Joint Statement on the Fourth U.S. - Slovenia Strategic Dialogue

The text of the following statement was released by the Governments of the United States of America and the Republic of Slovenia on the occasion of U.S. – Slovenia Strategic Dialogue.

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The governments of the United States and Slovenia held the fourth United States-Slovenia Strategic Dialogue in Ljubljana on April 19. The annual Strategic Dialogue reaffirms the strength and importance of their bilateral relations based on shared democratic values and interests.

State Secretary Sanja Štiglic and Assistant Secretary of State for European and Eurasian Affairs James O'Brien led this year's discussions. Representatives from the Slovenian Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs; Ministry of the Environment, Climate and Energy; Ministry of the Economy, Tourism and Sport; Ministry of Higher Education, Science and Innovation; Ministry of Defense; and the Government Information Security Office participated alongside representatives from the U.S. Department of State, Department of Defense, and NASA.

On bilateral cooperation in the areas of economy, energy, science, and technology, the two sides reviewed positive trends and opportunities in bilateral trade and investment and recognized the importance of renewable and low-carbon energy and climate change mitigation and adaptation aimed at preventing future large-scale natural disasters, such as the devastating floods and wildfires that have affected both countries.

Slovenia and the United States both promote clean energy, emphasize continued cooperation on energy security, and value a strong partnership on the long-term peaceful use of nuclear energy in Slovenia. In particular, Slovenia expressed its appreciation for technical cooperation in the U.S.-led Project Phoenix on the responsible use of small modular reactor technology.

Slovenia and the United States also expressed their interest in enhancing existing cooperation in science, innovation, and technology based on mutual partnership. Both sides highlighted the all-round benefits of cooperation in research and advanced technologies, including space technologies and artificial intelligence. At this year's dialogue, Slovenia signed the Artemis Accords. Under the Artemis Accords principles, the United States and Slovenia reaffirm their shared commitment to a common vision of peaceful, sustainable, and transparent cooperation in the civil exploration and use of the Moon, Mars, comets, and asteroids.

Both sides reaffirmed the importance of strengthening contacts between their respective societies, organizations, and citizens, including through short-term fellowship and visitor programs, such as the Young Transatlantic Innovation Leaders Initiative (YTILI) Regional Innovation Summit that the United States hosted in Ljubljana in 2023 and the EU-US Emerging Leaders Visitors Program (EVLP) hosted by Slovenia in 2024.  Both sides expressed interest in cooperation with regard to the Bled Strategic Forum (BSF) and committed to using this global platform to exchange views on the most pressing issues in the region and beyond.

The two countries also reaffirmed their partnership to strengthen resilience and combat disinformation by signing a Memorandum of Understanding on Countering Foreign State Information Manipulation, committed to work in a global community of likeminded democracies to safeguard the information space.

On cyber and digital issues, both Slovenia and the United States underscored their intent to promote shared values and responsible state behavior in cyberspace. Discussions focused on improving cybersecurity and resilience, as well as on a shared recognition of current emerging cyber threats, with a particular focus on ransomware, countering disinformation, and the potential misuse of artificial intelligence (AI) in cybersecurity. Both sides reaffirmed their commitment to further enhance global cyber resilience and implement cyber capacity building, supporting partners through mechanisms like the Western Balkans Cyber Capacity Centre. Furthermore, the two countries concurred on the need for trustworthy, secure, ethical, and safe AI systems. The U.S.-led UN General Assembly resolution on AI therefore serves as a good foundation for establishing clear international norms for AI in anticipation of the adoption of the Global Digital Compact at the UN Summit of the Future later this year.

With regard to defense cooperation, Slovenia and the United States noted the important ongoing bilateral High-Level Defense Dialogue. Both governments acknowledged the concrete and diverse long-standing cooperation at the bilateral and multilateral levels, especially in the field of defense policy, military exercises, education and training.

Both sides underscored NATO's unity and solidarity ahead of the 75th anniversary NATO Summit in Washington in July. The Summit should send a strong message on burden-sharing, robust long-term support for Ukraine on its path to future membership in NATO, in line with the Vilnius Summit decision, ongoing active engagement in the Western Balkans, and enhanced cooperation with the European Union and Indo-Pacific partners. As Slovenia marks 20 years of Alliance membership, NATO remains a pillar of our collective defense and both sides reaffirmed their commitment to continue working together as Allies.

Slovenia and the United States committed to working closely together during Slovenia's membership of the UN Security Council in 2024 and 2025. Both countries reaffirmed their commitment to multilateralism, respect for international law, including the UN Charter, and the international rules-based order. In the context of the UN Summit of the Future, they underlined the importance of preparing an ambitious, concise, action-oriented, and human rights-based Pact for the Future.

On global and regional security issues, Slovenia and the United States discussed the situation in the Middle East, Ukraine, the Western Balkans, and the Indo-Pacific region.

Slovenia and the United States stand firmly with Ukraine as it continues to defend its independence, sovereignty, and territorial integrity within its internationally recognized borders. Both countries reaffirmed their abiding support to Ukraine as it defends its future and proceeds on the path of Euro-Atlantic integration.

Slovenia and the United States expressed their intent to further strengthen their engagement in the Western Balkans to support the region's progress on its European and Euro-Atlantic path and to contribute to a stable and resilient region. Supporting the implementation of reforms and the reconciliation process is critical to ensuring prosperity for the people in the region. As the region faces continuing brain drain, reconciliation is crucial for a positive perspective for young people.

On the Middle East, the two countries underscored the urgent need to secure the release of all hostages and ensure safe, sufficient, and unhindered delivery of humanitarian aid into Gaza, and improve protections for civilians and humanitarian aid workers. Both countries are united in their support for achieving a sustainable ceasefire and a two-state solution. They are also committed to endeavors aimed at upholding navigational rights and freedoms in the Red Sea.

Slovenia and the United States expressed a strong interest in further deepening their strategic partnership. The next Strategic Dialogue will be held in Washington in 2025.

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