



MINISTRY
OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS
OF THE SLOVAK REPUBLIC

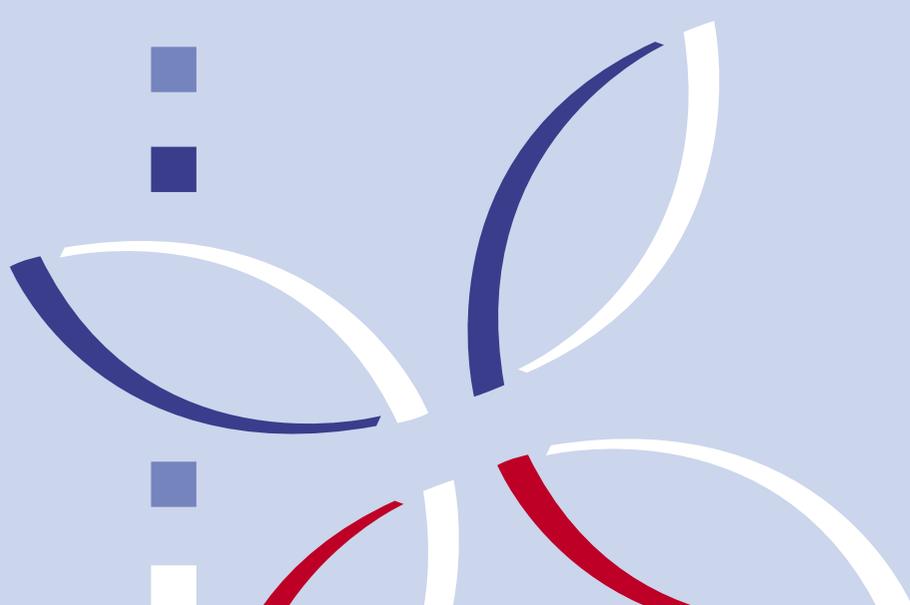


Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Slovak Republic

Foreign Policy in 2010

Annual Report

2010



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“It is a pillar of regional stability and cooperation that experiences one of the major growths in Europe. Slovakia plays a key role in the integration of the Western Balkans and the Eastern neighbours into the Euro-Atlantic structures, and serves as a major example of benefits that arise from wider integration in the European community.”

Hillary Clinton, US Secretary of State



“Slovakia is doing the right things. It is pressing ahead with fiscal consolidation, giving strong signs of fiscal discipline, but also pressing ahead with the reforms. This is going to distinguish Slovakia and it is going to be a very strong signal to the markets that Slovakia is open for business, doing business and being a good place for business.”

Angel Gurría, OECD Secretary General



“I’m grateful for Slovakia’s valuable contribution to both of NATO’s largest operations, ISAF and KFOR. Slovakia takes its responsibility in Afghanistan and to NATO seriously, with its troops deployed in difficult areas of Uruzgan and Kandahar.”

Anders Fogh Rasmussen, NATO Secretary General

“Generally, Slovakia and Germany are very close countries in terms of values. The breaking of the Stability and Growth Pact by certain countries that has been in place for several years is wrong and it is necessary to stop it.”

Angela Merkel, Chancellor of Germany





“Foreign policy should reflect our innermost values and beliefs”

Success in foreign policy is not measured by quantity. The underlying indicators are credibility of a country, firm partnership bonds, good and friendly relations with neighbours and partners, cooperation yielding economic benefits, an active approach, an ability to contribute to a safer world and to help those who are in need.

Success and credibility in international relations are based on three pillars.

The first one is a consistent foreign policy which should reflect our innermost values and beliefs. In other words, we can only speak about and pursue such things “outside” in which we believe at home. If our foreign policy is to be predictable, it must be uniform. You cannot have a different foreign policy *pro domo*, for your voters, and yet another for your foreign partners.

The second condition for a successful and purposeful foreign policy is to have solid foundations on which you can lean. I am convinced that our foreign policy should serve Slovak citizens and protect their interests. Therefore, I believe that it must be primarily based on human and civil values. The values that are traditional, the values that have stood the test of time, the values on which Europe is built. They include fundamental human rights and freedoms, a right to life, to human dignity, and others which create the framework for the system of democracy.

Finally, I wish to highlight the third underlying concept in our foreign policy, which is accountability. Accountability as a way to counter populism which is equally dangerous in international relations as in economic dimensions. Accountability which represents a rudimentary ability of a man to contemplate the consequences of his decisions, their impacts on society and one’s own future. We can hardly make accountable decisions if we are driven by unaccountable motives.

These basic concepts – fundamental values, citizens’ interests and accountability – open doors and roads for us to formulate our approaches to particular issues. They form the groundwork of our programme thesis which we defined in the form of a decalogue at the beginning of the current election term and which we apply in practice and extend in response to recent developments.

Accountability and citizens’ interests drive our efforts to participate in the shaping of a strong and coherent Europe. The European Union emerged as a project of peaceful coexistence and cooperation among European nations. It is not only economic benefits that unite us, it is mainly our shared principles and values. This obliges us to protect our coherence and seek solutions to concrete problems, to seek a functioning early warning and prevention model in those cases when a member state suddenly finds itself on the road of adverse economic development, and to reinforce the EU as a global player.

“We will follow our direction towards accountability and value-based foreign policy”

Our ambitions to play an active role in further enlargement of the European Union are also based on the shared values. We continue an intensive dialogue with Eastern Partnership countries; we wish to keep the momentum of the enlargement process in the Western Balkans. We offer European prospects to Western Balkan countries – the prospects of political stability and economic development – which mean the prospects of living a life in peace, freedom and dignity for their citizens.

The fundamental values, accountability and citizens' interests are behind our efforts to intensify good neighbourly relations and regional cooperation, within the Visegrad Group in particular. Our shared objectives, as well as deep historical and cultural bonds, give us the potential to resolve problems that extend beyond the capacities of individual V4 members, such as energy security issues, for example.

The fundamental human values and the feeling of accountability encourage us to place much greater emphasis on development assistance to countries that have found themselves in an emergency situation or that are going through complicated developments.

In order for our efforts to succeed, we must have an effective foreign service in place. Several organisational changes have been made in this respect, such as the transfer of management competencies over the trade and economic departments abroad to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. It will not only simplify and increase the effectiveness of Slovakia's presentation abroad, but also contribute to our plans to strengthen the economic dimension of diplomacy, to ensure that Slovakia's good international reputation translate into tangible

economic benefits in the form of business projects and opportunities, jobs and pay for Slovak citizens.

Looking back at the past year, I am confident to say that the new approach to foreign policy has already started to bear fruit. Following the change in foreign policy priorities, the voice of Slovakia, as well as that of the Visegrad Group, has become more audible in the European Union, tensions in communication between Slovakia and Hungary have been relieved. We have managed to take principled stands to issues which must not be neglected – we have supported Cuban and Chinese dissidents, as well as the persecuted Belarus opposition. We have supported truth, understanding and freedom. We have denounced injustice, oppression and the arbitrariness of power.

Dear readers, the year 2011 has laid new challenges ahead of us – often unpredictable. A year ago, no one would have predicted what would happen in Arab countries or what natural disaster would hit Japan.

We will follow our direction towards accountability and value-based foreign policy defending the citizens' interests. We will carry on with the reforms within our Ministry.

We will consider it a success when Slovakia's good international position takes on tangible forms. When the citizens actually realise and feel it – in the form of new job and study opportunities, educational and cultural activities. Or in their day-to-day life. For example, if, when saying that they live in Slovakia, they feel a bit of healthy pride in their country.



Mikuláš Dzurinda
Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Slovak Republic



Minister Mikuláš Dzurinda and State Secretary Milan Ježovica when assuming the office at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Slovak Republic, 9 July 2010



German Chancellor Angela Merkel, Slovak Prime Minister Iveta Radičová and French President Nicolas Sarkozy at the European Council meeting in Brussels, 17 December 2010



Slovak President Ivan Gašparovič meets UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon in New York, 25 September 2010



Prime Minister of the Slovak Republic Iveta Radičová
and Minister of Foreign Affairs Mikuláš Dzurinda



2010 in foreign policy

The Slovak foreign policy of 2010 remained responsible, creative and retained a clear focus on practical results, which are summarised on the following pages of this publication. The new government of Iveta Radičová draws on Slovakia's firm position in the EU and NATO, a more responsible domestic financial policy and clearer positions on the fundamental values of the European partnership, the transatlantic alliance and regional responsibility. These factors were further amplified by the aftermath of the global economic and financial crisis. In an effort to quickly and successfully overcome it, the government proceeded with qualitative changes that were manifested in a relatively short period of time – for example a realistic position on the euro zone's sovereign debt crisis, an improved atmosphere in the bilateral relationship with Hungary, and the intensification of regional cooperation, especially in the Visegrad Group (the presidency over which Slovakia assumed in July 2010).

Slovakia maintains its internal momentum and remains optimistic about the global prospects and competitiveness of the EU and its economy. Thanks to the structural reforms implemented in the past decade, Slovakia continues to rate among Europe's fastest growing economies. It proudly claims to be the “success

story” of European integration in Central Europe. It relentlessly supports European values and standards in the countries of the Western Balkans and the Eastern Partnership, which was also the destination for a large part of official development assistance last year.

Foreign policy Decalogue from the Manifesto of the Government of Iveta Radičová

1. Value-based foreign policy
2. Good relations with neighbours, regional security and cooperation
3. Active European policy
4. Guarantees of security, transatlantic relations, relations with the United States
5. Russia, countries of Eastern Europe, Central Asia and Southern Caucasus
6. Economic policy abroad
7. Development assistance
8. Assistance and services to Slovak citizens abroad, Slovak compatriots
9. New challenges
10. Openness and public control of foreign policy



Minister of Foreign Affairs Mikuláš Dzurinda
at the Budapest Marathon, 25 September 2010



1 Neighbourhood and regional policies

Intensified cooperation within the V4

Regional cooperation and the development of **good relations with neighbours** were the priorities of Slovak foreign policy. In pursuing them, the Slovak Republic is building upon the assumption that the countries of the Visegrad Four (V4) group have sufficient capacity to further develop multilateral cooperation and influence European policies.

During the preparations for its twelve month presidency of the V4, handed over from Hungary on 1 July 2010, the Slovak Republic had resolved to intensify regional cooperation and bring forward topics and issues that would strengthen both the EU and NATO, while benefiting our interests as well.

Priority issues include sectoral cooperation concerning the new EU financial perspective, regional and cohesion policies, energy industry, transport infrastructure and the environment.

In 2010, the tradition of **regular meetings of the V4 Prime Ministers** that are held prior to the European Council meetings continued (the September 2010 meeting was attended by the President of the European Council Herman van Rompuy; the December meeting

was attended by the President of the European Commission José Manuel Barroso). Another successful event was an informal meeting of the V4 Foreign Ministers and representatives of the Western Balkan region, together with representatives of Belgium's EU Presidency and the European Commission, held in mid-October 2010 in Bratislava. The ministers expressed their support of the policy of EU enlargement to the Western Balkan countries and agreed on closer coordination of joint actions to be taken by the V4 countries to support European and Euro-Atlantic integration processes.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Slovak Republic began implementing a specific bilateral assistance programme for the countries of the Western Balkans and the Eastern Partnership – Centre for Transfer of Integration and Reform Experience.

Slovakia actively joined in consultations with the European Commission and countries of the region which should become part of the European Danube Region Strategy. Slovakia's priorities include development of transport infrastructure, energy industries and the environment, along with social and economic development, including enhancement of competitiveness.

Neighbourhood and regional policies

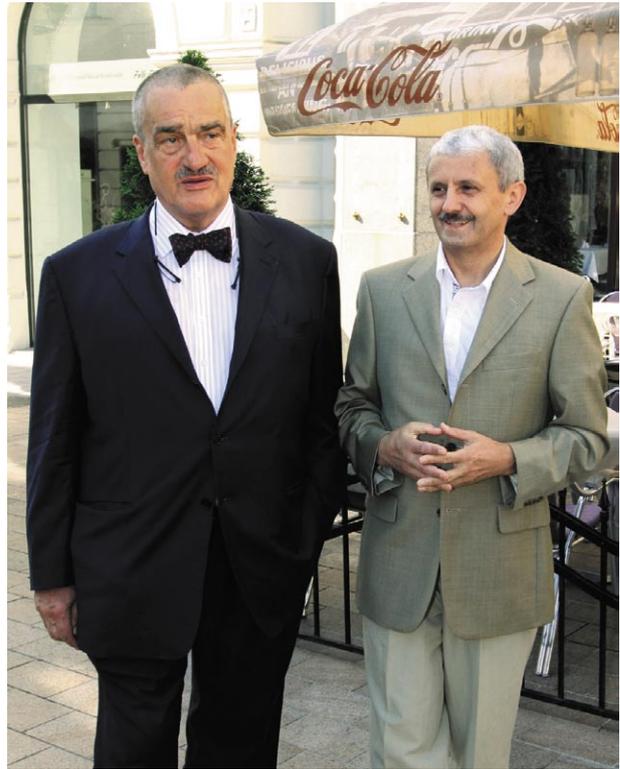
Good relations with neighbours

Czech Republic

As far as bilateral **relations with neighbours** are concerned, those with the **Czech Republic** have preserved their above-standard quality, as proved by bilateral visits of Prime Ministers and Foreign Ministers of the two countries following their appointment after respective general elections. The proximity of programmes and ideas of the new coalition governments in the two countries also provided room for close cooperation within such platforms as the EU, NATO, OSCE and the UN. Slovakia and the Czech Republic continued their joint operations in international crisis management missions (Kosovo, Afghanistan).

Energy security remained among the priority issues on the agenda of bilateral cooperation. The ability to cooperate closely and to effectively provide mutual aid could also be seen during emergency situations caused by floods (May and August 2010). The two countries consulted the extent of damage and the submission of an application to the EU Solidarity Fund.

Mutual cross-border cooperation continued as well. It has been already a decade since it was institutionalised.



Czech Minister of Foreign Affairs Karel Schwarzenberg after informal working breakfast with Mikuláš Dzurinda, Bratislava, 10 July 2010

The implementation of the Operational Programme of Cross-Border Cooperation between the Slovak Republic and the Czech Republic 2007–2013 successfully proceeded as well.

Poland

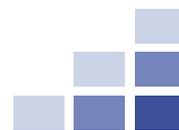
In 2010, cooperation with the **Republic of Poland** preserved its achieved level. The overall dynamics of the contacts was to a large extent influenced by the national tragedy of Poland – the decease of the presidential couple as well as a part of Polish political elite.

However, the new government in Slovakia restarted the political dialogue with their Polish partners as well as the new Polish president again in a dynamic and responsive manner. Both countries tested their operational links and responsively assisted each other during the floods **on the Slovak-Polish border. Poland also sees Slovakia as a positive example of the first V4 country entering the euro zone.**

In January 2010, the second meeting of the Polish–Slovak forum was held in Warsaw. A communiqué



Minister of Foreign Affairs Mikuláš Dzurinda meets Polish President Bronisław Komorowski while visiting Poland, Warsaw, 16 December 2010



V4 Foreign Ministers at the meeting in Bratislava

that was adopted after the meeting defined fundamental fields for activities of the forum, being a new form of bilateral dialogue between the two countries, such as development of infrastructure, cross-border cooperation, culture, science, tourism and cooperation in resolving historical issues as well as intergovernmental dialogue, European agenda and security policy issues.

December 2010 visit by Foreign Minister Mikuláš Dzurinda to Warsaw proved a high pace of cooperation. Energy security was the top issue discussed at the July meeting of the Slovak and Polish Prime Ministers, which translated into a declaration expressing their interest in building a gas network interconnection between the two countries. Unresolved bilateral issues for the future include the completion of cross-border road transport infrastructure and modernisation of railway infrastructure.

Hungary

After a fruitless period, to some extent the period of confrontation, 2010 witnessed a change in the approach to bilateral relations with the **Republic of Hungary**.

The Hungarian adoption of an amendment to the Citizenship Act and the Act on National Solidarity (so-called Act on Trianon) just on the eve of Slovakia's general election had increased tensions in bilateral rela-



Prime Minister Iveta Radičová and Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor Orbán after signing the intergovernmental agreement on the construction of north-south gas network interconnection

Neighbourhood and regional policies



Mikuláš Dzurinda and his Hungarian counterpart János Martonyi sign the agreement on cooperation and mutual representation in processing visa for third-country nationals

tions and resulted in a temporary suspension of dialogue between the two countries. It was not before the July 2010 meeting of the Prime Ministers of the Slovak Republic and the Republic of Hungary that an agreement to resolve problematic issues was achieved and bilateral dialogue resumed, along with the

functioning of joint committees established in order to implement the *Treaty on Good Neighbourliness and Friendly Cooperation between Slovakia and Hungary*. In autumn, the committees launched their activities aimed at development of multifaceted cooperation. The atmosphere in bilateral relations improved and new possibilities opened up for more effective communication between the top state officials, as proved by the visits of the Foreign Minister Mikuláš Dzurinda to Hungary in September and the Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor Orbán to Slovakia in December 2010.

The Foreign Ministers János Martonyi and Mikuláš Dzurinda confirmed joint action of the V4 countries in the EU and NATO and agreed upon further development of consular cooperation as well as defined important projects in the field of energy industry (the north–south gas network interconnection Veľký Krtíš–Vecsés) and transport infrastructure (completion of the Košice–Miskolc expressway, construction of bridges over the Ipeľ River).

Austria

Intensive bilateral dialogue with **Austria** was further developed by the September visit to Austria paid by the



Minister of Economy Juraj Miškov, Minister of Foreign Affairs Mikuláš Dzurinda and the OMV Gas & Power Executive Board Member Werner Auli visiting OMV gas compressor station in Baumgarten on the occasion of completed construction of the project enabling reverse flow of natural gas from Austria to Slovakia

Slovak Prime Minister and by the Foreign Minister in August and October. Nuclear energy has been a closely watched issue in bilateral relations on long-term basis and the intensive dialogue continued at all levels. In 2010 an environmental impact assessment procedure concerning the construction of blocks 3 and 4 of the Mochovce nuclear power plant was successfully closed.

Another positive achievement in the area of energy security of the whole region was the **launching of the gas network interconnection** in Baumgarten (Austria) enabling reverse gas flow from Austria to Slovakia. Austria has thus become the second country, after the Czech Republic, which can supply Slovakia with natural gas in case of emergency. A strategic dimension of this arrangement is that it will also enable connection to the planned Nabucco gas pipeline, which should end right at the Baumgarten terminal. Once the Nabucco project is launched, Slovakia will have both, the transport route and sources of its gas supplies diversified. A solution to connect oil transport systems of the two countries is also being sought.

Cross-border and regional cooperation played an important role in bilateral relations as well. Communication of water managements of the two countries intensified resulting in the agreement on joint monitoring of the Danube river.

Ukraine

In relations with **Ukraine**, Slovak diplomacy focused on good neighbourly relations, economic cooperation, energy security, minority and expatriate issues, and cross-border cooperation which is very important for the bordering regions. In the field of economic



Visit to a Slovak school in Uzhgorod, 27 August 2010



During his first visit to Austria, Minister of Foreign Affairs Mikuláš Dzurinda was received by his counterpart Michael Spindelegger, Vienna, 23 August 2010

cooperation, the energy industry remained the key issue. The delivery of energy supplies to Slovakia through Ukrainian territory was reliable and uninterrupted in 2010.

The visits of the Foreign Ministers to Ukraine contributed to the intensified bilateral dialogue – Miroslav Lajčák visited Kiev in April and Mikuláš Dzurinda paid a visit to our Eastern neighbour in August. The most prominent events last year included a visit by the President of the Slovak Republic to Ukraine in October and a Slovak-Ukrainian business forum. During the visit, an agreement on cancellation of consular fees for national visas was signed.

Slovak activities contributed to a broader engagement of the Ukrainian academic community and civil society in public debates, which supports shaping the country's European attitudes.

Funds from the Slovak development assistance programme were used to finance the launch of the National Convention on EU project in Ukraine (in cooperation with the Research Center of the Slovak Foreign Policy Association) in December 2010.

For the fourth year in a row, the Slovak Embassy in Kiev served as a NATO Contact Point Embassy in Ukraine. Despite Ukraine's changed policy towards NATO, the Embassy will continue providing information to the Ukrainian public on NATO-related issues. Embassy will also participate in the implementation of Ukraine's reform plans in the area of defence.



Mikuláš Dzurinda in a conversation with the British Foreign Secretary William Hague, Brussels, 14 October 2010



2 Active European policy

Reform processes

In 2010, the **financial crisis** was the main issue on the **European agenda**. It was acknowledged how deep the mutual economic and financial interdependence is among EU member states. It was these circumstances that led to the commencement of a process of reinforcing economic cooperation among EU countries.

Slovakia actively pursued its opinions on the continuation of the EU enlargement process, overcoming the consequences of the global economic crisis and consolidation of the euro zone. It primarily focused on those areas and policies where it can provide higher added value and tangible results to partners (such as fiscal policy, structural reforms, the Western Balkans, the Eastern Partnership, etc.). With the aim of improving the effective functioning of European institutions, Slovakia was actively engaged in the implementation process of the *Treaty of Lisbon*, while also paying appropriate attention to the building of the European External Action Service.

With respect to measures aimed at stabilising and consolidating public finances of the euro zone countries, Slovakia actively promoted:

- **strengthening of the Stability and Growth Pact**,
- **responsible economic governance**, including through more stringent fiscal discipline, extending economic oversight and, above all, application of a permanent crisis mechanism.

Slovakia's position in the discussion on the bail-out of Greece and the establishment of the European Financial Stability Facility (EFSF) was driven by its efforts to promote measures that provide a more permanent solution to the problem. One such measure involved debt restructuring with a managed default as an option. Slovakia considers it important that views on resolving debt problems of euro zone countries have changed and partners have realised that a loan will not help if the essence of the difficulties remains unresolved. Slovakia contributed to this change in attitude by taking a position which had first been subject to criticism but turned out later as well-founded, value-consistent and prospective.

As regards the preparation of the new **Strategy for Growth and Employment – Europe 2020**, it is one of Slovakia's achievements that the cohesion policy is considered among the most important instruments for its implementation. In 2010, Slovakia managed to speed up the drawing of cohesion policy funds for the 2007–2013 period, which allowed to close operational programmes of the 2004–2006 programming period. Slovakia actively participated in the drafting of a future cohesion policy beyond 2013. A strong cohesion policy for all EU regions with focus on the most underdeveloped regions remains among Slovakia's top priorities.

Slovakia was actively engaged in negotiations on the 2011 EU budget, pursuing balanced approach and taking into account not only the need for budgetary stringency, but also availability of sufficient resources

Active European policy



Ivan Mikloš
Minister of Finance
of the Slovak Republic

We are against privatisation of profits and nationalisation of losses

In early May 2010, when I commented on the refusal to provide a loan to Greece, I did not even know whether after the June elections I would be in the opposition or in the government, let alone whether I would again be a finance minister. The former Government said that our refusal of the loan was merely a shrewd pre-election move and that, if we were to form a Government after the election (which they did not expect at all then) we would certainly back down and approve the loan.

As you know, the reality is different. We refused the loan to Greece even though it was not easy and the

pressure was enormous, and we approved the EFSF, although with reservations. We insisted, in particular, that it really be a temporary, three-year project (as was proposed and approved) only, and that, as a precondition of any discussions concerning its extension or replacement with another, permanent mechanism, rules must be set up to govern state bankruptcies.

The reason is simple and conforms to why we refused the loan to Greece: it is a moral hazard. We think it unacceptable that the price for the bad decisions of the past be paid by the citizens of the country in difficulties and the citizens of other countries who had nothing to do with it, while the banks stand aside. The same banks that not only participated in the bad and unsustainable development, but also reaped a very tidy profit in the process. I consider it absurd, immoral and, on top of that, one of the main causes undermining the people's trust not only in the market economy, but also in the euro zone and the European integration as such. It is necessary to radically refuse the privatisation of profits and nationalisation of losses.

As the Finance Minister I have been participating in the ECOFIN, Eurogroup and Task Force meetings since July, usually in regular monthly intervals and sometimes more frequently.

to finance EU policies. Slovakia opened up the issue of updating national positions on the budget review in October 2010. Under the common agricultural policy (CAP), agricultural ministers of Slovakia, Hungary, Poland, the Czech Republic, Bulgaria and Romania signed a joint declaration at their meeting in Bratislava in November 2010, in which they agreed that real reform

was necessary in this sphere. It should be mainly aimed at preserving a two-pillar policy model and extending the application of the Single Area Payment Scheme.

Slovakia and EU enlargement

With respect to further **EU enlargement**, Slovakia was primarily engaged in supporting **European prospects of the Western Balkans**. Visits by the Slovak Foreign Minister to Serbia (October) and Montenegro (November) emphasised Slovakia's commitment to assist the two countries in their EU integration efforts and capacity building to meet these objectives.

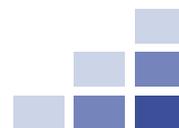
An informal meeting of the V4 Foreign Ministers and representatives of the Western Balkan countries, together with representatives of Belgium's EU Presidency and the European Commission, emphasised the active role Slovakia played in the EU integration of the Western Balkans.

Croatia

Slovakia has expressed its political support to accession talks between Croatia and the EU since their very beginning. In particular, it shared with



Croatian Minister of Foreign Affairs Gordan Jandroković and Mikuláš Dzurinda at the meeting of Foreign Ministers of the V4 countries and countries of the Western Balkans in Bratislava, 22 October 2010



ECOFIN is the EU27 finance ministers' council, the Eurogroup is the Euro zone finance ministers' council (EU17), and the Task Force is a temporary project made up of the EU27 finance ministers and chaired by European Council President van Rompuy tasked with preparing a review of the Stability and Growth Pact. A review to that would change and tighten the rules to an extent that would prevent the recurrence of what happened in Greece and what is brewing in some other countries as well.

The European Central Bank strongly supported a proposal made by the European Commission, which suggested that if a country failed to fulfil its obligations, the Commission would directly impose a sanction that could only be avoided if cancelled by the ECOFIN with a qualified majority of votes. Nevertheless, a French proposal was passed, changing essentially nothing compared to the present situation. It means that sanctions will not be automatic, even though such a system would rule out unequal treatment.

However, I wish to discuss a different topic, one that has only been addressed marginally so far, but will become pivotal in the upcoming months and years. It is the state bankruptcies, the moral hazard and the participation of banks in footing the bill for having brought the country into insolvency.

Although the Stability and Growth Pact only touches on the issue tangentially, the discussion of this topic was very important, because it will become crucial in the future – much more important than sanctions.

In my opinion, this implies two priorities for Slovakia, in particular:

1. We have to rely on ourselves and the revitalisation of public finance, improved business environment, structural reforms and the development of a knowledge-based society. It is a strategy that will allow us to elude the trap threatening many countries.
2. We must categorically denounce any extension of the EFSF or any new permanent crisis mechanism, unless it is linked to clear rules governing the state bankruptcies. To be more politically correct, it cannot be done without the so-called “haircut” (a euphemism for debt restructuring).

My vision came true in March 2011. Not only the elements of controlled state bankruptcies within the ESM were successfully pushed through in Brussels, but also an agreement was made to change a contribution key, significantly reducing Slovakia's share in the potential new rescue packages.

Croatia its experience from the accession process and harmonisation of national legislation with EU law.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs and European Integration of the Republic of Croatia organized a conference **Communicating Europe** on 15 October, with regard to the final stage of accession talks and intensification of activities aimed at informing public on accession of Croatia to the EU. State Secretary Milan Ježovica addressed the conference with an opening statement. He also addressed the conference on **EU Enlargement in the Balkans in 2011 – Make not Break**, held on 21 October 2010 in Bratislava. Conference was followed by an informal meeting of the V4 and Western Balkans Foreign Ministers the next day, attended also by the European Commissioner for Enlargement Štefan Füle.

Macedonia

Slovakia observes with regret that it was impossible to begin actual accession talks with Macedonia last year.

Montenegro

Slovakia acknowledged the positive *avis* of the European Commission on the EU membership

application submitted by Montenegro and, together with partners, succeeded in pushing through a European Council decision of December 2010 to grant Montenegro the status of a candidate country.

Minister Mikuláš Dzurinda's visit in November opened a lecturing tour of Slovak experts and EU and NATO ambassadors in Montenegro aimed at increasing the public support of Montenegro's integration to the EU and NATO.



Mikuláš Dzurinda during his visit in Montenegro discussing Brussels' positive evaluation with the Speaker of the Montenegrin Parliament Ranko Krivokapić –Montenegro received recommendation for the EU candidate status, Podgorica, 12 November 2010

Active European policy

State Secretary Milan Ježovica participated in the Strategic Planning Seminar Budva II held in Montenegro on 8–10 October 2010. Participants discussed the integration of Southeastern Europe into the EU and NATO, with emphasis on Montenegro. Milan Ježovica as one of the panellists spoke on Slovak NATO accession process experience and main challenges for the countries aspiring for a membership in the Alliance.

Serbia

Slovakia also contributed to the progress in Serbia's EU integration process. In February, the interim trade agreement between the EU and Serbia was unblocked; in June, the Council of the EU decided to proceed with the ratification process of the Stabilisation and Association Agreement. The President of the Slovak Republic ratified the *Stabilisation and Association Agreement between the European Communities and their member states, of the one part, and the Republic of Serbia, of the other part*, in October 2010. It was also due to the activities of Slovak diplomacy that a Kosovo resolution was adopted at the UN General Assembly in September 2010. The resolution calls upon Serbia and Kosovo to resume the dialogue that would promote peace, security and stability in the region. The UN General Assembly confirmed the verdict of the International Court of Justice in the Hague that Kosovo declared independence in compliance with international law. With an active endorsement by Slovakia, the Council of the EU requested the European Commission in October 2010 to provide an opinion on Serbia's application for EU membership.



Promotion of European integration and development of bilateral dialogue were the main objectives of Mikuláš Dzurinda's two-day working visit to Moldova on 9–10 November 2010. He also met Prime Minister Vladimir Filat



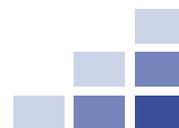
Minister of Foreign Affairs of Serbia Vuk Jeremić and Mikuláš Dzurinda at the meeting of Foreign Ministers of V4 countries and countries of the Western Balkans in Bratislava, 22 October 2010

October negotiations between Foreign Minister Mikuláš Dzurinda and his Serbian counterpart Vuk Jeremić confirmed Slovakia's position on the issue of recognizing independence of Kosovo and at the same time encouraged Belgrade to seek solutions to improve regional cooperation. Mikuláš Dzurinda and his Serbian partners also discussed the utilisation of the new dynamic nature of EU–Serbian relations after adopting the UN General Assembly resolution as well as future dialogue between Belgrade and Pristina.

Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina

Slovakia was supportive of EU integration of Albania and Bosnia and Herzegovina and approved the decision of the Council of the EU to liberalise visa regimes for the citizens of the two countries. A joint statement was adopted at the ministerial meeting of the V4 countries with the Western Balkan countries that was held in Bratislava in October, outlining the steps to be taken during the upcoming period.

The then Foreign Minister Miroslav Lajčák presented measures aimed at closer coordination of the EU countries in enhancing regional cooperation and the enlargement and reform process at the April conference in Sarajevo.



Iceland, Turkey

Slovakia appreciated the commencement of accession talks with Iceland and supported the continuation of EU accession negotiations with Turkey.

Eastern Partnership

Under the overall revision and improvements in the implementation of the European Neighbourhood Policy, Slovakia sought to enhance the effective functioning of the Eastern Partnership project. Strengthening political dialogue with Eastern Partnership countries was the main objective pursued by Ministry of Foreign Affairs top officials during meetings in Ukraine (August) and Moldova (November).

Slovakia paid special attention to negotiations on association agreements with partner countries, implementation of a visa free regime, and increasing the effective utilisation of EU financial instruments available to partners. Ukraine and Moldova were offered bilateral action plans which focused on sharing Slovakia's experience from transformation process, approximation of EU law, administrative capacity building and anti-corruption activities. Slovakia put a particular accent on cooperation with civil society; National Convention projects were also opened during the visits. The projects are aimed at institutionalisation of public debates on EU-related issues based on the partnership between the governmental and non-governmental organizations, business and interest associations, as well as a wider public, and creation of a valuable and expert source of information on EU-related issues.



State Secretary of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs Milan Ježovica officially opened the National Convention on EU project in Ukraine, Kiev, 8 December 2010



Belgian Foreign Minister Steven Vanackere, High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy Catherine Ashton and Mikuláš Dzurinda at the meeting of Foreign Ministers of the EU countries, Brussels, 10 September 2010

Institutional reform of the Union

The year 2010 was characterised by the **implementation of the Treaty of Lisbon**, and yielded the first experience with a reformed EU institutional framework. Slovakia pursued its positions, including, for example, a balanced involvement of the rotating presidency in the preparation and organisation of respective meetings of the Council of the EU and the European Council. Slovakia endorsed the introduction of a European Citizens' Initiative mechanism, which enables one million EU citizens to call directly on the European Commission to prepare a legal act in any area falling within the framework of its powers.

An important aspect in the practical implementation of the *Treaty of Lisbon* was the establishment of the **European External Action Service (EEAS)**, designed to improve coordination of the EU's common foreign and security policy. Slovakia successfully established itself in a group to promote and coordinate positions on the building of the EEAS. The fundamental principles of the joint position included a shared ownership of the EEAS (by member states and EU institutions), application of the geographical balance principle, and meaningful participation of all EU member states.

Slovakia sees added value in its possibility to effectively contribute to the scope of the EEAS, namely in Slovakia's priority areas (Western Balkans, Eastern Partnership). In this respect, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Slovak Republic appreciated the appointment of the former Slovak Foreign Minister Miroslav Lajčák, as a managing director for Russia, the Eastern Neighbourhood and the Western Balkans.



Security issues, Lisbon summit and NATO reform dominated the meeting of Minister of Foreign Affairs Mikuláš Dzurinda and NATO Secretary-General Anders Fogh Rasmussen in Brussels, 13 September 2010

3 Safe and democratic world



The **security policy** in 2010 was affected, on one hand, by complicated development in Afghanistan operations, an unpredictable policy pursued by Iran, escalating tensions on the Korean Peninsula and, on the other hand, by the signing of a nuclear disarmament treaty between the USA and Russia.

NATO November summit in Lisbon adopted its **new Strategic Concept, preparation of which historically for the first time also involved Slovakia**. The document is in line with the positions Slovakia presented during the preparation process and reflects Slovakia's requirement that the tasks and goals of the Alliance be realistic, feasible and open for cooperation with partners. It is also closely linked with the need to cope with the pressure for more effective spending of financial resources.

The summit confirmed that the **Alliance was resolved to address security risks even outside NATO territory and cooperate with partners that share similar values in a global context**. An important issue on the summit agenda was the decision on the building of a NATO missile defence system. The Lisbon summit also announced the beginning of the transition of responsibilities to the Afghan administration (the so-called transition process) to be carried out in the 2011–2014 period.

The GLOBSEC 2010 international conference organised by the Slovak Atlantic Commission in September, the Slovak Security Forum conference organised by the Euro-Atlantic Centre and the NATO Depository Library in October, along with other similar expert events, contributed to a full-scale debate on the new NATO Strategic Concept and security policy.

Slovakia in peacekeeping operations

The **ISAF operation in Afghanistan** remained Slovakia's priority. The number of Slovak troops deployed under ISAF increased to 314 in 2010, with the prospect of a further increase by 30 troops in the course of 2011. The character of Slovak armed forces activities in Afghanistan began to be better aligned with the requirement to strengthen NATO training capacities to support the transition of responsibilities for the country's security, scheduled to start in 2011.

The ISAF operation proved that security should be approached in its complexity. It is not sufficient to win a war; peace has to be won as well. Military operations have to be accompanied with building of statehood, economic cooperation, development aid etc. Slovak development assistance in Afghanistan was also adjusted to meet this objective.

Safe and democratic world



Troops receiving commemorative medals for serving in military operations in Afghanistan and Kosovo, Prešov, 17 December 2010

Slovakia is interested in having adequate participation in UN peacekeeping missions. Slovak troops continued their tasks under the **UNFICYP mission in Cyprus and UNTSO in the Middle East**. Activities of the Slovak contingent in Cyprus were supportive of Slovak diplomacy in its role as mediator – our troops are the only ones on both sides of the green line dividing the two communities in Cyprus and they are responsible for one of the most important sectors. Thus, they contribute to the excellent performance by the Slovak Republic of complex and widely appreciated (not only by the UN) tasks of a provider of good services within bicomunal dialogue.

Slovak troops continued their presence within the **EU missions in Bosnia and Herzegovina (ALTHEA, EUPM) and at NATO Headquarters in Sarajevo**. Slovakia is present also in the EU Monitoring Mission in Georgia,



President Ivan Gašparovič paid a visit to Slovak troops deployed in the ISAF operation in Afghanistan, Kandahar 15 December 2010

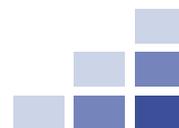
the EULEX mission in Kosovo, and the EUBAM mission on the Moldova–Ukraine borders. Two police experts participated in the EUPOL operation in Afghanistan.

Slovakia remained engaged in KFOR operations to the extent that its mandate would be in compliance with the UN Security Council Resolution 1244 (1999). Slovakia made sure that the KFOR troops performed their tasks according to their mandate even during the period of their gradual scale-down and transition of the operation to a deterrent presence level. Slovak troops concluded their involvement in the KFOR operation on 30 September 2010 upon a decision by the National Council of the Slovak Republic.

Slovakia was also actively involved in the formulation of a NATO policy on the Western Balkans. It promoted the “open door policy” and, at a meeting of NATO Foreign Ministers held in Tallinn in April 2010, endorsed the decision to invite **Bosnia and Herzegovina** to join the Membership Action Plan and supported intensification of cooperation between NATO and **Macedonia**, Montenegro and Serbia.

Slovakia in the UN and in international organisations

Slovakia systematically advocated close institutional cooperation between NATO and the EU, and cooperation of NATO with the UN, the OSCE and the African Union. In addition, Slovakia actively joined the OSCE discussion on the future of European



President Ivan Gašparovič at the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe summit in Astana, Kazakhstan, 1 December 2010

security within the Corfu Process and pushed through a proposal in the area of energy security.

Together with its partners and allies, Slovakia actively sought answers within international organisations to such **global challenges** as counter-terrorism, climate change, cyber defence, terrorism, global economic crisis, disarmament, illegal migration, food and energy security, education, science, and the search for optimal ways towards advanced technologies.

Within the **UN**, the Slovak Republic participated in the building of a system of international relations based on the principle of effective multilateralism. Under the common foreign and security policy, Slovakia was supportive of EU priorities in the UN and engaged in resolving the issue of pursuing uniform voting of EU member states at the global level within activities of the UN General Assembly and Security Council – just in line with the changes brought forth by the *Treaty of Lisbon*.

Slovakia endorsed a UN reform process with the aim of increasing coordination and mutual cooperation among the General Assembly, the Security Council and the Economic and Social Council in particular. The Slovak Republic supported the unification of UN structures in the area of gender equality and the

Election observers

In 2010, the Foreign Ministry continued to deploy Slovak observers to OSCE/ODIHR election observation missions. Fifteen short-term observers were monitoring elections in Ukraine (including the second round of presidential elections), Bosnia and Herzegovina, Azerbaijan, Moldova and Belarus. Slovakia had the largest presence – six observers – in the OSCE/ODIHR mission to monitor the December presidential election in Belarus. Observers' task is to monitor whether the election procedure, the counting of votes and the publication of results take place in accordance with democratic principles and international standards.

empowerment of women into a single entity entitled UN Women. It presented its positions on the UN Security Council reform based on increasing its effectiveness and responsibility, including through increased representation of the Eastern European Regional Group.

As a chair of the UN Group of Friends of **Security Sector Reform** (SSR) in New York, the Slovak Republic carried on with the activities it had launched as a non-permanent UN Security Council member in the 2004–2007 period. The Security Sector Reform was one of the key issues on the agenda of the Slovak chairmanship that received a broad positive response in the UN. In cooperation with Indonesia, Slovakia organised a workshop on multidimensional UN peacekeeping operations and post-conflict peace building for ASEAN countries, held in Jakarta in March 2010. It supported a workshop organised by Nigeria and the Republic of South Africa in New York on African prospects in the SSR area, focusing on cooperation between the UN and the African Union.



President Ivan Gašparovič delivered speech at the UN General Assembly, New York, 24 September 2010

Ministerstvo zahraničných vecí Slovenskej republiky a Občianske združenie Dvojfarebný svet
vás pozývajú na výstavu
originálnych hračiek detí z najchudobnejších krajín

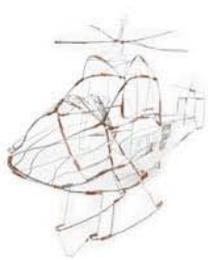
S čím sa hrajú...

Deti v Afrike a v Afganistane
sú síce chudobné,
majú však bohatú fantáziu



od 11. DECEMBRA 2010 do 2. januára 2011

Medzinárodný dom umenia pre deti BIBIANA
Panská ul. 41 Bratislava



Záštitu nad výstavou prevzala manželka ministra zahraničných vecí Slovenskej republiky pani Ing. Eva DZURINDOVÁ



4 Development assistance

In 2010, the Slovak Republic renewed its commitment to the Millennium Development Goals, including through a declaration at the UN Summit held in New York in September 2010. Slovakia confirmed it would endeavour to gradually increase the volume of its development assistance. However, it will primarily concentrate on the quality, effectiveness and tangible impacts on a given country and take into account the needs of partner countries.

In cooperation with several other ministries, the Foreign Ministry took several particular measures in 2010 in order to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of bilateral development assistance provided by the Slovak Republic. The Slovak Government approved a new method of budgeting bilateral development assistance. New Statute of the Slovak Official Development Assistance Project Committee was adopted to ensure an independent and transparent project selection procedure. In November and December 2010, the OECD's Development Assistance Committee carried out the so-called special peer review to evaluate Slovak development assistance activities; relevant DAC recommendations will be incorporated in order to further improve the effective functioning of the existing development assistance system.

A *Memorandum of Understanding* was signed between the Foreign Ministry and the Slovak Non-Governmental Development Organisations Platform in May 2010.

The objective of the Memorandum is to intensify cooperation and improve the effective provision of development assistance. A Communication Strategy on Slovak official development assistance, approved in March 2010, is designed to raise general public awareness of official assistance.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs will gradually extend the existing treaty base with Slovak ODA priority countries. An agreement between the Slovak and Moldovan government on development assistance came into force in September 2010.

Slovak ODA also served as an instrument to support reform and integration processes in Western Balkan and Eastern Partnership countries. For this purpose the Foreign Ministry prepared an institutional platform – the already mentioned Centre for Transfer of Integration and Reform Experience.

Slovakia was among the countries which promptly responded to humanitarian situations in Haiti, Ukraine, Pakistan, Moldova, Montenegro and Chile. The Ministry provided financial support to rescue teams which voluntarily participated in removing the waste of an industrial accident near Ajka, Hungary. The Foreign Ministry also offered humanitarian aid to fire-stricken Russia in the form of health recovery stays for children from socially disadvantaged families. In line with its foreign policy priorities, the Ministry participated in

Development assistance



Slovakia sent humanitarian aid for earthquake-struck Haiti from the humanitarian base in Limbach, 18 February 2010

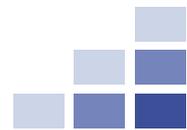
providing in-kind humanitarian aid to Afghanistan and the Palestinian Administration. Limited transportation capacities have remained a lingering problem as far as the delivery of Slovak humanitarian aid to remote territories is concerned. Nevertheless, Slovakia cooperated effectively with NATO and France in this respect.

In 2010, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Slovak Republic supported the development projects by the total sum of 4,361,907 euro, provided the micro-grants, humanitarian aid and contributed to capacity building process of the Slovak Non-Governmental Development Organisations Platform. Some examples of successful projects are stated below.

Selected development projects

Project title	Partner	Country	Funds approved (in euro)
Expert capacity building in agriculture and eliminating rural poverty	People in Peril	Afghanistan	241,511
Agricultural recovery by modern technologies in Maridi	SAVIO	Sudan	185,263
EU in School	Centre for European Policy, Bratislava	Bosnia and Herzegovina	172,237
Rehabilitation of a medical facility and psychosocial assistance to affected people in the PaP, Carrefour catchment area	Magna Children at Risk, Bratislava	Haiti	150,000
Primary education for pupils in Manguo-Maridi	SAVIO	Sudan	146,442
National convention on EU in Moldova	Research Center of the Slovak Foreign Policy Association	Moldova	107,063.76
Humanitarian aid to flood victims in Pakistan	People in Peril	Pakistan	30,000

The list of all projects supported in 2010 is available at: <http://www.slovakaid.sk/?p=5231>.



Green project in Southern Sudan

With the support from the SlovakAid programme, the SAVIO civic association launched a pilot project in Southern Sudan to address the consequences of the climate change. Its objective is to teach local farmers through workshops to utilise more efficiently small-scale agricultural production processes so that they can farm their lands in a sustainable and more efficient way. 60 selected farmers from individual villages in the district will participate in three three-month cycles to learn about more efficient methods of land irrigation, composting, cultivation and plant growing. In addition, farming classes will be introduced in the curricula at a local primary school to provide training to more than 300 pupils a year. Farming activities of the local people will also be supported through a micro-grant scheme, a seedbank as well as a farming machinery and tool rental system. The project aspires to create conditions to ensure that workshops for farmers continue even after the completion of the project.

Aid to earthquake victims

The earthquake that struck Haiti in January 2010 killed approximately 200,000 people and caused extensive damage from which the country has yet not recovered and still depends on external assistance. The Magna Children at Risk humanitarian organisation has been implementing a post-crisis assistance project in Haiti since November 2010, financed from the SlovakAid funds. The project concentrates on improvements in medical care for mothers and children and on the provision of psycho-social assistance to persons suffering from a wide range of post-traumatic stress disorders. Assistance services are provided both in groups and to individuals. Magna workers deliver their services in outpatient facilities, as well as directly in camps which still, a year since the earthquake, provide homes to tens of thousands of Haiti people in unchanged extremely harsh conditions. One of the tangible results of the project will be the construction of a medical centre for mothers and children on the premises of a medical facility severely damaged by the earthquake.



Slovak development aid was directed also to African Sudan

Development assistance

Slovaks teach farming lessons in Afghanistan

Farming is the key source of livelihood for Afghan people. With the funds provided by the SlovakAid, the People in Peril association implements a project in Afghanistan designed to support a comprehensive socioeconomic development of poor rural communities, with the focus on agriculture. 280 people have the possibility to gain practical experience and learn about new alternative sources of income from farming. 200 women will learn about more effective ways of caring for domestic gardens and processing agricultural products, another 20 women will receive training on how to set up domestic nurseries for fruit and other trees for commercial purposes. Basic literacy courses are open for disadvantaged micro-businesswomen. Farmers have the chance to receive expert advice, participate in training courses on modern farming methods and technologies, and also obtain access to, for example, modified seeds. In two years, 90 selected farmers will take part in practical training at farms in neighbouring provinces and abroad.

Debate on European future in Moldova

Even though Moldovan public has long been supportive of their country's integration into the EU and related reform as well as modernisation efforts, their support is often based on the misapprehension of the benefits and responsibilities that the integration process entails. Therefore, the National convention on EU, a project implemented by the Research Center of the Slovak Foreign Policy Association in Moldova, primarily concentrates on establishing an institutional platform for public discussion of the EU integration related issues on the basis of a partnership among governmental and non-governmental organisations, business associations, interest groups and the general public. Such a platform encourages a straightforward, transparent and open dialogue of all segments of Moldovan society and, at the same time, serves as a source of reliable, high-quality information and expertise, thus contributing to raising awareness of EU integration issues. The objective of the project is to strengthen citizens' participation in the democracy-building process through the establishment of



Slovakia assisted in organizing training for local farmers in Afghanistan aimed at reviving agricultural production in underdeveloped regions



Minister of Foreign Affairs Mikuláš Dzurinda at the official opening of the National Convention on EU project in Moldova, Chişinău, 9 November 2010

communities of experts based on shared real and practical interests with respect to the process of European integration. More information about the project is available at www.conventia.md.

Overview of humanitarian aid provided in 2010

Humanitarian aid consists of two basic forms:

1. **In-kind humanitarian aid** is approved by the Minister of the Interior of the Slovak Republic and the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Slovak Republic.
2. **Financial humanitarian aid** falls under the responsibility of the MFA and is approved by the Foreign Minister from the budget of official development assistance (ODA) of the Slovak Republic. A total of 250,000 euro was earmarked for financial humanitarian aid in the National ODA Programme for 2010.

The Slovak Republic has an effective system in place for the provision of humanitarian aid. In 2010 it responded promptly to humanitarian situations and rated among the first countries to provide aid, in particular in Haiti, Pakistan, Moldova and Montenegro, as well as in the

case of the environmental disaster in Hungary. The problem lies in Slovakia's transport capacities; we would welcome more solidarity among the EU and NATO member states in this respect. We appreciate the help of France in transporting aid to Haiti in January 2010, as well as cooperation with NATO in transporting aid to Pakistan.

Slovak rescue workers in Hungary

In October 2010, approximately a million m³ of dangerous contaminated red mud leaked from two waste reservoirs in an alumina plant near the town of Ajka, Hungary. Ten people were killed and 150 injured as a result of this environmental disaster.

The Hungarian government declared a state of emergency in the areas affected by the accident. The toxic mud put at risk the lives and health of several thousands of people living in the area of 40 km²; nearby rivers Marcal, Rába and the Moson Danube were also affected.

On 8 October 2010, Hungary asked, through the EU, for urgent assistance with removing the consequences

Development assistance



Loading the Slovak humanitarian aid for Haiti into the Government aircraft, Bratislava, 22 January 2010

of the environmental disasters. The EU Monitoring and Information Centre immediately urged the EU Red Cross to provide humanitarian aid.

Nine Slovak rescue workers (two specialists from **the Special Cynology Rescue Service Slovakia** and seven experts from **the International Rescue System**) were involved in rescue operations in the place of disaster from the very beginning, i.e., from 4 October 2010.

Following an agreement with the Budapest Rescue Service and the crisis staff, the Slovak rescuers were directly deployed in the area from Kolontar to Devcser. Using special equipment, they helped to remove the consequences of the disaster, purified local water sources and searched for missing persons. Their search operations were a success when, on 8 October 2010, they found two missing persons.

The Slovak rescue workers operated in Hungary under the auspices of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Slovak Republic and were co-funded from the Slovak bilateral development assistance. Their work was well received by local inhabitants, Hungarian authorities, as well as the media.

Help for Russian children

Central parts of Russia, including its capital Moscow, suffered from a massive wave of heat and drought at the turn of July and August 2010. Accompanying devastating wild fires destroyed thousands of hectares of fields, forests and peat bogs, as well as hundreds of villages and industrial and cultural facilities. Thousands of people were left homeless, dozens lost their lives. Even though Russian authorities did not make an official request for humanitarian aid, the Slovak Foreign Ministry came with an offer to organise a recovery stay in Slovakia for 30 Russian children and four teachers from affected Russian regions, especially for children from socially disadvantaged families and families directly affected by the fires.

Since the children had never been outside Russia before and had no passports, their visit to Slovakia could not be organised before March 2011. The Foreign Ministry closely cooperated with the Parliament on this project, which provided its recreational facility in Častá–Papiernička for this purpose. This tangible, human cooperation between Slovakia and Russia was also acknowledged by Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov.



Humanitarian aid provided in 2010

1.	Albania	120,000 euro	in-kind humanitarian aid – floods	January 2010
2.	Haiti	225,000 euro	stage I of in-kind humanitarian aid – earthquake	January 2010
3.	Haiti	220,000 euro	stage II of in-kind humanitarian aid – earthquake	February 2010
4.	Haiti	financial humanitarian aid of the MFA for UNICEF (15,000 euro), the Red Cross (15,000 euro), People in Peril (10,000 euro) and ADRA (10,000 euro)	for urgent projects to aid the victims	February 2010
5.	Chile	130,000 euro	in-kind humanitarian aid – earthquake	March 2010
6.	Hungary	160,000 euro	in-kind humanitarian aid – floods, 150,000 sandbags	June 2010
7.	Ukraine	149,000 euro	in-kind humanitarian aid – floods	July 2010
8.	Ukraine	25,000 euro	in-kind humanitarian aid – preparations to enhance immunity to influenza	July 2010
9.	The Palestinian self-administration	293,000 euro	in-kind humanitarian aid – medical aid to the victims of the military conflict	November 2010
10.	Kyrgyzstan	12,000 euro	in-kind humanitarian aid – ethnic unrest	July 2010
11.	Afghanistan	83,000 euro	in-kind humanitarian aid for Uruzgan	November 2010, transported by the Defence Ministry during troop rotation
12.	Moldova	50,000 euro	MFA financial humanitarian aid – floods	July 2010
13.	Pakistan	50,000 euro	MFA financial humanitarian aid for projects of the People in Peril association and ADRA – floods	August 2010
14.	Pakistan	80,000 euro	stage I of in-kind humanitarian aid – floods	August 2010
15.	Pakistan	143,000 euro	stage II of in-kind humanitarian aid – floods	October 2010
16.	Hungary	10,000 euro	MFA financial humanitarian aid for activities of the International Rescue System and the Special Cynology Rescue Service – environmental disaster	October 2010
17.	Santa Lucia	155,000 euro	in-kind humanitarian aid – hurricane	December 2010
18.	Montenegro	124,000 euro	in-kind humanitarian aid – floods	December 2010



Slovak rescue team testing a substance to neutralize dangerous red mud leaked from two waste reservoirs during the ecological accident in Ajka, Hungary



Minister Mikuláš Dzurinda and US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton in Washington, 19 October 2010

5

Bilateral relations



The economic crisis, new global challenges, international co-responsibility and a positive experience of solidarity have strengthened relations between Slovakia and other **EU** and **NATO** countries.

The Slovak Government has confirmed its interest in continuing and further intensification of bilateral cooperation with the **USA** and emphasised its strong interest in a substantive dialogue, seeking answers to foreign policy and security challenges. It was important to take advantage of the positive momentum, complete a number of major bilateral cooperation projects, and bring the bilateral strategic dialogue to a higher political level. Successful projects for the transfer of persons detained at the US Guantanamo Bay Detention Facility to Slovakia, reinforcing the number of Slovak troops deployed under the ISAF operation and, last but not least, the completion of several years of efforts to establish a Congressional Caucus on Slovakia in the US Congress moved to the forefront. The top events in the bilateral dialogue included the visit by the Slovak Foreign Minister Mikuláš Dzurinda to the USA in October 2010, followed by the visit paid by the Slovak Prime Minister Iveta Radičová in November 2010. At a meeting with minister Dzurinda, US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton praised **Slovakia for being a pillar of regional stability and cooperation**.

Attention also concentrated on enhancing bilateral economic cooperation, as proved by an address delivered by the Minister of Foreign Affairs at a global investment symposium at the Harvard Club of New York City, and the agenda of his official visit to the US that focused on economic and scientific cooperation. Preparation of “Road Show” events continued, so as to encourage technology transfers between the USA and Slovakia.

Enhancing bilateral economic cooperation is one of the key issues in relations with **Germany**. Discussions of the Slovak Prime Minister Iveta Radičová and the Foreign Minister Mikuláš Dzurinda with their German counterparts put emphasis on utilisation of Germany’s capacities as one of the world’s leaders in innovation, new advanced technologies and renewable energy. An important moment was the search for common positions on the EU agenda, especially in the context of crisis measures adopted within the euro zone.

Bilateral dialogue between the Slovak Republic and the **United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland** concentrated on seeking responses to EU policy challenges (building and staffing the European External Action Service, preparation of the EU budget review) and global political developments. Slovakia

Bilateral relations

was interested in balancing bilateral dialogue through reciprocal visits of UK officials to the Slovak Republic.

The underlying element in bilateral relations with **France** in 2010 was the strengthening of mutual dialogue at all levels, with the focus on identifying concrete programmes and projects of bilateral cooperation, as also proved by the September visit paid by the Foreign Minister Mikuláš Dzurinda to Paris. Attention was primarily focused on the economy, nuclear energy, investments and industry. Regional cooperation between Slovak and French regions and municipalities continued to develop as well.

EU-related issues logically prevailed in bilateral relations with **Spain**, as it held the EU presidency in the first half of 2010.

Relations with **Italy** concentrated on events designed to improve investment opportunities in Slovakia, such as cooperation between ENEL and the Slovenské elektrárne company.

Relations with **Portugal, Belgium, Luxembourg, Greece, Sweden, Cyprus, Denmark, Finland and the Netherlands** focused on searching for new opportunities to enhance economic and cultural cooperation.

In 2010, Slovakia continued strengthening its bilateral cooperation with the **Western Balkan** countries, and remained engaged in seeking solutions to the



Slovak Prime Minister Iveta Radičová and German Chancellor Angela Merkel during the military ceremonial, Berlin, 25 August 2010



Mikuláš Dzurinda during his official visit to the Federal Republic of Germany with his German counterpart Guido Westerwelle, Berlin, 29 July 2010

problematic issues of this region. Intensive cooperation with **Croatia** continued both in the context of the final stage of its accession negotiations with the EU and the expansion of bilateral economic cooperation.

During the official visit by the Slovak Minister of Foreign Affairs to Serbia in October 2010, the quality of bilateral relations and Slovakia's contribution to Serbian democratisation processes were acknowledged; the Minister also delivered a speech at a ceremony



Russian President Dmitry Medvedev during his two-day official visit to the Slovak Republic, 6–7 April 2010

commemorating the 10th anniversary of the overthrow of Milosević's regime in **Serbia**.

Bilateral cooperation and European integration were discussed during the visit by the Slovak Foreign Minister to **Montenegro** in November 2010.

While retaining its unvarying position on the unilateral declaration of independence by Kosovo, Slovakia continued in 2010 to advocate a search for a long-term and sustainable solution to the Kosovo issue and dialogue between Belgrade and Pristina.

Slovakia's relation with **Eastern European** countries developed in compliance with a strategic policy line of the EU and its enlargement. **Moldova** was the priority country of the Slovak official development assistance.

As regards **Belarus**, Slovak actively participated in the EU debate on shaping of its policy towards Belarus. Slovakia promoted a critical and open dialogue with Belarus leaders, continuous communication with the



Minister of Foreign Affairs Mikuláš Dzurinda with his Bulgarian counterpart Nikolai Mladenov, Bratislava, 14 September 2010

Bilateral relations



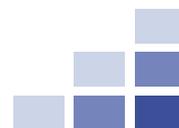
Ukrainian Minister of Economy Vasyl Tsushko during a visit to Slovakia, 29 September 2010

opposition and support to civil society institutions in the country, the use of official development assistance resources and a micro-grant scheme. Slovak diplomacy condemned the December presidential election and accompanying violence, and expressed support to the development of cooperation between the EU and Belarus under the indispensable condition of respect for democracy, human rights and the rule of law.

In relations to the **Russian Federation**, Slovakia advocated development of pragmatic and mutually rewarding contacts focused on trade and strengthening the economic dimension of diplomacy. Cooperation in the energy industry is considered strategic. During a visit by President Dmitry Medvedev to Slovakia in April 2010, the key issues were economic cooperation and a search for new strategies and innovative procedures in the sphere of economy. The talks indicated that cooperation was necessary on international policy issues in order to address common challenges in the area of security, stability and development, modernisation, economic crisis and climate change. The signing of an implementing protocol between the Slovak and Russian government



During his visit to Slovakia, State Secretary for European Affairs of the French Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs Pierre Lellouche was received at the Slovak Foreign Ministry by his Slovak counterpart Milan Ježovica, Bratislava, 15 October 2010



Norwegian royal couple visiting the Slovak–Norwegian aluminium factory in Žiar nad Hronom, 28 October 2010

to the **Agreement between the European Community and the Russian Federation on readmission** represented a significant milestone towards a visa-free regime between the Russian Federation and the EU.

Slovakia encouraged a more effective functioning of the NATO–Russia Council and the preparation of a joint document to assess security threats of the twenty first century. The strategic dialogue between Russia and the USA has remained an important factor in international relations also with China playing an increasingly more important role.

In relation to **Georgia**, Slovakia pursued a policy of supporting Georgia's territorial integrity within its internationally recognised borders. Relations with **Armenia** and **Azerbaijan** were based on the long-term interest in developing stable, pragmatic and mutually rewarding contacts with the countries of the South Caucasus, with an accent on economic cooperation and in compliance with the EU's Eastern Partnership programme. These aspects were also reflected in talks held by the Slovak Foreign Minister with partners in Armenia and Azerbaijan.



On the second day of the NATO Summit in Lisbon, President Ivan Gašparovič held bilateral talks with Prime Minister of the Commonwealth of Australia Julia Gillard, 20 November 2010

Standard cooperation continued with countries of **Central Asia**, corresponding with the possibilities and interests of both parties. Further development of trade and economic cooperation and the building of bilateral treaty base remained a priority, as discussed during the visits by the Slovak President Ivan Gašparovič to **Kazakhstan** and **Kyrgyzstan** in April 2010.



Minister of Foreign Affairs Mikuláš Dzurinda and OECD Secretary-General Angel Gurría opened an international economic conference held on the occasion of the 10th anniversary of Slovakia's membership in the OECD, Bratislava, 25 November 2010



6

Modern diplomacy

Diplomacy is rather a mission than an occupation. It is necessary that it be delivered by high-quality and qualified people, at diplomatic as well as administrative and technical posts. I consider creation of good working conditions for these people one of my priorities. I am glad that we have managed to put together an excellent team of individuals who know what technical, economic and personnel requirements the Foreign Ministry should meet in order for it to be a modern, functioning and economically managed institution.

A specific feature of the Foreign Ministry is that a majority of its employees work abroad, often under very specific and challenging circumstances. I have become increasingly more aware of how important it is to ask questions, obtain information and consult together so that we could make our work more effective in all areas. For example, how important it is to strengthen the public diplomacy dimension, to provide invaluable consular assistance to our citizens who have found themselves in a complicated situation abroad. Also, how important it is to support a successful international presentation of Slovakia, which is among our priorities, as well. Working together, we should arrive at some general rules which all diplomats will apply, taking into account the particular environment in which they discharge their official duties.

Our efforts have concentrated on the strengthening of the economic dimension of diplomacy right from the start. So that we could, through Slovakia's relations with other countries – whether with our immediate neighbours, partners in the European Union or with more remote countries – find and capitalise on their economic potential. So that our diplomatic efforts translate into tangible benefits for Slovak companies, businesses and, ultimately, for their employees, hence the Slovak citizens.

The unification of the foreign service performance and the transfer of trade and economic departments abroad to the management of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs have only been one of the logical series of steps and changes that lay ahead of us. In this respect, I consider the year 2011 a crucial one, because the most radical changes must be made right now. The following years will concentrate on fine-tuning the changes already made, in order to transform the Foreign Ministry into a truly effective and progressive institution that contributes to spreading the good reputation of Slovakia in the world. I believe that we have sufficient human and expert capacities to accomplish this objective – all the more so in view of the fact that we do not consider diplomacy merely an occupation but, above all, our mission.

Martin Maruška
Secretary-General, Ministry of Foreign
Affairs of the Slovak Republic

Modern diplomacy



Prime Minister Ivetta Radičová visiting PSA Peugeot Citroën factory with General Manager Luciano Biondo, Trnava, 15 December 2010

A large share of activities carried out as a part of Slovakia's **economic policy abroad** last year focused on overcoming the consequences of the global financial crisis. Through its active participation in the activities of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), Slovakia could draw on well-tried policies and best practices for a sustainable economic growth.

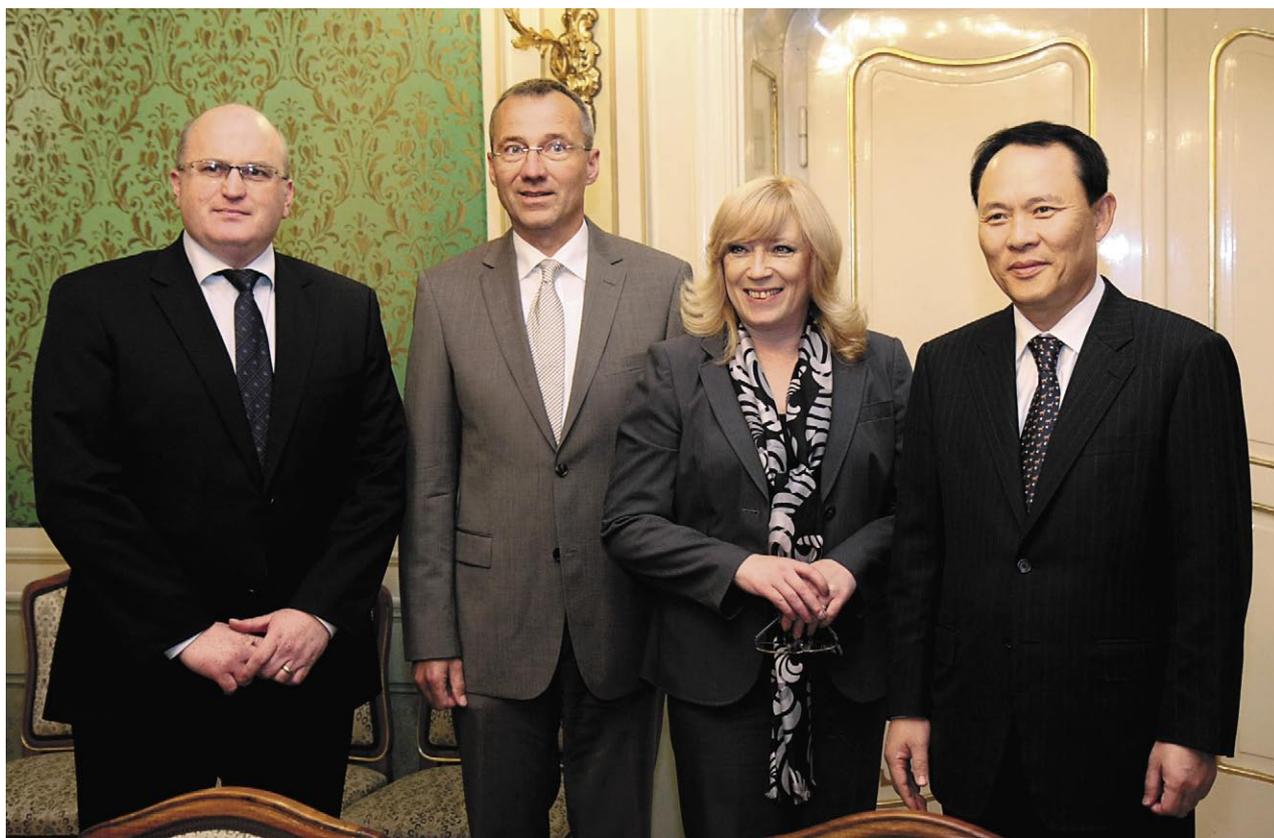
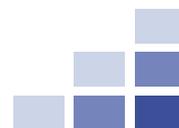
Last year, **an overall economic assessment, environmental performance assessment, in-depth energy audit**, plus a number of other significant activities, were also carried out as a part of the Slovakia–OECD cooperation.

The foreign service sought out possibilities for broader involvement of Slovak business entities in public tenders for the delivery of goods and services to international organisations. The Ministry organised a workshop for Slovak business entities, attended by representatives of procurement departments of international organisations of the UN System, the EU and NATO, to inform them about the conditions for participation in international tenders.

In cooperation with the Ministry of Economy of the Slovak Republic, the competences of the Ministry of Economy in the area of foreign trade concerning the management and administration of Slovak commercial and economic sections abroad were transferred to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, effective as of 1 January 2011, in compliance with the Government Manifesto and an amendment to Act No. 575/2001 Coll. on the organisation of the Government activities and on the



Detail of coins for the Central Bank of Argentina, a breakthrough contract for Kremnica Mint, who won the tender despite the competition of traditional producers, such as Chile, France, Korea and Italy



PSA Peugeot Citroën Slovakia General Manager Luciano Biondo, Head of Board of Directors of Volkswagen Slovakia Andreas Tostmann, Prime Minister Iveta Radičová and President and Chief Executive Officer of Kia Motors Slovakia Bae In-Kyu during the reception of the representatives of automobile factories in Slovakia at the Government Office of the Slovak Republic, Bratislava, 25 October 2010

organisation of central state administration as amended by Act No. 403/2010 Coll. The aforementioned legislative measure laid down an institutional framework for building of an integrated foreign service and an optimum model of economic diplomacy emphasising Slovakia's economic interests abroad.

In cooperation with the Economy Ministry, the SARIO agency and the Slovak Chamber of Industry and Commerce, the Foreign Ministry focused on investment capital from Asia, the Gulf countries, Latin America and Africa, in addition to traditional European partners. Two important business conferences were held in Bratislava in this respect: Prospects of Doing Business in Africa and Prospects of Doing Business in China. In cooperation with SARIO, the Ministry also organised business missions for Slovak entrepreneurs to South Caucasian countries and Moldova. In April 2010, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs organised an international conference on innovative policy and technology transfers, in cooperation with the American Chamber of Commerce in the Slovak Republic and the Office of the Government, which represented a tangible contribution by the Foreign Ministry to Slovakia's international economic policy.



Final stage for the ENDESA company of construction of power plant in Chile. Apart from this one, Slovak engineering company SES Tlmače is about to finish a second power plant of the same parameters



Employees of the Embassy in Pretoria provided valuable assistance to several Slovak football fans during 2010 World Championship in South African Republic

7

Serving the citizens



The Foreign Ministry's intention to improve the protection of Slovak citizens abroad and to ensure a more operative contact with them led to the establishment of a system for registration of citizens who travel abroad by means of the Foreign Ministry website.

Activities of the Ministry's Citizen Assistance and Service Centre were an important component of the Ministry's consular service as it provided information, via phone, to nearly 8,000 citizens.

The building of a consular network in Asia, including the Asian part of the Russian Federation and former Soviet republics, in Central and Latin America and Sub-Saharan African regions, has remained among the priorities of the consular service. It also involved the development of a network of honorary consulates and their engagement in economic activities.

The Foreign Ministry signed two memoranda of cooperation with partner institutions of the diplomatic academy (Serbia and Croatia) in 2010. Argentina, Brazil, Egypt, Macedonia, Mexico and Romania have also expressed interest in cooperating in the area of education.

Assistance in need

The core tasks of the consular service in 2010 also involved the protection of interests of Slovak nation-

als abroad and the provision of assistance services to people who found themselves in emergency situations during their foreign travels. All Slovak consular authorities, both abroad and home, paid special attention and effort to meeting these goals. Although the provision of consular assistance to people in difficulties does not constitute a major share of the total volume of consular services provided, it is an agenda that requires much time and, most of all, a particularly professional and sensitive approach from the consular staff to individuals who have asked them for help.

In 2010, Slovak diplomatic missions provided assistance to approximately 2300 people who could not resolve their situation without consular assistance. What situations are the consular officers most frequently confronted with? Here are a few examples.

Tourists in difficulties

In January and February 2010, the Embassy in Buenos Aires spent several weeks helping a group of Slovak tourists stranded in Aguas Calientes, Peru – a gateway to the famous tourist destination of Machu Picchu – following a massive landslide that trapped nearly 2000 tourists from all over the world.

In February and March 2010, the same Embassy, in cooperation with several departments of the Slovak

Serving the citizens



With regard to considerable interest of Slovak football fans, the Consular Office of the Embassy in Pretoria was reinforced during World Championship in SAR

Foreign Ministry, checked the location and conditions of Slovak nationals in the aftermath of an extremely strong earthquake in Chile. The Embassy also arranged for the transfer of a group of SES Tlmače technical specialists from the earthquake-hit area to Buenos Aires and, subsequently, to Slovakia.

The Consulate General (CG) in Istanbul in cooperation with the Slovak Embassy in Ankara were actively involved in resolving the problems of nearly 1,000 Slovak tourists who ended up in difficulties after the Karya Tour travel agency had gone bankrupt in summer 2010. Upon request by a group of tourists, the CG arranged for the free-of-charge assistance by a local lawyer.

Unusual situations

The CG in Istanbul solved two separate cases involving Slovak nationals who had applied for a residence permit in Turkey but Turkish immigration authorities had refused to recognise the validity of their Slovak passports. Following an intervention by the CG with the head of the immigration police department, the immigration authorities accepted and granted the residence permit applications of the two Slovak nationals.

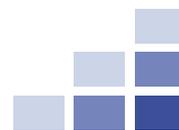
The Embassy in Kuwait had to provide consular assistance to a Slovak national, detained in Doha, who had consumed a larger quantity of alcoholic beverages on board of a plane and harassed a stewardess.

The Embassy in Helsinki provided comprehensive consular assistance to a Slovak national, including until his return to Slovakia, with serious health conditions caused by excessive consumption of energy drinks.

In 2010, the consular section in Moscow provided assistance and help to Slovak musicians who had performed at a music festival and encountered problems with the transport of their musical instruments on their way back home. The instruments were owned by the musicians, but there were some problems concerning their value and date of manufacture. The Russian customs authorities refused to permit their re-export from the Russian territory without a confirmation by the Russian Ministry of Culture that the instruments were not Russian cultural heritage.

Icelandic volcano

In 2010, the Embassy in Hanoi assisted two Slovaks and one Italian national with extending the validity of their



visas. They had to extend their stay in Vietnam due to Europe flight disruptions caused by a volcanic eruption in Iceland. The Embassy assisted Slovak nationals in leaving Vietnam or with renewing their visas on several occasions.

The staff at the Embassy in Madrid was also kept busy by the Icelandic volcano and subsequent flight disruptions in 2010 – they had to arrange for alternative transport of a number of Slovak public officials attending negotiations in Spain at that time, organised by the Spanish EU presidency.

A group of seven Slovak tourists contacted the Embassy in Nairobi in April 2010 and asked for assistance with resolving their difficulties caused by cancelled flights from Nairobi to Amsterdam due to a volcanic ash cloud over Europe. The Embassy provided the Slovak nationals with the necessary assistance, including temporary accommodation at the Embassy premises, and was helpful to them for the entire week prior to their departure.

Family stories

In 2010, after six months of intensive efforts, the Embassy in Ljubljana brought to a successful end the issue of custody over two minor boys, Kevin and David, whose mother had been detained by Slovenian police authorities and accused of organising prostitution. Proceedings concerning the placing of the two children

in their grandparents' care in Slovakia were extremely lengthy; the case was only resolved by mutual negotiations of the family's legal representatives, Slovak and Slovenian authorities, organised by the Embassy.

An extremely delicate case addressed by the Embassy in Madrid involved repatriation of a minor Slovak girl who had been left alone by her mother in northern Spain. Since the girl had lived with her mother's former partner following the mother's departure, a local social office decided to place her in its own residential facility. The release of the girl from the facility was conditional upon the presentation of a decision by a Slovak court that she was to be placed in her father's care. The case was successfully resolved with the active involvement of the Embassy in Madrid and the Ministry headquarters; the father was provided assistance throughout the entire process of obtaining documents necessary for the release of her daughter from the social care facility and for her return to Slovakia. A negative factor in this case was the mother of the child who, trying to prevent her daughter from being placed in the father's care, obstructed the efforts of the Slovak and Spanish authorities towards the girl's repatriation to Slovakia under various pretexts.

One of the most outstanding achievements of the Embassy in Rome include the identification of the whereabouts of minor Adriana O., illegally transported to Italy by her mother, and returning the girl to her father in whose care she had been placed by Slovak courts. The

Subject: Ďakujeme

Vážený pán veľvyslanec PhDr. František Lipka, chcel by som sa Vám poďakovať za Váš prístup pri nešťastí v pohorí Durmitor, ktoré sa stalo našim deťom dňa 30. 7. 2010, pri zostupe z vrcholu Terzim Bogaz.

Viem, že pomoc slovenským občanom v núdzi je Vaša pracovná náplň, ale prístup v danej chvíli ďaleko prekročil profesionálne hranice. Chcem sa Vám poďakovať hlavne za ľudský rozmer pomoci a podporu našim deťom v ťažkej chvíli. Bezodkladný osobný kontakt s nimi, Vaša okamžitá intervencia na Ministerstve vnútra Čiernej Hory ako aj informácie, ktoré ste nám poskytovali, bolo to, čo deťom a nám pomohlo prekonať prvotný šok zo strašnej správy.

Ďakujem za osobnú podporu našich detí do poslednej chvíle, za osobnú pomoc pri zabezpečovaní prevozu telesných pozostatkov zosnulej Silvinky.

Taktiež ďakujem Vašej pani manželke za zabezpečenie stravy a tekutín na ich cestu domov.

Bolo by mi ctou sa s Vami stretnúť osobne, keď budete na Slovensku a Váš časový plán Vám to dovoľí. Chcel by som Vám osobne stisnúť ruku, ruku, ktorá tak nezištne pomohla v nešťastí.

Nech vaše kroky sprevádza zdravie, šťastie a spokojnosť.

Ešte raz ďakujeme.

Za rodiny Durkačových, Dudových a Siklenkových

Augustín Siklenka

One of the thank you e-mails to the Slovak Embassy in Podgorica, Montenegro, for the flexible and professional, yet kind, approach of the ambassador in assisting the group of young people being involved in a tragic mountain accident in Durmitor national park in Montenegro and their family members

Serving the citizens

Embassy notified all honorary consulates in Italy of this case and requested them to report back immediately in case they were contacted by the mother. Soon afterwards, the whereabouts of Adriana's mother were located and a preliminary injunction secured from a court, based on which Adriana could return to Slovakia.

From May to September 2010, Slovak consular authorities dealt with an intricate case of a minor Slovak national (having a dual, Slovak and Swiss, citizenship) placed in a foster care facility in Costa Rica. The mother was forced to leave her son and return to Slovakia in April 2009, amidst fears for her own safety and the safety of her daughter after her husband, an untreated mentally disturbed patient, had seriously threatened the lives of his family members. Since he refused to give her the son's passport and a written consent to his travel from Costa Rica to Slovakia, the mother returned home with the daughter only. In May 2010, the father abandoned the boy who was then placed in a foster care facility. In cooperation with the Slovak Honorary Consulate in San Jose and the Swiss Embassy in Costa Rica, the Embassy reviewed the conditions for the placement of the minor in the mother's care. The Costa Rican authorities requested Slovakia to present guarantees that the minor's mother

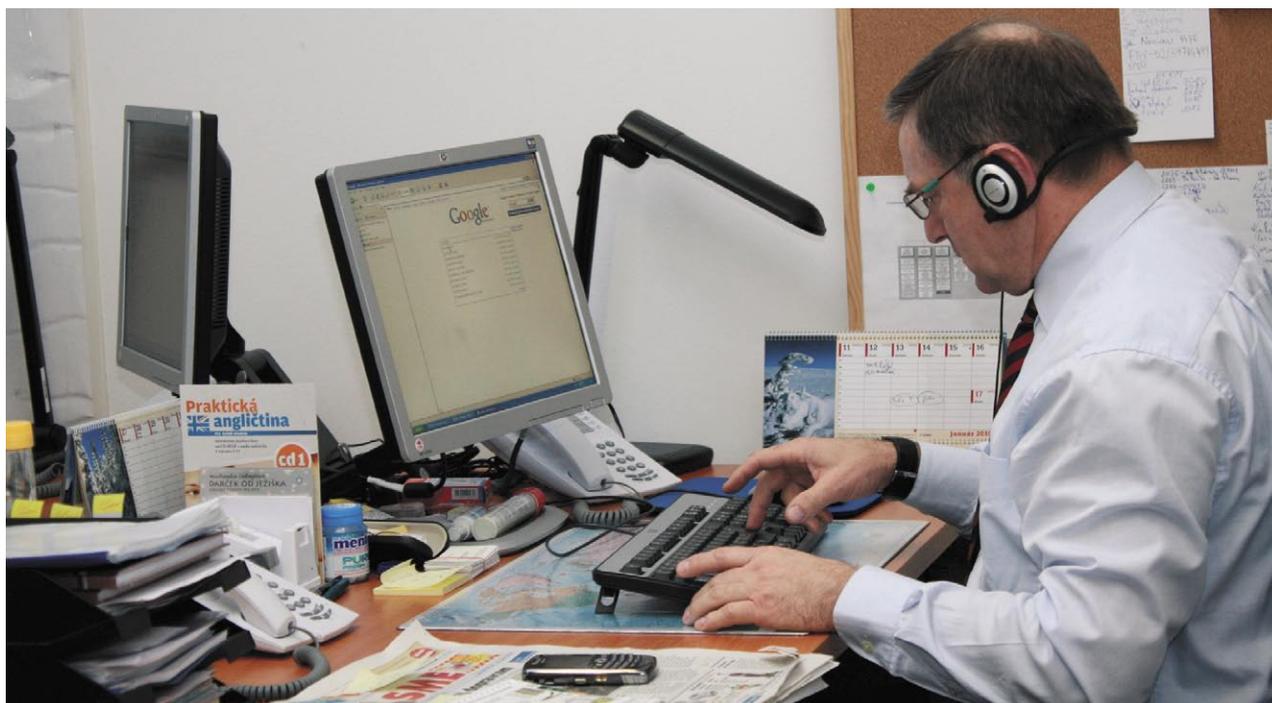
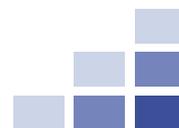
is capable of providing adequate care and education to her son in the Slovak Republic. After a Bratislava District Court had issued a decision on placing the minor in his mother's care, the boy was repatriated to Slovakia via Vienna in mid-September 2010. The Swiss consul personally accompanied the boy to the airport and supervised the travel document issuance and the purchase of the plane ticket. After months of work, the case was thus successfully concluded thanks to the close international cooperation between the consular authorities of the Slovak Republic and Switzerland.

Complicated and serious cases

The Consular Section in Moscow addressed an extremely serious and nearly unsolvable case of assistance in need, financial assistance and repatriation at the end of the summer of 2010, when a Slovak national approached the Consular Office staff seeking assistance in the search for her children. Complications arose immediately upon arrival to Moscow, when her Russian visa expired. Furthermore, in communication with her it became clear that she suffered from severe hallucinations and paranoid schizophrenia. Following consultations with her attending psychiatrist and her



The eruption of the Icelandic volcano Eyjafjallajökull resulted in closing most of the airports in Europe. The employees of Slovak consular offices had to assist our citizens, who were stranded at the airports



Citizen Assistance and Services
Centre at the Foreign Ministry

family, she was temporarily placed in a psychiatric clinic in Moscow. After the provision of financial assistance to purchase her plane ticket, the arrangement of her visa and organisation of her transport from the airport, she was flown from Moscow to Vienna. In the repatriation of the psychiatric patient, the Moscow consular section had to cooperate very closely with the Všeobecná zdravotná poisťovňa health insurance company, which assisted in the transport – although only from the Vienna Airport in Schwechat to a hospital in Slovakia. Repatriation from Moscow to Vienna had to take place without professional medical supervision.

The Consular Office of the Embassy in Paris provided assistance to two Slovak nationals who became the victims of trafficking in human beings. They were identified in transit in France, en route to the target destination in England. The French police investigated the case as trafficking in human beings. This case was addressed in cooperation with the International Organisation for Migration (IOM) in Bratislava. The victims returned home.

The Consular office of the Embassy in Rome, in cooperation with the IOM, ensured the repatriation of two victims of human trafficking, who were forced to beg and hand over their earnings. After their return from Italy to Slovakia, both were included in IOM's reintegration programmes.

The Embassy in Podgorica attended the death of a Slovak national. A tragic event in the Durmitor mountain range claimed one human life and two other persons suffered minor injuries. The Montenegro rescue service helicopter unit mounted an extremely prompt and highly professional rescue operation, which was supervised personally by the Montenegrin deputy interior minister.

The case of little Adam Azab was perhaps the one most closely watched. Throughout the year, the Embassy in Cairo had been providing the maximum possible extent of assistance to Katarína Azab – the mother of Adam Azab, who had been kidnapped. Unfortunately, it was not possible to ensure the return of little Adam to his mother despite several interventions by multiple Slovak state officials, as well as EU and UN representatives. In view of the chaotic situation that seized Egypt after the recent anti-government unrest, it will probably be necessary to start addressing the repatriation of the minor Slovak national all over again.

Mutual representation

In view of the large number of Slovak nationals who have habitual residence abroad or who travel abroad, most of the activities of diplomatic missions' consular posts revolved around providing consular services to our tourists and the Slovak community.

Registračný formulár občanov SR cestujúcich do zahraničia

Tento portál je bezplatnou službou Ministerstva zahraničných vecí Slovenskej republiky, účelom ktorej je prostredníctvom dobrovoľnej registrovanej databázy získavať informácie o občanoch Slovenskej republiky cestujúcich, žijúcich alebo nachádzajúcich v cudzích krajinách.

Každým rokom stúpa počet občanov, ktorí sa v cudzine dotvárajú do ťažkostí alebo sú nedobrovoľnými účastníkmi krízových situácií ako sú živelné pohromy, vojnové konflikty, terorizmus, havárie či organizovaný zločin. Aby vám naše zastupiteľské úrady mohli poskytnúť kvalitnú a plnohodnotnú pomoc, je vhodné zvyčajne množstvo informácií o vašich pobytoch v zahraničí. Dobrovoľnou registráciou na tomto portáli tak uľahčíte pomoc sebe, príbuzným a známym, keď to naozaj budete potrebovať!

UPOZORNENIE!!!
Nekorektné vyplnený formulár, resp. nesprávne údaje v ňom uvedené môžu mať za následok nemožnosť kontaktu uvádzaných osôb pri vzniku krízovej situácie! Informácie uvádzané vo formulári budú uchovávané max. dobu 30 dní od dňa ukončenia vašej cesty do zahraničia.

Identifikácia alebo vytvorenie novej registrácie	
Identifikácia:	Zadaním identifikačného kódu zobrazíte informácie o svojom pobyte v zahraničí a možnosťou úpravy. Identifikácia
Vytvorenie novej registrácie:	Registráciou, ktorá je bezplatná, zabezpečíte dostupnosť informácií o vašich zahraničných cestách. Po úspešnej registrácii vám bude pridelený jedinečný identifikačný kód, prostredníctvom ktorého sa môžete prihlásiť do systému. Registrácia

Politika ochrany súkromia
Prevádzkovateľ portálu, ktorým je Ministerstvo zahraničných vecí Slovenskej republiky so sídlom Hlboká cesta 2, 833 36 Bratislava 37, IČO: 006 99 021 (ďalej len „prevádzkovateľ“) sa zaväzuje chrániť poskytnuté osobné údaje v zmysle ustanovení zákona 428/2002 Z. z. o ochrane osobných údajov v znení neskorších predpisov (ďalej len „zákon“), nadväzujúcich právnych predpisov ako aj medzinárodných zmlúv, ktorými je Slovenská republika viazaná. Prevádzkovateľ sa tak tiež zaväzuje poskytnuté osobné údaje spracúvať výlučne pre účely tohto portálu.
Vaše osobné údaje nebudú publikované, uverejňované alebo vyťažované na verejnosti prostredníctvom masovokomunikačných prostriedkov, verejne prístupných počítačových sietí, verejne vyhlásené, uvedené vo verejnom zozname, registroch, umiestnené na verejne prístupných miestach a nebudú sprístupnené tretím osobám.

Vyplnením a potvrdením registračného formulára dávate prevádzkovateľovi súhlas na spracúvanie osobných údajov vo vymedzenom rozsahu a zároveň potvrdzujete, že všetky údaje uvedené vo formulári sú pravdivé.

Podľa zákona má každá dotknutá osoba právo písomne požadovať od prevádzkovateľa informácií o systémoch:
a) vo všeobecne zrozumiteľnej forme informácie o stave spracúvania svojich osobných údajov v informačnom systéme v rozsahu podľa § 26 ods. 3 zákona,
b) vo všeobecne zrozumiteľnej forme presné informácie o zdroji, z ktorého získalo jej osobné údaje na spracúvanie,
c) vo všeobecne zrozumiteľnej forme odpis jej osobných údajov, ktoré sú predmetom spracúvania,
d) opravu jej nesprávnych, neúplných alebo neaktuálnych osobných údajov, ktoré sú predmetom spracúvania,
e) likvidáciu jej osobných údajov, ktoré sú predmetom spracúvania, ak došlo k porušeniu zákona o ochrane osobných údajov,
f) likvidáciu jej osobných údajov, ak boli splnené účel ich spracúvania podľa § 13 ods. 1 zákona.
Právo dotknutej osoby možno obmedziť len podľa § 20 odseku 1 písm. d) a e) zákona, ak takéto obmedzenie vyplýva z osobitného zákona alebo jeho uplatnením by bola porušená ochrana dotknutej osoby alebo by boli porušené práva a slobody iných osôb.
Obmedzenie práv dotknutej osoby podľa § 20 ods. 1 písm. d) a e) zákona prevádzkovateľ bezodkladne písomne oznámi dotknutej osobe a Úradu na ochranu osobných údajov.

Registration form for Slovak citizens travelling abroad

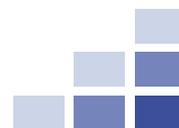
Negotiations with several EU member states continued in 2010 with regard to the conclusion of agreements on mutual representation in visa application procedures via their diplomatic and consular missions. The negotiation efforts were made in response to the Schengen Visa Code, which obliges all the Union members to gradually ensure the availability of visa services in all the countries of the world, whose nationals need a visa for entry into or for a tourist stay in the EU countries.

An Agreement between the Slovak and Hungarian Ministries of Foreign Affairs on the Representation of the Slovak Republic by Hungary in Visa Application Procedures was concluded through the exchange of notes of 23 and 24 September 2010. The agreement came into effect on 1 November 2010, as of which date Hungary represents us in the issuance of visas in Tirana (Albania), Kishinev (Moldova) and Riyadh (Saudi Arabia).

The Slovak and Austrian governments entered into a similar intergovernmental agreement already in 2009. It has not been applied in practice so far, however, due to ongoing negotiations of the implementing protocol, the final wording of which was drawn up in 2010. Pursuant to the agreement, Austria is to represent Slovakia in Beirut (Lebanon) and Amman (Jordan).

In October last year, an *Agreement between the Ministries of Foreign Affairs on Mutual Representation by Diplomatic and Consular Missions of their States in the Visa Application Procedure between Slovakia and Slovenia* was also concluded. Although it came into effect on 14 November 2010, the implementing protocol is still in the finalisation stage. After the signing of the protocol, Slovenia will represent us in the issuance of visas in Podgorica (Montenegro), while Slovakia will be issuing visas on behalf of Slovenia in Bucharest (Romania), Nicosia (Cyprus) and Uzhgorod (Ukraine).

In 2010, the Slovak Republic was engaged in various stages of negotiation of agreements on mutual representation in visa application procedures with Poland (which is to represent us in Armenia and Kaliningrad), the Czech Republic (representation in Afghanistan, Pakistan, Ghana, Mongolia and the Philippines), Lithuania (representation in Georgia, while Slovakia will represent it through its CG in Shanghai). Negotiations also took place with Latvia on the representation of the Slovak Republic in Azerbaijan (Slovakia will represent Latvia in Romania, Mexico and South Korea), with Estonia, which we will represent in visa application procedures in Libya, and with Germany, which will represent us in Cambodia and Azerbaijan (similar as with Latvia – depending on which country we conclude the agreement with first).



The *Agreement between the Government of the Slovak Republic and the Government of the Republic of Indonesia on Visa Exemption for Holders of Diplomatic Passports and Service Passports* is in effect as of 31 July 2010, and the *Agreement between the Government of the Slovak Republic and the Government of the Kyrgyz Republic on Mutual Abolition of Visa Requirements for Holders of Diplomatic Passports* is in effect as of 19 November 2010. The negotiation of visa abolition agreements with Cuba, Jamaica and Oman is in progress.

Visa rules

During an informal visit of the Thai Foreign Minister to Bratislava in June 2010, the Foreign Ministers discussed the abolition of tourist visas for Slovak nationals. In October 2010, Thailand informed the EU delegation in Bangkok that the Ministry of Justice of the Kingdom of Thailand is investigating the issue and is waiting for the position of the Ministry of the Interior of Thailand. In this context, it will be necessary to coordinate a joint course of action with the other members of the V4 Group, which also wish to achieve the abolition of visas for their nationals entering Thailand for tourist stay purposes. It is safe to assume that the current Hungarian and the subsequent Polish EU presidency also provide favourable conditions for addressing this issue.

Without doubt, the working meetings of consular representatives of EU member states held in 2010 contributed significantly to improving the quality of visa and consular practice of the Slovak diplomatic missions. This forum represents an effective means of exchanging relevant information, experience and views, as well as coordinating the course of action in the field of visas, especially since the commenced application of the new visa rules – the so-called Schengen Visa Code [Regulation (EC) No 810/2009 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 13 July 2009 establishing a Community Code on Visas]. In these meetings, the consuls also frequently addressed the issues of Schengen visa applicant insurance, the granting of long stay visa, the preparation of various types of information materials containing the basic information on the issuance of visa for the Schengen countries and the contact details of diplomatic and consular missions of the EU countries.

Counterfeit documents

The search for suitable tools to detect counterfeit public and travel documents submitted by Schengen

visa applicants remains a topical issue in respect of a significant proportion of African and Asian countries. In this sense, Slovakia can do nothing but envy some EU states, which are sending police experts on counterfeit detection to their diplomatic missions in high-risk countries. In view of Slovakia's economic constraints it would naturally be inefficient to send police experts to all the diplomatic missions that encounter the problem of counterfeiting most frequently. However, examples of mutual cooperation in some states indicate that the solution could lie in the establishment of joint work posts that would provide expertise services to all (or several) EU states. A practice that proved to be very effective last year within the framework of Schengen cooperation in the field of visas was the operative use of electronic communication in problematic cases (the so-called blacklisting). In some African and Asian countries, consular representatives also focused on the development of plans to provide emergency assistance to those EU citizens who do not have diplomatic or consular missions in some third countries.

In 2010 we have provided the following services to Slovak nationals:

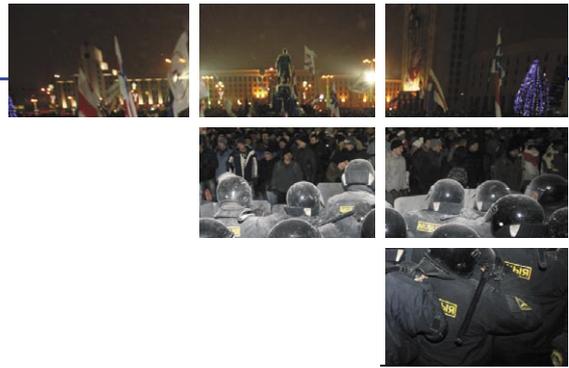
- certification of 33,409 documents at diplomatic missions and 4,312 documents at the MFA;
- 2,552 translations;
- 4,138 records of life events in a separate register of the Ministry of the Interior of the Slovak Republic;
- 7,377 passport applications;
- 2,259 state citizenship certificates;
- 1,593 statements from the register of criminal records;
- assistance in the repatriation of 90 deceased persons to Slovakia;
- various types assistance in connection with the deaths of 527 Slovak nationals abroad;
- non-financial consular assistance to 2,208 persons;
- financial assistance to 79 nationals;
- emergency travel documents for 3,575 nationals; and
- 43 marriages.

Visa issuance was clearly a dominant part of the services provided to foreigners; in 2010 a total of 57,997 visas were issued (plus 352 to the holders of non-recognised passports by Slovakia). A total of 1,653 foreigners have applied for temporary residence in the Slovak Republic via diplomatic missions, 75 have applied for permanent residence.

The consular posts also dealt with a significant number of requests for information from various fields of consular practice received via e-mail (totalling 40,054 in 2010).



José Luis García Paneque graduated in medicine. In March 2003, he was sentenced to 24 years in prison for the publication of three copies of an independent journal. He spent seven years in prison, including 17 months in solitary confinement. During his imprisonment he was supported by Slovak NGOs with the funds collected in a public fund-raising campaign. On 13 July 2010, he was deported by Cuban authorities to Spain. Paneque currently lives in the Spanish city of Valencia. "I have not been pardoned by Cuban authorities, my sentence is still valid. I have been banned from Cuba for life," he said at a reception by Milan Ježovica, State Secretary at the Slovak Ministry of Foreign Affairs.



8 Value-based foreign policy

The value-based policy includes the pledge of the new Slovak government published in its Manifesto to curtail its contacts with countries that fundamentally violate human rights. This decision created conditions for the strengthening of Slovakia's credibility as a respected and recognised partner.

This qualitative change was indicated by the government's position concerning the award of the Nobel Peace Prize to **Chinese dissident Liu Xiaobo** and an appeal addressed by the Slovak parliamentary Committee on Human Rights and National Minorities to the Chinese Government, requesting that he be released from prison. "It is an extraordinary expression of honour and respect towards everyone for whom human rights are indivisible and human freedom is a valued principle," said Minister Mikuláš Dzurinda, who, as then opposition politician, backed Liu's nomination along with another 50 Slovak members of parliament. Slovakia also became more involved in addressing the issue of human rights in Cuba. The **Ladies in White** movement was granted the Ján Langoš Award in Havana in December 2010. Slovak Prime Minister Iveta Radičová reminded that the Slovak Republic was proud to support defenders of human rights and freedoms in repressive regimes such as Cuba, thereby following its own tradition of civil resistance against totalitarian regimes of the 20th century.

State Secretary of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs Milan Ježovica received a prominent Cuban dissident **José Luis García Paneque** that was released from prison to discuss concrete measures that might be taken in order to help Cuban citizens persecuted by the Communist regime.

The Slovak Republic also applauded the release of Burmese dissident **Aung San Suu Kyi** from house arrest and called upon Burmese authorities to release all political prisoners.

The presidential election in Belarus and following development was a topic of special concern at the end of 2010.

Unforgettable moments in Bratislava

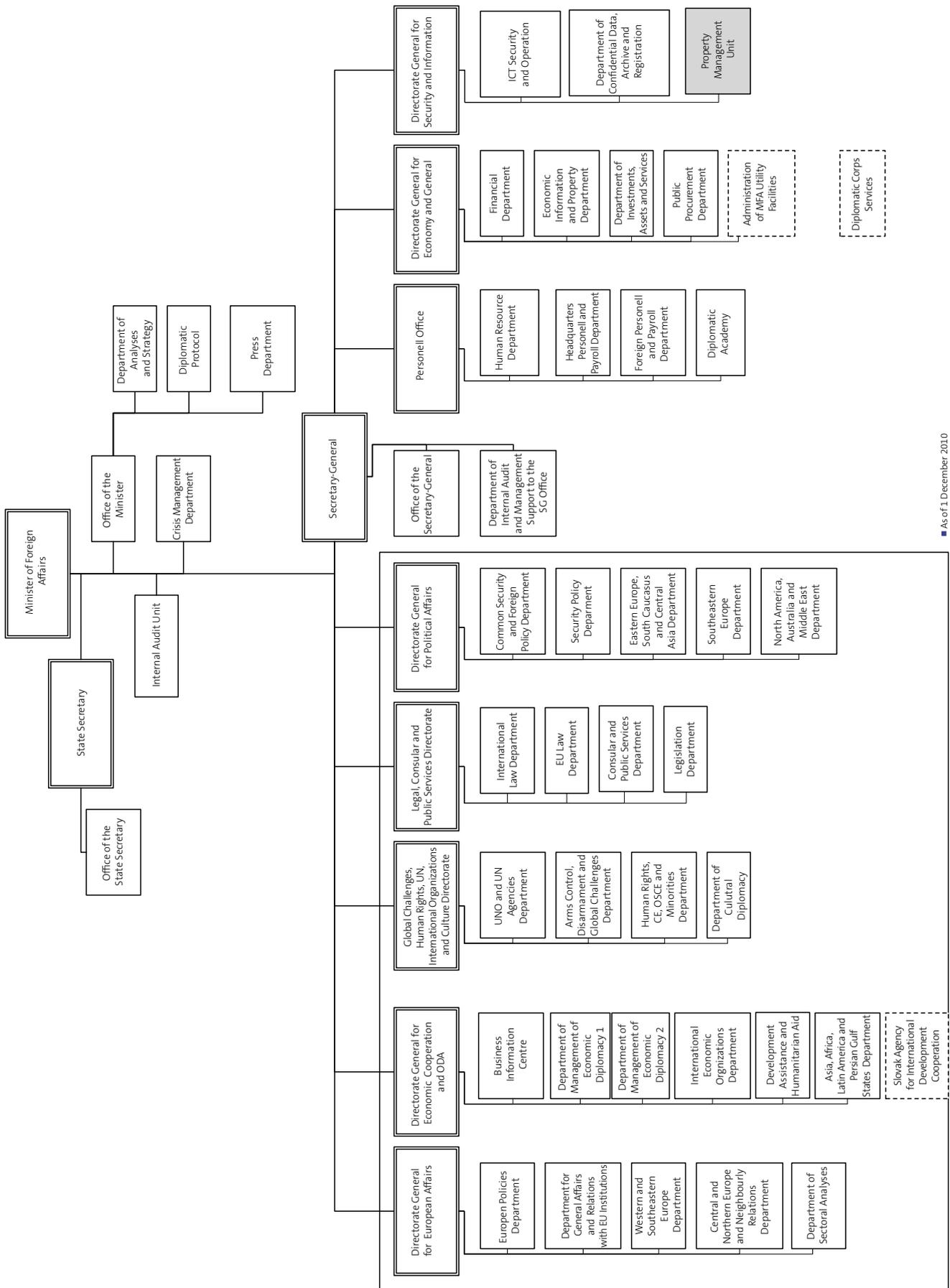
The Slovak Government, Foreign Ministry and non-governmental organisations provided for unforgettable moments I experienced in Bratislava in 2010. Your people have always been sympathetic to the conditions of the Cuban people, conditions very similar to those you had to overcome in the past, and now you can share a lot of experience from which we can learn. Your Embassy in Havana has always been open to opinions of the Cuban dissent and the Slovak Government has always been supportive, including at the European level or at various other international forums, of the initiatives to bring about democratic changes in my country. Even now, when I am in exile, I can feel your support.

I also have to mention assistance provided by your non-governmental organisations to our integration into European society.

I myself am in a position of which I am proud. I have nothing to hide and I take full responsibility for all my actions. I am bound by the truth I defend. The only thing I could not forgive is telling lies just to please somebody. I thank your people and your government for everything you have done for my nation.

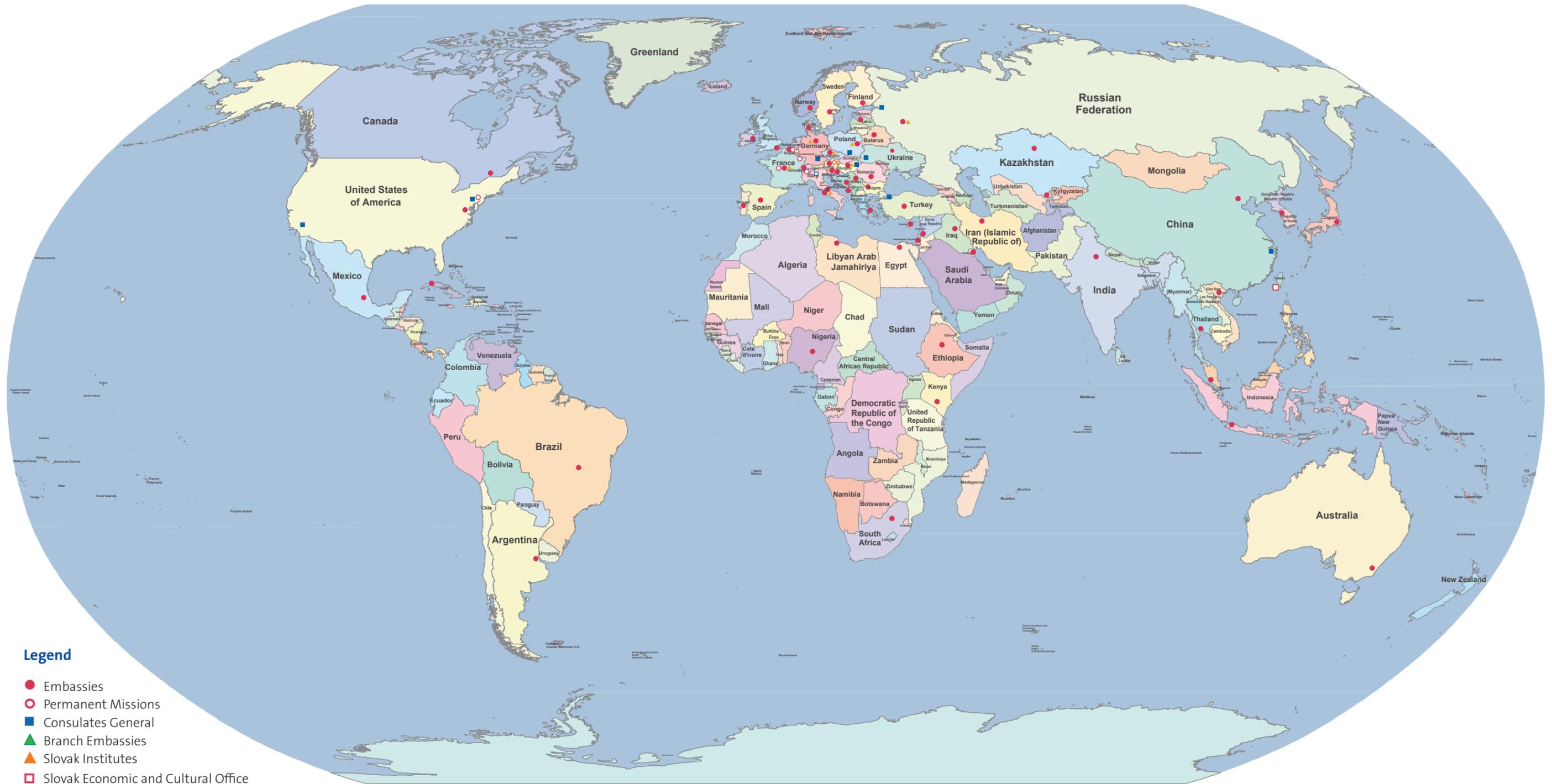
José Luis García Paneque
Cuban dissident

Organisational chart



■ As of 1 December 2010

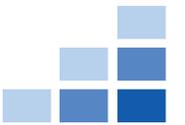
Diplomatic Posts of the Slovak Republic



Legend

- Embassies
- Permanent Missions
- Consulates General
- ▲ Branch Embassies
- ▲ Slovak Institutes
- Slovak Economic and Cultural Office
- Consular Office

Diplomatic Posts of the Slovak Republic in Europe



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