingdom of Spain L. F. Rudi. The negotiations concentrated on European integration, bilateral relations, and the current international situation.

3 – 4 June A meeting of the NorthAtlantic Council and the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council on the level of ministers of foreign affairs took place in Madrid. At the invitation of the Secretary General of NATO Lord G. Robertson, the Slovak delegation headed by the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the SR E. Kukan took part in this meeting.

4 June On the initiative of the Prime Minister of the Republic of Portugal J. M. D. Barros, the delegation headed by the Prime Minister of the Slovak Republic M. Dzurinda paid a working visit to the Republic of Portugal. The delegation took part in the seminar *Financial Management of Structural Funds*. The Slovak delegation was also represented by the Minister of Construction and Regional Development of the Slovak Republic L. Gyurovszky, other state representatives responsible for structural funds management, the representatives of self-governments and regional development agency projects managers.

4 – 6 June At the invitation of the President of the Slovak Republic R. Schuster, the President of the Ireland M. Mc'Aleese paid an official visit to the Slovak Republic. During her visit M. Mc'Aleese held negotiations with the President of the Slovak Republic R. Schuster, the Chairman of the National Council of the Slovak Republic P. Hrušovský, the Deputy Prime Minister for European Integration, Human Rights and Minorities P. Csáky and the Mayor of Bratislava A. Ďurkivský. The negotiations concentrated on bilateral co-operation, international issues, the preparation of the Slovak Republic on EU accession as well as possibilities of bilateral economic co-operation development.

9 June At the invitation of the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Slovak Republic E. Kukan, the Deputy Prime Minister and the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Czech Republic C. Svoboda paid an official visit to the Slovak Republic. Besides negotiations with E. Kukan, C. Svoboda was also received by the President of the Slovak Republic R. Schuster, the Chairman of the National Council of the Slovak Republic P. Hrušovský, the Prime Minister of the Slovak Republic M. Dzurinda, and the Minister of Defence of the Slovak Republic I. Šimko.

10 – 11 June The Director of the NATO Office for Security W. S. Rychak paid a visit to the Slovak Republic. He was received by the Prime Minister of the Slovak Republic M. Dzurinda and the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Slovak Republic E. Kukan. The subjects of the negotiations focused on the state of preparedness of the Slovak Republic for NATO membership and the issue of security units functioning in the country concerning the commitment to implement security norms and rules necessary for NATO accession.

12 – 13 June The delegation of the Slovak Republic headed by the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Slovak Republic E. Kukan took part in the regular meeting of member states of the Central European Initiative at the level of the ministers of foreign affairs in Wroclaw. The main points of the talks covered standpoints of the participants to European integration regarding the ongoing integration of CEI countries to Euro-Atlantic structures. The member and candidate countries to the EU and NATO expressed their support and interest for co-operation with these countries to build a democratic, stable and safer Europe.

15 – 17 June At the invitation of the President of the Slovak Republic R. Schuster, the President of the Democratic and Popular Republic of Algeria A. Bouteflik paid an official visit to the Slovak Republic. Besides the main negotiations with R. Schuster, A. Bouteflik was also received by the Prime Minister of the Slovak Republic M. Dzurinda. The official delegation was also represented by the State Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Democratic and Popular Republic of Algeria A. Belkhade and the Minister of Finance of the Democratic and Popular Republic of Algeria A. Benachenhou.

16 June The Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Slovak Republic E. Kukan took part in the meeting of the EU External Relations Council in Luxembourg. The meeting was held on the level of ministers of foreign affairs of the 15 members and 10 candidate countries. The topics of the talks focused on the Western Balkans issues, European Defence and Security Policy, weapons of mass destruction, bilateral relations between the EU and USA, and the situation in Myanmar and Libya.

19 – 20 June The Prime Minister of the Slovak Republic M. Dzurinda paid a working visit to the Hellenic Republic where he took part in the EU summit in Thessalonica. The main topic of the summit was the discussion on the EU Constitution Treaty draft. Participants also discussed the issue of common immigration and asylum policy in the context of the enlarged EU as well as the future of the Balkans, further EU enlargement and current international issues.

23 – 24 June At the invitation of the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the French Republic D. de Villepin, the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Slovak Republic E. Kukan paid an official visit to the French Republic. Besides negotiation with his counterpart, E. Kukan also negotiated with the OECD Secretary General D. Johnston and the Minister for the European Affairs of the French Republic N. Lenoir.

June 24 The Prime Minister of the Slovak Republic M. Dzurinda received the Head of the Bureau of European and Eurasian Affairs of the US State Department A. E. Jones. The negotiations focused on bilateral co-operation in the field of economy and the prospects for the development of co-operation in both fields.

24 – 25 June On the occasion of the end of the Slovak presidency, the summit of the prime ministers of the V4 countries was held in Tále. The main point of the programme was the evaluation of the Slovak presidency and the International Visegrad Fund activities, as well as the following Czech presidency priorities and the future of Visegrad co-operation.

26 – 27 June At the invitation of the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Slovak Republic E. Kukan, the Special Representative of the Romanian Government for Integration,

co-operation and Sustainable Development H. E. Prince of Hohenzollern-Veringen paid a working visit to the Slovak Republic. During his visit he met the Deputy Prime Minister for European Integration, Human Rights and Minorities P. Csáky, the State Secretary of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Slovak Republic I. Korčok, the Chairman of the Foreign Affairs Committee of the National Council of the Slovak Republic J. Figeľ and the Chairman of Slovak Chamber of Commerce P. Ihók.

27 – 28 June At the invitation of the Prime Minister of the Slovak Republic M. Dzurinda, the Prime Minister of the Government of the Republic of Croatia I. Račan paid an official visit to the Slovak Republic. Besides the main negotiations of the prime ministers, he met the Chairman of the National Council of the Slovak Republic P. Hrušovský. The negotiations concentrated on issues of bilateral relations, the future membership of the Slovak Republic in the EU and NATO as well as Croatian ambitions for EU integration.

30 June – 3 July At the invitation of the President of the Slovak Republic R. Schuster, the President of the Republic of Portugal J. Sampaio paid an official visit to the Slovak Republic. J. Sampaio negotiated with R. Schuster, the Chairman of the National Council of the Slovak Republic P. Hrušovský, the Prime Minister of the Slovak Republic M. Dzurinda, and met the Mayor of Bratislava A. Ďurkivský. The talks focused on current bilateral relations, economic cooperation, membership of the Slovak Republic in the EU and NATO, and current international issues.

1 July The Prime Minister of the Slovak Republic M. Dzurinda paid a working visit to Strasbourg. During his stay, he visited the Council of Europe and negotiated with the Secretary General of the Council of Europe W. Schwimmer. The points of the negotiations were the integration process in Europe, the role of the Council of Europe, the building and deepening of democracy and civil society among the nations of the enlarging Europe.

1 – 2 July At the invitation of the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Slovak Republic E. Kukan, the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation I. Ivanov paid a working visit to the Slovak Republic. During his stay, he held the negotiations with the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Slovak Republic E. Kukan and was received by the President of the Slovak Republic R. Schuster, the Chairman of the National Council of the Slovak Republic P. Hrušovský, and the Prime Minister of the Slovak Republic M. Dzurinda.

4 July The 4th Regional Partnership Conference of Ministers of Foreign Affairs of Regional Partnership countries took place in Buchlovice in the Czech Republic. The participants appreciated the co-operation within the framework of Regional Partnership at the level of ministers of foreign affairs as well as the levels of culture and agriculture.

6 – 8 July The Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Guatemala E. A. G. Girón paid an official visit to the Slovak Republic. During the visit he was received by the President of the Slovak Republic R. Schuster, the Vice-Chairman of the National Council of the Slovak Republic B. Bugár, and held negotiations with the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Slovak Republic E. Kukan. The talks concentrated on bilateral co-operation in the field of economy.

7 July The 10th meeting of the SR – EU Association Committee was held in Bratislava. The Slovak delegation was headed by the State Secretary of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Slovak Republic J. Berényi. The EU delegation was led by the Representative of the European Union for Slovakia D. Meganck. The talks concentrated on development of the accession process as well as the state of the implementation of the European Treaty.

7 – 8 July The Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Kingdom of Thailand S. Sathirathai paid an official visit to the Slovak Republic. The main points of the negotiations with the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Slovak Republic E. Kukan were an evaluation of bilateral relations, the possibilities for widening co-operation in the field of special technologies, and current political issues.

13 – 15 July At the invitation of the President of the Slovak Republic R. Schuster, the President of the State of Israel M. Katsav paid an official visit to the Slovak Republic. During the visit he negotiated with the President of the Slovak Republic R. Schuster, the Chairman of the National Council of the Slovak Republic P. Hrušovský, and the Prime Minister of the Slovak Republic M. Dzurinda. The talks primarily focused on the issues of bilateral relations, the development of economic co-operation, the expected impacts of Slovakia's accession to the EU and NATO as well as current political issues, primarily the *Road Map* issue.

15 July The Chairman of the Chamber of Deputies of the Parliament of the Republic of Italy P. F. Casini paid an official visit to the SR. He was received by the Prime Minister of the Slovak Republic M. Dzurinda. The key topics of negotiations were the issue of the development of bilateral co-operation, the deepening of economic co-operation, and future membership of the Slovak Republic in the EU and NATO.

16 July The State Secretary of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Mongolia R. Altangerel paid a visit to the Slovak Republic. He negotiated with the State Secretary of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Slovak Republic J. Berényi. Both representatives evaluated the current state of bilateral relations. They also discussed the possibilities of co-operation in the field of economy and current international issues.

19 July The Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Slovak Republic E. Kukan met the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Hungary L. Kovács in Bratislava. The key topics of the negotiations were to evaluate the possibilities of joint support for national minorities in the field of education and culture.

24 – 29 August The State Secretary of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Slovak Republic J. Berényi paid a working visit to Japan. During the visit, he negotiated with Senior Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs of Japan T. Yano. The negotiations concentrated on bilateral relations, the accession process of the SR to the EU and NATO, OECD reform including the accession of new members, changes in the decision processes and member dues of individual states.

5 – 6 September The Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Slovak Republic E. Kukan took part in the informal meeting at the level of the EU ministers of foreign affairs in Riva del Garda. The main points of the programme were questions regarding the following Intergovernmental Conference, the security strategy of the EU and European Defence Policy as well as the current international issues especially in the regions of the Mediterranean Sea and Near East.

15 – 17 September The Minister of Foreign Affairs of New Zealand P. B. Goff paid an official visit to the Slovak Republic. The negotiations with the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Slovak Republic E. Kukan focused on issues of bilateral relations and the possibility of the widening co-operation in the field of economy and trade as well as current political issues.

17 – 18 September At the invitation of the Government of the Slovak Republic on the occasion of the 10th anniversary of the independence of the Slovak Republic and 3rd anniversary of the Slovak Republic's accession to the OECD, a meeting of the OECD Council was held in the High Tatras. It was headed by OECD Secretary General D. Johnston. The meeting was focused on strengthening bilateral relations between the Slovak Republic and OECD as well as a presentation by the Slovak Republic as a new member state of the OECD.

21 – 22 September On the occasion of the 80th birthday of the former Prime Minister of the State of Israel S. Peres, the President of the Slovak Republic R. Schuster paid a working visit to the State of Israel. R. Schuster also met the President of the State of Israel M. Katsav and Vice Prime Minister, Minister of Communication, Minister of Industry and Trade E. Olmert. The key topics of the talks focused on an evaluation of bilateral relations, further development for co-operation in the field of economy, the Israel-Palestinian conflict and the situation in the Near East.

22 – 24 *September* The State Secretary of the Ministry of foreign Affairs of the Slovak Republic I. Korčok took part in the 58th meeting of the UN General Assembly in New York. I. Korčok met the UN Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations J. M. Guéhenn. The talks focused on the participation of the Slovak Republic in UN operations to support the peace-keeping process.

25 – 26 *September* The Prime Minister of the Slovak Republic M. Dzurinda paid a working visit to the Swiss Confederation. M. Dzurinda took part in the Symposium *Churchill's Europe 2003*. He delivered a speech *Slovak Republic and the Future Development in Europe*. The aim of the speech was to stress the significance of the integration process in Europe and to introduce a view of the future of the Slovak Republic as part of the unified European community.

26 – 27 *September*. At the invitation of the Prime Minister of the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg J. C. Juncker, the Prime Minister of the Slovak Republic M. Dzurinda paid an official visit to the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg. Besides negotiations with his counterpart, M. Dzurinda was received by the Grand Duke of Luxembourg Henri, the President of the Parliament of the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg J. Spautz, and the members of the Foreign Affairs Committee of the Parliament of the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg. The main points of the negotiations were bilateral relations, the issue of European integration aimed at Slovakia's accession to the EU, questions related to Schengen as well as current international issues. M. Dzurinda was accompanied by the Minister of Interior of the Slovak Republic V. Palko and the State Secretary of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Slovak Republic I. Korčok.

2 – 3 *October* At the Invitation of the President of the Republic of Croatia S. Mesič, the President of the Slovak Republic R. Schuster paid an official visit to the Republic of Croatia. Besides negotiations with S. Mesič, R. Schuster met the Prime Minister of the Republic of Croatia I. Račan, the Chairman of the Parliament of the Republic of Croatia Z. Tomčić, as well as the Vice-Chairman of the Parliament and representatives of Croatian municipal politicians. The points of the talks focused on issues of bilateral relations, the future membership of the Slovak Republic in the EU and NATO, as well as the integration efforts of the Republic of Croatia.

1 *October* A meeting of the prime ministers of governments of V4 countries took place at Dobříš Castle in the Czech Republic. The main points of the negotiations concentrated on the programme of the Czech V4 Presidency and the standpoints of the coming Intergovernmental Conference on EU. The Slovak delegation was headed by the Prime Minister of the Slovak Republic M. Dzurinda.

2 – 4 *October* The President of the National Assembly of the Republic of Bulgaria O. Gerdžikov paid an official visit to the Slovak Republic. He was received by the Prime

Minister of the Slovak Republic M. Dzurinda. The key topics of the talks were the issues of widening bilateral relations in a variety of fields, the EU and NATO integration ambitions of both countries as well as current political issues.

4 October The Prime Minister of the Slovak Republic M. Dzurinda paid a working visit to Rome. M. Dzurinda together with the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Slovak Republic E. Kukan took part in the official opening of the Intergovernmental Conference on the draft of the Constitutional Treaty of the EU. The main aim of the Conference was to negotiate the draft Constitution. M. Dzurinda also met the President of the European Parliament P. Cox. The conference continued with talks on the level of ministers of foreign affairs.

6 October The Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Macedonia I. Mitreva paid an official visit to the Slovak Republic. She negotiated with the President of the Slovak Republic R. Schuster, the Chairman of the National Council of the Slovak Republic P. Hrušovský, the Deputy Prime Minister and the Minister of Economy of the Slovak Republic P. Rusko, and the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the SR E. Kukan. The points of the talks included prospects for widening bilateral co-operation in the field of economy, support for the candidacy for non-permanent members of the UN Security Council as well as offering Euro-Atlantic integration know-how.

8 – 9 October The Chairman of Supreme Council of Ukraine V. Lytvyn paid an official visit to the Slovak Republic. During his visit, he was received by the Prime Minister of the Slovak Republic M. Dzurinda. Talks concentrated on current international issues, widening mutual co-operation in a variety of fields, and options for co-operation in multilateral forums.

14 – 15 October At the invitation of the President of the Slovak Republic R. Schuster, the President of the Republic of Slovenia J. Drnovšek paid an official visit to the Slovak Republic. Besides the main negotiations with R. Schuster, J. Drnovšek met the Prime Minister of the Slovak Republic M. Dzurinda and the Chairman of the National Council of the Slovak Republic P. Hrušovský. The significant points of negotiations were issues of the upcoming membership in the EU and NATO, ongoing talks on the EU Constitution, the current state of bilateral relations, widening of co-operation in the field of economy and on the international level.

16 – 17 October The Prime Minister of the Slovak Republic M. Dzurinda took part in the EU Summit held in Brussels. The main point of the programme was to continue the discussion within the context of the Intergovernmental Conference, during which participants negotiated the future draft of the unified constitutional document.

16 – 17 October The State Secretary of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Slovak Republic J. Berényi received the State Secretary of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Trade for Central and East Europe and the Near East of Canada G. Knutson. G. Knutson paid a visit to the Slovak Republic together with a group of perspective Canadian investors. The negotiations focused on an evaluation of bilateral relations between the Slovak Republic and Canada in the field of economy and trade.

20 – 21 October At the invitation of the President of the Republic of Hungary F. Mádl, the President of the Slovak Republic R. Schuster paid an official visit to the Republic of Hungary. During the visit, R. Schuster negotiated with F. Mádl and met the Prime Minister of the Republic of Hungary P. Medgyessy, the Vice-Chairman of the Parliament of the Republic of Hungary, and the Chairman of the opposition political party FIDESZ V. Orbán. The Slovak delegation was also represented by the Minister of Culture of the Slovak Republic R. Chmel and the State Secretary of the Ministry of Education of the Slovak Republic F. Toth.

21 October The Prime Minister of the Slovak Republic M. Dzurinda met the President of the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development J. Lemierre. The main points of the negotiations were issues of co-operation between the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development and the Slovak Republic in the field of small and medium enterprises, the development of infrastructure in cities and municipalities, support for regions with a high unemployment rate as well as by financing projects in the Slovak Republic.

21 – 22 October At the invitation of the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Slovak Republic E. Kukan, the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Estonia K. Ojuland paid an official visit to the Slovak Republic. During her visit, she held negotiations with the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Slovak Republic E. Kukan and met the President of the Slovak Republic R. Schuster, the Chairman of the National Council of the Slovak Republic P. Hrušovský and the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance of the Slovak Republic I. Mikloš. The main points of the negotiations were bilateral relations, EU and NATO enlargement as well as current international issues.

27 – 28 October At the invitation of the Prime Minister of the Slovak Republic M. Dzurinda, the Prime Minister of the Czech Republic V. Špidla paid a visit to the Slovak Republic. Besides the main negotiations between the prime ministers, V. Špidla was received by the President of the Slovak Republic R. Schuster and the Chairman of the National Council of the Slovak Republic P. Hrušovský. The talks concentrated on the bilateral political and economic co-operation as well as the current state of the accession process of both countries to the EU.

29 October The Federal Chancellor of the Federal Republic of Germany G. Schröder paid a working visit to the Slovak Republic. During the visit he was received by the President of the Slovak Republic R. Schuster and the Prime Minister of the Slovak Republic M. Dzurinda. The main points of the negotiations were an evaluation of bilateral relations between Slovakia and Germany, the deepening of co-operation in a variety of fields. Both prime ministers also discussed issues concerning the common future in the enlarged EU.

29 – 30 October The State Secretary of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Slovak Republic J. Berényi took part in the 58th meeting of the UN General Assembly on *Financing for Development*. The main aim of the meeting focused on an evaluation of the implementation of the Monterey Consensus. During the discussion, J. Berényi confirmed the commitment of the Slovak Government to help reducing starvation and poverty in developing countries.

30 – 31 October The Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Norway K. Bondevik paid an official visit to the Slovak Republic. During the visit, he met the President of the Slovak Republic R. Schuster, the Chairman of the National Council of the Slovak Republic P. Hrušovský and the Prime Minister of the Slovak Republic M. Dzurinda. Talks concentrated on bilateral co-operation between Slovakia and Norway, the options for widening mutual contacts at all levels, and co-operation of both countries within the framework of Euro-Atlantic organisations.

3 November Based on V4 country presidents and at the invitation of the President of the Republic of Hungary F. Mádl, the meeting of presidents of V4 countries took place in Budapest. The main topic of the meeting was the issue of the future of V4 co-operation after EU accession. The presidents also discussed the issues of cross border and regional co-operation, the Schengen acquis, and proposed realisation of measures to national governments.

3 – 4 November At the invitation of the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina M. Ivanič, the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Slovak Republic E. Kukan paid an official visit to the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina. Besides negotiations with his counterpart, E. Kukan met the Vice-Chairmen of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina M. Raguž and S. Džafenovič and members of the Presidency of the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina D. Covič, S. Tihič and V. Paravac. He also visited the High Representative of the International Community for the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina Lord P. Ashdown.

6 November The Prime Minister of Ireland B. Ahern during his tour through candidate countries paid a working visit to the Slovak Republic. During the visit, he negotiated with the Prime Minister of the Government of the SR M. Dzurinda. They discussed

the tasks of the following Irish EU presidency, the future of the EU, current security policy issues, the situation in the Balkans and Iraq, neighbourhood relations as well as widening economic co-operation.

7–8 November The Prime Minister of the Slovak Republic M. Dzurinda paid a working visit to the Republic of Slovenia. He took part in the meeting of prime ministers of CEFTA member countries and met the Prime Minister of the Republic of Slovenia A. Rop. The prime ministers discussed the issues of future activities of CEFTA due to the upcoming entry of five CEFTA member states to the EU as well as the integration ambitions of the other three countries – Romania, Bulgaria and Croatia.

10 November At the invitation of the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Kingdom of the Netherlands J. De Hoop Scheffer, the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Slovak Republic E. Kukan paid an official visit to the Kingdom of the Netherlands. The main points of negotiations for both ministers focused on political development in Slovakia, the status of the Roma and Hungarian minorities in Slovakia, security policy issues, and the future membership of the Slovak Republic in NATO.

10 – 12 November At the invitation of the Prime Minister of the State of Israel A. Sharon, the Prime Minister of the Slovak Republic M. Dzurinda paid an official visit to the State of Israel. Besides negotiations between the prime ministers, M. Dzurinda was received by the President of the State of Israel M. Katsav, the Chairman of the Knesset R. Rivlin, and he also met the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the State of Israel S. Shalom. The talks concentrated primarily on bilateral co-operation as well as an evaluation of the current state of co-operation in a variety of fields and prospects for future co-operation.

11 November At the invitation of the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Slovak Republic E. Kukan, the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Kingdom of Denmark P. S. Møller paid a working visit to the Slovak Republic. The talks focused on bilateral relations, Euro and Euro-Atlantic integration. The ministers also exchanged standpoints on the Intergovernmental Conference.

20 – 21 November The Slovak delegation led by the Prime Minister of the Slovak Republic M. Dzurinda took part in the regular summit of prime ministers of member states of the Central European Initiative in Warsaw. The negotiations focused on the political situation in the region of the Central European Initiative, the role of the CEI in the process of the EU enlargement, and they adopted the Final Document summarising the meeting's talks.

24–25 November The Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Slovak Republic E. Kukan at the invitation of the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Moldova N. Duda,

paid a working visit to the Republic of Moldova. Besides negotiations with N. Duda, E. Kukan also met the President of the Republic of Moldova V. Voronin, the Chairman of the Parliament of the Republic of Moldova E. Ostapciuc, and the Prime Minister of the Republic of Moldova V. Tarlev. The main points of the negotiations were issues of bilateral co-operation with an emphasis on widening economic relations and the current political situation in the Republic of Moldova.

2 – 3 December The Slovak delegation led by the State Secretary of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Slovak Republic I. Korčok took part in the conference of countries of the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership in Naples. The negotiations concentrated on three points: the Euro-Mediterranean Parliament Assembly, the financial assistance of the European Investment Bank in the Mediterranean region, and the Euro-Mediterranean Foundation for the Dialog of Cultures.

4 – 5 December The Slovak delegation led by the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Slovak Republic E. Kukan took part in the meeting of the North Atlantic Council, the NATO Commission – Ukraine and the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council in Brussels. The negotiations focused on the preparation of the summit in Istanbul as well as current issues concerning the Alliance's transformation process, the strengthening of NATO forces in Afghanistan, the situation in Iraq, strategic co-operation between NATO and the EU, and the widening of co-operation with partner countries in the Balkans and Central Asia.

18 – 19 December The Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Slovak Republic E. Kukan paid a working visit to the USA. During the visit, E. Kukan opened the Consulate General in New York and met the UN Secretary General K. Annan. During his stay, he also met representatives of Slovak communities and the American media.

The List of Treaties and Agreements Concluded between the Slovak Republic and Other Countries in 2003

Presidential Treaties

1. Agreement between the Government of the Slovak Republic and the Government of Romania on Inland Shipping
(Bratislava, 5 March 2003)
2. Convention between the Government of the Slovak Republic and the Government of the Republic of Uzbekistan for the Avoidance of Double Taxation and the Prevention of Fiscal Evasion with Respect to Taxes on Income and on Capital
(Tashkent, 6 March 2003)
3. Agreement between the Government of the Slovak Republic and the Government of the Russian Federation on International Transport by Road
(Moscow, 8 April 2003)
4. Convention between the Government of the Slovak Republic and the Government of the Republic of Slovenia for the Avoidance of Double Taxation and the Prevention of Fiscal Evasion with Respect to Taxes on Income and on Capital
(Bratislava, 14 May 2003)
5. Additional Protocol between the Slovak Republic and the United States of America to the Agreement between the Czech and Slovak Federative Republic and United States of America on Promotion and Reciprocal Protection of Investments
(Brussels, 22 September 2003)

Source: International Law Department of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Slovak Republic

6. Agreement between the Slovak Republic and the Republic of Hungary on Border Management in Road, Rail and Water Transportation
(Bratislava, 9 October 2003)
7. Convention between the Slovak Republic and the Republic of Estonia for the Avoidance of Double Taxation and the Prevention of Fiscal Evasion with Respect to Taxes on Income and on Capital
(Bratislava, 21 October 2003)
8. Framework Agreement between the Slovak Republic and the Republic of Austria on Cross-Border Co-operation between Territorial Units or Bodies
(Bratislava, 25 October 2003)
9. Convention between the Slovak Republic and the Republic of Moldova for the Avoidance of Double Taxation and the Prevention of Fiscal Evasion with Respect to Taxes on Income and on Capital
(Chisinau, 25 November 2003)

Inter-Governmental Treaties

1. Financial Memorandum of the National PHARE Programme 2002 signed between the European Community and the Government of the Slovak Republic
(Bratislava, 10 January 2003)
2. Financial Memorandum of the PHARE Cross-Border Co-operation Programme between the Slovak Republic and the Republic of Poland for 2002 signed between the European Community and the Government of the Slovak Republic
(Bratislava, 10 January 2003)
3. Financial Memorandum of the PHARE Cross-Border Co-operation Programme between the Slovak Republic and the Republic of Hungary for 2002 signed between the European Community and the Government of the Slovak Republic
(Bratislava, 10 January 2003)
4. Financial Memorandum of the PHARE Cross-Border Co-operation Programme between the Slovak Republic and the Republic of Austria for 2002 signed between the European Community and the Government of the Slovak Republic
(Bratislava, 10 January 2003)

5. Agreement between the Government of the Slovak Republic and the Government of the Republic of Hungary on Co-operation in the field of Culture, Education, Science, Sport and Youth
(Budapest, 16 January 2003)
6. Agreement between the Government of the Slovak Republic and the Government of the Czech Republic on establishment of Slovak and Czech Border Executing Point at the Road Border Crossing Brodské (D2) - Břeclav (D2)
(Prague, 22 January 2003)
7. Agreement between the Government of the Slovak Republic and the Government of the Czech Republic on establishment of Slovak and Czech Border Executing Point at the Road Border Svrčinovec - Mosty u Jablunkova
(Prague, 22 January 2003)
8. Exchanging Programme between the Government of the Slovak Republic and the Government of the State of Israel in the field of Culture, Education and Science for years 2001 – 2004
(Jerusalem, 27 January 2003)
9. Decision No 1/2003 of the EU-Slovak Republic Association Council amending Protocol 4 to the Europe Agreement, concerning the definition of the concept of “originating products” and methods of administrative co-operation
(Brussels, 6 February 2003)
10. Agreement between the Slovak Republic and the Republic of Portugal on the Scientific and Technological Co-operation
(Lisbon, 17 February 2003)
11. Agreement between the Government of the Slovak Republic and the Government of the Federal Republic of Germany on Readmission and Transfer of Persons
(Berlin, 19 February 2003)
12. Protocol on Amendment to the Agreement between the Government of the Slovak Republic and the Government of Ukraine on International Road Transportation
(Kiev, 24 February 2003)
13. Agreement between the Government of the Slovak Republic and the Government of Quebec on Social Welfare
(Quebec, 25 February 2003)

14. Agreement between the Government of the Slovak Republic and the Government of the Republic of Croatia on Mutual Assistance in Customs Issues
(Zagreb, 4 March 2003)
15. Agreement between the Government of the Slovak Republic and the Government of the Republic of Austria on Establishment of Common Contact Station at the Highway Border Crossing Jarovce – Kittsee at the territory of the Slovak Republic
(Bratislava, 22 April 2003)
16. Protocol Adjusting the Trade Aspects of the European Agreement Establishing an Association between the European Communities and their Member States, of the one part, and the Slovak Republic of the other part, to Take Account of the Outcome of Negotiations between the Parties on New Mutual Agricultural Concessions
(Brussels, 24 April 2003)
17. Agreement between the Government of the Slovak Republic and the Government of the Republic of Croatia on Co-operation and Mutual Assistance in Case of catastrophes
(Zagreb, 19 May 2003)
18. Co-operation Agreement between the Slovak Republic and the European Police Office
(Bratislava, 13 June 2003)
19. Agreement between the Slovak Republic and Serbia and Montenegro on Development Co-operation
(Belgrade, 19 June 2003)
20. Agreement between the Slovak Republic and the Republic of Portugal on Co-operation in the field of Education, Culture, Science and Technology, Youth, Sport and the Means of Mass Communication
(Bratislava, 1 July 2003)
21. Memorandum of Understanding between the Government of the Slovak Republic and the Government of Canada on the Official Development Assistance for Central Europe Programme
(Bratislava, 10 July 2003)
22. Agreement between the Government of the Slovak Republic and the Government of Ukraine on Establishment of the Embassies of the Slovak Republic in Ukraine and vice versa and on Services
(Bratislava, 15 July 2003)

23. Agreement between the Slovak Republic and the European Union on the Participation of the Slovak Republic to the European Union Police Mission (EUPM) in Bosnia and Herzegovina
(Brussels, 31 July 2003)
24. Memorandum of Understanding between the Government of the Slovak Republic and United Nations Development Programme on Development Co-operation
(New York, 15 September 2003)
25. Agreement between the Government of the Slovak Republic and the Government of the Republic of Bulgaria on Missiles Liquidation Assistance
(Bratislava, 16 September 2003)
26. Agreement between the Government of the Slovak Republic and the Government of the Czech Republic on Military Cemeteries
(Bratislava, 23 September 2003)
27. Memorandum of Understanding on the reorientation of the Swiss-Slovak Counterpart Fund (SSCPF)
(Bratislava, 25 September 2003)
28. Agreement between the Government of the Slovak Republic and the Government of the Republic of Hungary on Performing of the Treaty between the Government of the Slovak Republic and the Government of the Republic of Hungary on Border Execution in Road, Rail and Water Transportation
(Bratislava, 9 October 2003)
29. Amendment No. 1 to the Agreement between the Government of the Slovak Republic and the Republic of Slovenia on International Road Transportation
(Bratislava, 14 October 2003)
30. Agreement between the Government of the Slovak Republic and the Government of Romania on Co-operation in Combating Organised Crime, Illicit Trafficking in Narcotic Drugs, Psychotropic Substances and Precursors, Terrorism, as well as other Serious Crime
(Bucharest, 16 October 2003)
31. Agreement between the Government of the Slovak Republic and the Government of the Federative Republic of Brazil on the Partial Waiver of the Visa Requirement
(Bratislava, 12 November 2003)

32. Memorandum of Co-operation and Mutual Understanding between the Slovak Republic and the Kyrgyz Republic
(Bratislava, 8 December 2003)
33. Security Agreement between the Government of the Slovak Republic and the Government of the Kingdom of Sweden on the Mutual Protection of Classified Information
(Bratislava, 9 December 2003)
34. Agreement between the Government of the Slovak Republic and the Government of the Macao Special Administrative Region of the People's Republic of China on Abolition of Visa Requirements
(Macao, 10 December 2003)
35. Agreement between the Government of the Slovak Republic and the Government of the Republic of Hungary Concerning Mutual Support for National Minorities in the fields of Education and Culture
(Brussels, 12 December 2003)

Ministerial Treaties

1. Protocol between the Ministry of Agriculture of the Slovak Republic and the Forests State Administration Unit of the People's Republic of China on Mutual Co-operation in the field of Afforestation
(Beijing, 6 January 2003)
2. The Plan of Co-operation in the field of Health between the Ministry of Health of the Slovak Republic and the Ministry of Health of the Republic of Bulgaria for years 2003 – 2005
(Sofia, 14 January 2003)
3. The Plan of Co-operation between the Ministry of Culture of the Slovak Republic and the Ministry of Cultural Heritage of the Republic of Hungary for years 2003 – 2005
(Budapest, 16 January 2003)
4. Memorandum of Understanding between the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Slovak Republic and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Islamic Republic of Iran
(Bratislava, 7 February 2003)

5. Agreement between the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Slovak Republic and the Ministry of the Foreign Affairs of the Czech Republic on Execution of the Article 1 of the Agreement between the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Slovak Republic and the Ministry of the Foreign Affairs of the Czech Republic on Co-operation in the Consular Services from February 4, 1993
(Prague, 7 March 2003; by notes exchange)
6. The Plan of Co-operation in the field of Health between the Ministry of Health of the Slovak Republic and the Ministry of Health of the Republic of Slovenia for years 2003 – 2004
(Ljubljana, 10 April 2003)
7. Amendment No. 1 to the Administrative Agreement between the Ministry of Health of the Slovak Republic and the Ministry of Health of the Czech Republic on Execution of the Agreement between the Slovak Republic and the Czech Republic on Health Care and Reimbursement of the Health Care Expenditures
(Brno, 18 July 2003)
8. Co-operation Programme between the Slovak Republic and the Kingdom of Spain in the field of Education and Culture for years 2003 – 2006
(Bratislava, 30 July 2003)
9. Co-operation Programme between the Ministry of Education of the Slovak Republic and the Ministry of Culture of the Slovak Republic and the Ministry of Education, Science and Sport of the Republic of Slovenia and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Slovenia in the field of Education and Culture for years 2003 – 2006
(Bratislava, 14 October 2003)
10. Co-operation Programme between the Ministry of Education of the Slovak Republic and the Ministry of the Education and Research of the Arab Republic of Egypt the field of Education and Science for years 2003 – 2006
(Cairo, 11 December 2003)

Multilateral Treaties

1. Convention concerning Night Work of Women Employed in Industry
(San Francisco, 9 July 1948)
note: dep.: ILO
revised in 1948

published: No. 36/1980 Zb., No.17/1991 Zb., No. 110/1997 Z.z.
since 11 February 2003 not in force for the Slovak Republic
ILO Convention No. 89

2. Night Work Convention
(Geneva, 26 June 1990)
note: dep.: ILO
instrument of ratification deposited on 11 February 2002
entered into force for the Slovak Republic on 11 February 2003
ILO Convention No. 171
3. European Convention on the Supervision of Conditionally Sentenced or
Conditionally Released Offenders
(Strasbourg, 30 November 1964)
note: dep.: SG CoE
signed on behalf of the Slovak Republic on 12 March 2003
instrument of ratification deposited on 21 July 2003
entered into force for the Slovak Republic on 22 October 2003
Document No. 51
4. International Cocoa Agreement, 2001
(Geneva, 2 March 2001)
note: dep.: SG UN
signed on behalf of the Slovak Republic on 4 December 2002
instrument of ratification deposited on 28 March 2003
5. The Treaty of Accession to the European Union 2003
(Athens, 16 April 2003)
note: dep.: the Government of the Republic of Italy
instrument of ratification deposited on 9 October 2003
6. European Agreement relating to Persons Participating in Proceedings of the
European Court of Human Rights
(Strasbourg, 5 March 1996)
note: dep.: SG CoE
signed on behalf of the Slovak Republic on 4 September 2002
instrument of ratification deposited on 21 May 2003
Document No. 161
7. Civil Law Convention on Corruption
(Strasbourg, 4 November 1999)
note: dep.: SG CoE

- signed on behalf of the Slovak Republic on 8 June 2000
instrument of ratification deposited on 21 May 2003
Document No. 174
8. Framework Convention on the Protection and Sustainable Development of the Carpathians
(Kiev, 22 May 2003)
note: dep. the Government of Ukraine
signed on behalf of the Slovak Republic on 22 May 2003
9. Convention concerning Equal Opportunities and Equal Treatment for Men and Women Workers: Workers with Family Responsibilities
(Geneva, 23 June 1981)
note: dep. ILO
instrument of ratification deposited on 14 June 2002
entered into force for the Slovak Republic on 11 August 1983
ILO Convention No. 156
10. UNIDROIT Convention on Stolen or Illegally Exported Cultural Objects
(Rome, 24 June 1995)
note: dep. the Government of the Republic of Italy
the Slovak Republic accession document deposited on 16 June 2003
entered into force for the Slovak Republic on 1 December 2003
11. Convention concerning Safety and Health in Agriculture
(Geneva, 21 June 2001)
note: dep. ILO
instrument of ratification deposited on 14 June 2002
entered into force for the Slovak Republic on 20 September 2003
ILO Convention No. 184
12. Constituency Agreement between the Governors of the International Monetary Fund and of the World Bank for Austria, Belarus, Belgium, the Czech Republic, Hungary, Kazakhstan, Luxembourg, the Slovak Republic, Slovenia and Turkey
(Brussels, 8 October 2003)
note: dep. National Bank of the Kingdom of Belgium
13. Protocol to the 1979 Convention on Long-range Transboundary Air Pollution on Persistent Organic Pollutants
(Aarhus, 24 June 1998)
note: dep.: SG UN.
the acceptance document deposited on 30 December 2002
entered into force for the Slovak Republic on 23 October 2003

14. Convention for the Unification of Certain Rules for International Carriage
(Montreal, 28 May 1999)
note: dep. ICAO
signed on behalf of the Slovak Republic on 28 May 1999
instrument of ratification deposited on 11 October 2000
entered into force for the Slovak Republic on 4 November 2003

15. Convention on the Transboundary Effects of Industrial Accidents
(Helsinki, 27 March 1992)
note: dep. SG UN
the accession document deposited on 9 September 2003
entered into force for the Slovak Republic on 8 December 2003

16. Protocol to the 1979 Convention on Long-range Transboundary Air Pollution on
Heavy Metals
(Aarhus, 24 June 1998)
note: dep.: SG UN
the acceptance document deposited on 30 December 2002
entered into force for the Slovak Republic on 29 December 2003

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