

2017



Bled  
Strategic  
Forum

Conference report





# NEW REALITY

4 – 5 September 2017

2017 BLED STRATEGIC FORUM: New Reality

CONFERENCE REPORT

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**I FEEL  
SLOVENIA**

# The New Reality at the 12<sup>th</sup> Bled Strategic Forum

The globalised and highly digitalised world of today is challenging us enormously. Everything seems to be interconnected, interlinked and within arm's reach. The effects of an action on one side of the planet can be felt across the world, by everybody, everywhere.

We live in a world where constant change is the new normality. Access to a vast amount of information greatly affects how we perceive the world, and how the world perceives us. We live in a world where one sentence online can change the course of events or trigger a cascade of interconnected developments. But we also live in a world full of opportunities, potential and solutions.

Are we ready to take up the pressing challenges of this century? Are we ready to work together so that we will all live better? How are we going to adapt to this new reality? How are we going to achieve progress, peace and sustainable future?

These were the questions that we addressed at yet another successful Bled Strategic Forum, which brought together over one thousand participants from various parts of the world, backgrounds and affiliations. The title of the 2017 Bled Strategic Forum, "New Reality", reflected

the world we live in and the profound challenges to our self-perception, politics, economy, security, and society that we face.

Following the established formula, the BSF provided a high-level platform for discussions, and offered a space for exchanging ideas and concepts through panel discussions, round tables and one-on-one sessions in the idyllic Alpine environment of the town of Bled.

Over fifty hours of reflections and over thirty discussions yielded the conclusion that technology-driven social change, economic disruptions and security risks will persist in the new reality we live in; however, we are also able and equipped to develop common solutions.

Last, but not least, we would like to thank all the participants who contributed to this year's forum, the team who made the event possible and our distinguished partners, who supported us throughout the process of organising another successful Bled Strategic Forum.

Peter Grk  
Secretary-General of the Bled Strategic Forum

# Opening of the 2017 Bled Strategic Forum



Peter Grk, Secretary-General of the Bled Strategic Forum / Photo: Nebojša Tejić, STA

“How are we to adapt to the new reality and how are we going to use the new tools at our disposal to promote a more sustainable and peaceful future. This is what Bled Strategic Forum is all about this year,” stressed Mr Peter Grk, Secretary General of the BSF, as he summarised the aim of the BSF, which this year welcomed more than a thousand participants.

***“We live in a world where one push of a button can change the course of history.”***

Peter Grk

Mr Karl Erjavec, Slovenian Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs, highlighted that we need to put more effort into discussing the economic and geographical future of Europe, new international actors and global security challenges, human rights and basic freedoms, climate change and new technologies.



Karl Erjavec, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Slovenia / Photo: Nebojša Tejić, STA

He added that countries should refrain from the use of force and must fulfil their commitments to international law, regretting that international law and the decisions of international courts and tribunals are not respected both inside the EU or elsewhere in the world. “Ignoring the rule of law, including international law, is contrary to all the basic principles and values of the European Union,” he warned.

***“We need the opportunity and incentive to talk about the new reality and – above all – to agree on our future steps.”***

Karl Erjavec

Dr Miro Cerar, Prime Minister of Slovenia, said that digitalisation and technology are key drivers of progress in society today, and therefore we face a growing number of divisions and an increasing sense of inequality, followed by popular distrust in our institutions.



Dr Miro Cerar, Prime Minister of the Republic of Slovenia / Photo: Tamino Petelinšek, STA

*“The challenges we are facing demand new approaches, and there are not many examples from the past that we can look to.”*

Miro Cerar



Borut Pahor, President of the Republic of Slovenia / Photo: Nebojša Tejić, STA

Regarding the EU, the prime minister stressed the need to reunite around our common values and decide on the future of the EU, emphasising that “we need a more integrated EU, built on our fundamental values and principles”. Echoing Minister Erjavec’s thoughts, he stressed, that “as we talk about addressing the new reality, I do not see it without respect for the rule of law.”

## Opening of the 2017 Bled Strategic Forum

4 September, 14.00–15.00

@ Bled Festival Hall

Welcome address by **Karl Erjavec**, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Slovenia

Address by **Miro Cerar**, Prime Minister of the Republic of Slovenia

Address by **Borut Pahor**, President of the Republic of Slovenia

Chaired by **Peter Grk**, Secretary-General of the Bled Strategic Forum

*“By the end of 2016, it was clear to many of us that a common European future is not self-evident. We’re at a crossroads. The conditions are favourable for a reformed Europe if only we manage to have enough courage.”*

Borut Pahor

Mr Borut Pahor, President of the Republic of Slovenia, pointed out that we must nurture our diversities, and immediately take economic, technological, political and security measures to increase integration in these fields. He also expressed satisfaction with a number of elections in the EU in which pro-European forces were not defeated, and he underlined his support for the new French-German initiative and transatlantic partnership.

**#NewReality**  
**#Future**  
**#EUintegration**  
**#Values**  
**#Norms**

# Leaders' Panel

Technological, political and economic change, as well as their effects on society, were the core issues of this year's Leaders' panel. While discussing the new reality resulting from ongoing transformations, the topic of young people has been addressed on numerous occasions, specifically through the dilemma of how to activate them and engage them in policy-making.

The debate was opened by Mr Frans Timmermans, First Vice-President of the European Commission, who underlined his optimistic view of the future of the European Union, for three reasons: election results in Europe in 2017, Brexit as a political decision with a sobering effect on the European integration project and the growing supply of jobs in Europe. He also advocated the greater engagement of youth in decision-making processes and in the institutions by stressing that "we should allow them to take these places and to shape the future". Mr Timmermans also pointed out that Europe should find more sustainable answers to the migration crisis, growth and the economy and energy security.

***"With Brexit, people for the first time saw that the EU is not unbreakable. In this sense, it was a wake-up call."***

Frans Timmermans

Mr Angel Gurría, Secretary-General of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, focused on the current state of the economy and globalisation, emphasising his view that "We have to focus on the nexus between productivity and inclusiveness". He pointed out that the system we have now is man-made and is not in good shape, especially since it lacks trust. He called on the highest state representatives to take more decisive actions by policy-makers, adding that "the electorate wants leaders to take decisive actions".

***"When discussing leadership, it's not about age. It's about vibrancy, courage, and most importantly, it's about convictions!"***

Angel Gurría

The Serbian Prime Minister, Ms Ana Brnabić, described Serbian efforts to achieve greater regional stability as a proof of their commitment to the EU. "That would be a signal for the EU that we are committed to the EU," she said, and therefore disagreed with the assessment of the supposed drift of the Western Balkans towards Russia. She also spotlighted the need for a different approach by governments when providing services to citizens and businesses. Openness, digitalisation and youth, in her opinion, should drive such an approach.





Danilo Türk, Former President of the Republic of Slovenia at the Leaders' Panel / Photo: Tamino Petelinšek, STA

*“Day-in and day-out, Serbia shows its strategic commitment to the EU, and thereby to regional stability.”*

Ana Brnabić

Dr Danilo Türk, Former President of the Republic of Slovenia, argued that change is not something new, and that “it has always been a slogan”. By itself, it does not produce any effect automatically, but rather “produces big results through different and competing models of modernity.” In order to increase the legitimacy of the European integration process, Dr Türk advocated a new definition of the concept of solidarity in the EU.

*“Unless the EU finds a new definition of solidarity fit for the 21<sup>st</sup> century, its legitimacy will continue to suffer.”*

Danilo Türk

#Engagement  
#Enlargement  
#Solidarity  
#Legitimacy  
#Leadership

### Leaders' Panel

4 September, 15.00–16.45

@ Bled Festival Hall

Speakers:

**Ana Brnabić**, Prime Minister of the Republic of Serbia

**Angel Gurría**, Secretary-General of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development

**Frans Timmermans**, First Vice-President of the European Commission

**Danilo Türk**, Former President of the Republic of Slovenia

Moderated by **Nik Gowing**, international broadcaster and visiting professor, King's College, London, United Kingdom

# Address by the High Representative/ Vice-President of the European Commission

Bridging the Leaders' Panel and Special Panel, Ms Federica Mogherini, High Representative/Vice-President of the European Commission, echoed the fact that we live in a new reality, but continued with her view that current challenges already existed in the past. "The reactions of governments and citizens that are faced with the new reality have changed," she stressed, and pointed out that the EU stands as a strong, united, reliable and global partner to help the world overcome the challenges of the new reality. She advocated the need for hard work by the Union as a whole, which would lead to win-win solutions, compromises and multilateral approaches.

***"Cooperative solutions are more solid and resilient in times of crisis."***

Federica Mogherini

Ms Mogherini also addressed the issue of North Korea, saying that the partners of the EU can count on the Union, as it shares the view of the international community on the unacceptability of North Korea's actions. In her view, the only way to de-escalate tensions is to cooperate with regional powers and to react with determination, diplomacy and unity.

***"The EU strives for compromises and mutual agreements, and not confrontational approaches."***

Federica Mogherini

Addressing EU enlargement, she underlined that "The Balkans are already Europe; they don't have to move anywhere." The countries in the region are partners of the EU and share a European perspective. She said that "by the end of the current mandate of the European Commission, we will see practical, measurable progress for all our six partners in the Western Balkans, progress that will make their path to the EU irreversible".

Touching on EU-Turkey relations, she made the point that, despite the difficulties the relations are facing, the dialogue and negotiations between the two are continuing, as Turkey is still the principal player in the region for the EU. "Working together is a must when you are neighbours," she said.

***"We will always choose the multilateral path."***

Federica Mogherini



Federica Mogherini, High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy/ Vice-President of the European Commission / Photo: Tamino Petelinšek, STA

**#Cooperation**  
**#Compromise**  
**#Agreement**  
**#Non-confrontation**  
**#Multilateralism**

**Address by the High Representative/Vice-President of the European Commission**

4 September, 17.00–17.10

@ Bled Festival Hall

Keynote address by **Federica Mogherini**, High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy/Vice-President of the European Commission

# Special Panel: A New Vision for a New Reality



Mevlüt Çavuşoğlu, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Turkey / Photo: Tamino Petelinšek, STA

Do we require a new vision for a new reality? What is the vision of the foreign affairs chiefs in India, Turkey, Vatican, Russia, Hungary and Colombia? The special panel showed that its participants encounter numerous areas that are often very challenging, if not even contradictory. It addressed the issues of migration, Middle East, relations between the West and Russia, and the role of the EU in global affairs.

Turkish Minister of Foreign Affairs Mevlüt Çavuşoğlu addressed EU-Turkey relations at the very beginning of the debate, saying that Turkey is ready to negotiate on common issues and that nothing had changed since the coup attempt in Turkey. He also touched on the issue of respect for international law, which was a matter of public discussion in the aftermath of the coup.

The Minister stressed his point that, for Turkey, there had been no step back, but rather a step forward.

***“Populism is on the rise because radical parties are gaining power, while the old ones use the same means to recoup their power.”***

Mevlüt Çavuşoğlu

Mr Çavuşoğlu also commented on the situation in Syria, emphasising the importance of Turkey-Russia cooperation, while repeating his assertion that President Assad’s regime is not legitimate. He described the Turkish vision for Syria in the future, including the need to re-energise the Geneva process in order to find the best possible political solution.

Mr Shri M. J. Akbar, Minister of State for External Affairs of India, responded to questions on the latest peace treaty between India and China in his discussion contribution by saying that he viewed the deal as a display of maturity by the two countries. Dialogue played a crucial role in the process and prevented conflict escalation, he stressed.

***“The world watching [the India-China relations] was waiting for drama, but we never lost sight of the fact that dialogue is the best way forward in any dispute.”***

Shri M. J. Akbar

The Minister of Foreign Affairs and Trade of Hungary, Mr Péter Szijjártó, focused on the topic of migration in Europe by stressing that the influx of migrants had resulted in a terrible security situation and a serious threat of terror inside the European Union. In this regard, he pointed towards good cooperation with Turkey and echoed his government's view about the EU having double standards on migration issues.

Mr Aleksey Yurievich Meshkov, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation, took a clear stand regarding the situation in Syria. "We have to guarantee fair elections in Syria. The Syrians themselves will have to decide who they want as president," he stressed. He emphasised that, contrary to what many believe, Russia wants stable and predictable Europe, and as a consequence, stable relations between the EU and Russia.

*"I think we have a natural interest in the stability of our continent."*

Aleksey Yurievich Meshkov

Monsignor Paul Richard Gallagher, Secretary for Relations with States, Vatican, explained the Holy See's view of the migration issue. "It is a global challenge for the foreseeable future," he stressed, and instructed the audience to look into the future, become involved and be careful not to undermine fundamental international instruments when it comes to solving different crises.

*"We have to facilitate greater access to legal migration."*

Paul Richard Gallagher

### Special panel:

4 September, 17.10–18.20

@ Bled Festival Hall

#### Speakers:

Shri **M. J. Akbar**, Minister of State for External Affairs, Government of India

**Mevlüt Çavuşoğlu**, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Turkey

**Paul Richard Gallagher**, Secretary for Relations with States, Secretariat of State, Vatican

**Aleksey Yurievich Meshkov**, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation

**Péter Szijjártó**, Minister of Foreign Affairs and Trade of Hungary

#### Keynote listener:

**Patti Londoño Jaramillo**, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Colombia

Moderated by **Nik Gowing**, international broadcaster and visiting professor, King's College, London, United Kingdom

In conclusion, the panel was addressed by Ms Patti Londoño Jaramillo, Colombian Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs, who spoke about conflict as a prevailing state of mind in Colombia before this year's developments regarding the peace deal with FARC.

#Dialogue  
#Populism  
#Radicalism  
#Stability  
#ConflictResolution

# Conversation with the President-elect for the 72<sup>nd</sup> Session of the UN General Assembly



Miroslav Lajčák, Minister of Foreign and European Affairs of the Slovak Republic and President-elect for the 72<sup>nd</sup> Session of the UN General Assembly / Photo: Tamino Petelinšek, STA

The conversation with the President-elect for the 72<sup>nd</sup> Session of the UN General Assembly, Mr Miroslav Lajčák, started with an introduction of three principles he will abide by as the new President of the General Assembly. The principles will be: to focus on the people; to be mindful of outcomes of meetings; and to achieve balance between the UN's three pillars of peace and security, development and human rights.

He expressed his opinion that there would be “no business as usual”, but rather an atmosphere of expectation at the UN in New York. “There is a growing understanding that we cannot continue as we do” in terms of economy, peace and security, development and climate change, which is why he sees his mandate as a very challenging one.

***“There is no such creature as ‘the UN’: it is us. The UN is what we believe and allow it to be.”***

Miroslav Lajčák

Mr Lajčák also emphasised the importance of inclusion and active participation in the multi-lateral sphere. “We are the UN,” he stated, continuing that we are all responsible for its performance. At this point “We have to be able to talk and cooperate” in order to solve current global issues. Dialogue, in his opinion, is becoming a rare phenomenon in international relations, and instead the isolation of people with different opinions prevails. Also in the EU, he added, when it comes to the search for a common approach to cohesion and solidarity, a common stand is hard to reach, he noted.

***“What I’m missing in international relations is dialogue. We don’t engage with people with different opinions; we isolate those who think differently.”***

Miroslav Lajčák

**#UnitedNations  
#Dialogue  
#Balance  
#Belief  
#Cohesion**



Conversation with the President-elect for the 72<sup>nd</sup> Session of the UN General Assembly / Photo: Tamino Petelinšek, STA



Miroslav Lajčák and moderator Nik Gowing / Photo: Tamino Petelinšek, STA

### Conversation with the President-elect for the 72<sup>nd</sup> Session of the UN General Assembly

4 September, 18.30–18.40  
@ Bled Festival Hall

Speaker:

**Miroslav Lajčák**, Minister of Foreign and European Affairs of the Slovak Republic and President-elect for the 72<sup>nd</sup> Session of the UN General Assembly

Moderated by **Nik Gowing**, international broadcaster and visiting professor, King's College, London, United Kingdom

# The Future According to Tanja Fajon and Jacques Rupnik

The key challenges of the EU in the next decade were at the core of the pre-dinner side event with two distinguished “EU thinkers and doers”, who tried to suggest how to overcome the current atmosphere of fear, helplessness and hopelessness in the European integration project.

***“We shouldn’t forget that the EU is the most successful peace project in the world. The fundamental values that shape it should be passed to younger generations.”***

Tanja Fajon

Ms Tanja Fajon, Slovenian Member of the European Parliament, elaborated on predicting the future. It is a difficult and dangerous process, she admitted, but we need to have ideas and visions of where we want to go. Meanwhile, Dr Jacques Rupnik argued that we live in an era where future, big ideas and narratives seem to be disappearing. Instead, we have started to connect the future with new technologies and science exclusively. A wider approach is needed in this regard.

Ms Fajon observes a lack of strong leadership in the EU, where “every decision is based on a phone call to Berlin”, hinting at the strong dependence on German leadership. On the other hand, Dr Rupnik, pointed out that “the era of low profile political managers” has ended and

that Europe has to reclaim itself as a political project in order to gain power and recognition. European politics should address the integration process and reconnect with its citizens.

“Youth need to become more engaged and given more opportunities,” was an approach defended by Ms Fajon. However, Dr Rupnik warned that at the same time, young people need to be given attention, as they are at a higher risk of being engaged in radical movements and activities.

***“Young people can also be engaged in very anti-democratic, hostile, radical movements, as a form of protest.”***

Jacques Rupnik

For a politically strong Europe, it is crucial to invent new forms of political participation and rethink and reinvent the approach to the right/left divide in politics, underlined Dr Rupnik. He advocated the creation of a public European space where European political subjects could establish themselves. Ms Fajon agreed, but expressed her view that pro-European political parties still have chances to survive.

The debate ended with a discussion of technology in which Dr Rupnik warned that society should not become obsessed with the idea that general progress equals technological progress.





Tanja Fajon and Jacques Rupnik on future / Photo: Tamino Petelinšek, STA

Instead, economic and social systems need to be taken into account, and a reform of our approach should prevent certain spheres of politics from subordination to the market.

**#StrongLeadership**  
**#Youth**  
**#ReconnectEU**  
**#PoliticalParticipation**  
**#Progress**

### Side Event

4 September, 19.00–20.00

@ Grand Hotel Toplice, Lake Lounge

Speakers:

**Tanja Fajon**, Member of the European Parliament, Slovenia

**Jacques Rupnik**, Senior Research Fellow at CERI, Sciences Po, France

Moderated by **Dragan Barbutovski**, Director of Think Europe, Slovenia

# Networking Reception with Ana Roš



Miroslav Lajčák receives special accolade from the Slovenian Minister of Foreign Affairs, Mr Karl Erjavec / Photo: Tamino Petelinšek, STA

This year's networking reception was marked with contributions from the World's Best Female Chef 2017, Ms Ana Roš, and a special BSF Distinguished Partner Award being awarded to Mr Miroslav Lajčák, Slovakian Minister of Foreign and European Affairs and President-Elect for the 72nd Session of the UN General Assembly.

Mr Lajčák received special accolade from the Slovenian Minister of Foreign Affairs, Mr Karl Erjavec, for his ongoing support for the purposes and principles of the Forum since 2006, when the first Forum took place. The award is an acknowledgement of "Mr Lajčák's contribution and commitment to promoting, fostering and sustaining effective strategic dialogue and

raising awareness of the importance of the Bled Strategic Forum's aims, objectives and priorities," explained Mr Erjavec.

Mr Peter Grk, the Secretary General of the BSF, expressed his gratitude for Mr Lajčák's contribution, promotion and enhancement of the visibility of the Forum, its aims, objectives and priorities.

***"Bled is a symbol of the end of the summer break and the beginning of the diplomatic season."***

Miroslav Lajčák

After the ceremony, Mr Janez Fajfar, the Mayor of Bled, welcomed all the guests to Bled and wished them a pleasant stay. Last, but not least, Ms Ana Roš, The World's Best Female Chef 2017, addressed the audience with her life story, in which she shifted from studying diplomacy and international affairs to an entirely different career path – cooking – where, in her opinion, international affairs still matter.



Ana Roš, World's Best Female Chef 2017, addresses the audience / Photo: Tamino Petelinšek

### Networking Reception

4 September, 20.00–22.00

@ Grand Hotel Toplice, Grand Hall

Presentation of the Bled Strategic Forum Distinguished Partner 2017 Award:

**Karl Erjavec**, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Slovenia

**Miroslav Lajčák**, Minister of Foreign and European Affairs of the Slovak Republic and President-elect for the 72nd Session of the UN General Assembly

Addresses by:

**Janez Fajfar**, Mayor of Bled, Slovenia

**Ana Roš**, World's Best Female Chef 2017, Slovenia

# Night Owl Session: Fake News, And Do the Media Still Need Editors?

Fake news, facts and a multifaceted and cooperative response to the new online reality was discussed at the night-owl session, a session that traditionally concludes the first day of the Forum. The panel brought together internet experts, media representatives, policy makers and corporations in order to define and discuss the phenomenon of fake news.

Ms Gabriella Cseh, Public Policy Director for CEE at Facebook, argued that fake news is not an issue of Facebook exclusively, but a much wider, social problem that needs to be addressed with a common response. However, Facebook as a social media company does not want to shy away from responsibilities and cooperates with the media to detect fake news. She pointed out that the problem should be tackled with cooperation between all stakeholders and advocated a technical solution, which would allow the identification and prevention of the spread of unconfirmed and intentionally wrongful pieces of news.

***“While we tend to focus on the political aspect, fake news is mostly financially motivated.”***

Gabriella Cseh

Mr Peter Kropsch, President and CEO of German Press Agency, disagreed with Ms Cseh, saying that Facebook is oversimplifying the is-

sue of fake news and that the company owns much more than a technological platform. He argued that Facebook interfered in the media business model with its approach and the role it took in people's lives.

The need to build trust between journalists and readers was stressed by Mr Nabil Wakim, Director of Editorial Innovation at Le Monde. In his opinion, stronger cooperation should be established between media company publishers and platforms, also in order to address and fight the spread of fake news. He does not see a solution only in preventing the creation of fake news, but emphasises the importance of real news stories that are relevant for readers.

***“We should not fight fake news, but promote real stories, stories that matter to people.”***

Nabil Wakim

“The state should step in,” stressed Mr Teodor Marjanovič, commentator on foreign policy at Hospodářské noviny, in a straightforward manner, while arguing that the state, like the Czech Republic, should take part in fact-checking and removing fake content from Facebook. He underlined the need for short-term solutions to the issue, as long-term plans do not take immediate effect. However, he said a lasting solution involves state actors.



Panel discussion on fake news / Photo: Tamino Petelinšek, STA

***“If there is anyone that has the resources [to identify fake news], it is state actors that should do it.”***

Teodor Marjanović

Mr Florian Nehm, Head of Corporate Sustainability and EU Affairs at Axel Springer SE, spoke against state intervention and in favour of independent fact-checking teams. He suggested the concept of “exclusive copyright”, whereby anyone needs the permission of the producer in order to use journalistic content.

Reflecting on the reasons for the creation of fake news, Ms Ingrid Brodnig, author and Digital Champion Austria, continued the discussion

that Ms Cseh started. Her approach, in contrast to the financial reasoning provided by Ms Cseh, is based on social and psychological grounds. Most fake news is about the fears that people have, explained Ms Brodnig. She agreed with the need for fact-checking solutions and interventions, but warned about the two sides of the coin: technology can be both a solution and an enhancer for spreading fake news.

***“We prefer to believe something if it fits our beliefs. Fake news exploit the values and fears that people have.”***

Ingrid Brodnig

Mr Matthew d'Ancona, Columnist at The Guardian, the London Evening Standard, International New York Times, and GQ, said that we are taking part in the greatest technological revolution and that we live in a transformed information environment. In such a new reality, people tend to cluster in groups and in stay in their comfort zones due to algorithms which are designed to “give more of what you already like”.

*“We moved from pluralistic to homogenous information distribution.”*

Matthew d'Ancona

Senior consultant at Pristop, Ms Melita Župevc, expressed her view that the fake news phenomenon could be a good opportunity for “good old trusted brands and good old journalism”. As a result of the disillusion that fake news causes, she counts on people to return to their valued and trusted sources of information and therefore to old brands.

## Night Owl Session

4 September, 22.00

@ Grand Hotel Toplice, Lake Lounge

Speakers:

**Ingrid Brodnig**, author and Digital Champion Austria, brodnig.org / digitalchampion.at, Austria

**Gabriella Cseh**, Public Policy Director for CEE at Facebook, United Kingdom

**Matthew d'Ancona**, columnist at The Guardian, The London Evening Standard, The International New York Times, and GQ, United Kingdom

**Peter Kropsch**, President and CEO of the German Press Agency, Germany

**Teodor Marjanović**, commentator on foreign policy at Hospodářské noviny, Czech Republic

**Florian Nehm**, Head of Corporate Sustainability and EU Affairs at Axel Springer SE, Germany

**Nabil Wakim**, Director of Editorial Innovation at Le Monde, France

**Melita Župevc**, senior consultant at Pristop, Slovenia

Moderated by **Lenart J. Kučič**, freelance, journalist and columnist, Slovenia

**#FakeNews**

**#Journalism**

**#Facts&Stories**

**#SocialMedia**

**#PostTruth**



SAFE

TRUSTWORTHY

RELEVANT

ACCESSIBLE

FAST

SIMPLE

SMART

# Global Nuclear Governance: Quo Vadis?



Panel on global nuclear governance / Photo: Tamino Petelinšek, STA

Timely discussion on nuclear governance, warfare and security gathered the panellists to share their views of “Quo vadis - where are we going?” touching on actors, such as North Korea, Iran, the United Nations, NATO and the EU. The current situation in North Korea occupied the major part of the discussion and the panellists very clearly perceive it as a major threat to global security.

In his introduction, Mr Yukiya Amano, Director General of the International Atomic Energy Agency, said that North Korea is no longer a regional, but a global threat, adding that its role in global affairs had changed immensely with the missile tests recent years. He called on leaders to take the maximum precautions when dealing with nuclear technology in developing countries and mentioned the concept of “using atoms for

peace and development”, as exemplified by the activities of the International Atomic Energy Agency.

The Deputy Secretary-General of North Atlantic Treaty Organization, Ms Rose E. Gottemoeller, explained the NATO position on the North Korea issue by echoing the global nature of the threat it represents and by expressing the commitment of the alliance to seeking a solution. She went on to speak about US-Russia relations in the light of their respective nuclear capabilities. Both countries made an effort to reduce their nuclear arsenals and to continue with nuclear disarmament.

Mr Jacek Bylica, EEAS Principal Adviser and Special Envoy for Non-proliferation and Disarmament, brought a European voice to the discussion, saying that the EU is “not promoting or discouraging the use of nuclear energy”. However, he pointed out that there is no such thing as irrelevant details when dealing with nuclear energy, every single aspect, seemingly unimportant matters, which is why global nuclear governance should be conducted carefully and precisely.

***“There was no military solution to the Iranian nuclear issue and there is no military solution to the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea (DPRK) issue.”***

Jacek Bylica



Presenting Kazakhstan as a leading example of a shift from a country that has nuclear weapons to a non-nuclear country, Mr Yerzhan Ashikbayev, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Kazakhstan, underlined his aspiration for a nuclear-free world: “A world free of nuclear weapons is the new reality that the international community will face.”

The Executive Secretary of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization, Mr Lassina Zerbo, briefly introduced the Organization and presented its ultimate purpose, which is to make the world safer. Sadly, he continued, the implementation of the agreement is currently in limbo, which further leads him to promote the activities of the Organization and other international systems.

*“We should not wait for incidents like the DPRK to remind us that the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty and international monitoring systems exist.”*

Lassina Zerbo

Ms Enna Park, Ambassador for Public Diplomacy at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Korea, talked about the South Korean perception of North Korea, clearly viewing the latter’s nuclear programme as a direct threat to her country and the world, while calling on the international community to limit and stop North Korea’s behaviour with concrete actions. She advocated recognition of South Korea’s neighbour as a nuclear weapon state, and for the process of denuclearisation as the only possible response to the evolving and escalating issue

## Panel Discussion

5 September, 9.00–10.30

@ Hotel Golf, Jupiter Hall

Speakers:

**Yukiya Amano**, Director General of the International Atomic Energy Agency  
**Yerzhan Ashikbayev**, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Kazakhstan

**Jacek Bylica**, EEAS Principal Adviser and Special Envoy for Non-proliferation and Disarmament

**Rose E. Gottemoeller**, Deputy Secretary-General of North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO)

**Enna Park**, Ambassador for Public Diplomacy at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Korea

**Lassina Zerbo**, Executive Secretary of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization

Moderated by **Jure Kosec**, independent journalist at Delo, Slovenia

**#NuclearTestBan**  
**#NuclearEnergy**  
**#KoreanPeninsula**  
**#Denuclearisation**  
**#Monitoring**

# Water for Peace and Security



Panel on water and its role for peace and security / Photo: Tamino Petelinšek, STA

With the growing debate on the linkages between water and security and water as a strategic issue, the Bled Strategic Forum repeatedly offered to build on existing knowledge and generate new impetus for the discussion on the importance of water resources in international relations.

Dr Danilo Türk, former president of the Republic of Slovenia and chairman of the Global High-Level Panel on Water and Peace, opened the debate by pointing out why the nexus between water and peace is becoming more recognisable. Firstly, there has been a rapid deterioration of respect for international humanitarian law, as “Water is being used as a weapon of war,” he warned. Secondly, water cooperation is increasingly recognised as an important aspect of international cooperation that stabilises peace and security.

“Countries that cooperate on water issues well, secure peace in a much more fundamental way,” he added. Through a video presentation, Dr Türk showed recommendations for better water management: stronger water diplomacy efforts, more financial cooperation and strengthening of cross-border cooperation on water.

***“Water is being used as a weapon of war.”***

Danilo Türk

The Assistant Director General and Head of the Global Cooperation Department at Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation, Mr Pio Wennubst, outlined three reasons why Switzerland is one of the main promoters of water diplomacy. They “learnt that the only way to build stable societies is by working on what unites us, not on what divides us,” he stated as the first reason. Secondly, Switzerland acknowledges that political will alone is not enough, and thirdly, cooperation around water issues could have financial benefits. “The situation is more beneficial if countries act in a peaceful manner,” he concluded.

***“We learnt that the only way to build stable societies is by working on what unites us, not on what divides us.”***

Pio Wennubst

Sundeep Waslekar, President of the Strategic Foresight Group, India, to the surprise of the audience, drew attention to an example of good practice from West Africa, where countries have established the most advanced cross-border water cooperation: Senegal, Mali, Mauritania and Guinea renounced their national sovereignty over water resources and share ownership of them.

Mr Kabiné Komara, Former prime minister of Guinea and now an international consultant at Invesco, offered a historical perspective on the agreement, which was rooted in the period of decolonisation. Faced with a lack of natural resources and a troubled environment, the leaders of these countries “understood that they could not succeed unless they cooperated.”

Contributing with an example from Central Asia, Mr Kairat Sarybay, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of Kazakhstan to Slovenia in Vienna, described water cooperation mechanisms in Kazakhstan, which is dependent on its neighbours for water. As a result of a Kazakh initiative to establish a “water, energy and food security consortium”, the neighbouring countries are strengthening their collaboration. Many actors are still using water as a commodity comparable to other resources.

Although water resources are the reason for conflicts, Mr Aaron Wolf, Professor and Department Chair of Geosciences at Oregon State University in the US, pointed out that a study shows that in the past, conflicts of this nature were often resolved with strong and stable agreements. Mr Wolf brought the development aspect into the discussion, emphasising that helping people out

## Panel Discussion

5 September, 9.30–11.00

@ Hotel Golf, Libertas Hall

Speakers:

**Kabiné Komara**, Former Prime Minister and International Consultant at Invesco, Guinea  
**Kairat Sarybay**, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Republic of Kazakhstan to the Republic of Slovenia in Vienna, Austria

**Danilo Türk**, Former President of the Republic of Slovenia

**Pio Wennubst**, Assistant Director General and Head of the Global Cooperation Department at Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation, Switzerland

**Aaron Wolf**, Professor and Department Chair of Geosciences at Oregon State University, United States of America

Moderated by **Sundeep Waslekar**, President of the Strategic Foresight Group, India

of poverty is often the best tool that we have to prevent conflict and instability.

*“Water is an opportunity to encourage peace-making between countries and eradicate poverty.”*

Aaron Wolf

# The European Union in a Changed World

The most pressing challenges and issues the EU is facing at the moment include a crisis of trust and identity. What the future of the EU should be like and what the solutions for adapting the EU to the new reality were at the core of the panel focusing on European integration.

“Fear is preventing us from moving forward,” stated Dr Violeta Bulc, European Commissioner for Transport, in her explanation of connectivity in the EU. Infrastructure is an essential tool for the economy and growth, but more is to be done in terms of enthusiasm and development. Although starting rather pessimistically, she repeated that the EU is characterised by integration, partnership, an open society and open economy.

Following Dr Bulc, the former President of the European Parliament, Mr Pat Cox, addressed the roots of our fears. He shared his understanding that the brutality of the economic crisis after 2008 hit society very hard, and both citizens and leaders need to address the anxieties which were left after the crisis and which still influence decision-making. While doing this, an important question needs to be answered: do we want stronger community decision-making or more inter-governmental resolutions?

Moldova’s Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs and European Integration, Mr Andrei Galbur, said that we should not scale back from the intention to spread the European idea. For him, European integration remains the best model for ensuring prosperity. He added that it is necessary to enhance unity and solidarity, and create a strategic vision of the EU’s future.

Adding to the cautious approach by the other panellists, Ms Nathalie Loiseau, French Minister for European Affairs, also warned that we should not feel the relief just yet. She emphasised that convergence is more important than competition between member states, and that we have to fight to overcome artificial divisions in Europe.

***“Little can be done in the EU if the French-German engine is not working. And we are refuelling it.”***

Nathalie Loiseau

Mr Teodor-Viorel Meleşcanu, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Romania, echoed the need for a new vision, which should be achieved inside the EU by consensus. A Europe of different speeds is not an option, in his opinion, and a better Europe can only be built together.



Panel on the EU in a changed world / Photo: Tamino Petelinšek, STA

Despite all the flow of discussions and efforts surrounding integration, the future of the EU will be determined through political and financial debates, highlighted Mr Iztok Mirošič, State Secretary at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Slovenia.

***“The model of the future of the EU will be defined by the next financial perspective.”***

Iztok Mirošič

Further European enlargement and the Western Balkans as a region were often brought up. The Montenegrin Minister of European Affairs, Mr Aleksandar Andrija Pejović, contributed with a

European perspective from the standpoint of an EU aspirant, strongly arguing against so-called package solutions and in favour of the individual treatment of candidate countries. However, he reaffirmed the fact that the candidate countries need to cooperate and do their homework in the form of reforms and accession alignment.

***“The transformative power of the EU is still there. Peace, democracy and human rights are the best elements of the EU.”***

Aleksandar Andrija Pejović

Ms Ekaterina Zaharieva, Bulgarian Deputy Prime Minister for Judicial Reform and Minister of Foreign Affairs, agreed that the first question that needed to be asked was how changes will affect people's everyday lives. She argued that the only possibility when it comes to the future of the EU was continued integration.

The case of Brexit was addressed by the keynote listener, Mr Witold Sobków, Political Director at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Poland. He underscored the importance of the learning outcomes from the British referendum, on the basis of which “we should see where we need less Europe and where we need more Europe”, he said.

Mr Martin Kotthaus, Director General for European Affairs at the Federal Foreign Office, welcomed the conclusion of the discussion, because the EU is still perceived as a solution and not an unresolvable problem.

**#TransformativePower**  
**#StrategicVision**  
**#Convergence**  
**#Englargement**  
**#FurtherIntegration**

## Panel Discussion

5 September, 10.45-12.15

@ Hotel Golf, Jupiter Hall

Speakers:

**Violeta Bulc**, European Commissioner for Transport

**Pat Cox**, Former President of the European Parliament, Ireland

**Andrei Galbur**, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs and European Integration of the Republic of Moldova

**Nathalie Loiseau**, Minister for European Affairs of the French Republic

**Teodor-Viorel Meleşcanu**, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Romania

**Iztok Mirošič**, State Secretary at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Slovenia

**Aleksandar Andrija Pejović**, Minister of European Affairs of Montenegro

**Ekaterina Zaharieva**, Deputy Prime Minister for Judicial Reform and Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Bulgaria

Keynote listeners:

**Martin Kotthaus**, Director General for European Affairs at the Federal Foreign Office, Germany

**Witold Sobków**, Political Director at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Poland

Moderated by **Tobias Flessenkemper**, Senior Fellow at the European Institute – Centre international de formation européenne (CIFE), France



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# INSPIRING VISIONS OF THE FUTURE

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# Realistic Hope – How Transformation Happens Faster Than One Thinks



Betty Sue Flowers, poet, scenario writer and former director of the LBJ Presidential Library, moderating the panel on realistic hope / Photo: Tamino Petelinšek, STA

How to alleviate poverty, how to create visions of the future? Is there a dilemma about whether we should be pessimistic or optimistic about our future? Or should we only have realistic hope? In a very interactive debate, the panellists and listeners argued in favour of realism instead of optimism or pessimism.

The moderator, Dr Betty Sue Flowers, poet, scenario writer and former director of the LBJ Presidential Library, delivered the introduction, pointing out that, without hope, humanity could not go into the future. The story we tell about the future creates the present, the possibility of action in the present. Without hope, we cannot have a new reality, she argued.

*“Every step forward has a shadow side, we are not idealists; we are realists.”*

Betty Sue Flowers

Focusing on two extreme challenges that society still faces, poverty and hunger, Ms Claudia Juech, Executive Director of Cloudera Foundation, recalled the situation a few years ago, when organisations dealing with the eradication and prevention of poverty were expecting to soon be out of a job. Slow economic growth, xenophobia and significant cuts in official development aid changed the course of events and significantly slowed the process of poverty reduction.

Despite the persistent nature of this challenge, tools to alleviate poverty are available: innovative finance and big data. For such instruments to be used effectively, we need political will, enabling an environment and the collaboration of, and with, the private sector.

Contributing to the discussion on the future and hopes of society, Ms Alenka Smerkolj, Slovenian Minister without portfolio responsible for Development, Strategic Projects and Cohesion, presented the process of creating Slovenia's development strategy in the last year. She believes that society needs a vision, specifically in order to deal with uncertainty. Shaping such a vision requires that decision-makers go out,



engage with people and indicate the needs and demands of the people. The toughest job, she added, is to follow the preparation of a vision with a strategy, and later converting both into action.

*“The issue raised at all workshops around Slovenia in the process of shaping the common vision of the people was trust, or the lack of it. Trust is what we need.”*

Alenka Smerkolj

Another important aspect of visions of the future is our approach to predictions. The Senior Director of the World Energy Council, Dr Angela Wilkinson, focused on the process of knowledge acquisition. “We have to become learners,” she argued, while highlighting that everyone is a learner, learning about the future. This principle requires an attitude of humility and courage. In order to spread such an approach, Dr Wilkinson argued that we need to make learning contagious. To learn about the future, it is necessary to create spaces for more intensive and better conversations.

*“We are learners, learning our way into the future.”*

Angela Wilkinson

**#RealisticHope**  
**#Future**  
**#DevelopmentStrategy**  
**#Vision**  
**#Transformation**

## Panel Discussion

5 September, 11.15–12.45

@ Hotel Golf, Libertas Hall

Speakers:

**Claudia Juech**, Incoming Executive Director of the Cloudera Foundation, United States of America

**Alenka Smerkolj**, Minister without portfolio responsible for Development, Strategic Projects and Cohesion of the Republic of Slovenia

**Angela Wilkinson**, Senior Director of the World Energy Council, United Kingdom

Keynote listener:

**Vasantha Senanayake**, State Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka

Moderated by **Betty Sue Flowers**, poet, scenario writer and former director of the LBJ Presidential Library, University of Texas at Austin (Emeritus), United States of America

# Southern Mediterranean

'Southern Mediterranean' is a diverse geographical term encompassing a number of different political realities, humanitarian challenges and security threats. The panel agreed on the role of the EU in tackling the challenges of the region as a whole and paying attention to the specifics of the individual parts of the region, that clashes of global power relations also come into play in this troubled region, and the role of the people and civil society should not be undermined and underrepresented.

Migration was one of the principal topics throughout the discussion, and Mr Fathallah Sijilmassi, Secretary-General of the Union for the Mediterranean, reminded critically: "we stand on the same side: there is no north or south side of the Mediterranean; there is only "humanity vs. inhumanity". Addressing illegal migration, terrorism and radicalisation is crucial, and "we have to enhance our cooperation against these threats". Mr Terens Nikolaos Quick, Greek Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs, focused on how to promote peace and stability in the region by saying that "it all started with the Arab Spring", which had "failed dramatically". Joining Mr Sijilmassi in his approach, Mr Quick identified illegal migration and refugees as one of the biggest issues. However, he called on the participants for openness and acceptance. Instead of "raising fences", we should be "building bridges", like Canada, he concluded.

***"While Canada is building bridges, European countries are raising fences."***

Terens Nikolaos Quick

Senator Benedetto Della Vedova, Under-Secretary of State at the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, continued with the European perspective on the issue. He argued for "the need for political commitment and a single European policy on migration" and stressed that the Dublin Rules had to be changed because they had been created for different issues in a different time. The EU needs a single policy in Africa in order to be more effective in tackling the challenges, he added.

Mr Carmelo Abela, Maltese Minister of Foreign Affairs and Trade Promotion, stressed that the effects of what was happening in the Mediterranean were having an effect on a wider region. Mr Abela emphasised that "we have to invest more in Africa" and pay attention to countries in the region where the situation is more likely to escalate due to existing instabilities. "It is an issue for all of us to tackle; we are far better together rather than divided," he concluded.

Economic stability, social cohesion and political order are factors that crucially contribute to solutions to the existing challenges, and civil society is indispensable when it comes to all three



Panel on Southern Mediterranean / Photo: Tamino Petelinšek, STA

of the factors. A counsel at Amereller, Ms Sarah Rizk, sees civil society as an indispensable actor when it comes to reaching them. Citizens are adopting certain values that boost development, and speaking on the basis of Egypt, Ms Rizk highlighted the contributions of civil society to a stable environment.

***“Civil society is providing important services that governments can also rely on.”***

Sarah Rizk

Dr Masanori Naito, Dean of the Graduate School of Global Studies, Doshisha University in Japan, put Syria in the spotlight of the discussion. In this regard, he argued strongly against any new borders in the Middle East, since the creation of any independent or autonomous territory could end in a “disastrous conflict”.

***“I don’t want to see any new borders in the Middle East; they would only create new wars.”***

Masanori Naito

Bringing an insight into yet another, and one of the oldest, open issues in the Middle East, Dr Hanan Ashrawi, PLO Executive Committee Member and PLC Member, from Palestine, pointed out that the Palestine-Israel question is disappearing from the global agenda. It is an “elephant in the room” for the international community, although the issue can be resolved only on the basis of international law and justice. Dr Ashrawi added a Mediterranean and European component to it: anything that happens in the Middle East is going to be reflected in Europe and beyond.

*“Palestine does not seem to be at the top of the global agenda anymore. Can we speak of a stable Middle East without solving the Palestine-Israel question? Palestine is the elephant in the room.”*

Hanan Ashrawi

Summing up a number of challenging cases from the region, the Vice Dean and Head of the Law Department at the Faculty of Maritime Studies and Transportation, Dr Marko Pavliha from University of Ljubljana, explained the role of the Euro-Mediterranean University (EMUNI) and the International Maritime Law Institute (IMLI) and suggested that a decisive imperative for improving the situation in the Southern Mediterranean is education that is holistic, compassionate, intercultural and human rights oriented.

**#Terrorism**  
**#Migration**  
**#Investment**  
**#CivilSociety**  
**#Stabilization**

## Panel Discussion

5 September, 12.30–14.00

@ Hotel Golf, Jupiter Hall

Speakers:

**Carmelo Abela**, Minister of Foreign Affairs and Trade Promotion of the Republic of Malta

**Hanan Ashrawi**, PLO Executive Committee Member and PLC Member, Palestine

**Benedetto Della Vedova**, Under-Secretary of State at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Italian Republic

**Michael Martens**, South East Europe/Turkey correspondent at Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung, Germany

**Masanori Naito**, Dean of the Graduate School of Global Studies, Doshisha University, Japan

**Marko Pavliha**, Vice Dean and Head of the Law Department at the Faculty of Maritime Studies and Transportation, University of Ljubljana, Slovenia

**Terens Spenser Nikolaos Quick**, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Hellenic Republic

**Sarah Rizk**, Counsel at Amereller, Germany  
**Fathallah Sijilmassi**, Secretary General of the Union for the Mediterranean

Moderated by **Andreu Claret**, consultant and former executive director of the Anna Lindh Foundation, Spain

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# Digital Diplomacy in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century: To Tweet or Not to Tweet in Foreign Affairs?

The digital revolution triggered an avalanche of changes in the way we conduct diplomacy. Digital social platforms have revolutionised diplomacy, but also became an indispensable part of it. Although requiring quite a lot of skill and sensitivity, the use of this new type of communication also has many benefits, the discussants concluded in a participatory and innovative ‘fish-bowl’ discussion.

***“If we stick to the old ways, we will miss the opportunity to be more transparent, accountable and inclusive.”***

Nikola Dimitrov

Mr Nikola Dimitrov, Macedonian Minister of Foreign Affairs, an active Twitter user, believes that the ascent of digital media does not mean an end to diplomacy, but has rather changed the methods of communication. He was absolutely positive that “this makes democracy more legitimate,” adding that politicians are no longer tested every four years, but on a daily basis. Ms Eirliani Abdul Rahman, a member of Twitter’s Trust and Safety Council, echoed that social media should be one of the tools used by diplomats. However, she warned that the specifics of every individual country must be borne in mind. Mr Ilan Manor, a doctoral candidate at the University of Oxford, UK, agreed that social media have changed the speed of diplomacy and transparency, and created a “loud and volatile public”.

We are in a new reality as diplomats, said Mr Dimitrov; we have to be genuine and honest in our statements on social media. Diplomats have a responsibility “to be there and have a say”, while stressing that silent diplomacy could still be conducted as well.

Ms Rahman shifted the discussion to cases of the troubling use of social media by leaders. She believes that any negative comments targeting a specific person or group should be considered unacceptable, especially when public officials post them. However, people’s opinions on what is acceptable and what is not often vary significantly, so it is hard to distinguish between appropriate and inappropriate tweets. A dilemma arose in the debate about who has power and right to draw the dividing lines. Mr Manor expressed his opinion that only one type of hate speech was relevant in political discourse: that aimed at radicalising people. Therefore, he claimed, hate speech should not be removed from social media, as this can create the impression that people with negative or extremist opinions do not exist.

***“If data are the new oil, Zuckerberg is the new Rockefeller.”***

Ilan Manor



Panel on digital diplomacy in the 21st century / Photo: Tamino Petelinšek, STA

Mr Ilan Manor, a doctoral candidate at the University of Oxford, UK, focused on the collection of user data by corporations such as Facebook and Google. This practice raises a wide range of questions that will have to be answered both by governments and the private sector.

*“Facebook is not a social platform; it’s a surveillance tool. It’s an information aggregate.”*

Ilan Manor

Today, the strategic goals of digital communications are identified with respect to countries’ specifics, Mr Manor said. As a result, the public institutions of the future will be able to accumulate big data in order to foresee crises or help their citizens. There will be an increased use of artificial intelligence and virtual reality, also to promote the national image, with both positive and questionable consequences.

*“If diplomats can’t agree on what the reality is, then diplomacy can’t function.”*

Ilan Manor

### **Fishbowl Conversation**

5 September, 13.00–14.30

@ Hotel Golf, Libertas Hall

**In partnership with Global Diplomacy Lab.**

Speakers:

**Nikola Dimitrov**, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Macedonia

**Ilan Manor**, PhD candidate at the University of Oxford, United Kingdom

**Eirliani Abdul Rahman**, member of Twitter’s Trust and Safety Council, Singapore

Moderated by **Nora Müller**, Executive Director International Affairs at Körber-Stiftung, Germany

**#TweetOrNot**

**#DigitalDiplomacy**

**#SocialMedia**

**#BigData**

**#ArtificialIntelligence**

# Human Rights in Times of Change



UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, Zeid Raad Al Hussein / Photo: Tamino Petelinšek, STA

The debate with the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, Zeid Ra'ad Al Hussein evolved around his office's work and human rights developments in the world; he noted an alarming erosion of commitments built and established in the first half of the 20th century. The High Commissioner expressed his doubt about the commitment to human rights, which is a result of the troubled financing system of his office. Accounting for only 3 per cent of the UN's budget, the office seems to be working in a field where countries do not demonstrate full commitment to its goals or purposes.

***“There is no country that is perfect. But the UN cannot carry the entire load.”***

Zeid Ra'ad Al Hussein

He sees potential ways to strengthen the role of the office in the diversification of the basic financial support and in decentralisation and increasing the organisation's presence on the ground. Mr Al Hussein illustrated the importance of the office by explaining that his team is very often the first to investigate human rights violations and potential risks of escalation, and briefs the countries and the Human Rights Council on such issues.

Dan Damon of the BBC World Service addressed the criticism directed at the President of the United States, which seems to be in stark contrast to the lack of criticism of other countries that violate human rights even more egregiously. Mr Al Hussein was very direct in his response, describing the American president as somebody who is “recklessly driving the bus of humanity down a mountain road”, because in his opinion the office of the US president was too important and too powerful, and required a dignity that encouraged respect. Once a country loses that respect, it can no longer use the power in fast-moving situations.



When asked to provide an example of a success story, Mr Al Hussein did not seem to find a clear answer. However, he illustrated how the sense of shame when violating a certain treaty or convention is still a driving factor of countries in the international community. The disappearing sense of shame that he has sensed in the last year is troubling, since shame has been at least a minimal motive for fixing human rights issues. The migration crisis brought a human rights test to the EU, even to countries in the north, which are often a couple of leaps ahead of other countries in terms of respect for international law.

*“It’s dangerous to draw relative examples, because complacency sets in. And no government should be complacent. If you are not constantly investing in showing that your state is compassionate, humane in respect of the law, you can go off the rails, as we see.”*

Zeid Ra’ad Al Hussein

Thus, as an organisation, the UN is therefore crucial, but cannot operate on its own, which is why Mr Al Hussein emphasised the role of other actors, countries, private companies, law firms and individuals.

**#ErosionOfCommittments**  
**#Diversification**  
**#Decentralisation**  
**#Dignity**  
**#HumanRightsViolations**

### One-on-one Session

5 September, 14.15–15.45

@ Hotel Golf, Jupiter Hall

Speaker:

**Zeid Ra’ad Al Hussein**, United Nations  
High Commissioner for Human Rights

Moderated by **Dan Damon**, Presenter/  
Reporter at the BBC World Service, United  
Kingdom

# InvestTalk Slovenia

At the session, presenting investment opportunities in Slovenia, Dr Imre Balogh, the CEO and Executive Director of the BAMC, began by presenting his company, how it was established and operations in general. In the aftermath of the financial crisis, BAMC was established and made a significant contribution to improving the economic and financial image of Slovenia. BAMC took over non-performing loans valued at 16 per cent of Slovenia's GDP in 2013.

BAMC's mission is to cash in the assets as fast as possible, repay the debt, and be a catalyst for corporate governance. In the three and a half years since it started operating in earnest, it has already generated 1.5 billion euros in cash, meaning it is more than halfway to realising its mission, Mr Balogh said.

Additionally, BAMC's Executive Director for Corporate Affairs, Mr Aleš Koršič, stressed that the performance of the bank was underpinned by the well-regulated external framework and commitment to ethical standards of all employees. He also pointed out that the bank was subject to oversight by authorities such as the Court of Audit and the Commission for the Prevention of Corruption.

Following on from this, Executive Director for Asset Management, Mr Janez Škrubej, presented the track record of operations and potential projects by mentioning several success stories and pointing out attractive investments in the portfolio.



InvestTalk Slovenia / Photo: Tamino Petelinšek, STA

### Side Event

5 September, 14.45–15.45

@ Hotel Golf, Libertas Hall

**In partnership with the Bank Asset Management Company.**

#### Speakers:

**Imre Balogh**, CEO and Executive Director of Bank Asset Management Company (BAMC), Slovenia

**Aleš Koršič**, Executive Director for Corporate Affairs at Bank Asset Management Company (BAMC), Slovenia

**Janez Škrubej**, Executive Director for Asset Management at Bank Asset Management Company (BAMC), Slovenia

Moderated by **Matej Skočir**, Head of the Department for Internationalisation and Foreign Direct Investments at SPIRIT Slovenia – Public Agency for Entrepreneurship, Internationalization, Foreign Investments and Technology, Slovenia

# Western Balkans – EU Enlargement: Is Pretending the Name of the Game?

The panel featured high-profile speakers focusing on the prospects of Western Balkan countries accession to the EU. While the participants agreed that the European perspective has a transformative effect on the countries in the region, this is a two-way process that requires efforts from both sides.

Mr Ditmir Bushati, Albanian Minister of Foreign Affairs confirmed that EU had had a transformative effect in the region and that the atmosphere is more peaceful than ten years ago. All the countries in the region had made a progress due to their EU accession prospects. However, he regretted that “the gap between the EU and Western Balkans is not being bridged.”

***“All states have made an effort, but the accession process no longer seems to be the most popular game in town.”***

Ditmir Bushati

Mr Igor Crnadak, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Bosnia and Herzegovina, called for more precise and concrete messages from European partners and stressed that they need more predictability in the accession process. On the other hand, “We must not avoid our duties and obligations,” he conceded. Mr Crnadak said that support for the EU accession process in Bosnia and Herzegovina should not be taken for granted.

Mr Ivica Dačić, Serbian First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs, is pessimistic about Serbia’s prospects for joining the EU, as “we are so late that we are getting the impression we will never enter the EU”. He expressed his feeling that the EU as an organisation “does not have a fair attitude to Western Balkan countries”, but nonetheless reminded the audience that the region is a place where the EU can achieve something positive.

The Montenegrin Minister of Foreign Affairs, Prof. Srdjan Darmanović, underlined that Montenegro believes in the EU, is working hard to become a member and has hope in the unity and the European idea, since it is a crucial source of stability for the region.

In contrast to the experience of Montenegro, Macedonia is an example of “how not to do enlargement”, admitted the Macedonian Minister of Foreign Affairs, Mr Nikola Dimitrov. He offered his country as an example of “what happens when there is no perspective, when progress reports are softened up, and when a country stops taking reforms seriously”.

Mr Valon Murtezaj, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of Kosovo, expressed commitment to the EU enlargement process and the belief that the process is transformative, although it is very



Panel on Western Balkans and EU enlargement / Photo: Tamino Petelinšek, STA

lengthy and sometimes complex. However, the process can be done and motivates the government in Kosovo, he thinks.

The Croatian Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign and European Affairs, Ms Marija Pejčinović Burić, expressed the view of a Western Balkan country that has already been through the process. The most important point of the process is to be transformative; otherwise, something is wrong with it, she pointed out.

Deputy Assistant Secretary of the Bureau of European and Eurasian Affairs at the US State Department, Mr Hoyt Brian Yee, was more re-

served about the claims that the process has a transformative impact on the Western Balkans. The region “only accepts change when faced with necessity and only recognises necessity when in the midst of a crisis,” he said. Political will on both sides is crucial for a successful path to the EU.

***“It’s not enough for the EU to be transformative; the candidates must also be fully willing, not just able.”***

Hoyt Brian Yee

While pointing out “remarkable successes” in the region and arguing that the process has been transformative, reminded Mr Thomas Mayr-Harting, Managing Director for Europe and Central Asia at the European External Action Service, while European Commissioner Cretu’s special adviser, Mr Walter Deffaa, spoke in favour of the transformative power of the process. “All stakeholders need to be included in the process,” stressed Mr Pierre Heilbronn, Vice President of Policy and Partnerships at the EBRD, and pointed to the role of civil society and entrepreneurs as something that has the capacity to transform society. Mr Milan Nič, Senior Fellow at the German Council on Foreign Relations (DGAP), highlighted the need for more cooperation between foreign ministers and civil society in the region.

*“Trusting institutions is good, but we also need to trust other actors, such as business owners, and ask what they think.”*

Pierre Heilbronn

**#CommitmentToEnlargement**  
**#EuropeanPerspective**  
**#Transformation**  
**#PoliticalWill**  
**#Cooperation**

## Panel Discussion

5 September, 16.00–17.30

@ Hotel Golf, Jupiter Hall

In partnership with Danube Transnational Programme.

Speakers:

**Ditmir Bushati**, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Albania

**Igor Crnadak**, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Bosnia and Herzegovina

**Ivica Dačić**, First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Serbia

**Srdjan Darmanović**, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Montenegro

**Walter Deffaa**, Commissioner Cretu’s special adviser, European Commission

**Nikola Dimitrov**, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Macedonia

**Pierre Heilbronn**, Vice President, Policy and Partnerships at EBRD

**Thomas Mayr-Harting**, Managing Director for Europe and Central Asia at the European External Action Service

**Valon Murtezaj**, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of Kosovo

**Marija Pejčinović Burić**, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign and European Affairs of the Republic of Croatia

**Hoyt Brian Yee**, Deputy Assistant Secretary of the Bureau of European and Eurasian Affairs, US Department of State

Keynote listener:

**Milan Nič**, Senior Fellow at German Council on Foreign Relations (DGAP), Slovakia

Moderated by **Gerald Knaus**, founding chairman of the European Stability Initiative, Germany



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# A Changing World: How Do We Feel and Co-create the New Reality?



A Changing World: How Do We Feel and Co-create the New Reality? / Photo: Tamino Petelinšek, STA

Kicking off the Business Bled Strategic Forum at the AmCham Business Breakfast, businesspersons, researchers and leaders were challenged to discuss the new reality in business, their ways of tackling the change, bringing it about and taking others along. The discussion offered a panoramic view of the central question “What is the role of the individual, business, politics and society in the new world?”.

Dr Teresa Kennedy, an award-winning author from the US, started with an inspiring keynote speech on the role of potential and belief in oneself; for her, a crucial thing when it comes to innovating is the pure potentiality of the art of creating. She also emphasised that it is important to learn how to disconnect, to be still for a

moment in the vortex of life today, and then use the energy to create and innovate.

*“I am pure potentiality; my thoughts create my reality. We are creators of our own reality, and collectively we are co-creators of our shared reality.”*

Teresa Kennedy

“The old reality can cooperate with innovative realities,” continued Ms Christel Hofman, Director at Such a Potential in the Netherlands. Working together, creating in the new reality and finding a common basis to share and grow are three crucial elements of today’s world.

*“We lead from our hearts and our minds. They come together when we find our purpose.”*

Christel Hofman

Dr Mark V. Vlasic, Senior Fellow and Adjunct Professor of Law at Georgetown University, stressed that instead of talking exclusively about the planet, we need to talk about us. What happens to us will influence the whole planet and its development. Leaders should stop pointing the way to create change and instead lead by example. The engagement of the people and education of people is crucial if we want to deliver our message. As we think about our future, we need to be more thoughtful about the ways we interact with each other.



A panel discussion with the three speakers was followed by short keynote speeches by impressive innovators. Dr Matjaž Humar, a researcher at the Jožef Stefan Institute, presented his work in the field of medicine, where he develops the technology of implantation of lasers inside human cells for medical purposes, such as the treatment of wounds, tattoo lasers that allow constant diagnostics of the medical state of the body and similar improvements to human well-being.

Dr Aleks Jakulin, Founder of Ganxy Inc., addressed the connectivity revolution that we will see happening. “Every technological revolution in the past has been followed by a big war... It’s a threat. The best way to prevent war is to predict it. It’s an unhappy prediction which we hope won’t come true,” he added. Dr Jakulin also elaborated on the dangers of the Internet in today’s new reality, stressing that voluntary sharing of private information with corporations can be risky, calling it the new media’s mind control.

Mr Andrej Pečjak, CEO of Metron Institute, presented his vision of mobility, where cars and energy will be interconnected, where cars will be electric and will not only use electricity but also produce it through renewable resources. Such functionality would be sustainable, long-term and lead to system-wide reforms. “Going electric will contribute to global political and economic changes,” he stressed.

Mr Tim M. Žagar, co-founder of ICONOMI, The Financial Services for Decentralised Economy, explained the background of block-chain technology and the potentials of its impact. He drew a comparison between the difficulties of explain

## AmCham Business Breakfast

5 September, 8.30–10.00

@ Hotel Golf, Concordia Hall

In partnership with AmCham Slovenia.

Speakers:

**Christel Hofman**, Director at Such a Potential, the Netherlands

**Matjaž Humar**, researcher at the Jožef Stefan Institute, Slovenia

**Aleks Jakulin**, founder of Ganxy Inc., United States of America

**Teresa Kennedy**, award-winning author and President of Power Living Enterprises, United States of America

**Andrej Pečjak**, CEO of Metron Institute, Slovenia

**Mark V. Vlasic**, Senior Fellow and Adjunct Professor of Law at Georgetown University, United States of America

**Tim M. Žagar**, co-founder of ICONOMI, The Financial Services for Decentralised Economy, Slovenia

Moderated by **Ajša Vodnik**, Executive Director of AmCham Slovenia, Slovenia

the Internet a decade ago with the difficulty of explaining block chain today. In the first phase, he sees its role as being mainly in the financial sector, but believes in its omnipresent application possibilities in a few years.

**#LeadingByExample**

**#Privacy**

**#Prediction**

**#Mobility**

**#Blockchain**

# The Collaborative Economy: Sharing, Cooperation or Simply Business?



Tourism panel on the collaborative economy / Photo: Nebojša Tejić, STA

The panel discussed the challenges posed by the collaborative economy, tourism's impact on cities and the regulation of the new providers. The panellists argued that the collaborative economy was now an integral part of the tourism sector and required established players to adapt. The panel also called for greater clarity in the sector, which should in particular include big platform providers sharing data with the authorities. This would make it easier to track trends, collect taxes and protect competition.

Ms Maja Pak, Director General of the Slovenian Tourist Board, stated that the collaborative economy has redefined the tourism industry, and our challenge now is to live with these changes. Governments need to find a way to deal with these changes and establish effective regulation

in the field, confirmed Mr Zdravko Počivalšek, Slovenian Minister of Economic Development and Technology.

Sharing is not a new economic model, pointed out Mr Manolis Psarros, CEO of Toposophy in Greece. However, availability and accessibility have changed due to digital tools. As a consequence, it is very easy for anyone to share their time or assets through the collaborative economy. He pointed out the example of AirBnB, and the role that the accommodation provider has in the collaborative economy in tourism and questioned whether it is still an alternative business model at all or just a way of doing business.

*“The new technologies have changed the way we travel and the way the travel industry works, especially in relation to millennials.”*

Maja Pak

From collaboration to competition, hotel occupancies have been decreasing in recent years, noted Mr Christian de Barrin, the CEO of HOTREC - Hotels, Restaurants and Cafes in Europe from Belgium. He suggested that skewed competition was hampering investments in tourism.

In response, Mr Carlos Villaro Lassen, Secretary-General of the European Holiday Home Association from Denmark, warned against ex-

cessive regulation, by arguing that policy-makers and regulators should not seek to exclusively protect hotels. While overcrowding is indeed a problem in cities, in rural areas the collaborative economy is an opportunity to give a boost to the local community. While remaining within certain limits, shared economy solutions cannot do any harm, said Mr Klemens Himpele, Head of the Municipal Department for Economic Affairs, Labour and Statistics at the City of Vienna. Fewer than 8,000 AirBnB properties are listed in Vienna and so far this is a number that has not caused any trouble.

Ms Daniela Wagner, Director for Europe, Middle East and Africa at PATA – Pacific Asia Travel Association in the UK, stressed that dialogue and cooperation are the way to tackle the challenge. Participants in the sector should learn from each other and share best practices, she added. While Ms Eva Štravs Podlogar, State Secretary at the Ministry of Economic Development and Technology of the Republic of Slovenia, explained what Slovenia did regarding adaptation to the collaborative economy in tourism, Dr Janja Hojnik, a professor at the Faculty of Law, University of Maribor, focused on other legal challenges, such as where to litigate and which laws apply in disputes in the collaborative economy in tourism. She said it is hard to litigate against platforms like AirBnB or gambling platforms.

**#UrbanTourism**  
**#Sharing**  
**#Regulation**  
**#Overcrowding**  
**#LocalEconomies**

## Tourism Panel

5 September, 10.00–12.30

@ Grand Hotel Toplice, Grand Hall

**In partnership with the Ministry of Economic Development and Technology and Slovenian Tourist Board.**

Opening remarks:

**Zdravko Počivalšek**, Minister of Economic Development and Technology of the Republic of Slovenia

**Maja Pak**, Director General of the Slovenian Tourist Board, Slovenia

Keynote speaker:

**Manolis Psarros**, CEO of Toposophy, Greece

Speakers:

**Christian de Barrin**, CEO of HOTREC – Hotels, Restaurants and Cafés in Europe, Belgium

**Klemens Himpele**, Head of the Municipal Department for Economic Affairs, Labour and Statistics at City of Vienna, Austria

**Janja Hojnik**, Professor at the Faculty of Law, University of Maribor, Slovenia

**Eva Štravs Podlogar**, State Secretary at the Ministry of Economic Development and Technology of the Republic of Slovenia

**Carlos Villaro Lassen**, Secretary General of the European Holiday Home Association, Denmark

**Daniela Wagner**, Director for Europe, Middle East and Africa at PATA – Pacific Asia Travel Association, United Kingdom

Moderated by **Igor E. Bergant**, anchor at Radio-television Slovenia (RTV), Slovenia

# Red Monkey Innovation Management: Organizations and Regions in Search of a New Balance



Jef Staes, author, speaker and expert on learning, innovation and culture change at the Red Monkey Company / Photo: Nebojša Tejić, STA

Mr Jef Staes of the Red Monkey Company in Belgium, an international keynote speaker and three-time TEDx speaker, shared with the audience his insight into what is wrong with our system, starting with a strong statement “Education breaks people”. What we need are new kinds of solutions, he claims.

*“We have to destroy things to be able to create new things. So why don't we do it? Because it's not allowed.”*

Jef Staes

What is happening today is a switch from a 2-D world to a 3-D world, he said, claiming “we are facing a battle of species” as a new generation of so-called 3-D smarts is emerging. Therefore, a new educational system needs to be established to allow people to express their passions, otherwise they become “sheep” and all they look forward to in their work is “function description and yearly performance appraisal”.

*“Real learning only happens when you are in the groove with your talents.”*

Jef Staes

The problem is that “we forget to put a tag on our talents” from a very early age and then the whole of life becomes a discovery of who you are, and the sad thing is that many people never make this discovery. Meanwhile, 3-D smarts are resetting their boundaries, as they are “addicted to their talents” and have a tendency to continuously discover their passions. They improve themselves every day.

### **Business BSF Session**

5 September, 10.15–10.45

@ Hotel Golf, Concordia Hall

Speaker:

**Jef Staes**, author, speaker and expert on learning, innovation and culture change at the Red Monkey Company, Belgium

The government(s) should thus create an environment in which it is possible to develop new ideas, such as crowd sourcing and funding, the sharing economy, creative destruction and new democracies, which are “going faster, and there is no stopping”.

*“85% of the people are not engaged in what they do. We need to create a work environment where people are in the flow with themselves.”*

Jef Staes

# The Role of Innovation in a New Reality



Junji Tsuda, Yaskawa Electric Corporation, at the Business BSF Panel Discussion / Photo: Anže Malovrh, STA

Focusing on the role of innovation in a new reality in the context of the relationship between government and business, the panel found that innovation will always be faster than regulation, but governments must follow. In the new reality, the world does not abide by the boundaries that we draw, according to Mr Marco Steinberg of Snowcone & Haystack. He continued that we have developed a science-based approach to development and growth in the last two centuries and that we are constantly redefining new kinds of geographies, which he illustrated with examples from sustainable development and social innovation.

Mr Boris Koprivnikar, Slovenian Minister of Public Administration, outlined government activities regarding digitalisation, such as centralisa-

tion, building a common cloud for institutions and contributing to building an environment for, and by, society – search for solutions for the people, for workers (but never for computers themselves). Innovation is something that no one can escape nowadays. And in this process, everyone will fall and progress, but also learn.

In order to deal with such complex processes, the role of the leader is to set a clear vision and the values of a group. This contributes to agile decision-making, because answers to questions that appear on a daily basis are easier to answer if a common path is clear.

*“When you innovate, you will face failures. The failure is a process of innovation.”*

Boris Koprivnikar

The moderator, Mr Steinberg, challenged the speakers to define and present their views on innovation. Mr Mark Pleško of Cosylab started that innovation for him is doing things differently from everybody else. Innovation means that if somebody does it the way you do it, you have to do it better or differently. Mr Ranko Jelača of Telekom Slovenije noted that innovation demands open-minded people. For him, innovation is a process that starts from oneself; innovation is very personal, he said. Mr Robert Trnovec of Microsoft reminded that the whole progress of



Panel on the role of innovation / Photo: Anže Malovrh, STA

mankind was built on innovations that sparked the industrial revolution. The current technological revolution is similar. In the business world, the main principles for innovation in corporations are the vision and the corporate culture. Mr Gregor Potočar from SAP Slovenija illustrated the importance of global cooperation, which is a response to customers' not buying the technology, but rather the right solution for them.

In Hong Kong, the government invested heavily in education and research, but businesses complain because the scientific research or innovation in research does not "necessarily help the manufacturers or enterprises solve the problems they currently face," explained Mr Michael Lau, AIA International. He pointed out that government efforts to support innovation in the long-term and the needs of business do not always go hand in hand. Mr Junji Tsuda, Yaskawa Electric Corporation, stressed that technology had changed and connected the world; there are now

endless connections. Connectivity and a bigger network bring bigger risks. He highlighted that it is not necessary to explain innovation; what is important are practitioners and final results.

*"Robots are not taking away our jobs, but creating more jobs. We need innovative people to utilise robots. A robot is just a tool."*

Junji Tsuda

Managers not only discussed leadership, but also commented on the importance of human resources, where they are seeking talent and intelligence, which both lead to innovation potential. Mr Steinberg suggested that a sparkle in the eye is important, and Mr Koprivnikar added the understanding of values and visions as a crucial predisposition for good team workers.

Suggesting that the government might not always serve as a service provider, but rather a provider of a platform for collaboration in service

provision, the conversation shifted to a discussion of the role of government. Mr Koprivnikar drew the line between businesses who innovate for profit and governments which are there to provide legislation and regulation for the common good.

Ms Sirpa Kekkonen, Head of the Government Strategy Secretariat at the Finnish Prime Minister's Office, specified the government as the carrier of the national narrative and that a wise government anticipates "what is around the next corner", to respond to it and involve it in its narrative. She said government needs to understand the phenomena, which she illustrated with an example of Finland investing in research and development and education. The next step is interaction and cooperation with other actors. But recently, the welfare state and the job market have come to the fore again due to the emergence of digital tools and robots.

*"The feeling of losing the present kinds of jobs causes resistance and anxiety, and governments need to play a role in it."*

Sirpa Kekkonen

Awareness of the global aspect of the new reality was emphasised by Mr Pleško. The competition to lead in welfare, innovation, education and similar fields should be happening between global actors, not between specific niches, he stressed.

## Panel Discussion

5 September, 11.00–12.30

@ Hotel Golf, Concordia Hall

Speakers:

**Ranko Jelača**, member of the Management Board of Telekom Slovenije, Slovenia

**Sirpa Kekkonen**, Head of Government Strategy Secretariat at the Prime Minister's Office, Finland

**Boris Koprivnikar**, Minister of Public Administration of the Republic of Slovenia

**Michael Lau**, senior Wealth Management Manager at AIA International, China

**Mark Pleško**, co-founder and CEO at Cosylab, Control System Laboratory, Slovenia

**Gregor Potočar**, Managing Director at SAP Slovenija, Slovenia

**Robert Trnovec**, Director General at Microsoft, Slovenia

**Junji Tsuda**, Representative Director and Chairman of the Board at Yaskawa Electric Corporation, Japan

Moderated by **Marco Steinberg**, founder and CEO of Snowcone & Haystack, Finland



# Musical Leadership Strategy – For a European Identity in a Multipolar World



Violinist Miha Pogačnik on Musical Leadership Strategy / Photo: Nebojša Tejić, STA

The session featured Mr Miha Pogačnik, a violinist, visionary and cultural ambassador of the Republic of Slovenia, presenting his resonance platform, a method he uses to empower business and political leaders to experience classical music as a specific European strategy for mobilising human potential and action.

The aim of his action is to highlight the role and importance of culture, which is the most powerful inner substance, although many people think that culture is not important. As such, he puts culture at the top of the pyramid of human needs.

Passion in management is a means of creative stimulus. Passionate managers can filter good ideas and focus on them, instead of working on too many ideas at the same time and then ending up empty-handed. Through music, we can

## Business BSF Session

5 September, 14.00–14.30

@ Hotel Golf, Concordia Hall

Speaker:

**Miha Pogačnik**, violinist, visionary and cultural ambassador of the Republic of Slovenia

actively learn emotional intelligence. We realise that most problems cannot be solved in the head alone, Mr Pogačnik explained.

*“Heartstorming: changing the corporate culture requires changes in the heart.”*

Miha Pogačnik

Mr Pogačnik uses the same approach in his work across Europe on what he described as a “polyphonic European identity”, its aim being to find the essence of culture in each country that can sound excellent together with other countries’ essences.

**#Resonance**  
**#PolyphonicEuropeanIdentity**  
**#HumanPotential**  
**#CreativeStimulus**  
**#Heartstorming**

# Innovative Europe – Opportunities for a New Breakthrough



Discussing opportunities for a new breakthrough in Europe / Photo: Nebojša Tejić, STA

The innovation environment in the EU faces a number of challenges, but also a huge number of opportunities, the panellists stressed at the concluding panel of the Business BSF.

Innovation is permeating all levels and institutions, and politics must not be seen as two separate spheres, said Ms Violeta Bulc, European Commissioner for Transport. The EU has been challenged, and needs to address the issues it faces, but it is a reality, and it offers numerous opportunities if we allow ourselves to see it. In her view, participation is crucial, because governing structures alone cannot discover all the issues that exist. They are created to serve the people, and need help when identifying their needs.

*“We have to dare to bring a fresh wind that will address the challenges that we have been able to identify through people, politics and institutions.”*

Violeta Bulc

Stressing her core message, the Commissioner said: “Get engaged; don’t stay back; there will be more and more engagement models that you can use. But please, create some on your own. We need to feel the power of democracy.”

Europe and its business sector were at the core of the discussion. According to Mr Sandi Češko of Studio Moderna, a very positive side is the European start-up scene, but on the other hand “we don’t have the environment to scale up those opportunities”. He stressed that we have to step out of the old paradigms and address the needs of society on our own. We have to overcome cultural barriers in our mind and open up, he added.

*“Value will shift from those who are creating products to those who are managing data.”*

Sandi Češko

Ms Rumyana Trencheva from SAP South East Europe explained that, in her opinion, the potential lies in “the combination of innovation of different ages, of different ethnicities, different cultures; these people, these cultures, creating

something together”. She reminded the audience that our region often suffers from persistent old perceptions, lack of self-confidence and lack of self-awareness. She illustrated the need to remind us about the progress and achievements that we have reached.

*“Agility is the competitive advantage of this region.”*

Rumyana Trencheva

We live in an exciting period, said Ms Medeja Lončar, Siemens Slovenija. Size does not matter, as small countries can also have their piece of the cake at the global level. There are more opportunities for everyone, and agility is what matters most. Mr Yuri Sidorovich of Deloitte Slovenia took a rather pessimistic approach, and argued that we need to hear the truth sometimes, which is not always pleasant. He pointed out several obstacles, including Europe’s support for start-ups, saying that Europe was not really as innovative as we would like to think.

*“How do you protect yourself from all the disruptors [e.g. start-ups]? The answer is: to become disruptor yourself.”*

Yuri Sidorovich

Stressing that the EU is like a start-up compared to the US, Mr Iskren Krusteff, Chairman of Global Entrepreneurship Monitor, pointed out that “we all need to act” and understand industrial revolution 4.0. He illustrated the role of technology for the individual, and called for a Europe that would be more prepared to present its capabilities. He also presented the manifesto blueprint created by the 2017 Young BSF participants.

## Panel Discussion

5 September, 14.30–16.00

@ Hotel Golf, Concordia Hall

In partnership with Siemens Slovenija.

Keynote speaker:

**Violeta Bulc**, European Commissioner for Transport

Speakers:

**Sandi Češko**, CEO of Studio Moderna, Slovenia

**Iskren Krusteff**, Chairman of Global Entrepreneurship Monitor, Bulgaria

**Medeja Lončar**, CEO at Siemens Slovenija, Slovenia, Slovenia

**Yuri Sidorovich**, Managing Partner and Forensic leader for Deloitte’s Adriatic Region at Deloitte Slovenia

**Rumyana Trencheva**, Managing Director of SAP South East Europe, Bulgaria

Moderated by **Martina Merslavič**, coach at Own the Room, Slovenia

**#Innovation**

**#Engagement**

**#Data**

**#IndustrialRevolution4.0**

**#StartUps**

# Digital Lunch

## Side Event

4 September, 11.45–13.45

@ Grand Hotel Toplice

On the sidelines of this year's Bled Strategic Forum, the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Public Administration, Mr Boris Koprivnikar, hosted a Digital Lunch for the ministers responsible for digitalisation in the Western Balkan countries and the Member States of the South-East European Cooperation Process (SEECP).

The meeting was regarded as a follow-up to last year's Ministerial Meeting titled "Digital Transformation of the Western Balkan Countries", at which the participating countries agreed to further cooperation on digitalisation.

Mr Koprivnikar initially presented Slovenia's major achievements and objectives in digital transformation, emphasising the importance of open data and the possibility of its processing and further re-use. He explained that Slovenia has highly developed trust services at the state



Digital Lunch with Minister Boris Koprivnikar / Photo: Tamino Petelinšek, STA



Digital Lunch with Minister Boris Koprivnikar / Photo: Tamino Petelinšek, STA

level, which are connected with the economy, banks and insurance companies. The discussion also touched on the centralisation of state informatics, which is vital to a successful operation of state administration, but at the same time requires a lot of negotiation, since the services, funds and people are being centralised.

The guests at the Digital Lunch presented their own achievements in digitalisation, expressed great interest in sharing best practices and agreed that cooperation should be further enhanced in order to accelerate the digital transformation of society and European integration

process in the Western Balkan region. Mr Koprivnikar concluded with a promise that Slovenia would certainly help other countries by sharing its own best practices and cutting-edge expertise.

The in-depth discussion concluded with an invitation from Serbia, which will take the initiative from Slovenia and host a Ministerial Meeting on the topic of digitisation. The Digital Lunch was attended by representatives from Croatia, Greece, Kosovo, Macedonia, Montenegro and Serbia.

# Generation of Global Citizens

## Young Bled Strategic Forum

1-3 September

@ Ljubljana

Around thirty creative minds, technological and social entrepreneurs and researchers came together for the 7<sup>th</sup> edition of the Young Bled Strategic Forum (Young BSF), held between 1 and 3 September, in order to collaborate, create stories and raise awareness on pressing issues related to the nexus of the 3Es: Economy, Ecology and Electronics at a time of (dis)connected reality. Start-up CEOs, researchers, government officials, innovators, web designers, and social and tech entrepreneurs were led by discussion moderators and design-thinking coaches and tasked with creating a ‘tale for the ages’, the objective that resulted in the final document, Young BSF Manifesto.



Prime Minister of the Republic of Slovenia, Miro Cerar at the Young BSF / Photo: Anže Malovrh, STA

Opening Reflection started with Dr Miro Cerar, Prime Minister of the Republic of Slovenia, who encouraged the participants not to forget the values behind any positive change in society. “Your contribution to the world will be essential,” Dr Cerar stressed, and added that as prime minister, he was well aware of the need for development and that the 4<sup>th</sup> industrial revolution was already underway. However, science has two aspects: it can lead to positive achievement or it can lead to various disasters.

*“Please be courageous, be bold, be innovative, be open, but also be tolerant and cooperate with each other.”*

Miro Cerar

Ms Isidora Simović of the Faculty of Forestry at the University of Belgrade, spoke about the need for a multi-disciplinary approach and cooperation, while Mr Matevž Raškovič of the Faculty of Economics at the University of Ljubljana touched on young generations and a paradox that is the key to the future.

Before really rolling up their sleeves in the first session of the day, entitled Electronics: The Future of People in the Land of Robots, the participants were briefed by Ms Nataša Rojec Spindler of SAP Slovenia on the concept of design thinking.



Design thinking workshops / Photo: Anže Malovrh, STA



Presenting the results of design thinking workshops / Photo: Anže Malovrh, STA

### Electronics: The Future of People in the Land of Robots

Mr Andrija Šulić of Renderspace, who moderated the opening debate, noted that the world was on the verge of “something really big”, while Mr Sebastijan Nograšek of Zavarovalnica Triglav pointed out that companies had to think about what was coming and either anticipate what would happen or be left behind.

Mr Gregor Potočar of SAP Slovenia noted that technology was now a commodity and that the real question was how to implement it in real life. According to him, policymakers cannot follow the exponential change happening in technology, and they should be helped in this, not just criticised.

Mr Takashi Furuya, a software engineer for Yaskawa Electric Corporation, meanwhile, pointed to concerns about robots taking people’s jobs, stressing that robots are meant to facilitate our work.

*“The real question is to think about how robots can facilitate the work we do”.*

Takashi Furuya

**#Automatization**

**#InequalityReduction**

**#Digitalisation**

### Environment: No Flow, No Go

“We take the environment for granted when everything is okay, but when things go wrong, we’ll do anything to put it back to the previous state,” said Mr Andraž Šiler of Ypsilon Institute. Mr Roeë Tamari of Herodium Investments presented his view on digitalisation in agriculture. He believes that deploying digital tools in agriculture is a win-win situation for all players in the sector, not just farmers. It helps consumers with growing health concerns, as well as public entities, which can develop strategies based on information gained from digital tools.



Panel discussions with young leaders / Photo: Anže Malovrh, STA



Iza Tršar, Programme Director of the Young BSF, and Sandra Palamar, Project Manager / Photo: Anže Malovrh, STA

Ms Isidora Simović of the Faculty of Forestry at the University of Belgrade underscored the importance of the social and natural sciences working together on tackling environmental change and building a greener future. Mr Mitchell Pearce of Call Me Keeper followed her line of thought, saying that it was okay for people to turn to technology when it helps, but that sometimes it was frustrating that they did not use existing solutions.

**#Agriculture**  
**#DigitalTools**  
**#GreenFuture**

### **Economy: The Virtual Reality of the Economy and the Real Sector**

The economy should not be seen only as a system “where people buy and sell goods”, but a social system with mechanisms for making life more efficient and creating value for society, underscored Mr Matevž Raškovič of the Faculty of Economics at the University of Ljubljana.

Technology, meanwhile, is an enabler of the creation of this value, one which has a profound impact on goods and services, on actors and behaviour. “In my opinion, technology is the key to bringing everyone together and making [the market] more democratic and easier for everyone,” stressed Mr Eduardo Donadi Neto of Liber Capital in Brazil.

Mr Vladan Dragičević of Rubik, who sees the competitive advantage of small start-ups in their flexibility and “adoption of new trends and technologies”, took up this notion. At the state level, technology can also help small countries, which cannot compete in terms of productivity with bigger ones, to become competitive, noted Ms Mare Ushkovska of Invest Macedonia.

***“The IT industry is a real example of how living in the age of technology can really overcome the lack of resources or economic difficulties of the past and can really give small countries a new chance to reinvent themselves.”***

Mare Ushkovska





Teamwork at ABC Accelerator / Photo: Anže Malovrh, STA

However, technology and digitalisation also have a dark side, which has to be addressed through cyber security. There are no police online; states can barely protect themselves, and there is no government regulation, which leaves individuals and companies having to tackle this aspect of the digital economy on their own, added Mr Marko Bernik of PwC Svetovanje.

**#ValueCreation**

**#Transparency**

**#CyberSecurity**

Fuelled by the Opening Reflection with the Slovenian Prime Minister, and insights from industry experts from their ranks in three sessions as well as workshops with Mr Iskren Krusteff of GEM Bulgaria, the participants came up with proposals ranging from agriculture and public services to education, technological inclusiveness and cyber security.



Conversation with the Mayor of the Municipality of Ljubljana, Mr Zoran Janković / Photo: MOL

***“Your generation will find a new system in which everybody will be proud to live in their country.”***

Zoran Janković

Before taking a well-deserved afternoon off, with a boat trip on the Ljubljanica River and a guided tour of the capital, the young leaders also presented the manifesto to Mr Zoran Janković, Mayor of the Municipality of Ljubljana.

# YOUNG BSF MANIFESTO

## **1. Preparedness for the Challenge of Industry 4.0**

All stakeholders – policy makers, implementers, educators, non-technological businesses, the media, and users – should be continuously educated and thus enabled to adequately participate in, rather than merely observe, Industry 4.0. Plans and resources should be made for relevant, efficient and timely training and learning by the best providers in education, public or private.

## **2. Technological Inclusiveness**

While technological achievements are common and widely used in the more developed and affluent parts of the world, this is not the case elsewhere. To address the emergence of regional technological asymmetries and the distinctive form of inequality that accompanies it, we propose the establishment of a Universal Basic Technology System to act as a redistribution mechanism similar to that of the Universal Basic Income. The system should be financed by a combination of smart taxation and incentive-focused tax relief policies built around key stakeholders, both corporate and individual.

## **3. Problem-Based Learning**

For humankind to remain and be a positive factor in increasingly frantic social change, we call for education reform, bringing about prob-

lem-based and lifelong learning with an emphasis on character building. Such reform would help to raise responsible and proactive citizens capable of critically assessing new issues and responding to them in a swift manner that remains inclusive and sustainable.

## **4. Universal Technological Ethical Code**

We unanimously recognise the development of clearly defined ethical standards as one of the main challenges of our hyper-technologised and often borderless societies. To avoid the misuse of power accruing from scientific breakthroughs, both on the part of states as well as non-state actors and individuals, a clear set of rules and guidelines need to be established. They will govern all areas of human activity that are significantly affected by digital and other emerging technologies.

## **5. Incentive-Driven Agriculture Policies**

Many traditional human activities face the challenge of an aging population and disappearing knowledge pools in certain industries. Agriculture, particularly at the local level, is a pertinent case. To motivate producers in the agricultural sector to continually educate themselves and strive for sustainable production, we suggest a revision of subsidy policies and smart, incentive-oriented approaches that enable local production to better dovetail with the industrial

food sector. Such an approach would result in better products, while also ensuring a more secure form of income and sustainability for producers at all levels.

## **6. Green Urban Planning**

It is projected that by 2050, 70% of the world's population will be urban. Cities, regardless of their size, should strive to increase and balance the size of their green areas. This can be achieved by traditional means, such as reopening old, and creating new, parks in different forms, as well as using previously idle spaces, as with rooftop gardens. This would provide a valuable example for city-dwellers to also engage in responsible and sustainable production within the confines of their own homes and communities. Green urban planning should become a highly ranked integral part of policy considerations at both state and municipal levels, while also becoming a fulcrum of private undertakings.

## **7. Sustainable Consumption**

It is important to stress that how we consume is just as important as how we produce. Since most of the stress of global consumption affects the individual consumer, the only way for us to reduce the ecological footprint of human consumption is to become better aware of the impact of our everyday activities. People should

be encouraged to engage in moderate and ideally environmentally neutral consumption, something that can also be supported by innovation and awareness-raising campaigns undertaken by public and private actors, also at the international level.

## **8. Increased Efficiency of Public Services**

Large portions of the public sector seem to be trapped in a pre-digital era. This is perhaps most evident in the case of bureaucratic services, which many people consider to be the epitome of inefficiency and tediousness. It is even more remarkable when we consider the potential for innovation and optimisation that modern technology offers for administrative processes, and the fact that technology-based solutions are regularly adopted to great effect in the private sector. In addition to existing digital solutions, newly emerging technologies such as virtual reality and block chain should also be considered seriously and in a timely manner to enable e-governance systems to become fit to serve the needs of people in the 21st century.

## **9. Building Trust by Improving Transparency**

Lack of trust in both public institutions and private organisations is undermining people's ability to effectively tackle challenges across the global policy spectrum. As technology develops, this problem is likely to worsen, unless ethical

standards are introduced along with scientific advancements. To this end, existing and emerging technologies should be taken up with the aim of improving the transparency of all social and economic processes through open data and big data. While process tractability is likely to be affected to an extent, particularly regarding privacy, we still regard these measures worthy of consideration given their trust-building potential.

## 10. Enhanced Cyber Security

In a world where not only virtual but also physical infrastructure is controlled by digital systems, enhancing cyber resilience is paramount. To avoid intrusions and disruptions at the individual level, as well as curtailing systematic risk, a two-pronged approach is required. First-

ly, we need to reinforce our technical capabilities by investing in nascent technologies, such as machine learning and artificial intelligence, which will help us have the necessary level of control in an ever-more complex world. Secondly, restrictive standards should be put in place, clearly defining which actions are permissible within the cyber realm and, crucially, how to deal with violations. Cyber security standards should be agreed at the global level and would need to be binding on all relevant stakeholders.

\*The project is partly financed by Triglav Group.

**Our goals. Our passion.**

The Triglav Group and Zavarovalnica Triglav present:

- Annual Report for 2016 including its strategic plans, business operations analysis and the sustainable development report,
- Business publication of the Triglav Group for investors including the interview with Zavarovalnica Triglav's Management Board on the new strategy.



The Triglav Group and Zavarovalnica Triglav d.d. Annual Report 2016

**triglav**

[annualreport.triglav.eu/2016](http://annualreport.triglav.eu/2016)



Participants of the Young BSF and the Slovenian Prime Minister / Photo: Anže Malovrh, STA

# 2017 Bled Strategic Forum: Facts and Figures

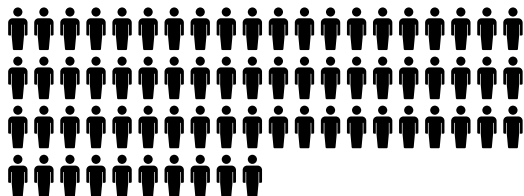
2006 2007 2008 2009 2010 2011 2012 2013 2014 2015 2016 2017 Bled Strategic Forum was the **12<sup>th</sup>** in a row.

Altogether, **1057** people from **66** countries, **5** continents registered for the forum.

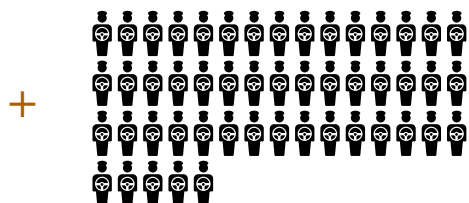
- 1 president
- 2 prime ministers
- 16 foreign ministers
- 27 other ministers
- 14 representatives of international organisations
- 28 other high-level guests

**140** media representatives were accredited for the Forum, including TV, radio and printed press journalists.

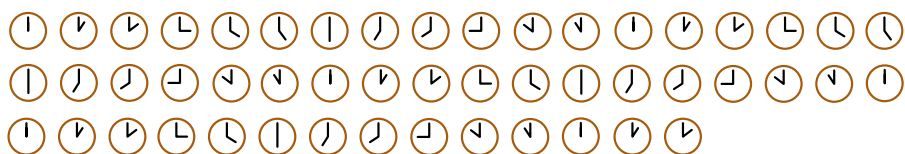
The organising team consisted of **70 members**,



**50 drivers**



## Over 50 hours of sessions



The Forum is supported by

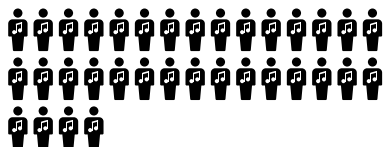
## 59 partners and sponsors.



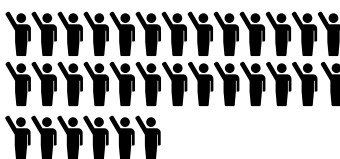
Renault Slovenija provided **40 vehicles**  
for the transportation of participants.



## 34 musicians



## 32 volunteers



## Strategic Partners

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## Partners

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## Contributors

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## Institutional Partners

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## Young BSF Institutional Partners

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## Major Partners

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## Sponsors



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# SAVE THE DATE

10 – 11 September 2018





