

Sinfo 09

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The latest from Slovenia



IN FOCUS INTERVIEW: **Roman Jakič**, Minister of Defence
BUSINESS INTERVIEW: **Andrew Page**, British Ambassador to Slovenia
EUROBASKET INTERVIEW: **Ivo Daneu**

Comprehensive Regional Ministerial



1-3.10.2013
Brdo | Slovenia

Harmonization of Regional Defence and Security Cooperation
in the Western Balkans and the South-Eastern Europe



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Photo: Archive of Ministry of Defence



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Slovenia has more talent per square kilometre than any other country in Europe

Photo: British Embassy Ljubljana



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The story of a legend of Slovenian, Yugoslavian, European and world basketball

Photo: Nebojša Tejić/STA



SINFO – SLOVENIAN INFORMATION

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Photo: Bruno Toič

Tanja Glogovčan, editor

Inspiring Stories

The September edition of Sinfo concludes the successful story of the preparations, happenings and successes surrounding EuroBasket 2013. As we were wondering before each game or during it whether the Slovenian team would beat their opponents, we discovered that, as well as technique, team work and playing with heart were needed to win. And each time these were combined, we were able to celebrate at the end. But we were proud throughout that Slovenia was being represented at EuroBasket by such a superb team, even when things did not go smoothly. You will learn more about the sport and the history of Slovenian basketball in the interview with the legendary Ivo Daneu, the best Slovenian basketball player of all time.

The central topic of this issue is a theme that has received little attention in the past, but is nevertheless very current. We interviewed the Minister of Defence, Roman Jakič. A comprehensive regional meeting of defence ministers from South-Eastern Europe and the Western Balkans will be held at Brdo pri Kranju between 1 and 3 October. On issues of defence and other topical political and economic questions, we spoke to Andrew Page, Ambassador to Slovenia of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

The articles on the start-up company, Koofr, and innovator Erika Drobnič are proof that, with enough inspiration, success is possible even in an economic crisis. We also invite you to read our other interesting articles, which include a summary of impressions from the Bled Strategic Forum, and presentations of Slovenian mountain trails. We hope you find the stories inspiring.



Photo: GCO

Slovenia: successful host to EuroBasket 2013

This September, Slovenia seems to be a veritable Europe in miniature. The matches of the European Basketball Championships are behind us and we can all be satisfied with the attendance and the organisation of the tournament, which was running smoothly. It is interesting to note, in terms of sport, that EuroBasket 2013 has become a championship of surprises, with basketball superpowers such as Russia and Turkey eliminated in the qualifying rounds, while Finland, an outsider without any particularly notable previous results, qualified for the next stage. The towns of Celje, Koper, Ljubljana and Jesenice have all turned out to be very friendly hosts. Here I should give special mention to Jesenice, which till now has had a reputation as a “hockey town”: the atmosphere in the Podmežakla sports hall was great, with supporters behaving well and no incidents reported. More generally, it is worth mentioning that the supporters’ contribution to the great atmosphere during the championships has been considerable; this is true, in particular, of the fans from Finland, who couldn’t praise highly enough the friendliness of their hosts in Koper. They were also enthusiastic about the low prices they found here, at least compared with those in Finland. The championships then moved to Ljubljana’s Stožice Sports Centre, where all further matches were to be played, including the final on Sunday 22 September.

The European Basketball Championships have nearly overshadowed the economic and political events in Slovenia, though these are no less interesting or tense than those in the sports halls. The Government of Alenka Bratušek is preparing a revised 2014 national budget aimed at achieving a very ambitious goal: a maximum three percent deficit as required by the European Commission. With recession still on in Slovenia, this will be very hard to accomplish, which explains why the political temperature in the country is on the rise. Along with budget documents, the Government has been drawing up a package of measures to ensure economic growth and new jobs. The discussion on the envisaged measures includes proposals from the economic sector and the trade unions, which makes the social dialogue truly lively. Efforts to exit the crisis also include the measures taken by the Government with a view to combating the grey economy. So far, Slovenia has had little success in this domain; accordingly, the Govern-

ment has decided to tackle the problem with more determination and consistency. The new measures are based on increased supervision to be carried out by the inspectors, who will be given more powers through the legislation amendments. Stricter control will also be imposed on the owners of illegally built buildings, who will have to pay compensation for such buildings until their legalisation. Estimates concerning the scope of the grey economy in Slovenia vary considerably, ranging from four to as much as ten billion euros. The Government’s aim is to halve the volume of the grey economy, which would entail a significant increase in budget revenues. Another important factor is the public awareness campaign promoting a view that tax evasion constitutes a loss for us all and that buying without an invoice is ultimately more expensive since it excludes relevant servicing and guarantees. Obviously, such campaigns take time in order to have the desired effect. But this was also the problem with the separation of waste, and today Slovenia is one of the most successful countries in this area, while only a decade ago it was way down in comparison with other European countries.

In September, the Bank of Slovenia, in accordance with its powers, took a very important decision to initiate the procedure of controlled liquidation of two Slovenian banks, namely Probanka and Factor banka. These are two smaller Slovenian banks with relatively low market shares, but the Bank of Slovenia has effectively started the process of rehabilitation and stabilisation of the Slovenian banking system, which is crucial for our way out of the crisis. In this respect, the Bank of Slovenia has finally taken over the central role, which is something that should have happened long before; however, close cooperation with the Government and the Ministry of Finance should also be mentioned. The decision to liquidate two of its banks was very positively welcomed by the European Commission. The most important thing was that the Bank of Slovenia and the Government, through coordinated action, managed to persuade the people not to panic by withdrawing deposits from their accounts, which would threaten the liquidity of other banks. Again, it has been demonstrated that credible, professional and coordinated action is the only remedy to ensure that Slovenia overcomes the crisis.

Foreign Direct Investments Conference

Prime Minister Alenka Bratušek attended this year’s Foreign Direct Investments Conference – FDI Summit Slovenia 2013 under the theme “A Clear Vision for the Future”.

In her address, the Prime Minister presented to the conference participants the key measures the Government has adopted in the last six months to improve the economic and social climate in Slovenia. She highlighted Slovenia’s competitive advantages and the efforts of the Government to enhance the opportunities for quality investments in Slovenia, which will also create new jobs. Prime Minister Bratušek is convinced that Slovenia is very attractive and suitable for foreign direct investments, as it has a healthy industrial base, well-developed infrastructure, and qualified, hardworking and talented people.



Photo: Nebojša Težić/STA

Slovenian Government supports new foreign direct investments as an excellent tool for stimulating economic growth, economic stability, a reduction in unemployment and improved well-being of the population and Slovenia’s better integration in international trade.

Against grey economy

The Government approved a programme of measures aimed to combat the grey economy, which also foresees curbing undeclared employment, inspection campaigns, amendments to health-care legislation and damages for illegal building. Measures also tackle cash payments, duties and eliminating administrative barriers.

The Government plans to launch a comprehensive campaign to reduce the grey economy, which includes incentives, eliminating the main causes, and greater oversight and sanctions. The plan, Mitigating the Grey Economy in the Republic of Slovenia, presents sector-specific policies and measures, and horizontal measures focused on improving the detection of the grey economy, better sanctions policy, prevention, and raising citizens’ awareness of the significance of the grey economy and its consequences. The grey economy is increasingly becoming not only an economic, but also a moral issue and a problem of values in Europe. Therefore, the Government will regularly monitor and update the implementation of documents and measures.



Photo: Tamino Petelinšek/STA

The aim is to reduce the grey economy by half, which translates into at least two million euros in additional tax revenues.

Striving for a better Europe

The Prime Ministers of Slovenia, Italy and Croatia met in Venice, where they shared the idea of enhanced cooperation on energy and infrastructure projects in the Northern Adriatic.

At a joint press conference held by Slovenian Prime Minister Bratušek, Croatian Prime Minister Milanović, and the host, Italian Prime Minister, Enrico Letta, the latter said that they saw many possibilities for cooperation between the three countries. As a concrete example, he stressed that the Northern Adriatic ports in all three countries should not compete, but could develop only through mutual cooperation and thus compete against other larger ports in the world. The Prime Ministers also agreed to harmonise positions at the European level. In this light, they advocated the prompt establishment of a banking union.



Photo: Staniko Gruden/STA

The Prime Ministers expressed their support for the countries of the Western Balkans and their efforts to join the European Union.

The excellent relations between the countries are clear

At the beginning of September, the Austrian President Heinz Fischer made an official visit to Slovenia. In his talks with Slovenian President Borut Pahor, President Fischer often emphasised support for Slovenia in resolving its economic problems. He also discussed current issues with the President of the National Assembly, Janko Veber, and the Prime Minister, Alenka Bratušek.

President Pahor emphasised that he and President Fischer were meeting officially for the second time in six months, which in his opinion "demonstrates the excellent political relations between the countries". They focused primarily on the issue of the Slovenian economic and financial crisis. President Pahor expressed his belief that Slovenia can resolve its problems alone, but stressed that time is running out. President Pahor also informed his Austrian counterpart of Slovenia's efforts in connection with the Western Balkans and activities within the Brdo Process.



Photo: Stanke Guden/STA

Austrian guests pointed out that the official language issue has not yet been resolved to the satisfaction of all parties. However, in time and with the help of dialogue, he expects progress in this field.



Photo: Daniel Novakovič/STA

Prime Minister Bratušek emphasised that she likes to ride a bicycle, thus taking care of her health and contributing to a cleaner environment.

Getting to work by train and bicycle

The Slovenian Prime Minister Alenka Bratušek took part in this year's European Mobility Week which is taking place under the slogan 'Clean air – It's your move!'. From Kranj to Ljubljana she travelled by train and from Ljubljana Railway Station to the governmental building she cycled.

More than 2,000 European cities are expected to participate in the European Mobility Week which is taking place for the twelfth year in a row. This year's edition runs until end of September under the slogan 'Clean air – It's your move!'. The 2013 campaign aims to encourage citizens to improve their health and well-being by changing their day-to-day mobility behaviour, and to raise the awareness about the impact of transport on local air quality. Air pollution also affects the environment, resulting in acidification of soil, biodiversity loss, ozone depletion and climate change.

Chemical weapons attack in Syria is a crime against humanity

A UN inspection team published a report confirming that on 21 August, chemical weapons were used during an attack in the Damascus neighbourhood of Ghouta. The attack, in which sarin poison gas was used, claimed many victims, including children, and is obviously a gross violation of international law and a war crime.

The report, which focuses primarily on the use of chemical weapons rather than identifying the perpetrator, contains certain evidence which might help identify the criminals, including the possibility that the Syrian regime was responsible for the attack. The Slovenian government considers this attack a crime against humanity which deserves the most serious punishment, and demands that the perpetrators be brought to justice.



Photo: Daniel Novakovič/STA

Slovenia commends the team of experts, who in difficult conditions successfully carried out the field investigation and wrote a credible and unbiased report based on testimony and laboratory results.

Europe frequently too slow in responding to change

At the main discussion of the 8th Bled Strategic Forum (BSF), which took place between 1 and 3 September, the Slovenian and Austrian Presidents, Borut Pahor and Heinz Fischer, and Italian Prime Minister Enrico Letta stressed that Europe, often too slow in its response to change, needs a vision.

Photo: Tamino Petelinšek/STA



The leaders pointed out that 2014, when European parliamentary elections will be held, will be vital for the development of the EU. The President of the Republic of Slovenia, Borut Pahor, believes in the united countries of Europe; however, not in the form of a melting pot, but by respecting the different identities of European countries. "The crisis clearly points to the lack of powerful shared institutions for tackling the crisis," he said and stressed that the Lisbon Treaty is not enough for the future of Europe. A new fundamental document is urgent, and must be circulated to all Member States for decision-making; the right time to prepare it will be after the European parliamentary elections.

According to Italian Prime Minister Letta, the European par-

liamentary elections will also be an opportunity for Europe to decide on the new method for selecting its senior representatives and the presidents of the European Commission and European Council. He is convinced that the selection of the highest representatives should reflect the will of the people rather than the choice of leaders in Brussels at late night sessions.

Austrian President Heinz Fischer agreed that a future vision for a joint Europe is necessary, and a suitable timeline is also required for people to understand this idea and accept it. He pointed out that change is the main force in today's world and life, but it is essential to know which changes are needed and how to make them. Some pressure is necessary for difficult decisions,

but wisdom is also required to take the right action; Europe has problems because changes have been postponed for too long.

Prime Minister Letta agreed and highlighted that the present crisis has shown that a more efficient Europe is needed. "How many billions of euros have been lost because of inefficiency; billions, which must now be saved just as money was spent, because decisions were not made at the right time?" he asked, and expressed his certainty that the European problem was political rather than economic. Europe's problem is untimely decision making.

President Fischer stressed that taking big steps at this point is not prudent, as there are more chances of failing than when taking one step at the time.

Italian PM Enrico Letta, Slovenian President Borut Pahor, panel moderator Igor Bergant, Austrian President Heinz Fischer and Indian Minister of State for External Affairs Preneet Kaur (pictured from left to right) taking part in the panel of leaders at Bled Strategic Forum (BSF).

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He also stressed that regulations from national democracies cannot simply be transferred to the European level, although this direction should be followed. "People do not want Brussels to have so much power, because they think it is too remote from them," he warned.

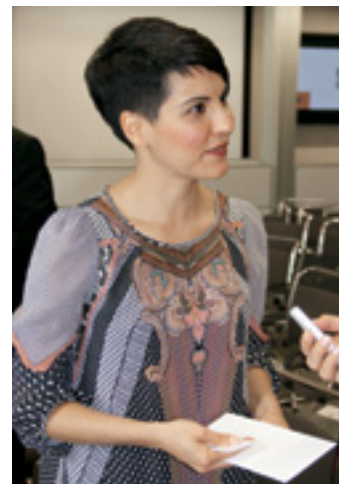
SMART INTEGRATION

The participants at the Bled Strategic Forum were first greeted by the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Slovenia, Karl Erjavec, and Slovenian Prime Minister Alenka Bratušek, who highlighted that "Only a stronger and more connected Europe will be able to face its challenges. We need smart integration, which does not mean new legislation, but a simplification of procedures and reduction of administrative burdens. We have to be aware that reforms and fiscal consolidation are not urgent only because of Brussels. Only regular and gradual change and evolution can lead to sustainable development and growth. I advocate further enlargement of the European Union, as the enlargement policy has so far been successful." Karl Erjavec, Minister of Foreign Affairs said, "Europe has not been in such a difficult position since the Second World War and it seems as if it is being forced to change against its will. If it does not find answers to the challenges, it will gradually lose its competitive advantages in the global environment."

APPEALS TO ENHANCE ECONOMIC COOPERATION WITH RUSSIA AND CENTRAL ASIA

The discussions about business at the Forum, organised by IEDC-Bled School of Management and the Slovenian-Russian Business Council, were held before the official opening of the BSF. They focused on opportunities to enhance economic cooperation and make new business deals in Russia and Central Asia. The markets of Russia and Central Asia are growing and offer many opportunities for positive synergies with the Slovenian economy, and diplomacy is there to provide assistance. In spite of the opportunities, the participants also pointed out several limitations:

Photo: GCO



Dr. Nadya Zhexembayeva, Head of Coca-Cola Chair of Sustainable Development at IEDC-Bled School of Management: "It sometimes seems that companies do not understand region of ex Soviet Union and Central Asia very well, or do not know how work is done there. This is a market with specific rules, so it is very important to know how to address such a market. I am glad that so many people from different disciplines have gathered here, given that there are limitless possibilities for economic cooperation. Slovenia has knowledge and good companies. Russia and Central Asia have natural resources and, as a result, financial means."

Photo: Personal archive



Danica Purg, President of IEDC-Bled School of Management: "Relations between Russia and Central Asia are exceptionally important for our joint future; not only in the fields of energy and the economy, but also for understanding the political roles of Europe and Russia in the globalisation process. We must create and innovate together, while respecting each other's differences and on the basis of mutual

values. During the business part of the Bled Strategic Forum, co-organised for the second time by IEDC-Bled School of Management, our honorary Professor Dr Jean-Pierre Lehmann, former professor at the Institute for Management Development in Lausanne and founding director of the Evian Group Switzerland also gave a lecture. In his lecture on economic aspects of change in Europe and the world, he pointed out a very important idea. He said that China is becoming the centre of the world, and so the fundamental question is how Europe will adjust to that. "This time, the world will not adjust to Europe. And we will have to accept that." I generally think that we will have to integrate and learn more from others. There is absolutely no time for self-sufficiency. As a point of interest, the extent of global trade is now about 1,600-times larger than it was one hundred years ago."

Photo: GCO



Samo Omerzel, Minister of Infrastructure and Spatial Planning of the Republic of Slovenia: "Infrastructure and spatial planning offer opportunities for enhancing cooperation with Russia and Central Asia (e.g. in the field of sustainable mobility). Many small and medium-sized companies in Slovenia have good information technology; there is also a lot of knowledge about so-called smart communities. Slovenia should also seek opportunities in this field. Internal traffic in our country has been decreasing during the crisis; on the other hand, total transportation has been growing, particularly due to the developing markets of Russia, Ukraine and

entire Central Asia. Slovenia lies on the shortest path towards the Adriatic and the countries of South-Western Europe (Italy, France, Spain and Portugal). In strengthening cooperation and taking advantage of opportunities, one of the toughest challenges will be the field of transport, which is an inseparable factor and condition of economic development."

Photo: GCO



Nujayed Ahmad, Team Leader for Municipal Governance in Nangarhar, Afghanistan: "I am grateful that the Slovenian Government has given us the opportunity to participate at such a useful Forum. Our young country is also part of the world, and with our presence here, we are trying to bring it closer to the developed world and new business opportunities."

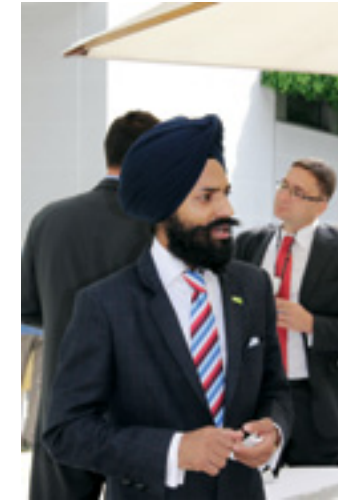
Photo: GCO



Abdul Ahad Fazli, Political Advisor to the Governor of Nangarhar, Afghanistan: "It is about mutual interest; we are still a young country, we are constantly learning, and it is the same in the case of Slovenia. We wish to

let the world know that we want to develop and keep up with the world."

Photo: GCO



Mehtab Singh, entrepreneur: "I have been in Slovenia for eighteen months and I am excited about your unique geographical location and natural sights. And also about the fact that you do not need a visa to enter the USA. I wish that the Government would not impose such high taxes on companies, particularly those which are starting their activities. I am otherwise very happy with the sale of Indian tea in Slovenia."

Photo: GCO



Dušan Arzenšek, *Le Monde Diplomatique*: "I am thrilled about the number of participants in Bled; I believe it is the largest yet. A lot was said about dreams during the discussion on the future of Europe. We all have them, of course, but I missed words like solidarity, social justice, balance, fair distribution of wealth, which were fundamental ideas in post-war Europe. I believe that we will be able to present our hopes also to the

USA, where social injustice or social differences are the greatest. I have a dream that twelve shipping companies in Greece could pay off 300 billion euros of Greek debt if they gave up twenty per cent of their assets held in tax havens. To be successful only by becoming richer is something that leads to reckless future conflicts.

ENTERING THE BELARUS MARKET

A contract worth over one hundred million euros with which the Riko company included the Slovenian companies Marmor Hotavlje, Stilles and Klima Petek in the construction of a Kempinski complex in Minsk, the capital of Belarus, was also concluded during the business section of the Forum.

THE CLASH OF GS

The introduction to the main event of the Bled Strategic Forum was the Young Forum, entitled "The Clash of Gs". Young professionals from diplomacy, academic institutions and business world, representatives of think-tanks and students discussed the challenges facing youth in the EU, the digital revolution and new business rules. The young participants were addressed by Prime Minister Alenka Bratušek, who said that solutions for overcoming the crisis must to a great extent also consider the young, and promised that the Slovenian Government would study the solutions generated at this year's YBSF. The Minister of Education, Science and Sport, Jernej Pikalo, also debated with the young participants.

THE MESSAGES OF THE FORUM WERE OPTIMISTIC

More than 500 distinguished guests, senior representatives from politics, business, the academic sphere and international community participated at the 8th Bled Strategic Forum. In addition to the main discussion on the future of Europe in the changing world, there were also discussions on: the future of the economic and monetary union; the situation in North Africa and the Middle East, particularly

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The host, the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Karl Erjavec, assessed the Forum as successful, "It was interesting to listen to the discussions at the young, business and main forums. I am glad that the main messages remain optimistic in spite of the current unenviable circumstances," he concluded and invited his guests to return to Bled next year, in the same numbers, to meet at the 9th Strategic Forum.

with regard to water supply; the situation in the Western Balkans following Croatia's accession to the EU; cooperation between the EU and Turkey, and the role of international criminal justice. Besides Austrian President Heinz Fischer and Italian Prime Minister Enrico Letta, this year's

BSF was attended by numerous ministers of foreign affairs and senior representatives of international organisations.

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Photo: Taminio Pehelinski/STA

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Over the past seven years, the BSF has grown into a successful platform for high-level strategic dialogue among leaders from the private and public sectors on key issues facing Europe and the world in the 21st century.



Photo: Taminio Pehelinski/STA

Slovenia to host this year's NATO conference

Between 30 September and 4 October 2013, the planning conference for the NATO Crisis Management Exercise (CMX 14) will be held in Portorož, one of the most beautiful Slovenian coastal towns. The conference is being organised by the Ministry of Defence of the Republic of Slovenia (MORS), which expects some 250 representatives of member states of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization and representatives of Finland and Sweden, who participate in exercises and their planning in NATO and in their own countries, to attend the conference.



Photo: Trnkec/SPIRIT

Portorož, often referred to as the capital of Slovenian seaside tourism and nightlife, is one of Slovenia's most popular beach resorts. It has a long fine sandy beach with top-rate bathing facilities. The seaside promenade is lined with restaurants, hotels, and nightclubs.

SUBJECT OF THE PLANNING CONFERENCE

In accordance with NATO policy, the North Atlantic Council organises and conducts regular annual crisis management exercises (CMX). In addition to key NATO bodies, member states and, depending on the nature of the exercises, invited partner countries participate in the exercises. In preparation for individual exercises, NATO holds planning conferences in allied states at which experts from member states familiar with the fields related to the subject of the exercises also take part.

The planning conference in Slovenia on the CMX 14 exercise is the third this year; the participants have already met at simi-

lar conferences in Belgium and Spain. A draft of instructions for the exercise and a hypothetical but realistic scenario was prepared in Madrid, including the presentation of starting points for work at the conference in Slovenia. The final conference will be in Berlin at the end of November.

Following the introductory speech by Roman Jakič, the Minister of Defence of the Republic of Slovenia, and a plenary session of the coordination conference in Portorož, participants will be divided into several different working groups (coordination, political, strategic communication, civil crisis planning, cyber defence, etc.) which cover the full scenario of the CMX 14 exercise. The exercise is planned for March 2014.

ASSESSMENT OF READINESS

The five-day conference in Slovenia concludes with a full plenary session to present a summary of the work of individual groups and findings on the final agreement or harmonisation of issues discussed about the CMX 14 exercise. The exercise is intended to verify the readiness of states' decision-making procedures and the Alliance when responding to a cyber crisis, the suitability of cooperation and harmonisation of measures in a cyber crisis and the ability to exchange information to establish the most comprehensive and realistic picture of events possible.

The participants at the planning conference will undoubtedly complete all planned tasks and successfully conduct the exercise in March 2014.

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Comprehensive Regional Ministerial

Harmonisation of Regional Defence and Security Cooperation in the Western Balkans and South-Eastern Europe

The idea of organising the Comprehensive Regional Ministerial (CRM) arose at the beginning of 2012, when the Ministry of Defence of the Republic of Slovenia (MORS) conducted an analysis of regional defence initiatives in the Western Balkans and South-

Eastern Europe. The analysis showed that the Minister of Defence at the time had been invited to six meetings to discuss regional initiatives in 2011, which amounted to almost one month of Minister's participation at regional meetings alone.



Photo: Staniko Crudenč/STA

The short-term effects such as saving funds and time (from all delegations) must be highlighted. But the expected long-term effects are even more important: for example, the rationalisation of regional cooperation within the framework of individual projects and initiatives, as well as the contribution of Slovenia to the stabilisation of the region, particularly of the Western Balkans, as the implementation of the CRM would enhance defence cooperation between all the countries in the region. And finally, the effect that the event will have on the growing recognisability of Slovenia in the region and internationally should also be considered.

The idea was to hold several meetings for different initiatives at one location within a condensed period of one week at the most, which would otherwise have been held at different locations and different times in the second half of the year. The main objective was to save time and money for participants. In June 2012, MORS submitted a proposal to all countries in the region and several donor countries on participating at the CRM or on rationalising regional defence cooperation. The countries in the region and international and regional organisations were then regularly updated on details at almost all regional meetings. The idea of holding the CRM between 1 and 3 October 2013 at Brdo pri Kranju received a favourable response and was also confirmed for individual initiatives (also on the basis of numerous bilateral harmonisations and discussions).

AGENDA 2013

The CRM will begin on 1 October 2013 with a meeting of the Western Balkans Defence Policy Directors (WBDDPD), and will continue on the following day (2 October) in a similar format with a ministerial meeting of the U.S. – Adriatic Charter (A-5). The last day (3 October) will see the hosting of the ministerial meeting in the broadest format, the

South-Eastern Europe Defence Ministerial. Additionally, a brief ad hoc meeting of all participating delegations will be held, which will include representatives of all countries in the region.

WHAT WILL SLOVENIA GAIN FROM THIS EVENT?

The comprehensive meeting is expected to host 17 ministers and several of the most senior representatives of regional and international organisations (NATO, OSCE, EU, UN, RCC, RACVIAC, etc.). The rationalisation of time and funds is most directly visible if all participants in individual formats are added up, in which case some 300 people would have to participate at all meetings. However, because the formats of individual initiatives overlap (individual countries thus participate at WBDDPD, A-5 and SEDM), the final number of participants is expected to be about 150. Considering that the participants will have the opportunity to participate at three events for three different initiatives in three days, this type of meeting also provides an excellent opportunity to discuss the harmonisation of regional projects and initiatives. Furthermore, the condensed implementation of two ministerial meetings means the presence of several ministers and highest representatives of international

organisations, which will contribute to the improvement of cooperation between different regional initiatives and international and regional organisations.

Although the entire implementation of the comprehensive meeting will not cost MORS significantly more than the annual income of an officer in the Slovenian Armed Forces on an international operation or mission, the relevant question for the Slovenian public is: what will Slovenia gain from hosting the meeting? The short-term effects such as saving funds and time (from all delegations) must be highlighted again; these could become permanent if this type of forum becomes traditional. But the expected long-term effects are even more important: for example, the rationalisation of regional cooperation within the framework of individual projects and initiatives, as well as the contribution of Slovenia to the stabilisation of the region, particularly of the Western Balkans, as the implementation of the CRM would enhance defence cooperation between all the countries in the region (conflicts between countries in close cooperation are less likely to develop). And finally, the effect that the event will have on the growing recognisability of Slovenia in the region and internationally should also be considered.

Roman Jakič
Minister of Defence

For an open dialogue on defence and security cooperation

The purpose of the regional meeting is not only to save resources, but also an opportunity for open discussion on methods to reduce unnecessary duplication, provide coherence, rationalise structures and improve working methods. This direction is also noted in the title of the comprehensive regional meeting – Harmonisation of Regional Defence and Security Cooperation, said Minister of Defense Jakič before the beginning of the meeting.

Photo: Archive of Ministry of Defence



Roman Jakič holds a bachelor's degree in pedagogy and is a professor of sociology. While still a student at the Faculty of Arts of the University of Ljubljana, he became associate dean and co-founded the Student Organisation. As well as performing high-ranking political functions, he was also President of the Track and Field Athletes' Association of Slovenia, and still leads the Slovenian Paralympic teams at the summer and winter Paralympics. In his professional career he was also a sole trader in the field of management counselling for domestic and foreign companies, and later became Director of the Ljubljana Public Institute of Sport. He was the Chair of the National Assembly Committee on European Union Affairs and the Deputy Head of the National Assembly Delegation to the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe from 2011 until March 2013 when he was appointed Minister of Defence of the Republic of Slovenia.

The Minister of Defence, Roman Jakič, also supports the Slovenian basketball team. The Ministry of Defence contributed supplies and the assistance of the Slovenian Armed Forces to the staging of the basketball championship. From the National Logistics Centre for Protection and Disaster Relief, the Administration of the Republic of Slovenia for Civil Protection and Disaster Relief provided six mobile and nine large aggregates for lighting, twenty containers for one thousand square metres of umtech panels, cargo vehicles for transporting and removing equipment, wireless communication equipment, a tent for lighting, premises for the control centre in Ljubljana, a sports hall in Ljubljana for training, and parking premises in Celje, Kranj, Ljubljana and Ankaran. Eighty members of the Slovenian Armed Forces were involved in staging the event. In the photo: Slovenian President Borut Pahor, Croatian Prime Minister Zoran Milanović, Slovenian Prime Minister Alenka Bratušek, Minister of Foreign Affairs Karl Erjavec and Minister of Defence Roman Jakič.



Photo: Nebojša Tejić/JSTA

We hope that these meetings become traditional and some other country in the region will host a similar event in 2014.

The value of such events is that defence ministers will have the opportunity to acquaint themselves in a short time with the most relevant regional incentives in the field of defence, which will possibly lead to harmonisation and to avoiding the duplication of certain regional projects.

A comprehensive regional meeting of defence ministers from South-Eastern Europe and the Western Balkans will be held at Brdo pri Kranju between 1 and 3 October. This will be the first such meeting and is undoubtedly extremely demanding in terms of organisation. How are the preparations going, and what is the meeting about?

The preparations for the Comprehensive Regional Ministerial are being conducted by the Defence Policy Directorate in cooperation with other internal organisational units of the Ministry of Defence, the Slovenian Armed Forces and several other state authorities (e.g. Police). This is the largest project our ministry is organising this year, and it will also be a unique opportunity to promote Slovenia. The ministerial meeting is an innovative project aimed at rationalising costs and saving precious time. In three consecutive days, we will be hosting three meetings of three regional incentives which would otherwise be held in the second half of the year in different countries; these are the meeting of defence policy directors of the Western Balkans, the meeting of defence ministers of the Adriatic Charter (A-5) presided by Montenegro and the meeting of defence ministers of South-Eastern Europe (SEDM) presided by Romania. The value of such events is that defence ministers will have the opportu-

nity to acquaint themselves in a short time with the most relevant regional incentives in the field of defence, which will possibly lead to harmonisation and to avoiding the duplication of certain regional projects. More than twenty ministers and highest representatives of international and regional organisations are expected at the meeting, which is a total of about 200 representatives. At this point, I can already confirm that the OSCE Secretary General and NATO Deputy Secretary-General confirmed their attendance. I would also like to highlight that representatives of Serbia and Kosovo are expected to attend the meeting. We hope that these meetings become traditional and some other country in the region will host a similar event in 2014. With regard to the anticipated high level of attendance, the comprehensive regional meeting will be a great opportunity for bilateral meetings and enhancing cooperation between individual regional defence incentives and regional and international organisations.

Are there any reservations about enlargement within NATO and outside as well?

Of course, there are. There are countries which are sceptical about enlargement or accepting new members; then there are others which are happy to receive new members – members

in a package; then there are still others – we are among them – which believe that the enlargement of the Alliance has to be approached individually. As far as the accession of Montenegro is concerned, I hope that public opinion will turn in NATO's favour, and that the decision to join will not be problematic. I am certain that it will receive public support and the support of the Alliance. The Montenegrin authorities are waiting for our signal for the right moment to join. The wish, if not requirement, of Slovenia is to expand further to the Balkans, which will contribute to stabilising the region. That Serbia has concluded an agreement with Kosovo and appointed NATO forces as a guarantee for the protection of minorities, are grounds for hoping that Serbia is also nearing the Alliance. As you know, Serbia has the most reservations about membership, especially because of past events; however, their membership is extremely important to us.

How is Slovenia involved in the process of Montenegro's inclusion in Euro-Atlantic integration?

Slovenia is one of the greatest supporters of North Atlantic integration. In addition to the Ministry of Defence, several other bodies and ministries are involved in the process of including Montenegro



Photo: Nebojša Tejić/JSTA

in Euro-Atlantic integration. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs monitors the activities of other bodies, mainly the activities of the Ministry of Defence in the field of defence and military cooperation, which is also our jurisdiction and responsibility.

Has the share of GDP earmarked for defence increased or decreased recently?

From 650 million euros in the last few years, we dropped to a budget of 300 million for defence, which is 1.1 per cent of GDP, which does not meet the obligation to NATO, which requires 2 per cent per year. Only three countries among the 28 EU Member States are able to provide that. As far as numbers are concerned, we are near the bottom of the list, which is understandable, because the crisis does not allow any major investments in defence at the moment. While we can still fulfil our obligations on international missions, the budget cuts will not have an externally visible effect on defence; however, it will have a great impact on the development and future functioning of the system. At the moment, it is important to ensure a sufficient number of personnel for NATO, EU and UN missions.

Your numerous activities are directed towards transforming the Slovenian Armed Forces, staffing, peacekeeping operations

and missions, Euro-Atlantic integration and international missions. The members of the Slovenian Armed Forces currently posted in Afghanistan, Kosovo, Bosnia and Herzegovina and elsewhere perform their duties in the name of the country and are also Slovenian ambassadors and an important element of Slovenian foreign policy interests.

That is true. Most of our troops on foreign missions are in Kosovo, i.e. 300. More than 320 troops, which is more than 80 per cent of all Slovenian troops involved in international operations and missions, are present in the Western Balkans. This is a clear indication of the priorities of Slovenian defence and security policy. We are not planning reductions in Kosovo, since our presence there is very important. The number of soldiers in Afghanistan is decreasing; by the end of the year, only 39 and next year only 12 will remain there. We will have to decide whether to stay there at all. I would like the Police and various educational institutions to participate in these missions. There are many possibilities for cooperation, but unfortunately those who make decisions have reservations about security.

The troops are also paving the way for Slovenian businesses in these regions. Do you have any information on the possible economic effects?

The fundamental document defining decision-making frameworks on Slovenian cooperation in international operations and missions and a general selection of capacities for its implementation is the 'Cooperation strategy of the Republic of Slovenia in international operations and missions (of 12 November 2009)'. Among other issues, the strategy discusses the integration of business entities, non-governmental organisations and other non-governmental bodies in implementing international operations and missions within the framework of a comprehensive approach to ensuring national security and welfare, and realising the foreign political, security, economic, developmental and other interests and objectives of the Republic of Slovenia. In accordance with this, the possibilities for Slovenian businesses to provide logistical supply for individual operations or missions and to acquire possible business opportunities related to post-conflict reconstruction of affected areas are studied by the relevant line ministries and services during the planning, preparation and implementation of cooperation on international operations and missions. The missions do not have a direct impact on the economy, unless the protection of economic interests is concerned. The Slovenian defence industry is small, but as such it is trying to help the econ-

At the Bled Strategic Forum, the Minister of Defence, Roman Jakič, was a panel speaker in the discussion entitled 'EU and Turkey – Where do we go from here?' The discussion focused on the importance of EU integration for the countries of the Western Balkans and on the future of Turkey within the EU and its strategic and economic role in the regional and global context. Minister Jakič described Turkey as a friend and credible ally which is oriented towards a joint future.

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The armed forces are here to help people with their everyday problems and disasters. I advocate a synergy between the Civil Protection Service and Slovenian Armed Forces, because it is beneficial.

In the photo: Minister of Defence, Roman Jakič, and Slovenian Prime Minister, Alenka Bratušek.



Photo: Naboljaja Teljiz/STA

It's our desire, in spite of the crisis, to preserve and develop indirect cooperation between companies and the Ministry of Defence, which must serve as a foundation for launching Slovenian companies in military markets at home and abroad.

omy in its breakthrough abroad. Regardless of the above, we stress that the Ministry of Defence within its jurisdiction and comprehensive approach to participation in international operations and missions particularly focuses on the military aspect of Slovenia's participation in international operations and missions: more precisely, on the participation of members of the Slovenian Armed Forces and civilian experts.

What is cooperation with the civilian environment in Slovenia like, e.g. assistance during natural and other disasters; what is the role of the Slovenian Armed Forces in protection against natural and other disasters?

Our cooperation with the local environment is close and intensive. People are frequently unaware that a certain action was part of a larger defence action. We are trying to connect the Civil Protection Service and Slovenian Armed Forces at points where mutual cooperation is possible, such as how to use helicopters in civilian rescue. We have encountered such examples during flooding, forest fires, mountain accidents. The armed forces are here to help people with their everyday problems and disasters. I advocate a synergy between the Civil Protection Service and Slovenian Armed Forces, because it is beneficial. Military skills are frequently used in civil purposes. The importance of the Administration of the Republic of Slovenia

for Civil Protection and Disaster Relief for the civil environment is seen during every major natural or other disaster. We have encountered several catastrophic floods in recent years, where the members of the Administration and other rescue services, also fire brigades and medical services, promptly and efficiently responded to the calls of citizens in distress. Engineering teams set up several prefabricated bridges, enabling access to urban centres for residents in cut-off areas. The Slovenian Armed Forces provide an emergency helicopter team for emergency medical services and mountain rescue. The construction machinery of the Slovenian Armed Forces is used to reconstruct roads and other infrastructure of local communities wherever possible. Let us not forget the assistance of members of the unit for water purification, which ensured drinking water to the residents of the Municipality of Lož Valley.

It is in the interests of the state to provide jobs also in the defence industry; is this plan being realised?

It's our desire, in spite of the crisis, to preserve and develop indirect cooperation between companies and the Ministry of Defence, which must serve as a foundation for launching Slovenian companies in military markets at home and abroad. The Slovenian defence industry is small and made up of companies which do most

of their business abroad. But sales in these markets depend entirely on domestic references. If our equipment, technological solutions and services are not used by the Slovenian Armed Forces, then we most certainly will not sell them to foreigners. This is why cooperation with the Slovenian Armed Forces is so important for the defence industry.

We support EDA guidelines, regional integration and joint investments in equipment. Defence procurement is becoming more and more transparent, which improves competition and enables small and medium-sized companies to access this market. The Ministry of Defence is implementing a policy of counter-trade in compliance with EDA and EU requirements; we are thus maintaining and increasing the number of jobs.

Successful countries take advantage of the development of the defence industry to develop their civilian industries and increase their competence in the most developed civilian markets for technology. Slovenia should do the same in its industrial policy.

As a minister, I will help promote the Slovenian defence industry as far as I am legally permitted. I ask companies to join me on visits abroad if they recognise a specific market as potentially interesting. The Ministry of Defence also helps finance the Slovenian defence industry at presentations at fairs abroad.

Andrew Page

British Ambassador to Slovenia

Slovenia has more talent per square kilometre than any other country in Europe

Photo: Stanko Gruden/STA



Andrew Page, born in 1965, began his career as an assistant in the Economic Relations Department of the British Foreign Office. In 1993, after completing Russian and Ukrainian language training courses, he was appointed Second Secretary at the British Embassy in Kiev. On his return to the United Kingdom, he first served as public relations advisor in the Foreign Office's Middle East Department and then became head of its Africa Department (Southern). In 2001 he was appointed First Secretary of the British Embassy in Paris and in 2004–2008 he served as the Deputy Director of the Russia, South Caucasus and Central Asia Directorate. In March 2009 he was appointed British Ambassador to Slovenia.

In the photo:
Slovenian President Borut
Pahor, Prince Edward and British
Ambassador to Slovenia Andrew
Page.



Photo: British Embassy, Ljubljana

Banks must be cleaned up and provided with the conditions to lend normally again. Therefore, I strongly support the establishment of the Bad Bank.

An ambassador's role is to serve their country. In a world dominated by the capitalist mentality, the idea of service is not popular. How do you perceive it?

There is an old adage that diplomats are honest people sent abroad to lie for their country. I do not believe in lying. I think diplomats should always tell the truth, while also trying to influence. I strive to work in the interests of my country and believe in the public service ethic. I regularly report to London about Slovenia, and I am happy to say that my cooperation with the Slovenian ambassador Iztok Jarc is excellent. We have done a huge amount together, eg. The UK-Slovenia Investment Forum and then Prime Minister Pahor's visit to Number 10 and meeting with our Prime Minister and Deputy Prime Minister.

I also believe that it is an over-generalisation to say that if a country has a capitalist economy, its civil servants are less interested in service. Unlike the public administrations or state administrations of many other countries, the Civil Service in the United Kingdom has a strong tradition of political neutrality: even civil servants in the highest positions are not transferred or dismissed when there is a change of government – they provide continuity, as we saw when the Coalition Government came in.

Slovenia is experiencing a severe economic crisis and the Slovenian

Government is looking in different directions for a way out. Which direction would you recommend? Do you think the United Kingdom is tackling the crisis successfully?

I think the Government led by Alenka Bratušek has taken some good measures and approached the crisis with real purpose. Minister of Finance Uroš Čufer immediately set about solving the banking crisis as a priority. Your government debt is not that high, but the proportion of non-performing loans in the banks is. Slovenia is among the few EU Member States which remain in recession. Banks must be cleaned up and provided with the conditions to lend normally again. Therefore, I strongly support the establishment of the Bad Bank. I know that the Slovenian political parties had different opinions on this issue, but Slovenia must bear in mind the opinions of the IMF, the European Commission and, importantly, the financial markets and credit rating agencies, which all assessed this measure as positive. I am still confident that Slovenia will find a way out of this economic crisis without foreign assistance. I also believe that Slovenia will soon begin the privatisation process which will facilitate foreign investment. This will not only provide more capital to help the economy to grow, but also give a welcome injection of new business leaders, free from political influence, to work alongside your many able business leaders here, so strengthening corporate gover-

nance.

In the United Kingdom, the Coalition Government entered this financial crisis with an 11 per cent budget deficit, which was unsustainably high. The Government decided to take strict fiscal measures. Some people thought the measures too harsh, but the policy has proven successful, to the extent that the deficit has been reduced by one third, the UK retains a healthy credit rating and the economy is gradually returning to growth. Another of the United Kingdom's advantages is that our bureaucracy is relatively unburdened by regulation, we enjoy flexible labour markets and have a low rate of corporation tax, so global companies like to establish their parent company or factories in the United Kingdom. The crisis definitely affected us, too in a big way, but indicators suggest that we may be over the worst.

Much has been said in public recently about the United Kingdom leaving the European Union. What is your position on that?

Public opinion in the UK is divided. David Cameron's speech at the beginning of the year was a seminal one for the UK's position. He proposed that the UK remain part of the European family and attempt to reform the EU from within. In the event of the Conservative Party winning the next election, he gave a commitment that the British people would be given a chance to decide at a referendum,



Photo: British Embassy, Ljubljana

In his role as the UK and International Trustee of the Duke of Edinburgh's Award programme, Prince Edward presented gold awards to over 50 young Slovenes.

with a "yes/no" vote, by half way through the next Parliament (i.e. end of 2017). At the same time, he effectively tasked British diplomats with negotiating changes to the UK's settlement with the EU, based on a review of competences undertaken in the UK (i.e. which policy areas should be decided in Brussels and which by national Parliament). The British are among the leading champions in the EU in favour of extending the Single Market, in financial and digital services and the energy sector. We are also very active, along with France, in foreign and security policy, as we saw over Libya and now over Syria, not to mention Iran. We are also strongly in favour of including citizens in politics, and addressing what is known as the "democratic deficit", whereby voters feel disenfranchised on an ever increasing number of decisions made in Brussels. The idea of repatriating certain powers to Westminster is popular in the UK; conversely, the idea of pooling more sovereignty in the EU (as Eurozone States are having to do) is anathema.

What is your view of foreign investment? Are companies in the UK showing an interest in Slovenia and how are you involved in economic diplomacy?

Persuading more UK companies to do business in Slovenia is not an easy task, as the economy is still in contraction. I cooperate a great deal with the British-Slovenian Cham-

ber of Commerce (BSCC). We try to focus primarily on sectors which could be of interest to British companies, as we are well aware that Slovenia has traditional relationships with German, Austrian, Croatian and Italian companies. The British have an advantage when it comes to financial services, with the City of London not only the main European, but also the leading global financial centre. If, as I hope, the Slovenian Government continues with privatisation, I can see opportunities for British companies in financial advisory work, and perhaps in one or two strategic sectors, too.

We are also working a lot on tourism, together with BSCC and SPIR-IT. For instance, at the Bled regatta, a team from Henley competed. Bled and Henley became twin towns as a result of an initiative taken by my Embassy during the 2011 World Rowing Championship – both are great centres of world rowing. We can use the rowing connection and links between the two business schools, secondary schools and cultural cooperation as a basis for establishing people-to-people contacts which we hope might later grow into business cooperation, including in tourism.

In your time in Slovenia, you have met different people from the world of politics, diplomacy, economy. Have you formed special connections with anyone in particular?

Yes, lots. I have made a huge number of Slovenian friends, helped by the fact that I speak Slovene. Some I made during my five weeks of language immersion, many others through sport (tennis and golf), and others – like the Bled Mayor – through the job. The wonderful privilege about being Ambassador in a small country is that, over four years, you really can get to know the leading figures in pretty well every sphere of life – political, parliamentary, business, education, sporting and cultural.

The strategy of the Slovenian Government is to enhance economic and other cooperation with the markets of the former Soviet Union, India, China and some other countries which are the markets of the future. The Bled Strategic Forum also focused on these topics, particularly on cooperation with Russia. Compared to Slovenia, which markets is the United Kingdom focusing on?

It is true that we are all interested in the emerging markets of the BRICS countries, but some indicators show that these markets have not been growing as rapidly as before. During my time here, the British Government has been focusing greater effort also on what we are calling "Emerging Europe". We have established a "Central European Network", which includes British embassies in the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Poland, Hungary, Slovenia, Austria, Croatia, Romania

When the Earl and Countess of Wessex visited in June, the main topic discussed during their meetings with the President and Prime Minister was youth unemployment. Youth entrepreneurship was also the theme of the BSCC Business Breakfast at which Prince Edward spoke, and was the focus of my speech at the Queen's Birthday party to 800 guests at Vila Podrožnik. This is an urgent policy priority not only for Slovenia, but also for the United Kingdom.

Celebrating the Queen's birthday at Vila Podrožnik.



Photo: British Embassy, Ljubljana

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and Bulgaria. For example, when a CEO of a British company is passing through Warsaw or Prague, British ambassadors in these countries will also highlight business opportunities in Slovenia. This regional approach is already bearing fruit, and we are able to access more funds for trade promotion work as a result of it, including as part of the GREAT campaign that was launched in 2012, the year of the London Olympic and Paralympic Games.

I have noticed that the issue of youth unemployment is particularly important to you. What can you tell us about that?

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tended by MEPI's patron, President Pahor. The visit of the royal couple was also connected with the Young Bled Strategic Forum (YBSF). We spoke about mentorship and ways for young people to succeed in finding a job, and we are cooperating actively with the Prime Minister's Office on this, together with our partners in the British Council. The MEPI programme encourages young people to develop skills outside formal education, which will help them in their future employment. In the UK, it is rated more highly by employers than any qualification other than a university degree. We are aiming to achieve greater recognition of the Award among employers here too, and we are strengthening MEPI's corporate governance, with a new Board of MEPI stakeholders and recruitment of a new Executive Director, to help MEPI to take a quantum leap and expand nation-wide.

What is your position on military intervention in Syria? The political parties in Slovenia are taking different positions. Is the UK more unanimous on this subject? What can you tell us about this issue?

The UK's goal is for Syria's chemical weapons (CW) to be identified and destroyed, for the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC) to be upheld and for chemical weapons never to re-emerge anywhere in the world as an instrument of warfare. The British Parliament did not approve military intervention in Syria. I think this was partly because military intervention in Iraq was still very much alive in the parliamentary and public memory.

Nevertheless, the British Government remains very actively involved on the political, diplomatic and humanitarian fronts. We have been participating intensively in diplomacy with the USA, France and Russia to achieve a binding resolution at the UN, making clear that if the Syrian regime does not comply, the UN Security Council should impose measures under Chapter VII of the UN Charter. The UK has been allocating large amounts of money to Syrian refugees. After the USA, the UK is the second largest donor to humanitarian organisations providing aid to Syria.

The Russian proposal for Syria to surrender control of its chemical weapons to the international community changed the dynamics of the issue. This will be a stern test of foreign policy, in Britain and elsewhere, after Iraq and Afghanistan. If the international community, with a constructive role played by Russia, can succeed in reaching an agreement on a CW inspection and destruction programme, this will put President Bashar al-Assad and his regime under enormous pressure. A lot will depend on unity at the UN. For Syria to give up its chemical weapons, it is essential that the threat of international action in the event of non-compliance remains credible. The possibility of a targeted military attack to degrade Syria's CW capabilities still has not gone away. After the clear report by UN inspectors pointing to Assad regime's capability, Slovenia's rhetoric hardened. I hope they will now support the robust stance at the UN that we and others are advocating.

Photo: Stanko Gruden/STA



Do you know where will you be posted at the beginning of 2014? And finally, how have you felt, or how do you feel in Slovenia?

I will be heading back to London, but I don't yet know which job I'll be doing. I have enjoyed Slovenia enormously – most of my friends here are Slovenes. Every British person who comes to Slovenia is delighted to discover the beauty of its nature – and many are surprised. It's like a well kept secret. During my term, I have visited every part of the country. I love tourist farms, for instance, and I have attended lots of sporting events, and tasted your fantastic dishes and wines. I am an active member of golf and tennis clubs. I have established many friendships with people not only in sport but also in politics and business – people like The Chief Commissioner of the Commission for the Prevention of Corruption, Goran Klemenčič and CEOs of embattled banks. I believe that the test for every diplomat is in the range and depth of their contact network. And learning Slovene has added immensely to my enjoyment of your country.

Why is that?

I spent three years in Ukraine in 1993–96. Before my posting to Kiev, I learnt Russian and Ukrainian. Since I already spoke two Slavonic languages, it was much easier for me to learn a third one when I came to Slovenia. Ukraine became independent in 1991, the same year as Slovenia. I felt there how much it appealed to Ukrainians' sense of national pride that I had learnt and used their native tongue, not just

Russian. And here in Slovenia too I have sensed how much people appreciate the efforts I have made to learn their language, in which they take an understandable pride.

Have you been to a EuroBasket match or followed the European Championship?

I have not seen a match live, because I was away for the opening stages organising a Slovenian Tennis and Golf Tour to Britain with my Slovenian sporting friends, but I have been following the Championships closely on television. I also paid a visit to the British team just before the Championship began. At the beginning, they did well and were very happy, with wins over Israel and Germany, but sadly they did not make it to the second round. I have also followed the matches of the Slovenian team, which were very tight, especially when early leads appeared to diminish towards the end. The Dragič brothers made a strong impression on me: they always seemed to play better as pressure mounted, which I admire.

So you think there are reasons to be optimistic?

Yes, I do. Slovenia has come a long way since it gained independence. It is easy to overlook how much it has achieved over the last two decades – a shining star among all the countries that came into the EU in 2004, and a really well conducted EU Presidency in 2008. Unfortunately for many, my four years in your country have coincided with recession and many of Slovenia's greatest difficulties, but it is im-

portant not to let these difficulties blind one to the achievements – including, for instance, on the sporting field, where Slovenia has a huge amount to celebrate, with successes at both summer and winter Olympics, Tine Maze's exploits etc. Looking back at my time here, we have hosted a lot of high-level visits – by our Speaker of the House of Commons, Lord Mayor of the City of London, Europe Minister etc – and I was delighted that my term was crowned in 2013 with a royal visit. After the Earl and Countess of Wessex's visit, Slovenia had been visited since Independence by all immediate members of the Royal Family: Her Majesty The Queen and Their Royal Highnesses Prince Charles, Princess Anne, Prince Andrew and Prince Edward have all been here now. As Prince Edward put it, Slovenia has had “a Royal Flush”, and not many countries in the world can claim that!

This is definitely an endorsement of Slovenia. The quality of life in Slovenia remains high. I never tire of admiring the country's beauty as I drive around. I agree that it could be better in some ways, e.g. accountability in public life, but I also believe that you have a bright future ahead once you manage to overcome the crisis and take action to improve Slovenia's competitiveness, as I have no doubt you will. As one of my predecessors put it, “Slovenia has more talent per square kilometre than any other country in Europe” and this applies in spades to your young people. They give me vast confidence in your future.

The Green Day 2010 programme prepared by Slovenia's Ministry of Foreign Affairs in collaboration with the British Embassy on the occasion of the European Mobility Week. The planting of a tree in the courtyard of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs as part of the commitment made on the adoption of the Action Plan for Green Diplomacy.

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“I feel Slovenia” and innovative ideas

The impression that Slovenians are not particularly creative nation is far from being the case

Slovenian companies are relatively small, meaning that they lack the critical mass to trigger innovative ideas in large numbers, which might give the impression that the Slovenians are not a particularly creative nation. But this is far from being the case, as is evident from the successes of the young entrepreneurs who have emerged from the Ljubljana University Incubator (LUI).



Photo: Archive of Elan d.d.

Elan's innovation: Amphibio Waveflex 14 Fusion skis (a double-edged ski). In 2012, Elan was the first Slovenian brand to receive the title of Most Innovative Brand in the category of sports equipment, which is the highest award presented annually by the German organisation Plus X Award.

For the third year running, the University of Ljubljana has awarded the Rector's Award for Best Innovation. In the first year of the project, the award went to the company MESI, which was founded by two graduation candidates from the Faculty of Electrical Engineering. The company has been in business for two years, manufacturing medical devices; it employs fifteen people and does business around the globe. Also among the success stories is last year's winner, the Animacel company, founded by a young researcher and her mentor; they also received an award at the 7th Slovenian Innovation Forum 2012 for the best innovation in a startup company.

THE SLOVENIAN INNOVATION FORUM

This year's Slovenian Innovation Forum is already the 8th in a row, which goes to show that the Slovenian creative spirit is by no means lacking. The Forum, which will take place from 12–13 November in Ljubljana, will feature a diverse enterprise-innovation programme, covering topical issues in the areas of entrepreneurship, innovation and various development-oriented topics. Particular emphasis will be laid on the international presentation of priority areas of activity where Slovenian companies and research institutions can enhance their comparative advantages and competitively enter foreign markets.

Last year's Forum saw the presentation of 48 of the best ideas, of which as many as 70 per cent are already in the implementation or realisation phase. Last year the Innovation Forum's award for best innovation went to the Elpa company, for its development of a noise attenuation system for rail brakes called Bremex Annsys Basic. And a special award for the best innovation by an individual innovator went to Peter Slatnar for his children's ski jumping bindings for younger ski jumpers (up to the age of 15).

Slovenian innovators have recognised the Innovation Forum as a springboard for the breakthrough of their innovations onto both Slovenian and international markets. Their success stories prove that Slovenians really are innovative people.

ID CENTRE – I FEEL DESIGN

Velko Glaner, MSc, SPIRIT Slovenia

In a world of science, business, culture and sport, visibility – being associated with clever strategies, marketing and design – is very important. This last, rather than being mere form – a frequently encountered simplistic interpretation of the term – is an extremely important factor of innovativeness, which in turn represents an advantage in introducing new products, brands, services and ultimately the country itself.

New brands and success stories are to a large extent created by small and medium-sized enterprises, which are important drivers of economic development,

growth and employment. Therefore, in line with the strategy to promote innovation and the use of design in business, the Ministry of Economic Development and Technology has established a centre of innovation and design – the ID Centre – in the framework of the public agency SPIRIT Slovenia. Through its promotional activities, the Centre is intended to become a contact point for the interests of the economy, the professions and national strategies.

Slovenians again and again, through design, have proved themselves to be an innovative and creative nation. The “I feel Slovenia” brand should get a more prominent role in the promotional activities of the state, as a brand of achievements in

the areas of the economy, science, sports and culture. May “I feel Slovenia” as design become an identity card, a fingerprint of each success story, be it a product, a service or a design solution of some presentation. Development in the area of design should primarily create a link between knowledge, creativity and innovation. The very process starts with our decision to create something new and recognisable, where the state's logo can be added as the final touch.

Visibility is a trump card for the future, should we wish to succeed and survive in an economy of knowledge and competition and keep abreast of the rapid changes entailed by globalisation.

Quite a few Slovenian designer products are setting new standards at a global level with their turning-point innovations. In 2011, Slovenia prepared an exhibition entitled “Silent Revolutions”, featuring a selection of designer products created in the 20 years of its independence.

Photo: Archive of GCO



Participants at one-day meeting.

I FEEL SLOVENIA = MADE IN SLOVENIA = SLOVENIA ORIGIN?

Foreign experts often “surprise” us with the opinion that the “I feel Slovenia” brand is a unique and innovative approach to branding. In Slovenia we are still insufficiently aware that the country's brand should be applied consistently at all levels. David Aaker (1996) says that the value of a brand is the sum of advantages (and responsibilities) associated with the brand's name and symbol, adding value to products and services that are provided under the brand to their stakeholders.

In July, the Government Communication Office, as the administrator of the national brand, organised in Ljubljana a one-day meeting entitled “I feel Slovenia = Made in Slovenia = Slovenia origin?”. Invited to

the meeting were representatives of the ministries and institutions which are most directly involved in the promotion of Slovenia, especially in the economic field.

The meeting was held in the spirit of an exchange of views, addressing dilemmas and opportunities that are of strategic importance for the life, power and wealth of the brand. Through workshops, the participants presented their views of the “I feel Slovenia” brand in the economy and its use in various economic processes and drafted a list of representatives who could serve as “I feel Slovenia” ambassadors. Furthermore, they searched for grounds to motivate the providers of successful Slovenian brands, products and services to link their success with their Slovenian origin under “I feel Slovenia”.

A brand is a set of experiences – an experience before encountering the brand, actual experience with it and experience after encountering it. A brand is a promise that must be kept.

The area of the economy represents a huge potential for the use of the national brand of Slovenia, as a number of successful and innovative entrepreneurs, their products, services, activities and their success stories, may add to the “I feel Slovenia” brand the necessary market value and power. A successful and strong national brand could benefit the Slovenian economy by making it more attractive for investments and economic integration; moreover, a well-established brand also helps companies in entering foreign markets. The same applies to other areas where the country may show itself to be outstanding, different, superior and successful.

Special energy is present in Slovenia in those activities that we undertake with pleasure and enthusiasm, and it is in these that we are the best. The development of personal interests has resulted in a variety of economic activities with a common denominator – a niche-based economy, which in accordance with the zeal involved becomes “boutiqueness”.

SILENT REVOLUTIONS

Quite a few Slovenian designer products are setting new standards at a global level with their turning-point innovations. In 2011, Slovenia prepared an exhibition entitled “Silent Revolutions”, featuring a selection of designer products created in the 20 years of its independence. In the production of the selected items, design was included as an important integral part of development and competitive advantage. These works highlight the innovative approaches, outstanding strategies, inspiring visions and new design ideas of the designers and clients, manufacturers and com-

panies alike, all of whom have played key roles in the realisation of the projects exhibited.

The exhibition, which presents more than 25 selected works, is the first large international presentation of Slovenian product design in the last two decades. By linking the economy and culture, and by active participation of government institutions in the field of creative industries, we wish to promote cutting-edge Slovenian products and companies, and increase the visibility of Slovenia through industrial design.

After its premiere at London Design Festival 2011 – Tent London,

the exhibition was also successfully presented at Dutch Design Week 2011 – Zona Ventosa, La Triennale di Milano 2012, Maribor European Capital of Culture 2012, Belgrade Design Week 2012 and Helsinki Design Week 2012. The first stop in 2013 was Vienna, and the next is Moscow (11–17 October 2013).

“I had seen the Slovenia exhibit during Salone del Mobile in April in Milan and was very impressed. I thought their exhibition in London was even better – with great information and a wonderful mixture of industrial design and fashion. I am looking forward to seeing more!” – Beth Dickstein, BDE, New York



An exhibition entitled “Silent revolution”.

THE STORY OF SLOVENIA IN THE FIELD OF THE ECONOMY

Slovenians want to be recognised. In the pursuit of personal interests, we are building a niche-based economy, based on dealing with things that are dear to us. The eagerness with which we pursue our business goals is contagious. As a society of individuals, we create a wide range of outstanding works, which however have a common source – the balance between our wishes and capabilities, between man and nature.

DELIBERATELY CHOSEN NICHE-BASED ACTIVITIES

Special energy is present in Slovenia in those activities that we undertake with pleasure and enthusiasm, and it is in these that we are the best. The development of personal interests has resulted in a variety of economic activities with a common denominator – a niche-based economy, which in accordance with the zeal involved becomes “boutiqueness”. We want to draw investments to those activities in which we are the best, as Slovenian diligence in the things

that we love will help to create added value in these areas.

ORGANIC DEVELOPMENT

Slovenia advances hand-in-hand with nature. This also applies to the economy and its controlled development. By supporting technological development, the Slovenian economy helps to create and maintain the essential distinctive advantage of Slovenia – its preserved environment. The consensus on organic development as a vision for Slovenia's future calls for investments in its own potentials and capacities.

Koofr d.o.o.

Redefined hybrid storage

Innovativeness, will and persistence produce results. This has also been demonstrated by the team at Koofr d.o.o., a company which was established only in February this year. At the end of May, they had already won the national ‘Start-up of the Year’ competition.

Photo: Tamino Petelinšek/JSTA



In her brief speech, Slovenian Prime Minister Alenka Bratušek described the forum as an important opportunity to strengthen cooperation between Slovenia and Germany. “Innovations in a knowledge-based society are motors of the economy,” she stressed. She also emphasised the important role of young people in kick-starting economic growth and finding an exit from the current crisis, which she admitted has hit Slovenia hard.

Koofr is a web and mobile interface for access to various data storage systems, which enables the storage, management and distribution of files with the use of a cloud based on clients' existing hardware.

Matičič told the Slovenian Press Agency (STA) that it was very important to meet new people and start-up cultures in other countries. "We are looking for best practices to bring to Slovenia," he explained.



Photo: Personal archive

The main results of the visit to Berlin were agreements on cooperation with Deutsche Telekom and a number of German venture capital investors.

Start-up companies are established by people who want to change the world, or the things around themselves. A large number of recent start-up companies deal with new technologies related to the internet, the development of mobile applications, geo-location, etc. Koofr d.o.o. is a company which develops software for cloud computing.

WHAT IS KOOFR?

Koofr is a web and mobile interface for access to various data storage systems, which enables the storage, management and distribution of files with the use of a cloud based on clients' existing hardware. According to the company's director Damjan Matičič, it could best be described to final users as a service which is an improved and more private Dropbox. Their clients are primarily providers of internet services which serve as intermediaries for traffic exchange between users and services like Dropbox or Google Drive. The company operates in the global 'storage as a service' market. Its clients can offer their users data storage in the cloud.

The company's long-term goal is to expand to all continents and the majority of countries, according to Damjan Matičič.

Start-ups are also active and successful in other areas, which is evident in the diversity of the five finalists in the Slovenian competition for start-up of the year. More than a hundred companies entered

TURNKEY SERVICE

"Koofr has established good relations with some of the largest global providers of hardware, with which we can offer our clients comprehensive turnkey services," said Damjan Matičič.

The company has also formed partnerships with leading producers of hardware in order to merge hardware and software solutions into new, comprehensive products. Such connections enable the company to increase its competitive advantage and gain easier access to new sales channels.

START-UP COMPANIES HAVE GOVERNMENT SUPPORT

Representatives of Koofr were in the Prime Minister's delegation on her visit to Germany. "Germany is a very interesting market for us. Deutsche Telekom, with its subsidiaries, is one of the biggest mobile operators," said Damjan Matičič, who met representatives of a very active German start-up association and representatives of potential partner companies

this year's competition. As well as the winner, Koofr, the finalists included companies from various fields: Eforma with the MojMojster solution; HomeO-Garden with natural fertilisers for plants; MyMedica with

in Berlin. "The Embassy in Berlin provided great assistance with organising meetings, for which we are very grateful. We certainly believe that we made good use of the opportunity and succeeded in making some good business contacts on which we will build future cooperation."

THE WORLD IS THE GOAL

The main results of the visit to Berlin were agreements on cooperation with Deutsche Telekom and a number of German venture capital investors. "The first step, to arrange a meeting, is usually the hardest. From there on, our services are what makes us convincing," Matičič added. The company's long-term goal is to expand to all continents and the majority of countries, according to Damjan Matičič. To begin with, the company is starting to expand in the neighbourhood, which they plan to follow with an expansion of their sales teams in individual target markets.

More information at: <http://koofr.net/>

food supplements made from medicinal mushrooms, and SmartPA, which has developed the Smarthousekeeping application, which simplifies the organisation of hotel housekeeping.

Kiara LOVE Cradle

Prince George also sleeps in a Slovenian cradle

On the birth of Prince William and the Duchess of Cambridge's first son, Slovenia presented the new parents with a cradle, a product that is based on an idea of innovator Erika Drobnič, who has been creating innovative furniture in Slovenia for several years, including multi-purpose Kiara cradles.

Photo: SPIRIT



SPIRIT Slovenia supports all Slovenian innovators who prove internationally that it is possible to confront the economic crisis with knowledge, innovation and persistence. The latest proof of the successful promotion of Slovenian innovators is the Slovenian cradle which adorns the British Court.

Erika Drobnič is a mother herself, and after her daughter was born, she wanted to make her new baby comfortable. The cradle was being created when she was expecting her second child, daughter Kiara, after whom she named the cradle.

THE BRITISH COURT

The idea that the Kiara cradle would be Slovenia's present to the British Court came about last year, when Drobnič was given the opportunity to be introduced in the British market, which was excellent promotion for the small company.

In Slovenia's name, the cradle was presented to the British Court by the Slovenian Ambassador to London, Iztok Jarc, on 7 August 2013. A similar cradle was also presented by the Ambassador to the British charity, East Anglia's Children's Hospices, on behalf of Slovenia and the Razvoj in inovacije company on 16 September 2013.

THE CRADLE IS DISTINGUISHED BY ITS MULTIFUNCTIONALITY

The cradle was designed from the perspective of parents who know what they need for their children. It has wheels and can

be moved about, and once the cradle is no longer in use because the child has grown out of it, the cradle is easily dismantled and reassembled in a new form which is needed for the child's development and must not be missed in any home: small chairs and a table. The upper part of the cradle serves as a basket for toys on four small wheels. This also means that if you do not want to construct the entire cradle for a second child, you can use just the basket. Thus the cradle acquires an unlimited lifetime, which saves money and space, so frequently a problem with children's furniture.

The idea that the Kiara cradle would be Slovenia's present to the British Court came about last year, when Drobnič was given the opportunity to be introduced in the British market, which was excellent promotion for the small company.



Photo: Jurij Pfeifer

In addition to Erika and her husband Bojan Drobnič, the project also included Pohišstvo Potočnik, Steklarna Hrastnik, architect Julijan Krapež, designer Irma Vončina, ethnologist Anja Likar and the company Vitapur.

The cradle is not just a piece of furniture, but symbolises life, a new beginning, hope and happiness. Cradles are closely linked to the loving relationship with children, between a man and a woman, their marriage, young family and succession. And all of the above beautifully relates to the young Royal family.

The cradle meets all EU standards and is constructed with high quality and safety in mind. It is available in several colours and with different bedding patterns made especially for the cradle.

THE POETRY OF WOOD, GLASS AND LACE

The cradle combines three noble, but simple materials: wood, glass and lace. The hand-blown glass part was made by Steklarna Hrastnik. The perfection of the product is also complimented by Slovenian lace, which decorates the bedding. The cradle has a distinctive Scandinavian appearance based on Slovenian tradition. The cradle is made of birch wood, which has been used for centuries for cradles, and the noble indigenous figured maple veneer. The symbols in lace combine the English rose and the Slovenian heart, the combination

of the royal coat-of-arms and Slovenian tradition. The cradle was named Kiara LOVE, which is Erika Drobnič's trademark, with the added Slovenian motto LOVE deriving from the word Slovenia.

THE CRADLE IS AIMED AT SLOVENIAN AND FOREIGN MARKETS

The 'Kiara' cradle is a unique Slovenian-made multi-purpose product that parents can use throughout the entire period of a child's growth. Already at first sight, the cradle appears different, as it combines modern design and innovative multi-purpose use. The beautiful colours and motifs are guaranteed to excite every child. The 'Kiara' cradle is a product which you will be proud of whether you receive it or present it as a gift. The 'Kiara' collection was very successful at the Kind + Jugend fair in Germany in September 2011.

It is protected as a Community design and has received several awards at international innovation fairs around the world. The cradle is a product of exclusively Slovenian work, knowledge and materials; it complies with all EU standards, which is confirmed by the conformity marking.

At present, the cradle can be purchased in Slovenia and Europe, but Erika Drobnič is hopeful of a breakthrough in the American market in the near future.

NEW PROJECTS

The company Razvoj in inovacije is developing a children's room which, like the cradle, will also be multifunctional and will grow with the child, while enabling the child to adjust its own space. The project, which began in mid-2013, is still in its initial phase; the company expects to complete it in three years.

The longest trail to explore Slovenia and yourself

The magic of the mountain landscape enriches the body and spirit

Mountaineer Joža Vršnik-Robanov once wrote, "You will see what others do not see. You will hear what others do not hear. You will feel what others do not feel. You will look for what has never been lost. You will chase what has never escaped". Are you ready for a 600-kilometre hiking trail?

Photo: Aleš Fovžer/SPIRIT



The Bovec Basin

The Slovenian Mountain Trail was the first connective mountain trail in the world. The idea was adopted in all Alpine countries and elsewhere, although it was criticised at first for not being appropriate for mountaineering. The individual mountaineering societies which make up the Alpine Association of Slovenia maintain the trail. Ivan Šumljak, its conceptual and operational creator, first designated it as a main path. At its opening in 1953, it was called the Slovenian Alpine Transversal; it acquired its present name in 1991.

ON THE CREATOR OF THE SLOVENIAN MOUNTAIN TRAIL

Ivan Šumljak (1899–1984) was an all-round mountaineer, blaze maker, writer, photographer and lecturer. On the creation of the trail, he said, "I began working with my friends. We blazed the entire Pohorje. We marked that ridge trail with a Knafelc (uniform) blaze and the number

one. When I was resting once at Črni vrh, pleased with the work we'd accomplished, I had an idea: what if the trail marked number one was extended - to Uršlja gora, Smrekovec, Raduha, the Savinja Alps, the Karavanke, the Julian Alps, from Karst to the sea and through the Notranjska and Dolenjska regions back to the Štajerska region and Maribor. A traveller would thus see the beauty of the entire alpine world."

IN A CURVE FROM THE MOUNTAINS TO THE SEA

The large curve of the Slovenian Mountain Trail which connects forests, mountains and sea, consisted initially of 80 control points. Today, it has 75 points over a length of about 600 kilometres. Added together, the climbs on the Slovenian Mountain Trail amount to over 45 kilometres. In addition to this one, an extended trail traversing less mountainous areas of Slovenia with individual

unconnected points was established in 1968. A log is needed for this trail, and a guidebook is also available (the latest updated version was published in 2012 by the Planinska založba publishing house).

THE ALPINE ASSOCIATION OF SLOVENIA IN NUMBERS

The Alpine Association of Slovenia is one of the largest and oldest voluntary organisations in Slovenia, and is currently celebrating its 120th anniversary. The Association includes 278 mountaineering societies, with a total of 57,520 members. The mountaineering societies manage 175 mountain huts, shelters and bivouacs, with about 6,000 beds and a network of 1,661 mountain trails with a total length of 9,000 kilometres. The cultural mission of the association is carried out through Planinski vestnik (The Mountaineering Gazette), the oldest Slovenian magazine still being published; its first edition

The large curve of the Slovenian Mountain Trail which connects forests, mountains and sea, consisted initially of 80 control points. Today, it has 75 points over a length of about 600 kilometres.

The peak of Triglav



Photo: Kladenik/SPIRIT

The Slovenian Mountain Trail passes 58 mountain huts where you can get a stamp to prove that you actually walked the trail.

came out in 1895. The Alpine Association of Slovenia was a partner in the construction of the new Slovenian Alpine Museum which opened in Mojstrana in 2010.

WALK SLOWLY, MY FRIEND!

The Slovenian Mountain Trail passes 58 mountain huts where you can get a stamp to prove that you actually walked the trail. The Knafelc blaze, sometimes accompanied by the number one, guides hikers along the trail, where beginners can systematically acquire mountaineering knowledge, skills and experiences. After walking the whole trail, beginners become experienced and well-rounded mountaineers with the firm spiritual qualities that such a trail offers forms and preserves. The Slovenian Mountain Trail is thus not intended solely for accumulating stamps. Ivan Šumljak advises, "Walk slowly, my friend. You can actually finish the transversal in a month, but it is the best if you walk for five years. You will benefit from it more, much, much more. The badge of honour will still be waiting for you."

Estimates vary as to how quickly you can walk the Slovenian Mountain Trail. If you walk moderately without breaks, it would take 28 days (in 2012, Pija Peršič took 30 days. According to the latest reliable information, only seven people have managed to run

the trail in less than 14 days. Klremen Triler set the current record in 2012 of 8 days, 14 hours and 45 minutes.

EXHIBITION ON THE SLOVENIAN MOUNTAIN TRAIL

This year marks the 60th anniversary of the Slovenian Mountain Trail, so the Alpine Association of Slovenia decided to prepare an exhibition which so far has been showcased at the Regional Archives Maribor, in Celje, in the central library in Koper, the culture centre in Miklavž na Dravskem polju and library in Hoče. The exhibition will be showcased at Mariborska koča mountain hut in Pohorje at the end of the summer.

WALKING FOR THE VIEW

The Slovenian Mountain Trail includes ascents to 23 separate peaks. Personal mountaineering equipment (boots, backpack) suitable for your planned climbing goal (do not forget to take a helmet and self-belaying kit for very demanding trails), a camera and good mood are essential when you walk the trail. Before you start, check the short-term weather forecast for the region and do not overestimate your abilities. If you want to spend a night in a mountain hut, check its opening hours and book a reservation in advance. An Alpine Association of Slovenia guide or an Alpine guide can also accompany you on the trail.

Some 9,500 mountaineers have so far completed the Slovenian Mountain Trail, all of whom received commemorative badges.

MEETINGS ON TRAILS

A walk along the Slovenian Mountain Trail is an excellent opportunity to experience the beauty of the Slovenian landscape, to discover cultural sites, signs along the path, flora and fauna, hear the diverse dialects of the local residents and admire the architecture. You will be accompanied by the murmur of waterfalls, streams and rivers, and you can climb the highest peaks and fill your heart and soul at a sunset or an early morning dawn. The magic of the mountain landscape enriches the body and spirit.

The most heartfelt and genuine meetings are those with the local people in the various regions. Different seasons, weather conditions and our own attitude ensure that we never forget the impressions that the trail makes on us. And that is the reason that so many people return to it time and again, or at least to individual parts which they have come to love in particular. See you on the Slovenian Mountain Trail!

ON THE SLOVENIAN MOUNTAIN TRAIL - IN BRIEF

(adapted by Borut Peršolja as recorded by Janez Čermilec)



Photo: Tomo Jeseničnik/SPIRIT

Ibexes on Kriški Podi, with Triglav in the background

The Slovenian Mountain Trail begins in Radvanje near Maribor (270 m) where it ascends to Pohorje, a 60-kilometre mountain chain with the highest point at Črni vrh (1,543 m), and numerous mountain huts and ski tows. In the west, the trail descends to Slovenj Gradec (420 m) and then ascends to Carinthian monadnock, Uršlja gora (1,699 m). From here, the trail continues over Smrekovec (1,577 m) and Komen (1,684 m) to Raduha (2,062 m) and past Bukovnik (1,327 m), the highest farm in Slovenia, then descends to Solčava (642 m) in the Upper Savinja Valley.

Through the picturesque Robanov Kot Landscape Park, the trail approaches the foothills of high mountains for the first time. From Molička planina (1,780 m), with the second oldest Slovenian mountain hut, now renovated, named after Fran Kocbek, the trail ascends via Korošica (1,808 m) to Ojstrica (2,350 m), our second most beautiful mountain. The trail continues to Planjava (2,394 m) and from Kamniško sedlo (1,864 m) to Brana (2,252 m), Turska gora (2,251 m), Skuta (2,532 m) and past Kokršsko sedlo (1,793 m) to Grintovec (2,558 m), the highest peak in the Kamnik-Savinja Alps. Via Kočna (2,540 m) and Češka koča mountain hut at Spodnje Ravne (1,542 m), the trail descends to Zgornje Jezersko (880 m), which used to be known as a health resort.

The trail continues to Storžič (2,132

m) with magnificent views and descends via Tolsti vrh (1,715 m) and Kriška gora (1,471 m) to Tržič (515 m), which was once an important industrial town. It then ascends to Dobrča (1,634 m) and past Roblekov dom mountain hut (1,657 m) to Begunjščica (2,060 m) and Stol (2,236 m), the highest peak in the Karavanke, which bears an inscription in Slovenian and German: 'The mountains of friendship'. The trail continues below the ridge along high mountains to Golica (1,835 m) below which lie extensive meadows famed for their daffodils.

After descending into the valley, the trail leads to Dovje (704 m), where the priest Jakob Aljaž, author of the mountaineering anthem 'Oj, Triglav, moj dom' (Oh, Triglav, My Home), worked for many years. From Mojstrana (641 m), home of the Slovenian Alpine Museum, the trail continues through the valley of Vrata past Peričnik waterfall to Aljažev dom mountain hut (1,015 m). A steep trail goes via the remarkable Triglav north wall to Kredarica (2,515 m) with the highest mountain hut in Slovenia and on to Triglav (2,864 m), the highest peak and a symbol of Slovenia, where Aljaž Tower is situated. Via Kriški podi (2,050 m) with high mountain lakes, Razor (2,601 m) and Prisanak (2,547 m), the trail continues to Vršič (1,611 m), a mountain pass between the Gorenjska region and Trenta with five mountain huts.

The trail to Jalovec (2,645 m), according to many the most beautiful Slovenian mountain, whose image is also in the coat-of-arms of the Alpine Association of Slovenia, is easy at first, but extremely challenging in the final section.

The trail then descends into the valley of Trenta with the spring of the Soča River, Slovenia's most beautiful river. Through Zadnjica, the trail again ascends to Prehodavce (2,071 m) and into the Triglav Lakes Valley or the Valley of the Seven Lakes (1,685 m). The present Triglav National Park has its origins here. From Komna (1,520 m) and along the Krn Lakes (1,385 m), the trail ascends to Krn (2,244 m) which offers beautiful views. The trail continues along the northern slope of the Lower Bohinj Mountains from Vogel (1,922 m) to Črna prst (1,844 m), below which a new mountain hut was built recently at the site of the former oldest Slovenian mountain hut, the Orožen hut. The trail continues to the Cerkljansko and Idrijsko Hills to Idrija (325 m), which once boasted the second largest mercury mine in the world.

From Trnovski gozd and Javnornik (1,240 m) further to Nanos (1,313 m) and via Vremščica (1,027 m) to Slavnik (1,028 m), the last 1,000-metre mountain on the trail. It is not far now to the Adriatic Sea, where the Slovenian Mountain Trail ends in Ankarana (8 m).

International Biennial of Graphic Arts Interruption

The 30th Biennial of Graphic Arts began with a gala opening outside the International Centre of Graphic Arts (MGLC) in Ljubljana. As the Minister of Culture, Uroš Grilc, mentioned in his opening speech, this year's biennial entitled 'Interruption' is actually a return to tradition. The opening was also attended by the President of the Republic of Slovenia, Borut Pahor.



Photo: Daniel Novakovič/STA

The opening of this year's Biennial was also attended by the President of the Republic of Slovenia, Borut Pahor.

CONNECTION OF THE WORD 'INTERRUPTION' WITH THE BIENNIAL

According to Minister Grilc, the notion of an 'interruption' is not something one would associate with the Biennial. This event, which first took place in 1955, has always served as Slovenian art's window onto the world and has invited global artists to Ljubljana, as its name is known around the world. The Biennial has seen many changes, but never an 'interruption'. On the other hand, as Minister Grilc said, interruption is a topic which is inseparably related to the idea of the Biennial itself and its perception by the broader public. In recent years, the issue of interruption has focused on the question of whether traditional graphic art is appropriately placed in the concept of the Biennial and whether reproducible techniques should dictate how the concept of the Biennial may expand.

This year's central exhibition, entitled 'Interruption' and designed by Deborah Cullen, is showcased at MGLC, the Museum of Modern Art, the Švicarija Building and Jakopič Promenade. The exhibition addresses the evolutionary graphic field of the present and presents a selective overview,

which accompanies and examines the radical transformation of means of visual literacy and everyday communication.

THE BIENNIAL CONNECTS VARIOUS VENUES

The Cankarjev Dom Gallery is hosting the exhibition 'The Biennial of Graphic Arts, Serving You Since 1955', and the Jakopič Gallery is hosting the exhibition of Regina José Galindo, the Grand Prize Winner of the 29th Biennial. The Museum of Contemporary Art Metelkova is hosting an exhibition by Miklós Erdély, who was awarded at the 29th Biennial with a special mention for his lifetime achievements. A special homage to the Biennial, with graphics from the MGLC Collection, can be seen at the Lek Gallery, and the exhibition 'Robert Morris from the MGLC Collection' is being showcased in the Pentagonal Tower at Ljubljana Castle.

TREE TALK

The international jury of Chema de Francisco, Sally Tallant and Dušica Kirjakovic with president Tevž Logar awarded the Grand Prize of this year's Biennial to María Elena González for her 'Tree Talk' series.

According to the jury citation, its complex design enables possibilities offered by current graphic techniques. The artist combines different media with exceptional precision and connects them harmoniously into a unity, which she then convincingly anchors in her conceptual origins. The series was inspired by her encounter with a fallen birch tree in the woods near a summer artists' colony organised by the Skovhogan School of Painting and Sculpture. The artist collected and flattened the bark, made drawings and rubbings, and then scanned its striated patterns to see what sounds it would produce. She digitally translated the bark patterns and had them laser cut into a roll for a player piano. This project allows visitors to 'hear the music' of a birch tree.

THE AUDIENCE AWARD IS NEW

Nevenka Šivavec, director of the MGLC, highlighted the new feature of this year's Biennial, which is the audience award. Visitors will be able to vote for their favourite artist in the main exhibition at various venues or via Facebook. The winning artist will be able to use the artist's residence or the MGLC graphic studio.

How do men in Slovenia dress?



Photo: Robert Poredoš/STA



Photo: Vito Tolaj

LEA PISANI Image Consultant

Lea Pisani is the author of the bestselling first Slovenian handbook on clothing, entitled *Obleka – kaj, kdaj, kako*, which translates into its English version as *Dress Code for All Occasions*, published recently at Amazon.com. She holds a university degree in textile and clothing design. She specialised in London, obtaining the title of CMB Image Consultant. Ms Pisani provides education and consultation in Slovenia, Italy and Austria. She has been working as an image consultant for sixteen years. Among other things, she has designed the programme entitled *Modni stilizem in Sodobna moda (Fashionable Styles and Contemporary Fashion)* at the Academy of Design; she also gives lectures at the Higher Vocational College for Catering and Tourism in Maribor. She is the creator of the new visual identity of the Ljubljana city wardens and the overall visual identity of the wardens of Slovenia. Working with acclaimed Slovenian costume designer Alan Hranitelj, Lea Pisani has also carried out several business attire projects (the visual identity of the Žale cemetery, the Slovenian Tourist Board and public transport provider Ljubljanski Potniški Promet, d.d.).

Men in Slovenia dress in a wide variety of ways. Their clothing has definitely become less formal than it was years ago. The tie is an everyday item only for those men who hold positions of leadership, while most jobs have a "smart casual" dress code. Slovenians do not tend to wear daring clothing with bold prints, patterns and colours like the Italians, though they do admire their creative choices in dressing. Without doubt, Slovenians value aesthetics more than Americans and are more careful about quality in comparison with the English. Our Slovenian textile companies have taught us to recognise good quality and we regret that there are hardly any left. Thus we are increasingly reaching out to foreign brands. There are many connoisseurs of clothing culture among Slovenians, who appreciate designed pieces defining their style of dressing. Quite a few of them follow the fashion trends, but it is true to say that the city where we can see the most fashionably dressed men is Ljubljana, followed by Koper, the latter because of its proximity to Italy.

As an image consultant, I have fought for years against wearing short-sleeved collared shirts, trying to make people understand that such a shirt is basically a "ruined" shirt with its sleeves cut off. And when such a shirt comes with a tie, a great aesthetic sin has been committed. Such a combination is allowed only for those wearing a uniform. In the summer, Slovenia and also other parts of Europe see men wearing three-quarter cargo pants with a pair of crocs, exposing some 20 cm of hairy legs. Some men just prefer to stay in their comfort zone and are not concerned with the aesthetic value of certain combinations of clothing and accessories.

Those who are acquainted with clothing culture are also generally connoisseurs of various brands, and there is no longer any need to shop abroad as such brands are now readily available in Slovenia. Young Slovenians surprisingly often shop online, because there is no need to enter sweaty fitting rooms, which is undoubtedly one of the main reasons why they, unlike women, do not particularly like the shops.

And what did Slovenians wear to the basketball games? If possible, a green T-shirt with stripes that represent Triglav, our highest mountain. As a rule, we wear comfortable clothing to sports matches: jeans, linen trousers, Bermuda shorts, polo shirts or T-shirts featuring messages are an excellent choice. Spectators at sports games should not really wear sportswear (such as tracksuits), since such clothing is only worn when we are actively engaged in sports activities.

In their rational choice of clothes, our men can, in general, set an example to Slovenian women, who have in their wardrobes as much as 70 percent of clothing they never wear – hence a very common comment here is "How come you have nothing to wear when your wardrobe's full of clothes?". Men prefer to buy clothes in sets, when they need something, and rarely during the sales. Men hate the crowds during the sales, though crowds at sporting events do not seem to bother them at all.

Sport and Fashion



Photo: Robert Poredos/JTA



Photo: Sanja Martinec

"For EuroBasket 2013, the Slovenian basketball team was equipped with Spalding basketball uniforms that are not only very modern, but also much lighter than previous uniforms. For the first time, the uniforms also blend with the overall image of the Basketball Federation of Slovenia," explained Matej Avanzo, the Senior National Teams and Marketing Director.

Although a pharmacy graduate, **TINA MARTINEC SELAN** has been engaged in fashion as an amateur ever since her childhood. After finishing her university studies, she expanded her hobby by writing a blog entitled *Odgledopet (FromHeadtoToe)* intended for various topics in the area of personal style and neat and tidy appearance. Since the blog received a very good response, she decided to change her career after giving birth to her second child. She attended colour consultant training at the international company *Colour Me Beautiful (CMB)*. After receiving the 'CMB- colour and makeup consultant' certificate, she became a CMB consultant in the field of colour consulting and make-up.

Do you still recall the time when people couldn't care less about the way they dressed when they decided to do some recreational exercise? If one went for a walk, a run, to aerobics, etc., one put on the bottom half of a baggy tracksuit, a T-shirt and sneakers, and that was it. Those times are gone forever. I have been observing for some time how people's attitudes towards the clothing they put on for sport activities have changed. In sports shops, unattractive clothes are practically impossible to buy, while the shelves are full of very stylish clothing, in which sport is more a matter of prestige than torment.

The invasion of fashion in the world of sportswear is a mutual phenomenon. Sportswear has paved its own path to become part of chic, elegant outfits. If you follow street-style fashion blogs or fashion magazines,

you must have noticed that they are full of elegant women and men who, in addition to a fancy dress or an elegant coat, put on sneakers that look very much the same as running sneakers, while fashion designers include the clothes made from sporting materials and cuts in entirely urban collections. And vice versa: fashion has also irrevocably invaded the area of sportswear. Neon and other interesting colours, fancy cuts, advanced materials and aesthetic clothes in general have now become the reason that, while running in a park, we glance at fellow runners not because of their speed, but because of joy we get from looking at their running outfits.

Pilates, yoga and certain other forms of exercise in gyms offer, in general, a view of splendid clothes which, in certain combinations, we could easily put on when going downtown or even to work.

For people whose love of sport is not in their blood and find it some kind of torment that must be forced upon oneself, this certainly represents a good stimulation and motivation: if one can look slightly fancy even while participating in sports, everything is much easier and more pleasant. Sounds familiar, doesn't it. And because we usually do not wear make-up while engaged in a sport activity, and loose (long) hair is not very practical for obvious reasons, nice sportswear in attractive colours is a welcome way to enhance our look.

I know quite a few people who admit that it is much easier and more pleasant for them to buy sportswear than clothes for the office or fancy events.

What about you? Is it also important to you to look good during recreation?

Cities and fans

In the spirit of the slogan 'I Feel Slovenia'



Photo: Nebojša Tejić/JTA

Slovenia! Slovenia! Slovenia! Slovenia!

The European Basketball Championship is an extremely important international event and a spectacle for Slovenia. It gave Slovenia the chance to feel the euphoria in the spirit of the national promotional slogan 'I Feel Slovenia'. The fans collected different fan tools which carry the message of the national brand. With the purpose of promoting Slovenia, flags bearing the official 'I Feel Slovenia' national brand were flown in the host towns of Celje, Koper, Jesenice and Ljubljana. The show windows near the event sites were furnished with billboards and balloons, and tourist centres offered diverse informative materials for foreigners.

The fans received different props: a fan hand in the form of a heart with the inscription (Navijam za Slovenijo - I'm cheering for Slovenia), a clap banner with the sign 'I Feel Slovenia' on one side and the Slovenian flag on the other. Fans could also use face stickers which feature the Slovenian flag on one side and the official brand on the other, and many green balloons were also available.

During the championship, the Congress Square became a city fan zone, with a big screen for watching the games, which were

also followed by an entertainment programme. Before the championship had even begun, a special conference for fans was held, where they competed in throwing three points with Slovenian basketball legends, and equipped themselves with fan props in the spirit of the slogan 'I Feel Slovenia'. They watched films, aimed to encourage fans in a funny and entertaining way to be sporting and thus contribute to a successful championship and the positive image of Slovenia.

A flash mob was organised in front of the Triple Bridge in Ljubljana, where a basketball court was set up to shoot some scores. Cheerleaders dressed in suits with official Slovenian logos were also present.

There was a lot of interest in watching the Slovenian team's matches. On average, 2,567 spectators watched the games. The stands were full and the viewing rate was the largest so far. No game has ever attracted so many viewers as the one between Slovenia and Croatia. 427,979 people watched the game on television, which is 54 per cent of those watching television at that time. The last minutes of the game between Slovenia and Croatia were watched by 535,000 viewers all

around Slovenia, or more than 70 per cent of those who were watching television at the time.

The match between Slovenia and Croatia also broke records of official visitors, since no basketball game has attracted so many high-ranking politicians before.

Along with the Slovenian President, Borut Pahor, the match was watched by the Prime Minister, Alenka Bratušek, and the Croatian Prime Minister, Zoran Milanović. Many ministers, presidents of political parties, Deputies of the National Assembly and presidents of management boards of some major Slovenian companies were also present.

During the European championship, the atmosphere was intense, exciting, happy and some times even bitter, due to the failures of the home team. However, this was an event that overwhelmed us all, Slovenian and foreign fans alike. The hosting fans also enjoyed the company of foreign ones. We met and socialised at the sports stadiums during EuroBasket. The cheering colours were quite diverse at the end of the summer, despite the gloomy rainy days. But, there is no colour like green, of course. I feel Slovenia - I feel basketball.

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In the beat of basketball



Lipko says...



Prime Minister Alenka Bratušek stressed at the opening...



Boundless enthusiasm among the fans...



The drumming heats up the atmosphere...



It's nice to be a mascot....



Our fans are naturally the loudest....



Crowds cheering in front of the arena...



You could shoot hoops in the fan zone in Congress Square...



I love everyone who supports our team....



The fans follow the latest fashion trends....



The players are excited about their success as well...



Too much winning makes the headache....

Promotion of Eurobasket 2013

From underground to the sea and to the peak of Triglav

The promotional events for the 2013 European Basketball Championship, the biggest sporting event in Slovenia, have caught the eye of the whole of Europe because of their originality and innovativeness. The first shots into a hoop were taken in a cave 60 metres under ground, then at sea level (0 metres), and finally on the highest Slovenian peak, 2,864 metres above sea level. EuroBasket is also an organisational success story.



At the press conference in Postojna Cave.

It all started less than a year ago with the attractive draw for EuroBasket 2013, which for the first time in the history of the competition took place under ground, in the large Concert Hall of Postojna Cave. The draw put the Slovenian national basketball team in Group C with Spain, Croatia, Poland, Georgia and the Czech Republic. It was also the first time a basketball game had been played in the karst underground. The game featured six legendary former Slovenian national team players, who played three on three. Roman Horvat will be remembered as first basketball scorer in the history of basketball. The game was played so fast that the scorekeepers could not keep score, so there was no official winner. The entire spectacle enjoyed extensive media coverage both in Slovenia and abroad, as it was attended by about 150 Slovenian and foreign journalists.

After the historic underground basketball game, the EuroBasket 2013 team prepared another ground-breaking event: the first basketball game at sea. This unique event took place on the largest raft in Slovenia, with a real basketball court on board. The competing teams featured basketball legends from three Adriatic countries, Croatia, Italy and Slovenia. They played three games with two ten-minute halves. The Slovenian team beat the Italians, but fell to the Croatians, who also beat the Italians to win the tournament. The spectacle took place 300 m off coast at Koper on a 1,500 kg floating platform, 40 m long, 20 m wide and 3 m high. Since it was not possible to set up seating places on the platform, the guests viewed the event from a catamaran, the Prince of Venice. According to Raša Nesterovič, the captain of the Slovenian team, the event was proof of the excellent neigh-

bourly relations between Croatia, Italy and Slovenia. The fans' enthusiasm did not flag even in the warm-up matches. In these matches, Slovenia beat all their opponents except the Serbian and the French teams.

Slovenia even won the match against the seemingly invincible Russians, who completely outplayed the Slovenian side in the first quarter in Tivoli Hall; but at the end, the Slovenians did manage to win their eighth victory. Between halves, the match was honoured by a visit from the golden generation of the Yugoslav basketball team, who at the invitation of the Slovenian President, Borut Pahor, and the Slovenian Basketball Association, gathered 43 years later in Tivoli Hall, where they won the World Championship in 1970. To honour their exceptional success, which contributed to the development of basketball, the audience gave them standing ovations.



Basketball on a floating platform.



Lipko scored with his first shot, the first basketball score ever achieved on Mt Triglav.

It all started less than a year ago with the attractive draw for EuroBasket 2013, which for the first time in the history of the competition took place under ground, in the large Concert Hall of Postojna Cave

France, which won the championship, also has the most renowned player in its team, the three-time NBA league champion, Tony Parker. As the host of the championship, Slovenia gave the famous French basketball player specially made glasses. The unique glasses were created by the young Wood Stock designers from cherry and lime wood, and they are 98-percent hand-made.

The promotional activities before EuroBasket 2013 reached

their peak one day before the championship began. Lipko (the mascot) organised a special campaign with the help of the championship organisers, and set up a basket at 2,864 m above sea level, directly beneath Aljaž's Tower. He scored with his first shot, the first basketball score ever achieved on Mt Triglav. This was Lipko's way of wishing all the players and fans a successful and interesting EuroBasket 2013.

The opening of EuroBasket 2013 took place in Congress Square,

where the official speaker was Prime Minister Alenka Bratušek, who stressed that we can be proud of the Slovenian basketball team players; however, it is our commitment and duty to make them proud of their country.

In conclusion, we can rightly say that Slovenia has proven once again that the Slovenian people love sports, are very hospitable and know how to organise and promote such an extensive event successfully.

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Wood Stock for Tony Parker

Wooden glasses of the young design group Wood Stock for French basketball player Tony Parker



Photo: Archive of Wood Stock

Wood Stock, a young design group from Slovenske Konjice, producing hand-made wooden glasses, has managed to make a major breakthrough – one of the greatest basketball stars, Tony Parker, will see the world through their lenses!

The glasses are a unique recycled product made of old wood. Wood is a great natural asset of Slovenia and traditionally present in almost every Slovenian home.

In the framework of promotional activities organised for the European Basketball Championships by the Communication Office of the Government of the Republic of Slovenia and related to the promotion of the 'I Feel Slovenia' brand, a special event took place at the friendly match between Slovenia and France. Slovenia, the host country of Eurobasket, presented French basketball star Tony Parker with wooden glasses manufactured especially for him by the young design group Wood Stock.

On behalf of Slovenia, Parker was handed the glasses by Slovenian basketball player and Parker's former team mate Rašo Nesterović. The glasses are a unique recycled product made of old wood. Wood is a great natural asset of Slovenia and traditionally present in almost every Slovenian home. This led to the idea of a unique and original present that links the tradition and modernity in the spirit of the Slovenian national brand, and reflects

Slovenia's boutique character and handicraft.

As more than two thirds of Slovenia is covered by forests, green is the predominant colour. We like to call it 'Slovenian green', and it tells a story about unspoiled nature and our desire to keep it in such condition. Slovenia ranks third in Europe by the share of wooded areas; to put it simply, forests grow almost everywhere.

Slovenians are closely connected with sport. Our story is also a story of sport – exercise fills us with vigour and gives us the energy necessary for recreational and professional goals. We excel at sports. We ski and climb where no one has before; we swim and cycle for longer distances than anyone else. We not only overcome natural laws and limits: we discover and extend them. Slovenia radiates a special sport energy because its people are constantly in motion and in touch with nature. Sport is a part of Slovenian identity and an indispensable el-

ement of the Slovenian brand and its green colour.

The green at the core of the national brand 'I feel Slovenia' has a particular place in the hearts of Slovenians – it reflects the balance between nature and society and the assiduity of Slovenians. The Slovenian green also characterizes the Slovenian people's orientation to the elements, that is, to what can be felt in their hands. The diverse landscape has marked a rich natural and cultural tradition, giving rise to the creativity of its people and inspiring different artists. Last but not least, the memory of Slovenia combines the scent of the forest, the murmur of the brook, the remarkable taste of its water and the softness of wood. We feel Slovenia.

WHY WOODEN GLASSES?

The answer is self-evident: wood is the most important Slovenian natural asset traditionally related to Slovenian creativity. Wood has never been merely a building and

Photo: KZS



Tony Parker was handed his glasses by Slovenian basketball star and former teammate Rašo Nesterović.

heating material; it represents the warmth of home and a material for creativity. Throughout the centuries, the linden crown and leaf has reflected the Slovenian national identity. The linden tree has been and remains a vital symbol of Slovenia. Wild cherry is another tree with a long history and tradition. Each Slovenian owns a wooden kitchenware item, a toy or another traditional wooden product. This led to the idea of a unique and original present that links the tradition and modernity in the spirit of the Slovenian national brand, and reflects Slovenia's boutique character expressed in handmade items. Wood Stock, a young design group, made the wooden glasses for Tony Parker from cherry and linden wood; they are almost entirely hand made. The new model of glasses developed for Tony Parker will be manufactured in only nine exclusive copies: two will be kept by the company, five will be sold at auctions, and one will be reserved for a presentation on a special opportunity. The

glasses have the 'I feel Slovenia' logo and the basketball star's signature 'branded' on the inner side of the temples.

The package is a unique product of its own, too. It resembles a wooden house and is made of wild cherry wood, in fact of a discarded old chest.

WHO ARE WOOD STOCK?

Wood Stock is a group of young and creative people with a vision of an authentic Slovenian product. They are aware of the distinctiveness of Slovenian wood. Wood Stock believe that the future of entrepreneurship lies not in companies in pursuit of fast profits made by selling mass-produced goods, but in companies focused on quality and environmentally friendly sustainable products.

FROM THE IDEA TO THE PRODUCT

The story of the wooden glasses began with the wish of Jaka Jančič, the Wood Stock com-

pany founder. He wanted to have wooden glasses with all his heart, but the price made them inaccessible. He decided to make a pair himself. This was followed by experiments in his garage where the first pair of glasses was made with primitive tools. After two years of testing and development, Wood Stock can now proudly present their high-quality and perfected product.

ABOUT THE PRODUCT

Wood Stock glasses are hand made from different sorts of wood and can also be customized. The glasses are also made from different old wooden objects (wardrobes, barrels etc.) that are no longer functional. Thus, we can talk about 'upcycling', which produces new objects with higher functional value by recycling old products. Each pair of glasses is protected by coatings of citrus oils and beeswax, which are natural and environmentally friendly. The lenses used are of the highest quality.

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The story of a legend of Slovenian, Yugoslavian, European and world basketball

If basketball didn't exist,
Ivo Daneu would have invented it

This was one of the thoughts in *Memories Among the Baskets* the documentary by Aleš Žemlja about Ivo Daneu in which Daneu is recognised as the best Slovenian basketball player of all time. Anyone familiar with the history of basketball would say he is a legend, a great star and an authority. The days of the golden generation are long gone, but Ivo Daneu continues his lifelong mission. He took on the role of ambassador of EuroBasket.

Ivo Daneu was born on 6 October 1937 in Maribor. In the Second World War, his family was deported to Serbia. After the war and their return to Maribor, his father died in 1949. Due to his height (184 cm), exceptional motor skills and the ability to throw (shoot), he was a playmaker and guard. After graduation, he decided to play for the AŠK Olimpija basketball club. Already during his first year in Ljubljana, he became a champion in Yugoslavia. He won six national championships in the fourteen seasons he spent in Olimpija. He played in over 200 international games for the Yugoslavian national team, including three Olympic Games, three world and six European championships. He ended his career victoriously in 1970 by winning the national and world championships. After retiring, he was Olimpija's coach for one year. In 1972, he became active again and played one season for Rudar club in Trbovlje. Today, he enjoys an active retired life. He plays sports and cards with his friends and travels. His grandchildren are his greatest pleasure. He usually starts his day with a cup of coffee and a newspaper in one of the coffee shops near his home in the centre of the Slovenian capital, which was where we met.



Photo: Nebojša Tejić/STA



Photo: Nebojša Tejić/STA

Ivo Daneu has been a unique ambassador of basketball and sport throughout his life.

In the film, Ljubodrag Simonović says: "Ivo Daneu was the founder of so-called modern basketball...It wasn't just about competing, winning, achieving good results, but also about developing elements of the game: dribbling, moving around in space, dynamic passes, intelligent play, speed, versatility of moves, etc."

In the interview with Ivo Daneu, we discussed not only his rich career, but primarily an event which is still relevant, EuroBasket.

Why did you decide to play basketball and not another sport?

As a child, I actually wanted to become a tennis player, but my family – my mother was left alone with four children after my father's death – didn't have the money, because tennis is a relatively expensive sport. There was a football field close to my home and I started playing football. But I disliked this sport after I accidentally got a hard blow in the head from a ball.

A basketball court was also nearby and that gradually became my passion. I didn't think about other sports after that. I started training with the Polet club in Maribor and later with

Branik. I played there until the end of grammar school and then I joined Olimpija.

What are your memories of the so-called 'golden' era?

Those were very good times, although I had to find a job very quickly. I first enrolled at the Faculty of Sport. I was already in the national team that year. I remember that the competition was in Poland. And because I had to be absent for five weeks, I went to the faculty administration, but unfortunately they weren't prepared to grant me such a long absence. So I didn't finish university because I was forced to choose between basketball and study. And I chose basketball. I was soon permanently employed. So, I went to work and played basketball. But I still managed. Others trained twice a day; I only trained in the evenings.

Basketball experts call you 'a legend', 'a golden boy'. In addition to all your other successes, you are known for your famous throw which won the world title for the Yugoslavian team.

To tell the truth, I was injured at the time. If the competition hadn't been in Ljubljana,

perhaps I wouldn't have even played. The club management was afraid that if I didn't play, the spectators would boycott the game. I didn't play much in the championship due to my injury; although I did play against the USA, but only in the last five minutes. And then in that crucial or necessary moment, I scored.

Such an achievement – for Slovenian basketball players to become world champions – seems almost impossible. Why was this possible then, but is probably not today?

Great credit undoubtedly goes to the management, especially Boris Kristančič. He had a vision that we would be the best. He almost planned it. The coach was law at the time. If a player had to be given the same instructions three times, he was considered a bit stupid. We got the instructions, considered them and worked very hard. It's true that the competing system back then was different from today. We also played in three groups, which were located in the former republics of Yugoslavia in order to reduce Slovenia's costs. Only six teams from the qualifiers played in Ljubljana.

"Ivo Daneu was the founder of so-called modern basketball...It wasn't just about competing, winning, achieving good results, but also about developing elements of the game: dribbling, moving around in space, dynamic passes, intelligent play, speed, versatility of moves, etc."

Ivo Daneu is the only Slovenian that the International Basketball Federation has inducted into its Hall of Fame, next to the best in the world.



Photo: Edil Šelih

Sport was highly appreciated in the former Yugoslavia. I'm still warmly welcomed in the republics of the former Yugoslavia. I've had the same impression now as ambassador of EuroBasket.

na and Yugoslavia as the host state. All teams played against each other. So, when we beat the USA one day before the end of the championship, we were practically world champions. The next game against the Soviet Union was irrelevant. And by the way, we lost that game.

What was the atmosphere like in the team and what were the circumstances then?

There weren't any disagreements. We were friends and we still socialise with the players who played at that time; but not only with them, with others as well. Sport was highly appreciated in the former Yugoslavia. I'm still warmly welcomed in the republics of the former Yugoslavia. I've had the same impression now as ambassador of EuroBasket. I received an invitation from the Montenegrin President, Filip Vujanović, to make a private visit and I was happy to accept it. As ambassador, I also took the opportunity to invite

the Montenegrin President to the championship in Ljubljana. Media from all over the former Yugoslavia were present throughout and showed great interest. Honestly, I am already slightly tired (laughs). I also have to say that I was invited to a dinner with the Croatian President, Ivo Josipović. I discussed sports and basketball with both presidents, not politics. Really, I always feel welcome in these countries. And that is nice.

So, the role of ambassador of EuroBasket is ideal for you?

I accepted it with great pleasure. But because English is not my forte, I asked to be the ambassador for the countries of the former Yugoslavia. I communicate more easily in these languages. And because I speak Russian, I also participated in the promotion of EuroBasket in Russia.

What can you say about the Slovenian boys who competed in EuroBasket?

They have quality, absolutely. They're very combative and aggressive; they're friends and a good team, but they still lack technical knowledge. They are weak particularly in the centre. All the other teams have four centres and can substitute them. The fact is that the Slovenian guards are quite young, inexperienced and play rather indifferently. The boys played very well at the beginning against Spain, but the inexperience came out against Croatia. They were better throughout the game, but slackened off at the end. They try too many three-point shots. I believe that basketball is played correctly with penetrations, switching positions and well-timed passes. Basketball is a very intelligent and strategic game.

Did the players ask you for any advice?

I didn't share any in particular; the Slovenian coaches are good and very knowledgeable, so I didn't interfere at all. You see,



Photo: Archive of National Museum of Contemporary History

not everything depends on the coach. He can control substitutions, but he can't play defence on the court instead of the players. The victory is always won by the players, if they score or if they block a throw.

How would you assess the teams now after EuroBasket?

This championship was interesting; there were many surprises. A pleasant surprise for us Slovenians was the win against Spain and the bitter disappointment over the much expected win against Croatia. I stress, too expected. It was proven that it was impossible to predict and count chickens before they are hatched. There is an anecdote: A very young friend of mine, a volunteer at EuroBasket, kept asking me who I thought would win individual games and I was always wrong. In the end, I joked and told him to bet the opposite of what I said if he wanted to win. By which I mean to say that the championship was also very interesting because of its unpredictability. Perhaps that was the result of the change of generations, and there were many young players and not, if I may say, so many mature sportsmen. The Spanish and Germans had rookies, for example. In spite of everything, my favourites were

the French and the Spanish throughout. But I couldn't believe that Russia was out of the championship already after the first round. That really surprised me. I should also mention that, until just recently, Russia had an American on their team. That would have never happened in my days. Mixed teams are very common now.

The President of the Republic of Slovenia has recently awarded you the Golden Order for Services for your outstanding sporting achievements, encouraging younger generations of basketball players and other sportspeople, and promoting Slovenia in the global sporting arena. What does this recognition mean to you?

I was happy to receive it. I was particularly pleased by the fact that President Pahor invited my colleagues from the national team, the golden core from 1970, and my club team mates to the ceremony. In my thank-you speech, I particularly stressed that my successes were not mine alone. In basketball, a single individual cannot win; it is a joint effort and joint achievement. So, I don't claim this recognition only as an individual. But it is true that I received the award for wider support for sport and basketball.

Do you think that the promotion of Slovenia during EuroBasket was sufficient?

I feel that all the participants worked very hard at the promotion: EuroBasket 2013, the Slovenian Basketball Association, the Government Communication Office of the Republic of Slovenia, and everyone else. Many people worked day and night. You see, it's always possible to do more, but it's also important to give recognition. Even more now, when financial resources are limited. Many volunteers participated in this project and I really think that Slovenia did an excellent job. I was happy to see a great number of passionate fans, and many officials and other VIP guests who were attending the games from the beginning. EuroBasket was a great sporting and diplomatic event, and certainly important for Slovenia in every way.

What is your message to the national teams now at the end of the European championship?

I sincerely congratulate all of them, and especially the winners. They were the best; somebody has to be. Congratulations also go to everyone, because the sporting spirit was present throughout. Again, congratulations to everyone.

When Ivo Daneu raised the winners' cup, everyone shared the same thought in the Tivoli Hall on 24 May 1970: for years it was believed that basketball was safest in Ivo Daneu's hands and thus the cup was also handed to him.

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I sincerely congratulate all of them, and especially the winners. They were the best; somebody has to be.

The City of Ljubljana opens the House of Sport An exhibition in memory of Yugoslav basketball's glory days

Located in Ljubljana city centre, on the bank of the Ljubljanica River, a House of Sport has opened its doors to sports enthusiasts. The House serves as a sports information centre, where fans can buy tickets for all sports events in Ljubljana and season tickets for matches and events organised by individual clubs in the city and find out about upcoming sports events. Here you can also make reservations for recreational sports facilities and find a range of promotional materials.



Photo: Stanke Cruden/STA

Former athletes: rower Jože Berc, footballer Branko Oblak, ski-flying world champion Jože Šlibar, ice-hockey player Rudi Hiti, tennis player Mima Jauševc, bowler Miro Steržaj, gymnast Miroslav Cerar, ice-hockey player Albin Felc and the grandson of fencer Rudolf Cvetko. Back row: former basketball players Aljoša Žorga and Ivo Daneu.

The main message to visitors is encouragement of tolerance, solidarity and fair play.

The House also offers refreshing drinks, snacks and pastries and acts as a focal point, bringing together people from different areas of sporting activity in Ljubljana – from athletes to fans, sponsors, tourists and recreationists – who can follow various sporting events on small or large TV screens inside or in front of the House. The main message to visitors is encouragement of tolerance, solidarity and fair play.

The visit of Yugoslav basketball's golden generation added a special touch of magic to the House of Sport. At the invitation of the Basketball Federation of Slovenia and President Borut Pahor, Ljubljana again, after 43 years, hosted the 1970 basketball world champions.

The legendary basketball players were honoured at an exhibition in the atrium of Ljubljana City Hall, entitled "We Were the World Champions. The Never-Ending Ascent to the 1970 Basketball Gold and Beyond". It was staged by the Museum and Galleries of Ljubljana (MGML) in co-operation with the Municipality of Ljubljana and the Intermedia Network production company.

Yugoslav basketball was a sporting phenomenon in which Slovenian players took part from the very beginning. In the 1960s and 1970s, Ivo Daneu, Aljoša Žorga and Vinko Jelovac, wearing the dress of the Yugoslav national team, were setting the standards for Slovenian basketball. The success achieved in

1970 in Ljubljana – the team's first major championship title – remains the greatest achievement of the Slovenian basketball players. Between 1961 and 1991, the team went on to win six bronze, ten silver and nine gold medals at European and World Championships and Olympic Games. Visitors to the exhibition will be able to see complete footage of the Yugoslavia–USA final from the Ljubljana World Championships and the cup received by the Yugoslav national team on winning the title of World Champions. The exhibition is accompanied by the world premiere – to be shown at the end of September – of the documentary We Were the World Champions, produced by the Intermedia Network production company.



Photo: Nik Rovnan

Inauguration of the Slovenian Sports Hall of Fame.



Photo: Sport Ljubljana

House of Sport

WE WERE THE WORLD CHAMPIONS

Ljubljana City Hall has opened an exhibition entitled "We Were the World Champions. The Never-Ending Ascent to the 1970 Basketball Gold and Beyond". The exhibition was staged in co-operation between the Museum and Galleries of Ljubljana, the Municipality of Ljubljana, Sections for Culture and Sport, and the Intermedia Network production company. The exhibition vividly presents the Yugoslav national basketball team's

path from its first performances in major competition to the gold medal at the 1970 world championships in Ljubljana.

A PATH TO THE FIRST GOLD MEDAL MADE INTO FILM

The exhibition, it was on display until 22 September at Ljubljana City Hall, was accompanied by the world premiere of the documentary We Were the World Champions, which was shown in the course of Eurobasket 2013 – the European Basketball Championships.

Produced by the Belgrade-based Intermedia Network, the film presents 50 people who in one way or another were involved in the development of Yugoslav basketball up to the historic victory – the first gold medal to be won by the Yugoslav national team – at the World Basketball Championships on 24 May 1970 in Ljubljana's Tivoli Hall. The film was written and produced – with Dejan Petrović – by Zvonimir Šimunec, with screenplay by Aleksandar Miletić. It is directed by Ivica Vidanović.

Yugoslav basketball is an unforgettable phenomenon. The exhibition, it was on display until 22 September at Ljubljana City Hall, was accompanied by the world premiere of the documentary We Were the World Champions, which was shown in the course of Eurobasket 2013 – the European Basketball Championships.

Photo: Mitja Volčanšek



Class Enemy wins at Venice Critics' Week

Class Enemy, the debut feature by Slovenian director Rok Biček, has won the best film award at the International Film Critics' Week, an independent section of the 70th Venice Film Festival.

Biček's high-school drama tells the story of a tense relationship between a group of students and their new German language teacher and features an impressive cast of some of Slovenia's leading actors, including Igor Samobor and Nataša Barbara Gračner.

Photo: Daniel Novakovič/STA



Kolektor plans EUR 1 bn in revenues in 2022

The concern Kolektor has never generated a loss in its 50-year history and plans to reach EUR 1 billion in revenues in 2022, the industrial conglomerate's chairman Stojan Petrič stated at an event marking the company's 50th anniversary.

Slovenian Prime Minister Alenka Bratušek, who attended the ceremony, said that Kolektor was a role model. Bratušek noted at a press conference that the company had been able to avoid the economic crisis and that she could only wish to have a balance sheet like Kolektor's as prime minister.



Photo: Taminio Pehelinskič/STA

Deloitte Central Europe Top 500

The auditing firm Deloitte has compiled a list of the 500 biggest companies in Central Europe. The list includes 18 Slovenian companies, one more than last year.

A third of the companies listed come from Poland, followed by those from the Czech Republic, while Slovenian companies represent 3.6%. Given Slovenia's GDP of EUR 35 billion, compared to Poland's EUR 380 billion, "this is a good result", Deloitte Slovenija official Janez Škrubej said as he presented the survey to reporters in Ljubljana on Wednesday. The leading Slovenian company, Petrol, generated EUR 3.8 billion in sales revenue last year to rank 32nd, followed by retailer Mercator (44th) and power utility HSE (85th). The list includes more companies from Slovenia than any other country from the region of former Yugoslavia, but the top-ranking such concern is Croatia's oil company INA.



Photo: Archive of Slovenian Vodka

Steklarna Hrastnik bottles

The SIP AWARDS international spirits competition, taking place this year in Las Vegas, USA, has presented awards to three bottles produced by the Steklarna Hrastnik glassworks.

Seventy judges awarded the highest (platinum) award for individual package design to bottles for the brands Slovenia Vodka and D'USSE. The bottle for the U'Luvka brand received the "best of class" award by the judges. In addition, Slovenia Vodka received a gold award in the taste category. The SIP AWARDS builds its credibility on the fact that the brands entered in the competition are judged entirely by consumers.

Photo: Archive of GEMotors



GEM Motors develops a new electric motor

Slovenian company GEM Motors has developed a new electric motor with permanent magnets. Its simple design and construction, high efficiency and innovative technology are the main advantages of this motor, giving it great potential for the electric vehicles market.

The company, a member of the Ljubljana University incubator, was established three years ago to develop a new electromagnetic motor for electric vehicles that would be eco-friendly and highly efficient for the people.

Photo: Archive of Bukla.si



Veronika Award goes to Krčrk as best volume of poetry

The Veronika Award for this year's best volume of poetry in Slovenia, awarded by the Municipality of Celje, went to poet Karlo Hmeljak for his collection, Krčrk, published by LUD Literatura.

A Golden Coin for Poetry was also awarded at the same event to Niko Grafenauer for his lifetime achievement in poetry and creative ennoblement of the Slovenian language and culture.



Photo: Nina Režbornik/STA

Two Slovenian innovators awarded at the International Fair on Innovations in Croatia

The sixth International Fair of Innovations, eco-ideas, products and technologies in the agriculture and food industry ended with a ceremonial awarding of prizes and recognitions in Biograd na Moru. Seven innovations from Slovenia were featured at the fair, and two Slovenian innovators received plaques for innovativeness.

The AGRO ARCA plaques were awarded to Bojan Goršič from Kranj and Ivan Gregorič from Vogrsko. Goršič presented a thoughtful invention called 'Canper', a plastic device which enables beverages to be drunk simply and hygienically directly from the can. Gregorič presented a new and improved model of his previous multifunctional mobile lawn mower which does more than ten different jobs in gardening and agriculture.



Photo: Sanjko Gruden/STA

Tina Maze also among the record holders

Tina Maze, winner of a record-breaking number of points in last year's women's alpine skiing World Cup, has taken her place among the world's record holders.

Record holders also include Matjaž Ferarič, with the largest number of world championship titles in precision paraglider landing. A place in the book of records was also won by Andrej Maver and the Glasbena agencija GIG music agency for the world's largest picture postcard (measuring 52.48 sq. m) and the ARC Group from Gorica for printing the world's biggest Qur'an.

Photo: Tinkara Zupan/STA



The “Transferzala” season ticket

2013/2014 season, Ljubljana

At the beginning of this year’s theatre season, five independent theatre stages have joined forces to introduce the new “Transferzala” season ticket. It is a theatre and dance season ticket for a selection of shows on the stages of Center kulture Španski borci, Gledališče Glej, Stara mestna elektrarna – Elektro Ljubljana, Mini teater and Plesni teater Ljubljana. The joint action stems from the desire of all those involved to provide visitors with the best that the participating independent theatres have to offer and to attract those visitors who find it difficult to choose quality shows from the repertoire of the city’s main theatres and from the more fragmented independent theatrical offer.

The season ticket will represent a transferzala, i.e. a trail across five of Ljubljana’s cultural outposts. It will provide season ticket-holders with the possibility to choose one from among the fifteen different performances in each participating theatre. The five performances of their choice will be followed by a final event including a surprise programme and a party at which they will be able to meet the actors.

More information available at: www.transferzala.si

Photo: Tamino Petelinšek/STA



The Ljubljana Marathon

27 October 2013, Ljubljana

Running amateurs have certainly marked 27 October as an important date on their calendars. This is the date of the main recreational sports event of the year: the 18th Ljubljana Marathon, for which entries are still open. Runners can join in either the 10-, 21- or 42-kilometre marathon through the streets of Ljubljana. The event will be complemented by running for children and adolescents. Last year’s marathon was accompanied by the season’s first snowfall, but hopes are high that the weather will be more favourable this year.

More information available at: www.ljubljanskimaraton.si



Photo: Tamino Petelinšek/STA

Fourth season of the Kino Šiška Urban Culture Centre

2013 season, Ljubljana

The Kino Šiška Urban Culture Centre starts this year’s season with its fourth anniversary celebration. The home of the Urban Culture Centre is the former Šiška motion picture theatre, which had been abandoned and left to ruin for many years. The refurbished theatre has now become well integrated into the local community and the Ljubljana cultural scene, and its popularity extends beyond Slovenia’s borders. The Kino Šiška Urban Culture Centre staged 1,000 events, of which 400 were concerts, and attracted almost 260,000 visitors since its opening in 2009.

More information available at: www.kinosiska.si



Photo: Tamino Petelinšek/STA

Edward Clug’s dance and ballet trio

5–8 October 2013

The choreographer Edward Clug, from the Slovene National Theatre, Opera and Ballet of Maribor, will be on tour with his three most popular shows at Ljubljana’s Cankarjev Dom from 5 to 8 October: Tango on 5 October, Radio and Juliet, the most famous love story of all time performed to the music of the alternative rock band Radiohead, on 7 October, and Hommage à Stravinsky, which is also an homage to Nijinsky and his notorious first performance failure in Paris in 1913, which became the dynamic basis for contemporary dance development in the 20th century.

More information available at: www.sng-mb.si/en/



Photo: Archive of National Museum of Contemporary History

Tanja Glogovčan

You Get the Moon – We Get the Gold

The exhibition ‘Basketball 1970 – You Get the Moon – We Get the Gold’ showcased at the National Museum of Contemporary History was open until the end of September. The exhibition coincided with the greatest ever sporting event in Slovenia, the European Basketball Championship.

The exhibition returned us to 1970, when the Yugoslavian national basketball team with three Slovenians (Ivo Daneu, Aljoša Žorga and Vinko Jelovac), beat the United States of America 70:63 in the finals on their home turf in Ljubljana’s Tivoli Hall, winning the first gold medal in world championships. The exhibition takes its title from a motto on a fan’s banner addressed to the Americans: ‘You Get the Moon – We Get the Gold’.

The winning event and celebration of basketball players and their fans were presented at the exhibition as seen through the lenses of recognised Slovenian news photographers. Nace Bizilj, Svetozar Busić, Marjan Ciglič, Egon Kaše, Edi Šelhaus, Miloš Švabič and Matija Jurovič captured individual games and the introductory and closing ceremonies, as well as other events that accompanied the championship. In addition to the photography, the exhibition featured a film by director Jože Pogačnik loaned by the Archives of the Republic of Slovenia and audio-video testimonies by two legendary Slovenian basketball players, Ivo Daneu and Aljoša Žorga, who provided additional insight into the championship.

To quote Delo newspaper: “All paths lead to Tivoli. The hall at the foot of Rožnik Hill had never before seen so many spectators. That happened on the first day and every day until the end of the World Basketball Championship in May 1970”. Continuing: “The basketball players were hugging and kissing each other. They were jumping like happy children. Exhausted Trajko Rajković could not stay on his feet; he fell to the ground with all his weight and cried. The tears of happiness sparkled on the sweating faces of his team mates.” And how did Delo newspaper describe the atmosphere in the Slovenian capital on that triumphant and euphoric day? “Ljubljana did not go

to sleep until three in the morning. Parades and flags, convoys of cars, a loud concert of cars’ horns...Even at dawn, groups of people were circling the town and cheering, “Gold, gold!” The leading names in the victory echoed in the streets for a long time. Ljubljana was crazy with joy and enthusiasm.”

Sixteen national teams competed in the sixth world championship, which was being held in Europe for the first time. The qualifying matches were played in Split, Karlovac and Sarajevo. The six best teams and Yugoslavia as the host state competed in the finals in Ljubljana. The winner was decided in games where each team played against another.

There was an exceptional atmosphere, which drowned the referees’ whistles in Tivoli Hall that day. The hall was filled with flags and sirens. One of the banners read ‘You Get the Moon – We Get the Gold’; the fans were connecting the historic steps of Neil Armstrong on the Moon in 1969 with the medal from the World Basketball Championship. In such an atmosphere, never before seen in Tivoli, a difficult and strenuous battle commenced... “You have to endure it. The opponent will not give up until the last minute,” Žeravica told the players. The Americans were never in the lead in the second round, but they pushed on. The 27th minute was the most difficult moment, when Krešimir Čosić was sent off for five fouls. Žeravica substituted him with Ivo Daneu, as he was counting on Daneu’s invaluable experience. “In the dramatic play-off, our team increased the lead and deservedly won 70:63,” wrote the Belgrade newspaper Politika. The conclusion of the Sovetsky Sport sports newspaper was: the more difficult the opponent, the better the game of the Yugoslavian national team.

The last match against the Soviet Union was a mere formality, because Yugoslavia already had an unassailable lead over its rivals for gold. The temperamental game under the baskets calmed down – the victory was Yugoslavia’s and no one could take it away from the national team. This was a victory for the record books.

Source: summarised from Siol.net, Delo newspaper and the invitation to the exhibition from the National Museum of Contemporary History.



Pokal, ki ga je prejela jugoslovanska reprezentanca ob osvojitvi naslova svetovnega prvaka v Ljubljani leta 1970.

The cup received by the Yugoslav national team after it had won the title of the 1970 world champion in Ljubljana.