

DIPLOMATSKI ZVEZEK

DIPLOMATIC BULLETIN



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28th Consultation of Slovenian Diplomats at Brdo pri Kranju
Author: MFA

“Maintaining Slovenia’s positive global image is our duty.”

Tanja Fajon
Minister of Foreign and European Affairs

FOREWORD

Dear readers,

We are entering 2025 with renewed vigour and energy, building on the successes of the past year. At the regular Consultation of Slovenian Diplomats held on 18–20 December, the leaders of our state praised Slovenian diplomacy. The meeting of all Slovenian ambassadors also coincided with the adoption of the new Slovenian Foreign Policy Strategy, which has been updated to reflect the spirit of the times and the increasing unpredictability of the international environment. We report on both in this issue of the Diplomatic Bulletin, which now also has a slightly updated graphic design.

Furthermore, we introduce you to the MED9 initiative, of which Slovenia is holding the presidency this year. Read about the challenges and opportunities this represents for our country. There is no doubt that any project of this kind brings responsibility and, if done well, visibility and a boost to the country’s reputation. This can also be achieved through promotional activities and strategic communication, as our colleague Kristina Plavšak Krajnc reflects. In this issue, the BSF reports on an event on Sudan held last November.

This is followed by a series of articles on Latin America. In addition, we report on another successful Latin America and Caribbean Days conference, an increasingly important springboard for deepening relations between Slovenia and the region. In the section entitled In the Past, we remember the many Slovenians who worked in the Yugoslav diplomatic service in Latin America, and the Embassy in Brazil reports on how Slovenian organisers of the International Photo Festival in Bolivia attracted thousands of visitors to the event.

We wish you a prosperous and peaceful 2025.

Ambassador Sabina R. Stadler, Editor

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NEW FOREIGN POLICY STRATEGY

Given the rapid pace of changes in a globalized world, the Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs decided to develop a new strategy document that reflects the unprecedented challenges of our time and provides a framework for Slovenia's response to the turbulent international environment.



Minister Fajon introducing the new Foreign Policy Strategy, 18 December 2024
Author: MFA

The aim was to create a modern and topical document that is concise, clear and easy to read. In crafting it, we aligned with current international trends in strategic guidelines, including in terminology and form. A conscious effort was made to use clear language so the document could be widely read and understood.

The strategy is designed to remain relevant over the long term despite the fast-paced nature of international events. This is why it does not include details on individual crises, measures or instruments, but rather focuses on the general principles guiding our way ahead.

The details will be covered in various operational documents, which fall into two main categories: the Ministry's programme of work and regional, thematic and geographical executive documents, such as guidelines, action plans and regional strategies.

After over three decades of Slovenia's diplomatic engagement, this new strategy seeks to articulate the priorities, principles and methods reflecting the country's foreign policy, the character of our diplomacy, as well as our national identity and interests. After a brief introduction, the new document begins with four core principles that underpin Slovenia's consistency in policy and diplomatic ethos: INCLUSION, RESPONSIBILITY, SECURITY and SOLIDARITY. These principles coupled with KNOWLEDGE form the foundation of Slovenia's diplomatic activities, success, visibility and international recognition. Together, they are prominently featured in the title of our new strategy.

Slovenia is and will remain an active member of the international community. Following the introduction of the core principles, the strategy defines Slovenia's role on the international stage.

First, it highlights Slovenia's position in Europe – as a neighbour, a European nation, a responsible EU Member State and a reliable NATO ally. Second, it addresses Slovenia's broader role in the world, emphasizing its courage and leadership in facing global challenges as one of the prominent voices in various domains.

The strategy concludes with recommendations for addressing current thematic and geographical issues. Written in the future tense, these recommendations outline a vision for Slovenia's successful future international action. The complexity of current global affairs, marked by growing unpredictability and emerging threats, calls for greater flexibility, interdisciplinary solutions and a comprehensive diplomatic and foreign policy approach. To this end, the strategy identifies seven key responses forming the backbone of our work and aligning with the priorities in our core principles, leverage Slovenia's strengths and emphasize the importance of resilience.

As a new feature, foreign policy goals have been streamlined into eight tangible objectives to help monitor implementation efforts and evaluate progress – both annually and across government terms. Slovenia's new foreign policy strategy is available [HERE](#).

**INCLUSION,
RESPONSIBILITY,
SECURITY,
SOLIDARITY,
KNOWLEDGE**

28TH CONSULTATION OF SLOVENIAN DIPLOMATS

The annual consultations of Slovenian diplomats took place shortly before the end of 2024. It is a multi-day meeting of all Slovenian heads of diplomatic missions and consular posts, i.e. ambassadors and consuls-general, with the leadership of the Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs and ambassadors working in the internal service in Ljubljana. The purpose of the consultations is to exchange views and strategic orientations for the future, to analyse and discuss foreign policy and to find common solutions and responses to global challenges.

In her opening speech, Minister Tanja Fajon presented the major achievements of the Slovenian diplomatic service in 2024, which have left a distinctive mark on Slovenia. She stressed that we can be proud of what we have achieved, even though the year has brought its fair share of changes, unforeseen challenges and the need for diplomatic involvement.

She foresees a similar amount of work and enthusiasm in the future, as the year 2025 will be just as (or even more) turbulent and unpredictable: we can expect continued power plays, erosion of respect for international law and human rights, and an intensification of the international situation. 2025 will also be a year of many anniversaries (80 years of the UN and the end of the Second World War, 50 years of the Helsinki Charter, 20 years of the BSF), continued membership of the Security Council, chairing the MED9 initiative, hosting a European Capital of Culture, preparing for Slovenia's third membership of the Human Rights Council – and the list goes on. For all this and more, we will network with like-minded people, strengthen Slovenia's visibility and reputation, and work to consolidate the political capital we have achieved. This is also a good starting point to strategically invest this capital in the future. The full text of the Minister's speech is available [here](#).

The diplomats were also addressed by the President of the Republic of Slovenia Dr Nataša Pirc Musar, Prime Minister Dr Robert Golob and the President of the National Assembly Urška Klakočar Zupančič. All of them focused on integrity, values and cooperation as the guiding principles of Slovenia's diplomatic activity and on the visibility or branding of Slovenia's international activity. It is important to continue to raise the profile of our country and to strive to be heard. As President Pirc Musar emphasised, we must be aware of our right and duty "not to be silent". Prime Minister Golob advocated Slovenia's engagement with a global perspective, i.e. an active contribution to world peace, stability and order, while President of the National Assembly Klakočar Zupančič supported the strengthening of Slovenia's role as a bridge-builder. They all praised the excellent and committed work of Slovenian diplomats.

The discussions took place in several panels and covered a wide range of topics: from EU deepening and enlargement to security issues, from competitiveness to global trends, from cultural and overseas issues to challenges to our own system and functioning. Six ministers and several other high-ranking representatives of state institutions joined the top Slovenian diplomats at the meeting.



Ambassadors with Prime Minister Dr Robert Golob and Foreign Minister Tanja Fajon / Author: MFA

SLOVENIA TAKES OVER MED9 PRESIDENCY FROM CYPRUS

"WORKING TOGETHER TOWARDS A MORE RESILIENT EU AND MEDITERRANEAN REGION"

In January 2025, Slovenia assumed the presidency of MED9, an informal group of nine like-minded Mediterranean EU member states—Cyprus, France, Greece, Croatia, Italy, Malta, Portugal, Slovenia, and Spain.

The group was established in 2013 at the initiative of Spain and Cyprus to coordinate positions on areas of common interest within the EU. MED9 countries, representing one-third of EU member states and 45% of its population, have found the group to be a valuable platform for fostering closer cooperation and aligning positions on current issues and activities within the EU and the Mediterranean region.

Slovenia joined the group in 2021 and is now assuming the presidency for the first time at the initiative of Slovenian Prime Minister Dr Robert Golob, which was confirmed in the Paphos Declaration adopted at the October 2024 leaders' summit in Cyprus. The Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs has set up a Task Force to play a central coordinating role in preparing, organizing and conducting Slovenia's presidency of MED9. The presidency will culminate in a summit scheduled for October this year in Slovenia.

The Role of MED9 Countries within the EU and the Southern Neighbourhood

The shared geographical features and similar interests of the nine EU member states sparked this informal cooperation, so it is no coincidence that the Mediterranean region is at the heart of their activities. The group seeks to strengthen collaboration on key EU matters and coordinate positions ahead of European Council meetings to achieve greater convergence on issues of common interests. This helps increase the countries' influence both within the EU and across the Mediterranean.

The group also advocates for greater visibility of Mediterranean priorities and regular pertinent discussions within the EU, and promotes closer cooperation with the Southern Neighbourhood as a strategic EU partner. These efforts go beyond security and stability in the region, addressing shared challenges and opportunities along the coasts of the Mediterranean, such as the negative effects of climate change, energy and food security, migration, water resources, youth participation, the green transition and economic development.

During the current European Commission mandate, the Mediterranean is set to receive greater attention, with a dedicated commissioner focusing on Mediterranean policies. The announced New Pact for the Mediterranean envisions comprehensive partnerships and a more integrated approach to investment, economic stability, job creation, energy, transportation, security, migration and more.

MED9 countries collaborate through regular informal consultations before the meetings of the European Council and the Council of the EU. The group also convenes thematic sessions to review the implementation of shared commitments at the ministerial level and holds regular meetings of ministers or state secretaries in charge of EU affairs (General Affairs Council format). These gatherings serve as preparation for the MED9 summit, the final and most significant event of each annual presidency.

Slovenia's MED9 Presidency in 2025

After three years as a MED9 member, Slovenia will assume the presidency of the group for the first time in 2025. The presidency reflects Slovenia's sustained efforts to increase its presence and visibility in the Mediterranean region. Slovenia views MED9 as a valuable forum for like-minded countries to align their positions and advance common priorities on topical issues, such as support for EU enlargement to the Western Balkans, economic and financial matters, climate change, energy and digitalization.

Slovenia is also enhancing its role in Mediterranean affairs by raising its profile in the Union for the Mediterranean and supporting its reform to become a stronger regional player. It has also strengthened its support to the Euro-Mediterranean University (EMUNI) headquartered in Piran and proposed the creation of the Euro-Mediterranean Students' Empowerment Fund (EMSEF), an initiative already introduced to MED9.

As a non-permanent member of the UN Security Council, Slovenia acts as a bridge between different formations by promoting priorities related to women, peace, security, climate, water and conflict prevention, which are also important to the MED9 region. Currently presiding to the Barcelona Convention and the Water Convention, Slovenia is also actively advocating for water protection and a sustainable Mediterranean. Drawing on its experience, strategic location and exposure to external factors and risks, Slovenia aims to contribute significantly to strengthening the resilience and influence of MED9 within the EU and the Union for the Mediterranean.

Pressing regional issues and shared interests—such as climate change mitigation, energy and food security, migration, mobility, and higher education—require closer cooperation and joint solutions. This is why it is essential to enhance collaboration with Southern Neighbourhood countries and the Western Balkans as an integral part of the Mediterranean region. As a crossroads between the EU, Western Balkans, and the Southern Neighbourhood, Slovenia is well positioned to promote EU enlargement to the Western Balkans while also encouraging these countries to engage more actively in Mediterranean affairs.

During its presidency, Slovenia will focus on increasing MED9's visibility and influence within the EU, fostering synergies between MED9 and the Union for the Mediterranean, advocating for a stronger Mediterranean presence in EU policies and strengthening EU relations with the Southern Neighbourhood. Slovenia will focus on enhancing cooperation in three main areas: 1) strengthened resilience, security and stability and sustainable water management; 2) economic growth and competitiveness; 3) empowerment and capacity building. In its efforts, Slovenia will seek to leverage MED9's potential to advance shared interests in the EU and the Mediterranean region, strengthen regional relations and ties with Southern Neighbourhood countries.

To ensure effective management of Slovenia's presidency, the Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs (MFEA) has established a Task Force that will act as the central coordinating point. The MFEA plans to organize one or two ministerial meetings, including a June meeting of EU affairs ministers or state secretaries, chaired by State Secretary Marko Štucin. This meeting will serve as preparation for the MED9 leaders' summit in Slovenia in October. In addition, other ministries have expressed interest in hosting thematic ministerial meetings between May and October, either in Slovenia or on the margins of the Council of the EU meetings.



MED9 Leader's Summit, Pafos,
11 October 2024
Author: Andreas Loucaides, PIO

SIXTH LATIN AMERICAN AND CARIBBEAN DAYS CONFERENCE

The Latin American and Caribbean Days international conference is aimed at fostering strong relations, political dialogue and cooperation between Slovenia and Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC) and its countries. The Department for North and Latin America and the Caribbean at Slovenia's Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs (MFEA) has hosted the event since 2018 in cooperation with the Bled Strategic Forum. It brings together diplomats, ministry officials, institutions, NGOs, cultural organizations, academics, and business leaders to explore opportunities for cooperation.

The 2024 conference, held on 20–21 November, was the first to be attended by a distinguished guest from a regional organisation, Rodolfo Sabonge, Secretary General of the Association of Caribbean States.



Opening Plenary Session
Author: MFA

The centrepiece of last year's conference was a public debate on the role of the LAC region amid new geopolitical dynamics held at Cankarjev Dom, Slovenia's main cultural and congress centre. The discussion examined regional challenges and opportunities for cooperation, attracting significant interest. A joint session with Slovenia's economic diplomacy representatives highlighted avenues for future business partnerships with individual companies, and research institutions and centres of excellence showcased their key scientific achievements.

Conference participants were briefed on Slovenia's diplomatic activities and foreign policy priorities, including within the UN Security Council.

The conference provided a platform for exchanging views, allowing representatives from the LAC region to share their priorities and initiatives. This format was greatly appreciated since conferences focusing solely on the LAC region are not common – even within the EU.

The LAC Days conference enables open dialogue and exchange of views, knowledge and best practices. It also serves as a platform for establishing new partnerships, promoting and enhancing bilateral cooperation and improving the understanding and methods of solving common regional and global challenges, such as the green and digital transitions. Sectoral dialogues cover environmental issues, scientific and research cooperation, digitalisation, artificial intelligence and gender equality.

The LAC Days conference has led to increased efforts in the fields of digitalisation and artificial intelligence, and consequently to greater visibility within the EU-LAC Digital Alliance – a significant achievement since the Alliance is a key tool to advancing the regions' digital agenda. As part of these efforts, Ljubljana hosted AI experts from various LAC countries under the TAIEX programme in autumn 2024. Slovenia also co-chairs the AI Working Group within the Digital for Development Hub (D4D) and is actively preparing contributions for the upcoming EU-CELAC summit in Colombia in autumn 2025.



Panel on the Role of LAC Region in the new Geopolitical Reality
Author: Daniel Novakovič/STA

Events like the LAC Days conference are instrumental in strengthening Slovenia's relationships and cooperation with the LAC region. Such conferences complement Slovenia's regular political, economic and institutional relations in the region, fostering even closer political, business, scientific and cultural ties. They ensure that partnerships based on shared values, principles and interests benefit all sides. This collaboration is particularly relevant during Slovenia's term in the UN Security Council and its efforts to address global challenges.

The LAC Days conference also reinforces inter-regional cooperation and reaffirms Slovenia's commitment to strengthening the EU-LAC partnership, which has gained renewed momentum over the past two years and set the course for future political and economic engagements. The regions share a strong interest in cooperation when addressing global challenges, particularly within the UN, underscoring the significance of such partnerships. In this regard as well, the 2024 conference marked great progress, described as the most successful to date by participants and organisers alike.



Panel Discussion in Cankarjev dom
Author: Daniel Novakovič, STA

Final remarks of State Secretary Marko Štucin
Author: Daniel Novakovič, STA

STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND PROMOTION OF COUNTRIES PUBLIC COMMUNICATION IN TIMES OF GLOBAL CRISES

Kristina Plavšak Krajnc, Strategic Communication Service

"The only thing we have to fear is fear itself." Franklin Delano Roosevelt

States and democracies around the world are facing unprecedented and highly complex global crises, such as the coronavirus pandemic, migration, climate change, cyberattacks, disinformation, conflicts and wars – particularly in Ukraine and the Middle East. These crises demand urgent action in the fields of security, environment, social protection, economy and healthcare. Their effects on people are tangible and direct, often serving as a wake-up call or causing shock.

In the current crises, the existing administrative structures, modes of operation and lifestyles are exposed to great pressures and require increased efforts to ensure smooth functioning. Governments are continuously working in crisis mode, leading to dwindling trust and heightened tension between the government and its citizens. State authorities thus find themselves torn between mounting demands for urgent crisis management and their wish to better communicate increasingly complex topics. Public sector decision-makers and professional communicators must balance swift communication of results, solutions and government responses based on public interest with active regard for citizens' concerns.

Despite all this, public communication remains central to managing existing situations and offering solutions, thus staying true to its most fundamental function. The verb to communicate stems from the Latin *communicare*, which transcends informing or messaging to include the meanings of sharing, cooperating and building a community.

The main objective of public communication is to bring the inner workings of the government and other state authorities closer to the general public, ensuring transparency and accountability. This means that the new reality does not call for a change in public communication's primary function, but rather adjustments on a more superficial level, such as adaptations in its mode of operation to reflect high communication speed, information inflation, disinformation and a surge in the variety of communication channels and the public's needs.

In addition to traditional public relations and media tools, emphasis is thus placed on social media and digital communication, enhancing direct communication with the citizens, including through local communities.

How does a state communicate – and market itself?

*“Wise policies, attractive culture and admirable character bring foreign policy benefits.”
Joseph S. Nye*

“States are likely to be more attractive in postmodern international relations if they help shape issues whose culture and ideas are closer to prevailing international norms and whose credibility abroad is bolstered by their values and policies.” Joseph S. Nye

With advances in globalisation and the spread of global crises, states are beginning to lose hard power and control. However, they can increase their influence through soft power, which stems from a country's culture, values and communicative prowess. Although in the past there has been talk of civilisation, diplomacy and even democracy coming to an end, the rules of realpolitik and the interests of the international community remain largely unscathed. What is changing, though, is the modus operandi and the dynamics of international relations, greatly influenced by technological advances and social media.

Changes to the status quo in international relations call for more diplomacy and communication, which needs to convey concrete foreign policy, values and norms, and consider possible effects. Today, traditional diplomacy is complemented by methods centred on networking, communication and marketing. To succeed in the current environment, modern diplomacy needs to create synergies and act in transparent, inclusive, communicative and creative ways.

Nowadays, states and NGOs carefully curate their image to promote themselves. More visibility and international recognition mean a stronger hand in advancing one's foreign policy goals. This leads to intense marketing competition in the media and other communication channels, each state seeking to woo and lock in the loyalty of their citizens and foreign nationals alike. During times of high or extreme tensions, like during the war in Ukraine, such strategic promotion and public diplomacy are key to upholding a country's reputation, helping it to endure.

A states' brand is its core promotional tool. Together, its essence and visual representation act as an umbrella identity, encapsulating its government representatives, politics, culture, territory, and the lowest common denominator of national characteristics and shared values. This identity represents a country's roots, its economy, environment, academics, sports, people, international engagements and its role on the global stage. A national brand cannot be curated artificially as a PR agency product. It is born out of each state's subjective dimensions – its individuality, vision and culture – inspiring in its citizens a strong sense of national identity and attracting the foreign public.

Curating a country's image and consolidating the national brand requires long-term investments in strategic communication and promotion, keeping in mind that the brand is shaped and sustained by its people, and that the process is dynamic and takes time. These promotional efforts must go beyond the usual advertising of the country as a tourist destination. The brand – both its essence and visuals – needs to be woven into all foreign engagements, while bearing in mind that the success of these efforts will depend largely on the country's activities and the implementation of its foreign policy. After all, actions speak louder than words.

CONFLICT IN SUDAN: FROM POWER STRUGGLE TO HUMANITARIAN CRISIS

BLED STRATEGIC FORUM CONVERSATIONS

On 14 October 2024, the Bled Strategic Forum hosted an event at the Faculty of Social Sciences in Ljubljana on the conflict in Sudan, which has been described by the United Nations as one of the largest humanitarian crises in the world. The fighting, which began in April 2023 between the regular army and the paramilitary Rapid Support Forces, has claimed nearly 15,000 lives and forced more than eight million people to flee their homes.

The event was opened by Ms Tina Vodnik, Head of the Department for Africa and the Middle East. In her address, she stressed: "We have done all that we could to keep Sudan at the forefront of our attention. Yet we have not done enough. We should do more, we are called to do more and we hope to do more."

Guest speaker Suleiman Jamous, a Zaghawa elder and humanitarian coordinator for the Darfur rebels, spoke of the violence experienced by Sudanese civilians and expressed hope: "For now Darfur is safe, inshallah, and I hope there will be peace in the future." Idris Fadul and Nagmi Sidahmed gave chilling accounts of the destruction and displacement caused by the war.

Tomo Križnar and Bojana Pivk Križnar drew attention to the global ignorance of the Sudan crisis. Tomo Križnar pointed out: "We have always found what we were looking for, from minerals to gold to the use of people as slaves. But now, when it comes to genocide, we look the other way."

The discussion covered key issues including the need for international humanitarian assistance, accountability for war crimes and the impact of the conflict on neighbouring countries. The event was a clear call for solidarity and action to resolve the largest humanitarian crisis of our time.

At the same time, this round table, organised by the Bled Strategic Forum in cooperation with the Faculty of Social Sciences, was a prelude to a series of events that the Forum will organise in 2025, thus further strengthening its role as an inclusive platform that strategically communicates and promotes to the Slovenian and foreign audiences the contemporary challenges and issues that will decisively shape our future.

The next such event will take place on 17 February, also in cooperation with the Faculty of Social Sciences, where the results of the foresight report prepared by the Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs under the leadership of Ambassador Sabina Stadler will be presented. The event will analyse key trends in the geostrategic space of the future through discussions with academics and civil society on Slovenia's role and response to the challenges ahead.



SLOVENIAN DIPLOMATS AND LATIN AMERICA

Following the preparation and publication of the overview document on Slovenian diplomats during the period 1945–1991 by the Department for Strategic Studies and Analyses, we are now presenting a segment of this research focused on Slovenian diplomats who made a significant impact in Latin America during the era of the former Yugoslavia.

Yugoslavia inherited its diplomatic representations on the continent—Buenos Aires, Montevideo, Santiago, and Rio de Janeiro—from the Kingdom of Yugoslavia. Owing to its strong economic ties and, later, its political diaspora, Yugoslavia devoted particular attention to relations with distant Latin America, especially after 1948.

In the early post-war years, a considerable number of diplomats from Slovenia were posted to these missions. Notably, envoy Izidor Cankar had already served in Argentina (and also covered Brazil) prior to the war (1936–1942). His first colleague, Viktor Kjuder, served as Chargé d'Affaires, heading the mission for some time until the Slovenian General Franc Pirc took over in 1946. The first economic representative of the new state in Argentina was Rudi Čačinovič from Prekmurje, who later became a prominent diplomat. Slovenians Dušan Čehovin and Line Žagar, both highly skilled lawyers and economists, authored the bilateral trade agreement. This agreement, along with the establishment of the Joint Chamber of Commerce in 1949, paved the way for a significant increase in trade.

From later years, Ambassador Pavel Bojc from Ribnica stands out. He served as Ambassador to Argentina and Paraguay (1963–1967) and later to Venezuela (1974–1979). Another notable expert on Latin America was Anton Kacjan, who served in Argentina, became the first Chargé d'Affaires in Bolivia and, after a term in Cleveland (where he was the first Consul-General), served as the last Yugoslav Ambassador to Ecuador (1987–1991). Uroš Markič, a Slovenian from Belgrade, headed the Embassy in Colombia (1984–1988) and had earlier served in Venezuela and as Economic Counsellor in Rio. Emil Durini from Novo Mesto, another expert on the region, led the Latin America Department in Belgrade, served as a diplomat in Argentina, Mexico and Peru, and was Ambassador to Costa Rica from 1978 to 1982, with accreditation to Honduras, Nicaragua and El Salvador. Ronald Strelec dedicated his diplomatic career to Latin America, serving in Buenos Aires, Havana and Managua. Milan Zupan from Žalec became Yugoslavia's first resident Ambassador to Guyana in 1976.

Other Slovenian diplomats who served on the continent during the former Yugoslavia include Bogdan Benko (Brazil), Aljaž Gosnar (Guyana and Panama), Bernard Kavčič (Argentina), Marjan Kunc (Brazil and Chile), Ivan Majcen (Argentina), Hinko Raspor (Argentina, Uruguay, Mexico, Cuba) and Rudolf Videtič (Venezuela), among others. Additionally, Josefina Kadunc, President of the loyal Yugoslav diaspora in Brazil, played a prominent role, as did Jože Smole, a journalist for Tanjug and later a diplomat. Smole gained considerable attention during his highly publicised tour in December 1952, when he became the first Yugoslav to interview several Latin American presidents, thereby raising awareness of the new country and fostering political dialogue between the continent and Yugoslavia.

DIPLOMATIC MISSIONS – IN FOCUS

SLOVENIAN ORGANISERS OF THE INTERNATIONAL FESTIVAL OF DOCUMENTARY PHOTOGRAPHY IN BOLIVIA ATTRACT THOUSANDS OF VISITORS

In the Bolivian city of Santa Cruz de la Sierra, the Embassy of Slovenia in Brasília supported the International Festival of Documentary Photography for the second consecutive year. This festival, the only one of its kind in the country, took place from 18 to 24 November 2024 at one of Bolivia's most prominent cultural institutions, the Manzana 1 Gallery. The event was conceived by Slovenian artist and painter Marija (Ejti) Štih, who resides in Bolivia and serves as the Honorary Consul of the Republic of Slovenia.

The Festival's programme director, award-winning Slovenian photographer Matjaž Krivic, curated and invited works by ten photojournalists from Slovenia, the United States, Denmark, Ukraine, Hungary, Peru, Georgia, Chile and Switzerland. Their works will remain on display until February.

Alongside the Festival, workshops were organised, featuring over 20 world-renowned photojournalists who shared their expertise and valuable experiences with more than 200 participants, including amateur, independent, and professional photographers as well as students from across the country. For many attendees, the long distances, poor transport connections and fuel shortages posed significant challenges.

According to Ejti Štih, participating in the Festival served as an inspiration for young people and their futures. The event demonstrated that compelling stories will always find an audience and that the desire for cultural expression and networking can overcome even the most significant obstacles. Thousands of enthusiastic visitors attended the exhibition during its opening week.

"We are delighted to have contributed to this successful and creative event, which also serves as an excellent promotion of Slovenia."



Festival
Author: Galerija Manzana I



Part of the Exhibition in Santa Cruz della Sierra
Author: Galerija Manzana I



Organizers and Artists
Author: Galerija Manzana I

SUCCESSFULLY COMPLETED

18–20 DECEMBER 2024: 28TH CONSULTATION OF SLOVENIAN DIPLOMATS

18 DECEMBER 2024: ADOPTION OF THE NEW FOREIGN POLICY STRATEGY OF THE REPUBLIC OF SLOVENIA

1 JANUARY 2025: SLOVENIA ASSUMES THE PRESIDENCY OF THE MED9 INITIATIVE

1 JANUARY 2025: SLOVENIA BECOMES A FULL MEMBER OF THE EUROPEAN SPACE AGENCY (ESA)

12–13 JANUARY: SLOVENIA TAKES OVER THE PRESIDENCY OF THE ASSEMBLY OF THE INTERNATIONAL RENEWABLE ENERGY AGENCY (IRENA)

IN THE PIPELINE

25 JANUARY: CROSS-COUNTRY SKI RACE FOR DIPLOMATS, POLITICIANS AND BUSINESS PEOPLE, POKLJUKA

8 FEBRUARY: OPENING OF THE EUROPEAN CAPITAL OF CULTURE GO! 2025 (NOVA GORICA – GORIZIA)

FEBRUARY: PRESENTATION OF THE MINISTRY'S STRATEGIC FORESIGHT PROJECT AT THE FACULTY OF SOCIAL SCIENCES, UNIVERSITY OF LJUBLJANA

INSPIRATIONAL QUOTE

"A journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step."

Lao Tse

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