

MINISTRY
OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS
OF THE SLOVAK REPUBLIC



Annual Report

Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Slovak Republic

Foreign Policy in 2011

**Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Slovak Republic
Foreign Policy in 2011
Annual Report 2011**

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Dear Friends,



The year 2011 will remain in our minds as one marked by the mass people's movements in North Africa, referred to as the Arab Spring, including the NATO operation in Libya, as well as the aggravation of the debt crisis in the euro area. The year also saw the continued growth of the economic and political significance of emerging economies whose global influence is ever increasing. Efforts were intensified worldwide to actively overcome the consequences of the world financial and economic crisis.

For Slovak diplomacy, 2011 was also a Visegrad-themed year. During the first half of the year, Slovakia held the presidency of the Visegrad Group; and at the same time, our regional partners presided the European Union: Hungary in the first half of 2011 and Poland in the second. The focus of Slovakia's efforts in that context was strengthened cooperation within V4 in European issues, enhanced security, including the energy security of Slovakia, support for the enlargement of the EU to include Western Balkan countries, and the promotion of the European perspective for Eastern Partnership countries.

Thirdly, 2011 was the first year in Slovakia's history when foreign, or more specifically European, policy determined the destiny of the government and induced an early parliamentary election. Therefore, we see as very strong the pro-European mandate which Slovak voters gave the new government, and which has been reflected very clearly in the Government's

programme statement. In that context, the new management of the Foreign Ministry will particularly focus on strengthening national coordination in the development and implementation of EU strategies and policies in order to enforce the interests of Slovakia and its citizens more effectively. These interests will be enforced in such important areas as the stabilisation of the common currency and the financial environment, economic and employment growth, and enhanced integration with EU instruments.

The Foreign Ministry will actively promote the continuity of Slovak foreign policy in areas where consensus has been maintained over the long term, be it the building of the country's position as a credible, respected and predictable member of the European Union, relying on NATO as the principal guarantor of Slovakia's security, or support for the completion of the European unification process. Special emphasis will be put on the overall coordination of activities related to the foreign policy of Slovakia, the promotion of economic interests, investment and innovation, care of compatriots, as well the strengthening of international law and international institutions with the aim to respond responsibly and actively to global challenges.

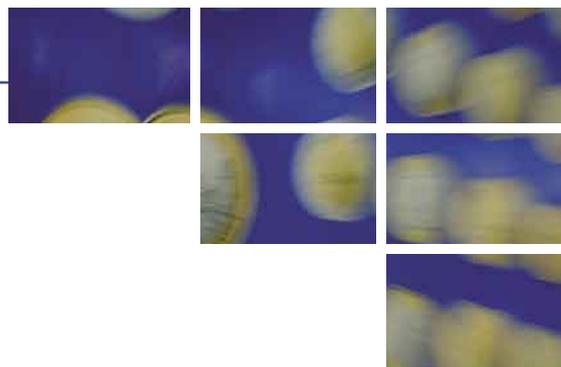
Our aim is also to increase the interest of the Slovak general public in foreign policy, communicate actively, and involve the public in discussions and the promotion of our foreign policy priorities, and strengthening the Slovak Republic's good reputation worldwide.

Miroslav LAJČÁK
Deputy Prime Minister and
Minister of Foreign Affairs



The Foreign Affairs Minister of the Slovak Republic Mikuláš Dzurinda and Catherine Ashton, High Representative of the European Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy during her visit to Slovakia on 3 March 2011. Photo: TASR

1 Foreign Policy in 2011



The year 2011 saw a number of significant events that had a crucial influence on foreign and European policy. While internally the EU continued its efforts towards the stabilisation of the euro area through strengthening the European stabilisation mechanisms and more closely coordinating economic and fiscal policies, externally the determining factor were developments in the southern neighbourhoods. The Arab Spring reaffirmed the strong and universal human desire for freedom and a better life.

The **development of cross-border cooperation**, infrastructure links, and reinforced energy security were the main factors of the **Slovak Republic's relations with its neighbouring countries**. The Ministry concentrated on **facilitating the success of the V4 presidency** which, in addition to fostering regional cooperation, focused on supporting the integration of Western Balkan countries into the EU, and on fostering the European Perspective for Eastern Partnership countries.

As part of the dialogue with Euro-Atlantic partners and allies, efforts were made to find a way out of the global financial and economic crisis and intensify economic cooperation. A particularly high intensity of political dialogue was characteristic of the relations with **Germany**.

As part of extending its operations in **Afghanistan**, the Slovak Republic for the first time sent a complete training team and deployed a special forces unit.

Improving the services of the **Citizen Assistance and Service Centre**, the Ministry's consular and information portal, and of the operations of Slovak embassies remain at the centre of the Ministry's attention. The repatriation of Slovak citizens after the outbreak of rebellion in Egypt, the military conflict in Libya, and the natural disaster in Japan was successfully managed.

New impulses came that activated **Slovak development assistance** for countries such as **Kenya** and **South Sudan**, or participation in the common EU programme following the Slovak Republic's first contribution to the European Development Fund.

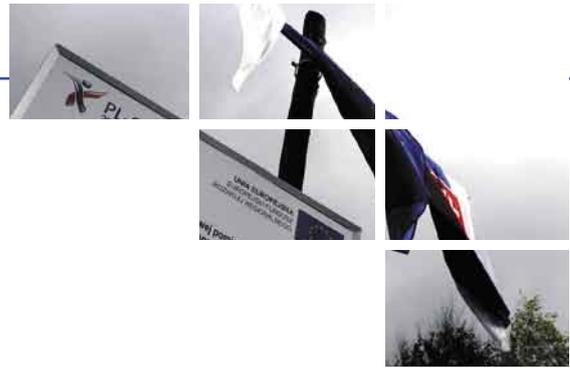
In 2011, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Slovak Republic assumed **economic diplomacy management**, formed the Transformation and Integration Experience Sharing Centre, and pushed through important Slovak nominees for international organisations. The Ministry also drafted a country presentation concept, "Slovakia: A Country with Potential". Further, the Ministry continued the dialogue with the non-government sector and academia, putting emphasis on the rationalisation of its own operation with the aim to economise, prepare both government sector employees and Slovak citizens for work in international organisations, and enhance the intra-departmental education system.

Even during such challenging times, Slovak diplomacy pursued its foreign policy objectives acting as a reliable partner and ally, promoting democratic values in international relations.



2

European Policies



The year 2011 saw a search for solutions to address the important challenges that the European Union faced. **The EU had to urgently respond to dynamic developments.** This is well evidenced by, among other things, the intensity of contacts at the highest political level. During the year, ten top events were held (*five regular European Council sessions, one informal session and one extraordinary session, and three euro area summits*).

The EU focused on the following priorities: **the complete building up and efficiency improvement of stabilisation instruments; strengthening economic management; and enhanced fiscal cooperation.**

Despite internal political turbulence, Slovakia confirmed that it is not **only a part of the EU, but also shapes** it, and can effectively and responsibly identify its urgent needs. Slovakia has acknowledged that its EU membership rests on four pillars: **shared values, responsibility, solidarity, and the promotion of national interests.** At the same time, it has also accented that the EU is the principal geopolitical area for the implementation of Slovak society's strategic priorities.

During challenging negotiations, Slovakia contributed to finding effective solutions to mitigate the consequences of the crisis, and to preserve the credibility and attractiveness of the EU. Thanks to its **responsible attitudes**, a number of national requirements were successfully asserted, and negative implications for the Slovak economy averted. The new EU economic management process (European Semester), as part of the **Europe 2020 strategy** monitoring, has resulted in the adoption of the National Reform Programme of the Slovak Republic by 2014 and the Stability Programme.

Slovakia was promoting a comprehensible policy focused on **strengthening financial surveillance, economic management and accountability in public finance management, with an emphasis on fiscal discipline and the automatic enforcement of sanctions for violations.** Slovakia supported the systematic elevation of the Stability Pact's stringency, and the formation of the Euro Plus Pact. It also pushed through the preservation of national competence over direct taxation, and the determination of retirement age based on demographic criteria.

Slovakia supported the resolution to make a limited amendment to the Treaty on the Functioning of the EU. The amendment aims to provide a legal basis for the emerging permanent mechanisms to secure the financial stability of the eurozone and the euro currency. Slovakia agreed to the increased lending capacity and reinforced competences of the European Financial Stability Facility (EFSF). Further, it achieved the approval of a **more objective distribution key** for contributions to the European Stability Mechanism (ESM), and the voluntary **participation of the private sector** in the new assistance package for Greece.

In the field of **strengthening the surveillance and coordination of Member States' economic policies**, Slovakia supported the adoption of a **package of legislative measures ("6pack")** to support economic management, reform of the Stability and Growth Pact, and reduction of macroeconomic imbalances within the EU. Eurozone leaders agreed in 2011 to a set of specific measures that go beyond the previously adopted package for economic management, and amount to the **significant promotion of economic and fiscal coordination and surveillance.** Pursuant to those measures, each euro area member state was required

European Policies

to constitutionally adopt a rule of balanced budget, which had been done by Slovakia on 8 December 2011.

During the year, considerations continued for **limited modifications of foundation treaties to add stringency to budget and debt rules**. Those considerations led to an agreement, at the breakthrough **December summit** of the EU, to make an intergovernmental treaty to facilitate closer economic integration and **provide the foundations for a fiscal stability union**. The treaty also regulated the further coordination of economic policies, and the arrangement of structures to improve the management of the economic and monetary union.

However, Member States, including the Slovak Republic, started to realise that fiscal consolidation without adequate **impetuses for economic growth** would not lead Europe out of the crisis. With that in mind, special emphasis was put on priorities under the Single Market Act, the electronic single market, and the reduction of administrative and overall regulation load on small and medium enterprises.

In the course of discussions regarding **the EU Multiannual Financial Framework 2014 to 2020**, Slovakia supported the continuation of the current role and scope of **cohesion policy**, and preferred the redirection of funding to underdeveloped regions and member states. As part of the **Common Agricultural Policy** reform process, Slovakia specifically promoted the fair and balanced distribution of direct payments, and the removal of the allocation system based on historical data.

The last day of the **seven-year transitional period** of limited **employment of Slovak nationals in Austria and Germany** was 1 May 2011. From May, citizens of Slovakia could fully use the opportunity to work in the

countries concerned without a work permit. This meant the completion of the final stage of Slovakia's full integration into the EU.

In the first half-year, the Slovak Republic contributed to the approval of the Strategy on Roma Inclusion and the Danube Strategy at the EU. Slovakia supported the integration of **Romania and Bulgaria into the Schengen area**, without being subject to additional political criteria. The Ministry initiated interdepartmental consultations focused on the preparation of Slovakia for the presidency of the Council of the EU in the second half of 2016.

EU Enlargement

The Slovak Republic made efforts to maintain the dynamics of the EU enlargement process as an **efficient means of stabilisation and transformation of the candidate countries**. Slovakia supported their progress based on own merits, and without exceptions from the obligation to fulfil the criteria. Slovakia particularly engaged in the finalisation of the **EU accession negotiations with Croatia**. The joint visit of the Foreign Ministers of Slovakia and Austria to this country in May 2011 was an important mobilisation in the conclusion of the accession process.

The Slovak Republic also promoted the opening of accession negotiations with **Montenegro**, and it helped to improve cooperation between the government and non-governmental sectors of the country, being one of the conditions for the advancement of integration efforts, through the National Convent Project. Slovakia supported **the granting of candidate country status to Serbia**, and stimulated its reform efforts during several bilateral high-level meetings.



Peter Michalko,
General Director of the
Political Directorate
General of the Slovak
Ministry of Foreign
Affairs

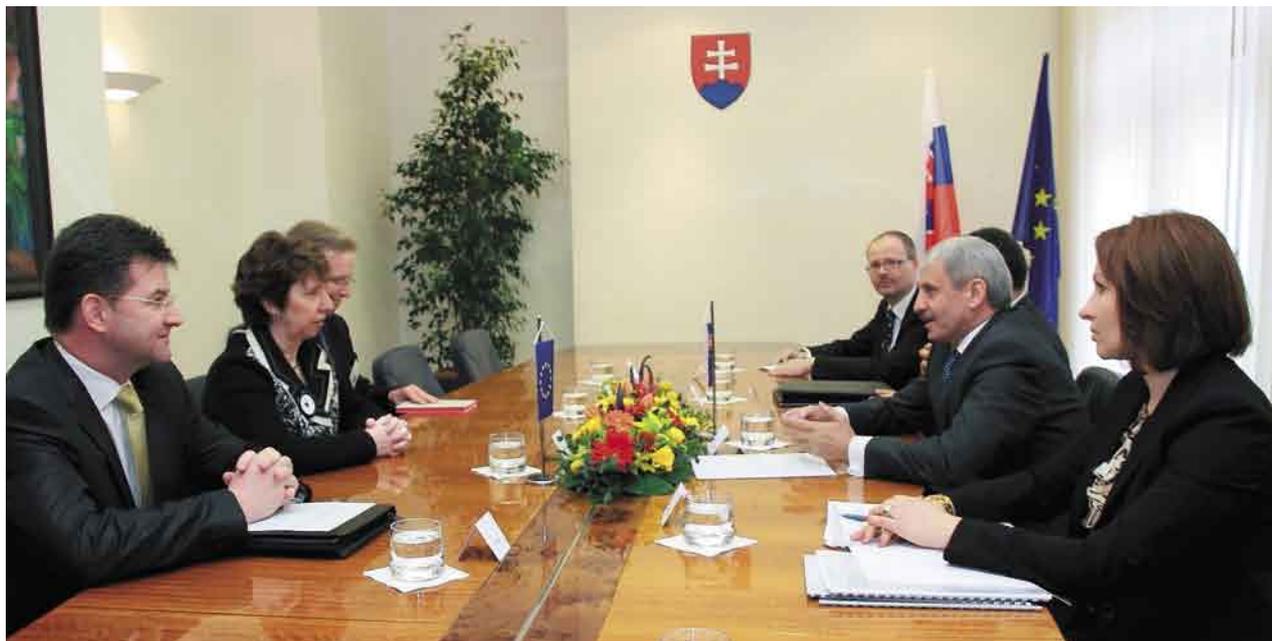
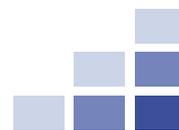
Interview with Peter Michalko, General Director of the Political Directorate General of the Slovak Ministry of Foreign Affairs

• **Mr. General Director, what major challenges were faced by the Eastern Partnership in 2011, and what is ahead of us in 2012?**

The Eastern Partnership was in 2011, and will continue to be also

in 2012, part of the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP) revision process. The revised ENP should more fairly reward countries both southward and eastward of the European Union for their reform efforts, reflect the pace of reforms, and thus also the euro-integration ambitions of those neighbouring countries that declare such intentions.

They are particularly some Eastern Partnership countries, though these are also challenged by issues of the sustainability of their democratic institutions or the consequences of 'frozen conflicts'. Therefore, in addition to carrying out agreements of an economic or visa nature between the EU and partners, we must make intensive efforts towards strengthening civil society, building up democratic



The meeting of Foreign Minister Mikuláš Dzurinda and Catherine Ashton, High Representative of the European Union for the Foreign Affairs and Security Policy on 3 March 2011. Photo:

Slovakia supported the **stabilisation of the situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina**, where during his September visit to the country the Slovak Foreign Minister urged the country's political leaders to reach a compromise in forming state-level government. The Slovak Republic continued its participation in the **EUFOR ALTHEA** operation.

While maintaining its position on the issue of the independence of Kosovo, the Slovak Republic supported continued **dialogue between Belgrade and Pristina** as the only possible way to reach a temporary pragmatic resolution of the Kosovo problem in line with the region's

European Perspective. Slovakia also supported continued accession negotiations with **Turkey and Iceland**.

Eastern Partnership

As part of the Eastern Partnership policy, Slovakia focused mainly on supporting the European direction of **Moldova, Ukraine and Georgia**. It engaged in the revision of the **European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP)**, which would more consequently than in the past apply the "more aid for more democracy and reforms" principle. Slovakia supported the strengthening of the

government institutions in those countries, and resolving 'frozen conflicts' by means of the available instruments. The Eastern Partnership, however, also offers what is referred to as "soft power" instruments to lead separatist regions and their mother countries towards the democratic standards of the Euro-Atlantic alliance.

• Which instruments are they?

They are the attractive agreements between the EU and partner countries which interconnect, to some extent, the EU area and the mother countries. They also include multilateral platforms and civil society projects that offer opportunities for the broader involvement of civil society in public matters, a higher standard of living, and wider scope for self-realisation.

Slovak projects have already been noticed among the general public of our eastern neighbours, particularly including platforms for a constructive dialogue between the general government, parliament, experts, and civil society within the frame of the National Convents that we have initiated, to date in the Ukraine and Moldova. Also worth mentioning are training courses for general government experts of those countries, organised in our centre for sharing experience from the accession processes, known as CETIR. In addition, projects of the Official Development Assistance of the Slovak Republic and non-governmental organisations. The Eastern Partnership is about people and for people, and this is the dimension being addressed by the Slovak Republic.

European Policies

Evaluation Conference of the National Convent on the European Union in Montenegro

The Evaluation Conference, held on 19 July 2011 in the Plenary Hall of the Parliament of Montenegro, provided a ceremonial ending of the **first cycle of the National Convent on the European Union in Montenegro**. The event, broadcasted live by public service television of Montenegro, was attended by the government officials of Montenegro and representatives of political parties, non-governmental organisations, and the media. The National Convent project, financed from SlovakAid funds, aims to create an open, society-wide platform for the discussion of European integration topics, improve public information, and strengthen expert capacities. It is a means to fulfil one of the seven conditions imposed by the European Commission for the opening of accession negotiations with Montenegro.

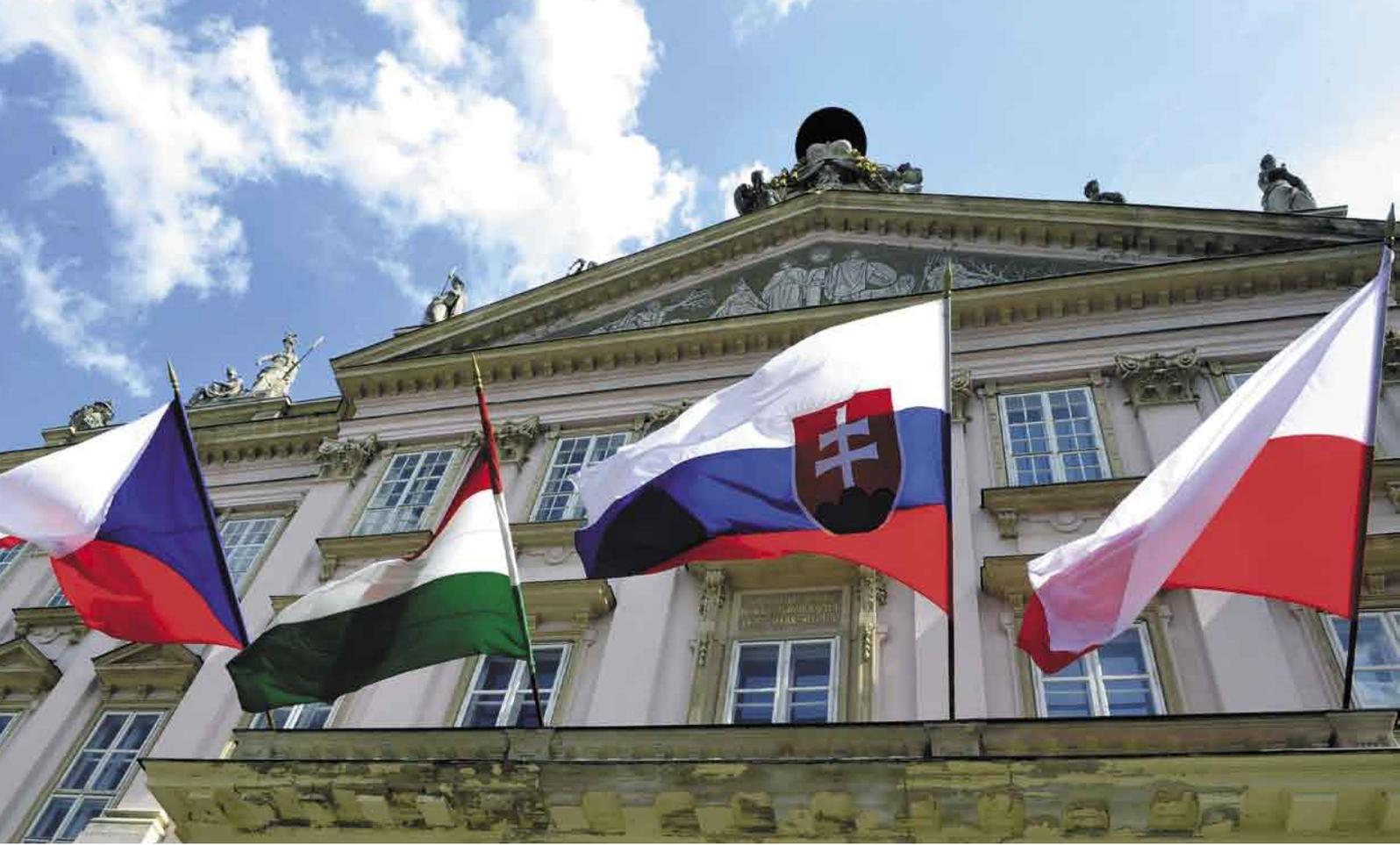
eastern dimension of ENP, the Eastern Partnership (EaP), also during the March meeting of the V4 Ministers in Bratislava.

Forms of Slovak Assistance

An important instrument of the Ministry to provide concrete assistance to Western Balkan countries and European Neighbourhood Policy partner countries was the **Centre for Experience Transfer in Integration and Reform (CETIR)**. The **National Convent on the EU**, another form of Slovakia's assistance, is active in the Ukraine, Moldova and Montenegro. The Slovak EUR 1.5 million twinning project "Capacity Building for the Energy Agency of the Republic of Serbia" was successfully launched under the Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance. The Slovak Ministry of Foreign Affairs, jointly with the UN Development Programme, provided assistance to Montenegro and Moldova aimed at the reform of public finance management.



The speech of the State Secretary of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Slovak Republic, Milan Ježovica, at the National Convent on the EU in Montenegro.



Summit of V4 Prime Ministers upon the occasion on the 20th anniversary of inception of V4. From left: Viktor Orbán, the Prime Minister of Hungary, Angela Merkel, the Federal Chancellor of Germany, Iveta Radicová, the Prime Minister of Slovakia, Petr Necas, the Prime Minister of the Czech Republic, Donald Tusk, the Prime Minister of Poland.

3

Visegrad Group and Neighbour Relations



Slovakia in V4

Regional cooperation is an important part of international relations – it promotes security, stability, prosperity, and the influence on foreign policy of both our country and the region.

The last period's key topics included in particular energy and transport infrastructure, EU cohesion policy, environment, energy security, strengthening of competitiveness, and support for EU enlargement.

The Slovak presidency of the Visegrad Four (V4), which ended in the first half of 2011, successfully continued the strengthening of cohesion within the Central European region. The main contributors to the more effective promotion of V4's common interests at the European Union were consultation mechanisms at a political level, namely that of prime ministers and foreign ministers. Cooperation was enhanced in the area of defence, where an agreement was achieved between defence ministers to set up a joint EU combat unit after 2015. In the energy security area, a high-level working group on energy issues was established, tasked to embody the north-south links in the priorities of European policy. The Slovak presidency of V4 actively supported the Hungarian and Polish presidency of the European Union. V4 proved its vigour and growing international prestige as an active promoter of EU enlargement to Western Balkan countries, and strengthened cooperation with eastern partners of the EU within the **V4+** format.

An important event organised under the Slovak V4 Presidency was the March meeting of foreign ministers of V4 and the Eastern Partnership (EaP) in Bratislava, attended by Foreign Minister of Germany Guido

Westerwelle, High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Catherine Ashton, and European Commissioner for Enlargement and European Neighbourhood Policy Štefan Füle.

A new programme, "Visegrad 4 Eastern Partnership" was established under the International Visegrad Fund from a Slovak initiative, aiming to support democratisation and transformation processes, and strengthen civil society in countries of the Eastern Neighbourhood.

An expression of the appreciation of the growing importance of V4 was the presence of German Chancellor Angela Merkel, Austrian Chancellor Werner Faymann, and Ukrainian Prime Minister Mykola Azarov at the summit organised in Bratislava upon the occasion of the 20th anniversary of the Group's inception. A meeting of the prime ministers of V4 and Moldova also took place during a summit of prime ministers at the end of the presidency term.

Another notable V4+ event was the **meeting of the foreign ministers of V4 and Japan**, which was held upon the occasion of an ASEM meeting in Budapest. It acknowledged the specific status of V4 cooperation, focused on the economic dimension, innovation, energy and climate change.

Cooperation with Neighbours

The main pillar of Slovak foreign policy is the development of mutually beneficial cooperation with **neighbouring countries**. One of the contributions to the continual enhancement of the above-standard cooperation with the Czech Republic was an agreement

Visegrad Group and Neighbour Relations

on mutual consular and visa representation signed in Prague by the Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the Slovak Republic and the Czech Republic. The 2nd meeting of the Slovak – Czech Discussion Forum delivered new added value in the form of recommendations on assisting Western Balkan countries on their path to the EU. Cooperation within the European Nuclear Forum, focused on energy security strengthening, continued. Thanks to a meeting of the involved members of governments, a new impetus was also given to the counter-corruption efforts of both countries.

As regards relations with **Poland**, the Slovak government adopted measures to complete the Slovak section of the direct expressway connection between the two countries. The signing of the Memorandum of Understanding on cooperation on a gas network interconnection project between Poland and the Slovak Republic meant a positive shift in energy security assurance. Slovakia supported the fulfilment of the programme of the Polish presidency of the European Union, in particular the cohesion policy area. The bilateral political dialogue was complemented with an official visit of Polish President Bronisław Komorowski to Slovakia.

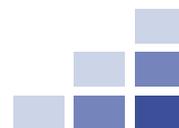
Slovak foreign policy towards Hungary put emphasis on a partner dialogue and cooperation based on sound

neighbour relations and respect for international law. Hungarian officials who visited Slovakia included President Pál Schmitt, Prime Minister Viktor Orbán, and Foreign Minister János Martonyi. Several important agreements in the area of energy and transport infrastructure were signed. A ceremony was held to open a newly built bridge over the *Ipeľ* river in *Veľká nad Ipeľom*; the construction and preparation of other bridges are underway. Slovakia and Hungary jointly coordinate their activities in the area of the Restoration and Maintenance of Water Quality under the EU Danube Strategy. Slovakia continued its efforts to depoliticise the issues of common history and, to that effect, a **conference of young historians** from both countries took place in Bratislava, funded by a grant from the Ministry.

Mixed commissions were also activated as a mechanism to facilitate the performance of the Basic Treaty with Hungary, and to help address pending issues. A process of bilateral consultations about issues concerning dual citizenship was also launched. Further, the Ministry proposed that the issue of financial support for members of the Hungarian minority in Slovakia should be addressed on the grounds of the Mixed Commission for Minority Affairs. The National Council of the Slovak Republic



The foreign ministers of the Visegrad Group – Karel Schwarzenberg (CR), János Martonyi (HU), Mikolaj Dowgiewleicz (PL) and Mikuláš Dzurinda met German Foreign Minister Guido Westerwelle on 3 March 2011 in Bratislava to discuss the Eastern Partnership. The Visegrad Group ministers reviewed the progress made in the implementation of the Eastern Partnership after their previous meeting in Budapest last year, and appreciated the participation of Germany at the meeting and its significant support for the Eastern Partnership. The ministers welcomed the exchange of views on the Eastern Partnership policy with the ministers of Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine, as well as the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Catherine Ashton, and the European Commissioner for Enlargement and European Neighbourhood Policy Štefan Füle.



The cornerstone of the cycle path was jointly tapped by the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Slovakia Mikuláš Dzurinda (third from left), Lower Austria Landeshauptman Erwin Proll (fourth from left), Chairman of Bratislava Self-government County Pavol Frešo (second from right), Mayor of the Capital of the Slovak Republic Bratislava Milan Ftáčnik (left), and Mayor of Devínska Nová Ves Milan Jambor (fifth from left). PHOTO TASR – Štefan Puškáš

and the Ministry declared their position on the new Hungarian Constitution.

An intensive political dialogue about all issues of mutual interest is typical of relations with **Austria**. Both countries pay increased attention to the **extension of regional cross-border cooperation**, further infrastructure building at the border (a new cycle bridge in *Devínska Nová Ves*), mutual cooperation in border regions, and the strengthening of energy security. The Slovak Republic continued to transparently inform on the completion of the *Mochovce* Nuclear Plant.

The main focus of active top-level dialogue with **Ukraine**, represented by the visit of Ukrainian President Viktor Yanukovych to Slovakia and of the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Slovakia to Ukraine, was support for the Ukraine's efforts to approach Europe and the development of bilateral cooperation. The Slovak Republic continued to transfer its experience of pre-accession and reform processes. It expressed its concerns over developments in the case of Yulia Tymoshenko via the Minister of Foreign Affairs. Slovakia continued to adopt practical measures to facilitate the border crossing and liberalise the visa regime. Inter-governmental commissions continued their active work. Schooling was commenced at a new school with both Slovak and Ukrainian teaching languages in Uzhgorod.

The 20th Anniversary of V4

Upon the occasion of the 20th anniversary of the inception of V4, a **summit of V4 prime ministers** was held in Bratislava on 15 February 2011 where the Bratislava Declaration was adopted. The V4 prime ministers highlighted the V4's 20-year success and identified the main challenges in the future. The high credit of the V4 at the European level was also acknowledged by the participation of the German Chancellor, Austrian Chancellor, and Ukrainian Prime Minister at the event. The V4 prime ministers, together with the chancellors of Germany and Austria made a declaration calling on Belarusian authorities to release Belarusian prisoners immediately and respect human rights and freedoms. As a part of the events of public and cultural diplomacy held upon the 20th anniversary, the Visegrad Four presented itself in Brussels through the **Quo Vadis, Visegrad** panel discussion and many other events, exhibitions, concerts and conferences. From the Ministry's initiative, a €2 commemorative coin and joint postal stamp of the V4 countries were issued.





On 19 May 2011, the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Slovak Republic, Mikuláš Dzurinda met the Secretary General of NATO, Anders Fogh Rasmussen in Bratislava.

4

Safe and Democratic World



The mass people's movements and rebellions in the Arab world, the NATO operation in Libya, and the increased threat of the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction were the major phenomena to mark 2011 in the **security area**.

The Slovak Republic continued to promote on the grounds of the EU and NATO as close as possible cooperation of the two organisations in the areas of building defence competences and undertaking operations.

It supported the intensive enlargement of NATO and the development of partnerships, particularly with countries of the Western Balkans and Eastern Partnership.

Continual attention was paid to the building of competences for deployment in **NATO quick response forces and EU combat groups**. The V4 defence ministers agreed at a meeting in Levoča on cooperation between the countries to build up a V4 combat group within the EU by 2016. The Ministry contributed actively to the preparation of the **Strategic Defence Review** document, aiming to make the fulfilment of Slovakia's international commitments more effective. The Ministry also prepared the **Act on Secondment of Civil Experts** for service in crisis management operations outside the territory of the Slovak Republic.

The Slovak Republic took an active part in international crisis management operations and missions. **Slovak armed forces and civil experts**

participated in 10 foreign missions led by NATO, the EU and the UN.

As a part of efforts to enhance Slovakia's presence in **Afghanistan**, the Slovak Republic, in cooperation with the USA, seconded a complete training team and deployed a special force unit for the first time. The main emphasis of Slovak activities will gradually be on the training of Afghan soldiers and support for developmental projects. In international crisis management, Slovakia promoted an all-encompassing approach, with an increased role of the civil force.

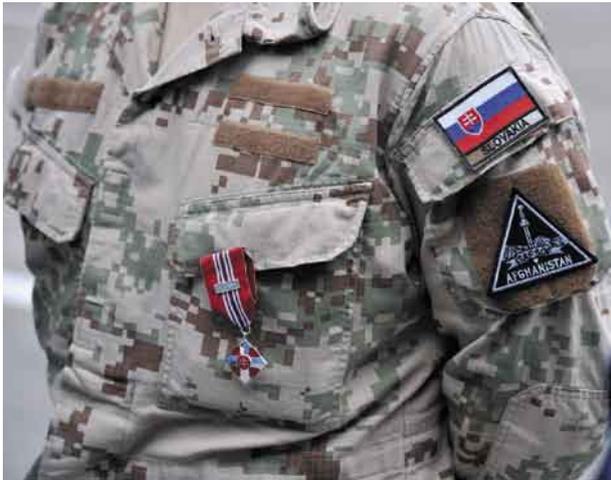
In addition to the military presence in Cyprus, Slovakia continued to organise bi-community dialogues seeking to converge the two communities in the interests of contributing to a resolution of the Cyprus issue.

Within international organisations, Slovakia took an active part in looking for ways to tackle asymmetric security threats. As the coordinator of the **UN Group of Friends of Security Sector Reform (SSR)** it organised several support activities, including an international workshop in *Častá-Papiernička*. It also contributed to the strengthening of OSCE capacities to combat new security threats, and conflict prevention and resolution capacities where it covered the field of early warning.

Activities within International Organisations

The focus of the Slovak Republic's efforts **on the grounds of international organisations** was the

Safe and Democratic World



Professional soldiers, formation of EUFOR ALTHEA mission.
Photo: TASR



The Special Representative of the UN Secretary-General for Afghanistan, Slovak diplomat Ján Kubiš, during a press conference in Kabul on 25 January 2012.

overcoming of the financial and economic crisis, the adaptation of the subjects of international law to new challenges, the addressing of urgent global

issues, the strengthening of the UN's central role, and the promotion of democratic values in the world.

Slovakia **successfully finished** its three-year membership of the **UN Human Rights Council**. Under its leadership, the UN successfully completed the process of adopting the Optional Protocol for the Convention on the Rights of the Child on a communications procedure.

Slovakia led the preparation of the Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence within the **Council of Europe**. At the **Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE)**, Slovakia co-initiated the 'Moscow Mechanism' which was used to review the state of human rights' observance in Belarus.



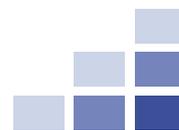
The Slovaks Helping the World photo exhibition, prepared by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Slovak Republic, opened in the National Council of the Slovak Republic on 20 June 2011.

A story of Slovaks helping the world attracted attention even in NATO

In September 2011, **"Slovaks Helping the World"**, a compilation of artistic photos by Andrej Bán and Martin Bandžák was presented at the NATO premises in Brussels. The exhibition conveys a message about Slovaks who, thanks to development and humanitarian aid, are giving a helping hand to people in the world's crisis regions.



Marta Žiaková, Chairperson of the Nuclear Regulatory Authority of the Slovak Republic. Photo: TASR, Štefan Puškáč



As a member and vice-president of the **Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC)**, the Slovak Republic supported the strengthening of the UN's relationship with the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund. Slovakia also supported complementarities between the activities of ECOSOC and G20 countries.

The increasing authority and significance of the Slovak Republic and its foreign service also bore fruits in the area of **nominations for offices in international organisations**. Slovakia was awarded the position of vice-president of **ECOSOC** and vice-president of **UNESCO's Executive Board**, and it also successfully upheld other nominations: election of Urban Rusnák as Secretary General of the Energy Charter Secretariat (a common V4 candidate) and Marta Žiaková, President of the Nuclear Regulatory Authority of the Slovak Republic as Vice-Chair of the NEA Steering Committee for Nuclear Energy in Paris.

An expression of appreciation of the quality of Slovak diplomacy was the appointment of Ján Kubiš as the Special Representative of the UN Secretary General for Afghanistan and Head of the UN Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA); Miroslav Lajčák as the Managing Director for Russia, the Eastern



Peter Tomka, Slovak President of the International Court of Justice in the Hague (in the middle), Mexican judge Bernardo Sepulveda-Amor (left) and Japanese judge Hisashi Owada. Photo: TASR/AP

Neighbourhood and the Western Balkans within the European External Action Service; and the re-election of Peter Tomka as a judge of the International Court of Justice for the next term, 2012 to 2021; and the appointment of Peter Zsoldos as the Head of the EU Delegation to Libya.



Slovak Prime Minister Ivetta Radičová during the speech presented at the 66th session of the UN General Assembly in New York on 24 September 2011. Photo: TASR/AP

Slovakia in the United Nations

One of Slovakia's top presentations at the United Nations in New York was the speech of Ivetta Radičová, the Prime Minister of the Slovak Republic at the 66th session of the UN General Assembly on the effects of the economic crisis on the UN's objectives. The Slovak Republic engaged through its Permanent Mission to the United Nations in a series of global-scale decisions. Let's mention the Permanent Representative of the Slovak Republic chairing the UN General Assembly committee for disarmament and security, and his service in the office of Vice-President of the UN Economic and Social Council as one of the principal UN bodies. Holding that position, the Slovak Republic promoted practical measures to address the effects of the financial and economic crisis on economic and social development throughout the world, particularly through strengthening the relationship between the UN and world financial institutions such as the World Bank, the IMF, and G20. In connection with the admission of South Sudan as the 193rd member of the United Nations, Slovakia became one of the initiators of the search for coordinated international support for that country. In December, the Slovak Republic was elected for a three-year term to the Bureau of the Assembly of the States Parties to the Roma Statute of the International Criminal Court.



Slovak Minister of Foreign Affairs Mikuláš Dzurinda and German Foreign Minister Guido Westerwelle commenced the school year at a German School in Bratislava with an international education programme.

5

Bilateral Relations



The main pillar of Slovak foreign policy is cooperation, firmly anchored through shared values, with Euro-Atlantic partners and allies. As part of the regular dialogue continued last year, efforts were made to find a way to end the global financial and economic crisis and intensify economic cooperation.

Particularly intensive were top-level **Slovak-German relations**.

In that regard, last year can be referred to, from a **foreign policy perspective**, as **the year of Germany**. The strategic importance of mutual dialogue was acknowledged by the visits of German President Christian Wulff, Chancellor Angela Merkel, and Foreign Minister Guido Westerwelle to Slovakia. The first session of the Slovak-German Reflection Group took place that confirmed the alignment between Slovak and German perspectives of how the debt crisis in the eurozone should be dealt with.

The major pillars of **Slovak-American ally relations**, promoted by the visits of the Prime Minister and the Foreign Minister to the USA, included **cooperation on Afghanistan, support for democracy**, also in the

context of the Arab Spring (assistance provided to Tunisia through the Community of Democracies), as well as activities aiming to strengthen our **trade and investment, and scientific and technological cooperation**. An important topic of dialogue with the USA were issues concerning cooperation in the fields of defence and interior affairs. The inception of the **Slovak**



The visit of Guido Westerwelle, the German Foreign Minister, to Bratislava on 2 September 2011.

Bilateral Relations



The Foreign Minister of Slovak Republic Mikuláš Dzurinda attended on 29 March 2011 the London Conference on Libya.

Congressional Committee contributed to strengthening the parliamentary dimension of the relations.

Trade and economic cooperation, and efforts to improve the utilisation of its potential in particular, were the basis of relations with the **United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland**, which was confirmed by the Slovak Prime Minister's visit to London.

The reciprocal visits of the Presidents of the Slovak Republic and **Italy** re-confirmed that the energy sector would continue to be the basis of cooperation.

The session of the mixed intergovernmental commission for economic, scientific and technical cooperation gave impetus to the development of trade and economic cooperation with the **Russian Federation**. The strategic component of economic relations remains to be cooperation in the area of energy, and the continuous supply of mineral resources and their transit through the territory of Slovakia in particular.

The Slovak Republic's active involvement in the EU enlargement process and in responding to regional challenges has deepened cooperation with **Western**



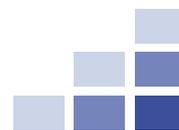
Igor Slobodnik,
Ambassador of the Slovak
Republic to The Federal
Republic of Germany

Relations with Germany have Acquired Elevated Intensity over 20 Years

• Relations with Germany have developed over a long time as one of Slovakia's priorities in the foreign policy area. In view of that,

what was the source of "growth potential" of the relationship last year?

Through a series of top-level events – attended by the Slovak and German Presidents as well as the Chairs of both Parliaments – we commemorated how the gesture of appeasement of 2 February 1991 of the then Slovak National Council towards Carpathian Germans who were displaced after the Second World War has contributed over the last twenty years to the creation of a strong tie between the two countries. In autumn, we set up a



Balkan countries. Visits to Slovakia of senior officials contributed to the intensification of cooperation with Croatia, Montenegro, Serbia, and Bosnia and Herzegovina, where wider scope has been provided for the operations of Slovak businesses.

Slovak foreign policy paid adequate attention to other regions and countries as well. The official visit of the Slovak President to **Indonesia** yielded new impulses for deepening trade and economic cooperation. The revitalisation of relations with Iraq continued in both the economic area, and defence and security sectors. A new impetus came for cooperation with **Israel** in the field of applied research. The focus of the Slovak Republic's relations with the countries of **Asia, Latin America and Africa** was an improvement of trade and economic dimensions of cooperation.

Nuclear Material under Control

The Joint Action Plan between the Government of the United States of America and the Government of the Slovak Republic on Combating the Illicit Trafficking of Nuclear and Radioactive Materials and Related Technology was signed in Brussels on 7 December 2011 by the Foreign Ministers of the two countries, Mikuláš Dzurinda and Hillary Clinton. It foresees concrete field



Mikuláš Dzurinda and Hillary Clinton, the Foreign Ministers of Slovak Republic and the USA.

projects, such as the upgrade of radiation detection equipment, expert trainings, transfer of experience to neighbouring countries, and technical equipment at borders. The implementation of these projects will help to create a more secure and stable international environment.

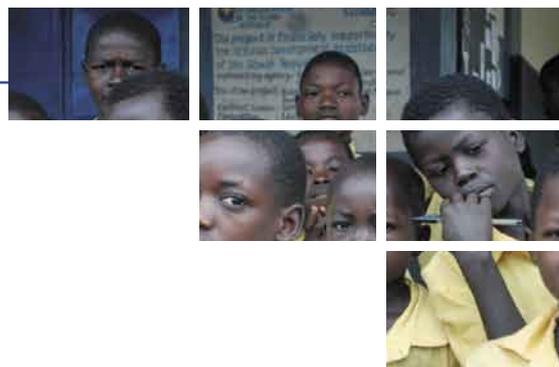
Slovak-German reflection group. During our presidency of the Visegrad Group, we made efforts to also transfer the strong link to the multilateral format: the extended V4 sessions in Bratislava were attended by German Chancellor Merkel as well as Vice-Chancellor and Head of Diplomacy Westerwelle.

• **Germany is, beyond doubt, the European leader in the field of applied research, innovation and new technologies. What does that mean for Slovak diplomacy and its economic dimension?**

Last year we initiated cooperation of the two countries in the promising field of the manufacture and implementation of electromobility. A round table meeting took place between representatives of several Ministries in Berlin; the Slovak Minister of Economy had discussions about that topic with partners in Berlin, Potsdam and Essen; and on that basis a decision was made in Bratislava in January 2012 to create a national platform for electromobility following the German model.



The Minister of Foreign Affairs Mikuláš Dzurinda visited Kenya, where he met with the Vice President Stephen Kalonzo Musyoki.



6

Supportive Slovakia

Conceptual changes were undertaken in 2011 in the field of bilateral official development assistance. They involved a **reduction in the geographic and sectoral scope of assistance** and the division of development assistance into **standard bilateral official development assistance** and technical assistance, and the setting up of a Ministry's specific programme for the latter, the **Centre for Experience Transfer in Integration and Reform (CETIR)**.

The Ministry extended the portfolio of contracts with priority partner countries of the Slovak Republic's official development assistance. In December 2011, the Agreement on Development Cooperation between **the Government of the Slovak Republic and the Government of the Republic of Kenya** was signed. Similar agreements were proposed with South Sudan, Montenegro, Bosnia and Herzegovina, and the Ukraine.

The Slovak Foreign Minister's visit to **Kenya and South Sudan** in December 2011 conveyed a strong political signal from the Slovak Republic towards the further development of mutual relations with the two priority countries of Slovakia's official development assistance.

Slovak development assistance continued to serve as a means to support the reform and integration process of countries of the Western Balkans and the EU's Eastern Partnership through the aforementioned

CETIR programme. This type of assistance in 2011 was extended to also cover countries of the EU's Southern Neighbourhood, **Egypt** and **Tunisia**.

The Slovak Republic promptly responded to humanitarian crises throughout the world. It provided financial humanitarian aid to **Japan** after the destructive earthquake, to **Bosnia and Herzegovina** through the "Halfway House" project; to **Libya** to support children's activities in a Tunisian refugee camp; to countries of the **Horn of Africa** after the excruciating draught.

Further, the Ministry provided humanitarian aid to cover the medical expenses of **injured Libyan nationals** undertaking therapy in *Piešťany* spa, and for a **recovery stay in Slovakia of children from the Russian Federation**.

Humanitarian Aid Summary Update

In 2011, the Slovak Republic promptly responded to humanitarian crises and provided **humanitarian aid totalling €538,827**.

Financial humanitarian aid was delivered in 2011 by way of **ten projects totalling €216,117** in countries such as **Japan, Russia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Belarus, Tunisia, Kenya, Ethiopia** and **Libya**.

Supportive Slovakia



Development Assistance to South Sudan

Slovakia also provided humanitarian aid through the Integrated Rescue System and Civil Defence Department of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Slovak Republic to **Uzbekistan, Japan** (in two stages), as well as **Pakistan** and **Turkey**; its total sum was **€322,710**.



The future of South Sudan

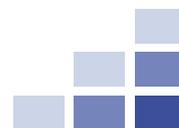
Development Projects

In 2011, the Ministry supported development projects of bilateral cooperation totalling €6,075,222.80 and CETIR projects of €56,887.50.

Moreover, the Ministry provided financial contributions (minor grants) up to **€5,000**, financial humanitarian aid, and it contributed to the capacity building of the Platform of Non-governmental Development Organisations.

Project Examples

Basic healthcare for South Sudan – with a view to help the country, the *Magna Deti v núdzi* (Children in Need) civic association, supported by SlovakAid, started to implement a mobile healthcare clinic project in the region of *Terekeka*. The mobile clinic provides its services across an area with a population of 23 thousand where no healthcare had previously been available.



Restoration of forest and water resources in Kenya

– in 2011, the **Človek v ohrození** (People at Risk) civic association launched an environmental development project aimed at the restoration of forest and water resources in *Molo*, a small town in central Kenya. The project is funded through SlovakAid and it will be carried out over two years in cooperation with the local organisation **Network for Ecofarming in Africa**.

Support from SlovakAid for three humanitarian projects in the region of the Horn of Africa

– the Ministry provided financial humanitarian aid of €60,000 for combating food crisis in Somalia, Kenya, Ethiopia and Uganda. A project of **St. Elisabeth College of Healthcare and Social Work** aimed to provide food aid to starving children in refugee camps in *Dadaab* in north-east Kenya. The organisation **Magna Deti v nůdzi** received a contribution for a project seeking to reduce children's mortality in the region of *Garissa* in north-east Kenya. The objective of an **Ethiopian** project of the **Nadácia Integra** (Integra Foundation) was to aid, through the supply of food and purification of drinking water, the most vulnerable groups – mothers, children, pregnant and breastfeeding women.





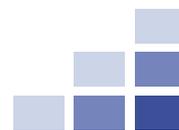
Arab Spring at *Pohoda* Festival

One of the events accompanying the ***Pohoda* Festival 2011** was a panel discussion entitled “**Egypt’s White Revolution: Know the Faces from Tahrir Square**”, attended by Minister of Foreign Affairs Mikuláš Dzurinda along with Shareef Ghonei, General Director of the Egyptian NGO Support Center and Reham Afifi, an activist for women’s rights.

The Slovak Republic promptly responded to the situation and actively supported Egypt’s transition to democracy. During the last year, the Ministry announced **special calls for Egypt** and **Tunisia** for

projects totalling EUR 100,000 and supported two projects for Egypt: the capacity strengthening of Egyptian civil society organisations emerging at the time of the formation of a new political system and a new political culture; and nationwide observation of last year’s presidential and parliamentary elections in Egypt, including training for observers and specialist assistance from Slovak experts.

A special call for Tunisia was announced, since the Slovak Republic included in its assistance for the country also a transition to democracy.



A Thank-You Letter from the Japanese Foreign Affairs Minister

Japan appreciated the assistance received from the Slovak Republic after the destructive earthquake. The Minister of Foreign Affairs of Japan Takeaki Matsumoto sent a personal thank-you letter saying: ..."I wish to express our deepest gratitude for the valued help from the Government of the Slovak

Republic, for the humanitarian aid provided through the European Union, as well as the financial support for the north-east region of Japan affected by the earthquake and tsunami..." Donations for Japanese people afflicted by the disaster were also organised by staff of the Slovak Ministry of Foreign Affairs.



**STREDISKO MZV SR PRE POMOC
A SLUŽBY OBČANOM**

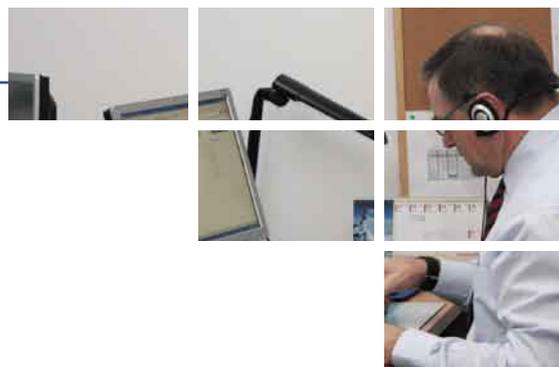
Tel.: +421 2 5978 5978

Fax: +421 2 5978 4499

e-mail: info@mzv.sk

7

Serving Citizens



High-standard, quick and accessible consular assistance to Slovak nationals abroad was provided in 2011 by a network of **72 Slovak diplomatic and consular missions**.

Emergency Service and Consular Assistance

While in 2009 the number of Slovaks spending their holiday abroad was 530 000, it was 600 000 in 2010, and nearly 700 000 in 2011. Of that, **2,195 persons in 48 countries worldwide** contacted consular missions of the Slovak Republic with a request for help in situations they could not manage without consular assistance.

The number of Slovak nationals staying abroad over prolonged time is also increasing. Consular assistance was extended to cover third countries where Slovakia does not have any representation. An agreement made in 2011 between the Foreign Ministries of the Slovak Republic and the Czech Republic allows Slovak nationals to seek consular assistance at **72 Czech diplomatic and consular missions in 54 countries**.

Compared to previous periods, 2011 saw an increase in the number of human trafficking cases. While in

2010 five Slovak representation offices were involved in helping the victims of human trafficking and participated in arranging eight repatriations of such victims, in the last year **seven consular locations provided assistance to 21 victims**.

Operations of the Citizen Assistance and Service Centre

As part of its role in providing first-contact information concerning consular services and assistance and primary intervention in the case of unforeseen and emergency events, during the last year the Centre provided information via 8,367 phone calls, which is an increase of some 1,000 on 2010. The centre also handled 756 e-mail requests and 902 replies to requests submitted under Act No. 211/200 Coll. on free access to information. **In the last year, 7,771 citizens registered themselves in the database maintained by the Centre using the registration form.**

The Centre, in coordination with other divisions of the Ministry, assisted in arranging the **evacuation of Slovak nationals** from various regions of the world affected by natural disasters or armed conflicts. They included tourists and Slovak nationals in Egypt, Libya, Japan,

Serving Citizens



Citizen Assistance and Service Centre.

Thailand, Haiti, India, Indonesia, Mexico, Nepal, the USA and the Dominican Republic.

Travel Document Administration

Improving, mainstreaming and accelerating the handling of citizens' applications for travel documents are among the most important tasks of the consular service. Achievements in the travel document administration area include a notable reduction in passport processing times, and a **reduction in the administrative workload of passport administration.**

Visas and Agreements on Representation for the Issuance of Visas

In 2011, the number of visa applicants rose by approx. 14,500, that is by a quarter on the previous period, reaching the level between 2008 and 2009. The change resulted from a significantly growing number of clients of Slovak and foreign agencies travelling to Slovakia, particularly Ukrainian and Russian nationals, who spent the Christmas and New Year holidays at Slovak recreation and sports centres.

In that regard, the Ministry organised work meetings with travel agencies in Bratislava, Moscow and Kiev;

provided special winter accreditations for travel agencies; and held small-scale press conferences to enhance public awareness. A visa hotline was established, and time limits for the issuance of visas reduced. From November 2011, **seven regional centres**



Citizen Assistance and Service Centre.



remained to deal with visa administration within the Schengen area, including Slovak representation offices in Athens, Berlin, Madrid, Paris, Prague, Warsaw and Vienna.

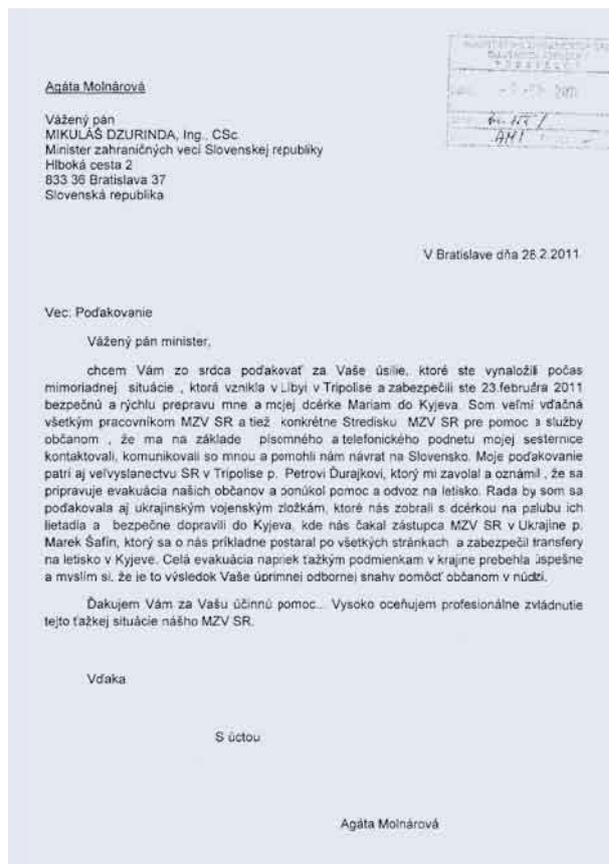
In 2011, Slovak nationals were subject to visa obligations in **129 countries**. In the course of the year, the visa obligation was abolished for Slovak nationals travelling to Thailand for 30 days or less. The abolition of visa obligations for Slovak nationals to as many countries worldwide as possible remains one of the main targets of the consular service.

Agreements on representation for the issuance of visas that were newly concluded or came into effect include those with **Austria, Hungary, Slovenia, Latvia and the Czech Republic**. The agreement on representation for the issuance of visas and its implementing protocol between the Ministries of Foreign Affairs of the Czech Republic and the Slovak Republic came into force on 4 December 2011. The **Czech Republic represents Slovakia** for the issuance of visas in **Afghanistan, Algeria, Pakistan, Ghana, Mongolia and the Philippines**; **Slovakia** reciprocally **represents the Czech Republic** for the issuance of visas in **Kenya**.

Negotiations also continued in 2011 on agreements on representation for the issuance of visas with **Poland, Lithuania, Spain and Estonia**.

Consular Service in Numbers:

- 2,195 cases of consular assistance
- 33,922 authentications at Slovak representation offices
- 7,593 passport applications
- 3,540 applications for emergency travel documents
- 338 injured and hospitalised
- 1,605 cases involving criminal activity of Slovak citizens
- 617 cases of death
- 3,540 emergency travel documents issued
- 25 marriages contracted at a representation office
- over 40 thousand replies to e-mail information inquiries
- 798 requests for authentication of a Slovak national living abroad
- 74,276 visa applications, of which 1,304 rejected and 72,802 granted



A thank-you letter for swift and successful evacuation from Libya.



- AKTUÁLNE
- CESTOVANIE A KONZULÁRNE INFO
- MINISTERSTVO
- ZAHRAANIČNÁ POLITIKA
- ČINNOSŤ MINISTERSTVA
- SLUŽBY OBYČANOM

- Zahraničná politika
- Kalendár podujatí k zahraničnej politike
- Bezpečnostná politika
- Európske záležitosti
- Ekonomická diplomacia
- Podnikajme v zahraničí
 - Úvod
 - Zoznam zastupiteľských úradov
 - Honorárne konzuláty
 - Informácie pre podnikanie podľa krajín
 - Významné podujatia
 - Verejná obstarávanie medzinárodných organizácií
 - Užitočné odkazy
 - Tendre a dopyty
 - Databáza exportérov
 - Čísla, údaje, fakty
 - Newsletters
- Oficiálna rozvojová pomoc
- Ludské práva
- Výbor pre medzinárodné humanitárne právo
- Medzinárodné zmluvy
- Slovensko v OSN
- Slovensko v UNESCO
- Slovensko v NATO
- Slovensko v OBSE
- Slovensko v Rade Európy
- Slovensko v OECD

Podnikajme v zahraničí



PODNIKATEĽSKÉ CENTRUM MZV SR

Sme Vám k dispozícii v pracovných dňoch od 8:00 do 15:30

Ministerstvo zahraničných vecí Slovenskej republiky
Oddelenie podnikateľského centra
Hiboká cesta 2, 833 36 BRATISLAVA
Tel. 021 5978 5959
E-mail: bizinfo@mzv.sk

Vážení priatelia,

vitajte v portáli podnikateľského informačného centra Ministerstva zahraničných vecí Slovenskej republiky.

Našou úlohou je prostredníctvom operatívnej komunikácie poskytovať informácie nevyhnutné k presadzovaniu vašich podnikateľských ambícií v oblasti exportu výrobkov a služieb, vývozu kapitálu, vytvárania kooperčných vzťahov a zakladania spoločných podnikov v zahraničí. Cieľom rubriek portálu je poskytovanie kontaktov, praktických rád a zmapovanie obchodných a investičných príležitostí, vhodných pre realizovanie vašich podnikateľských zámerov.

- ZASTUPITEĽSKÉ ÚRADY SR
- HONORÁRNE KONZULÁTY SR
- INFORMÁCIE PRE PODNIKANIE
- ČÍSLA, ÚDAJE, FAKTY
- DATABÁZA EXPORTÉROV
- TENDRE A DOPYTY
- VEREJNÉ OBSTARÁVANIA
- UŽITOČNÉ ODKAZY
- VÝZNAMNÉ PODUJATIA
- NEWSLETTERS

NAŠI PARTNERI



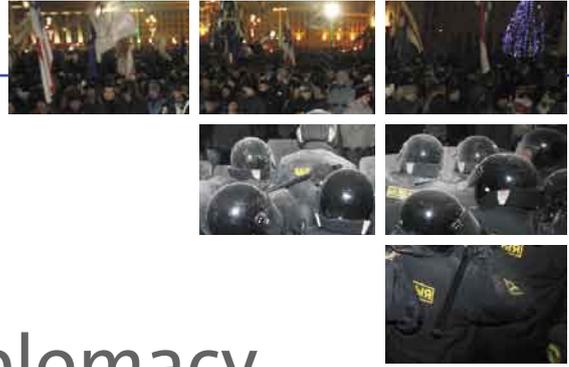
The collage displays several key pages from the portal:

- Podnikajme v zahraničí:** The main landing page for business abroad, featuring a navigation menu, a bar chart, and contact information for the Business Center.
- Informácie pre podnikanie podľa krajín:** A table listing countries and their respective business information.
- Table: Informácie pre podnikanie podľa krajín**

Zaužívané meno štátu	Svetoznačí	Oficiálny názov štátu	Webová stránka príslušného zastupiteľského úradu
Albánsko	Európa	Albánska republika	www.mzv.sk/albania
Azijsko	Ázia	Azijská demokratická ľudová republika	www.mzv.sk/paris
Argentína	Južná Amerika	Argentínska republika	www.mzv.sk/argentina
Arménsko	Európa	Arménska republika	www.mzv.sk/armenia
Austrália	Austrália a Oceánia	Austrálsky zväz	www.mzv.sk/australia
Azerbajdžan	Európa	Azerbajdžanská republika	www.mzv.sk/azerbaijan
Bahrajn	Ázia	Bahrajnské kráľovstvo	www.mzv.sk/bahrain
Bangladéš	Ázia	Bangladéška ľudová republika	www.mzv.sk/bangladesh
Belgicko	Európa	Belgické kráľovstvo	www.mzv.sk/belgium
Belize	Severná a Stredná Amerika	Belize	www.mzv.sk/belize
Bhután	Ázia	Bhutánske kráľovstvo	www.mzv.sk/bhutan
Bielorusko	Európa	Bieloruská republika	www.mzv.sk/belarus
Bolivia	Južná Amerika	Bolivský mnohonárodný štát	www.mzv.sk/bolivia
Bosna a Hercegovina	Európa	Bosna a Hercegovina	www.mzv.sk/bosnia
Brazília	Južná Amerika	Brazilska federatívna republika	www.mzv.sk/brazil
Brunej	Ázia	Brunejsko - Darussalamský štát	www.mzv.sk/brunei
Bulharsko	Európa	Bulharska republika	www.mzv.sk/bulgaria
Cyprus	Európa	Cyperská republika	www.mzv.sk/cyprus
Česko	Európa	Česká republika	www.mzv.sk/czech
Čierna Hora	Európa	Čierna Hora	www.mzv.sk/montenegro
Čile	Južná Amerika	Čilská republika	www.mzv.sk/chile

- Státy sveta:** A dropdown menu for selecting a country.
- News Articles:** Several news items with dates and headlines, such as 'Slovensko chce využiť skúsenosti a podporu severných krajín v oblasti obnove poškodených území' and 'Slovensko chce využiť skúsenosti a podporu severných krajín v oblasti obnove poškodených území'.

A sample from the "Let's do business abroad" information portal of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.



8

Economic Diplomacy and Energy Security

Support for economic growth, competitiveness and employment in the Slovak Republic is one of the principal priorities of the Ministry, especially at a time of global economic crisis. The integration of Slovak diplomats at the Ministry was effected, through which a new system framework was set up for this component of the diplomatic service to enable the closer interlinking of operations in the field of foreign policy with the country's economic needs, as well as the more rational use of human and financial resources. The pursuit of the objectives of economic diplomacy was an integral part of the work of all diplomats at Slovak representation offices. An important element in the evaluation of ambassadors was their contribution to supporting the export of Slovak products, increasing the inflow of foreign investment, modern technology and innovation, and developing inbound tourism. The shift of attention to countries that are important for Slovakia in terms of the diversification of economic and trade cooperation resulted in an extended territorial scope of operation of the Slovak diplomatic service.

During 2011 the Ministry organised a series of events aimed at **helping the business sector in Slovakia and supporting trade, investment and innovation**. As a result of the “**Economic Diplomacy**

as a Service for Businesses” discussion forum, basic requirements, notions and needs of business towards the government agencies involved were defined in relation to businesses’ economic objectives and interests abroad, as was the setting of an effective, optimum pattern of cooperation between government agencies and businesses. Tasks in the pursuit of the economic interests of the Slovak Republic and its business entities abroad were one of the key agenda points at the regular meeting of the heads of Slovak representations. Another key point was the **business and investment opportunity contact exchange** where entrepreneurs could discuss their business plans abroad with ambassadors. Further, the Ministry, in cooperation with regional branches of the Slovak Chamber of Commerce and Industry and Higher Territorial Units (*Nitra, Košice, Trenčín*), organised regional-level meetings with entrepreneurs. The Ministry cooperated with SARIO in the preparation of the 5th Slovak Matchmaking Fair held in November 2011. The Ministry runs the “**Let’s Do Business Abroad**” portal as a service for Slovak business entities operating in other countries.

With the aim of helping draw experience in the area of the knowledge-based economy from advanced countries, the **Nordic-Slovak Innovation Forum** took place at the Ministry in October 2011, organised

Economic Diplomacy and Energy Security



Michal Kottman,
General Director of the
Economic Cooperation
Directorate General of
the Ministry of Foreign
Affairs of the Slovak
Republic

The integration of economic diplomacy into the Foreign Service

From the very beginning, the reason behind the intention to unify the exercise of the foreign service and economic diplomacy was the aim to promote the economic interests of the Slovak Republic more efficiently with an emphasis on achieving enhanced synergies, and concentrating capacities on the delivery of more effective support for business entities on foreign markets.

The principal tasks of the Ministry in the field of economic diplomacy included monitoring the economic situation and the conditions prevailing on external markets; identifying opportunities and partners; and promoting the interests of the Slovak economy abroad through the network of diplomatic missions. Economic diplomacy as part of the integrated foreign service covered all relevant activities of the Ministry, and was reflected in the activities of all diplomatic missions of the Slovak Republic, not only those where specialist economic diplomats were deployed.

The scope of the work of economic diplomats at Slovak diplomatic posts was as follows:

- Assist in the building of contacts with ministries and other government agencies, chambers of commerce, associations supporting businesses, and national- and regional-level

in cooperation with representations of Denmark, Finland, Norway and Sweden. The knowledge-based economy was also the topic of the Visegrad Four-Japan workshop on innovation policy, and the **Slovak-Turkey Innovation and Technology Forum**.

Multilateral Economic Diplomacy

Slovak diplomats presented the opinions and interests of Slovakia within global trade and economic organisations such as the **World Trade Organisation (WTO)** and a number of economic **organisations under the United Nations** (UN Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), UN Industrial Development Organisation (UNIDO), and UN Development Programme (UNDP)). Another important area of work was the promotion of Slovakia's economic interests at global financial institutions: the **International Monetary Fund, the World Bank** and the **European Bank for Reconstruction and Development** in particular. The contribution made by those organisations to Slovakia's efforts was mainly in the identification of optimum approaches to necessary reforms and fiscal consolidation.

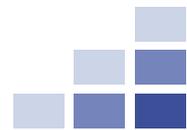
Our membership of and activities within the **Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development** were also of particular significance. Regular reviews and ratings made by OECD, with concrete recommendations for Slovakia, helped to formulate national strategies and sectoral policies,

and also had a notable effect on how the Slovak Republic was generally seen by European and global expert organisations and circles. Defences of national energy policy, environmental performance, and the evaluation of the Slovak development assistance system within OECD were successfully accomplished.

Energy Security

Another important objective of Slovak diplomatic efforts was to deepen cooperation in the fields of energy security, and promote the construction of the north-south gas network interconnection, energy infrastructure in the area of power networks and oil supply, and the effective mechanism of the European energy market. Issues concerning energy security were on the discussion platform agendas of the V4, OSCE, the Eastern Partnership Energy Platform, and the United Nations. In 2011, the International Energy Agency undertook an in-depth review of energy policy and supported Slovakia's efforts to strengthen regional integration and energy efficiency.

The Ministry implemented its own **External Energy Security** project to regularly monitor and assess the situation, and forecast developments in global energy. The Ministry devised a strategy to promote the energy security interests of Slovakia in international organisations. Slovakia continued to lead the initiative in this field, also at the OSCE.



- media; and intermediate contacts between the above and their Slovak counterparts;
- Elaborate economic information about the territory semi-annual frequency);
- Assess macroeconomic developments and prepare partial economic information about the situation in different sectors of the economy in the country of operation;
- Gather information about business opportunities, international calls for tenders, and fairs relevant for Slovak institutions and businesses;
- Provide advisory services to business entities entering a foreign market and support Slovak exports;
- Assist in the addressing of problems identified by the Ministry, other government departments, institutions and businesses;
- Coordinate institutional bilateral economic cooperation between Slovakia and countries of accreditation;
- Coordinate economic activities in relation to the activities of the EU and international organisations;
- Organise and take part in business negotiations (within the framework of business delegations); attend and make presentations at fairs and shows, workshops and conferences, and organise other promotional events;
- Search for contacts for potential business and investment partners, and assist in initial liaison;
- Provide advice and information support for potential foreign investors; perform tasks targeted at attracting foreign investors, in cooperation with SARIO.

Public Procurement Abroad

One of the focus areas of the Ministry's efforts was public procurement within international organisations. So far, Slovak business entities have seldom used the opportunity to win a contract in a public procurement process for the programmes and purposes of international organisations. On its

website the Ministry provides information about the rules, procedures and options for tendering purchase orders for the majority of international organisations. With a view to promoting this activity, in June 2011 the Ministry, in cooperation with the Slovak Ministry of Finance, prepared a workshop on public procurement within the World Bank group.

V OBCI SELCA PÔSOBIL V ROKOCH 1893 - 1906 AKO LEKÁR
ZAKLADATEĽ MODERNEJ SLOVENSKEJ LITERATÚRY

U OPĆINI SELCA DJELOVAO JE OD 1893 - 1906 GODINE
KAO LJJEČNIK OSNIVAČ MODERNE SLOVAČKE KNJIŽEVNOSTI

MUDR. MATEJ BENCŮR (MARTIN KUKUČIN)

 PRI PRÍLEŽITOSTI 150. VÝROČIA NARODENIA VENOVALO
MINISTERSTVO ZAHRANIČNÝCH VEČÍ SLOVENSKEJ REPUBLIKY
POVODOM 150. OBLJETNICE RODENJA PLOČU JE POSTAVILO
MINISTARSTVO VANJSKIH POSLOVA REPUBLIKE SLOVAČKE



9

Presentation of the Slovak Republic Abroad

The quality international presentation of the Slovak Republic, its creative potential, culture, and conducive business and investment environment plays a role that is annually becoming increasingly important. In that regard, the Ministry prepared a **country presentation concept**, entitled “**Slovakia: a Country with Potential**”. One of the core topics last year was the **20th anniversary of the Visegrad Four** and the presentation of the group as a platform for effective cooperation and coordination on European issues. Key events also included the **90th anniversary of the birth of Alexander Dubček**; the **100th anniversary of the birth of composer Ján Cikker**; and support for the **preparation of the Košice – European Capital of Culture 2013 project**. Other significant activities relevant for the presentation of the Slovak Republic included the **Ice Hockey World Championship 2011**, a top sports event which was popularised also by Slovak embassies. The presentation by the Slovak Republic of the values of Slovak culture abroad was done in cooperation with other countries of the EU, V4 and the Central European Cultural Platform, and also at the European Union National Institutes for Culture (EUNIC) association.

The Ministry, working with the government departments of culture, economy and finance, and the Slovak Tourism Agency, organised a number of tourism workshops and presentations, while the Investment Roadshow in the USA aimed at increase the visibility of the Slovak business environment.

Examples of Cultural Events in the World

- Continuation of the **Contemporary Slovak Glass** touring exhibition, with works by the most notable glass-making artists (exhibitions were held in Latvia, Russia, Germany, upcoming in 2012 are Sweden, Norway and Denmark).
- The **Slovaks Helping the World** exhibition project as part of the activities of the European Commission to mark the European Year of Volunteering. The project was distributed on CDs in five language versions to all Slovak embassies.
- Participation of the Slovak Republic at two cultural **Central European Cultural Platform** events – DJ Night in June 2011 in Budapest and Not Fashion Alone in November 2011 in Warsaw.
- **Danubius Fluvius** exhibition on the 10th anniversary of the opening of the **Mária Valéria Bridge** in **Štúrovo**, which will also be presented in other countries along the Danube.
- Launch of the second phase of an exhibition project in Jakarta, presenting works by Slovak visual artists of the 20th century from collections of **Považské múzeum in Žilina**.
- In December 2011, the **Slovak Graphics on the Road** touring project (an exhibition cycle presenting art by Miroslav Cipár in Asia) was launched in Delhi.
- An unveiling ceremony for a memorial table to mark the **150th anniversary of Martin Kukučín's birth** took place on the island of **Brač** in Croatia in August 2011.





On 1 March 2011, a public event took place at the Candlelight Manifestation Memorial in support of the release of political prisoners in Belarus.

10

Value-based Foreign Policy



Transparent, value-based foreign policy added to the Slovak Republic's global prestige, respect and enhanced visibility. Activities were foremost targeted at supporting and promoting the values of democracy and human rights.

In relation to **Belarus**, Slovakia promoted increased pressure on the regime of President Alexander Lukashenko, and supported targeted action against the country's non-democratic government. Pressure was exerted primarily to make the Belarusian government release political prisoners and respect human rights. Moreover, Slovak diplomacy supported Belarusian civil society and helped civil activists. It made a significant contribution to the formulation of the EU's policy towards Belarus, and managed to keep the issue of political processes and prisoners in Belarus at the centre of attention of the international community.

The Slovak Republic also actively responded to the changes in North Africa resulting from the Arab Spring. The Slovak Minister of Foreign Affairs visited Egypt, and expressed support for the country's transformation and early democratic election. **The Slovak Republic, together with the Netherlands, co-chaired the Community of Democracies' Working Group on Tunisia**, aiming to assist in its transition to democracy.

Other activities that should be mentioned include the participation of the Slovak Republic in the **US-Brazilian Open Government Initiative**, which declares its objective to be improving government and governance of public affairs through enhancing the

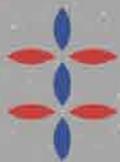
transparency, effectiveness, and accountability of public administration, and through creating opportunities for citizen participation in governance.

SR against Repression in Belarus

Slovakia co-initiated **at the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE)** the launch of the OSCE's Moscow Mechanism against Belarus. The initiative sought to achieve the objective investigation of human rights violations following the repressions of the Belarusian regime after the presidential election in 2010, and to prepare recommendations for the Belarusian government.

The eligibility of the initiative was confirmed by a number of established cases of the violation of human rights and the misuse of power to curtail citizens' personal freedoms and civil society activities, as documented in a report prepared by an independent expert of OSCE. The initiative suitably complemented the activities of other international organisations related to Belarus, and helped to ensure that the critical situation in the country remained at the centre of attention of the international community.

The Slovak Republic actively engaged in election monitoring within the framework of election observation missions of the OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR). In 2011, the Slovak Ministry of Foreign Affairs seconded eight short-term observers to missions operating in Kazakhstan, Macedonia, Albania, Kyrgyz and the Russian Federation.



MINISTERSTVO
ZAHRANIČNÝCH VEČÍ
SLOVENSKEJ REPUBLIKY

Svet a my

Časopis Ministerstva zahraničných vecí Slovenskej republiky

12/2011

- **Aktuálne: Ako sa zúčastniť na voľbách do Národnej rady Slovenskej republiky 2012 zo zahraničia**
- **Predstavujeme: Nová veľvyslankyňa v Nórsku Barbara Illková**
- **Pohľadnica: Dolu hlavou alebo Austrália očami slovenskej veľvyslankyne v Austrálii Evy Ponomarenkovej**
- **Cestovateľský servis: Konzulárne informácie a rady na cestách**

11

Building an Open and Effective Foreign Service



The efforts to make the Ministry more open to both professional public and general public and the Ministry's operation more effective, and the provision of quality staff education were among the priorities of the Foreign Ministry.

Partner dialogues with non-governmental organisations was not confined to organising joint events; the Ministry made use of NGO's contacts and professional expertise in the development of foreign and development policies, and involved them in discussion forums with Germany and the Czech Republic.

The Ministry launched ***Svet a my*** (The World and Us) electronic magazine intended for the general public, aiming to popularise Slovak foreign policy and present services and information from the Ministry's environment. The Ministry also supported the publication of magazines and brochures on foreign policy, International Issues and *Zahraničná politika* (Foreign Policy).

'Slovakia helping the World' touring exhibition presented Slovak development assistance in the world's poorest countries.

In the area of education, the Ministry for the first time concentrated on improving the rate of success of Slovaks seeking jobs in international organisations (Preparation for Work in International Organisations programme; Preparation for Work in the UN workshop). Another pilot programme was an intensive training course for economic diplomats.

The **rationalisation of the Ministry's operation** focused on staff cost savings and the gradual restructuring of the Slovak Republic's assets abroad. A new rental system was also introduced for the flats and residences of embassies. A new air ticket procurement system, also used by 15 other government agencies, has delivered a significant 30% saving on travel expenses. Cost efficiency has been added to the management of telecommunication services. Electronic auctions delivered transparency of the procurement of goods and services, and the reduction of the Ministry's operating costs by approx. EUR 200,000 a year.

Building an Open and Effective Foreign Service

Information about the Ministry's budget and its use in 2011

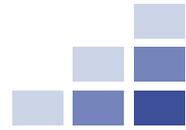
- The state budget for 2011 was approved by the Act of the National Council of the Slovak Republic No. 498/2010 Coll. on the state budget for 2011.
- The total expenditure in 2011 allocated to the heading of the Foreign Ministry was EUR 111,750,932, including current expenditure of EUR 107,957,104, and capital expenditure of EUR 3,793,828. The revenue budget of the heading was EUR 3,074,621.
- The approved Ministry staff limit was 1,111, including 1,099 persons in the central body and 12 persons in the Slovak Agency for International Development Cooperation (SAMRS). The limit was adjusted during the year due to the detachment of economic diplomats from the Ministry of Economy of the Slovak Republic (61 employees) and staff from the Government Office of the Slovak Republic, and the secondment of additional 10 employees to the Permanent Representation of the Slovak Republic to the EU in Brussels and the Permanent Mission to OSCE in Paris. The headcount limit of the Ministry's heading as of 31 December 2011 was 1,191.
- A binding limit was enacted for wages, salaries, service income and other service benefits in the amount of EUR 47,215,834.
- The approved expenditure budget was adjusted during 2011 through the Ministry's budgetary measures to EUR 125,851,054.10 and the actual drawing amounted to EUR 125,610,782 (99.81 %).
- The Ministry's revenue budget was met and even exceeded. The budgeted revenue was adjusted to EUR 7,435,444 and the actual income was EUR 7,555,870, which amounts to 101.62% performance of the adjusted budget.

Expenditure of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Slovak Republic for 2011

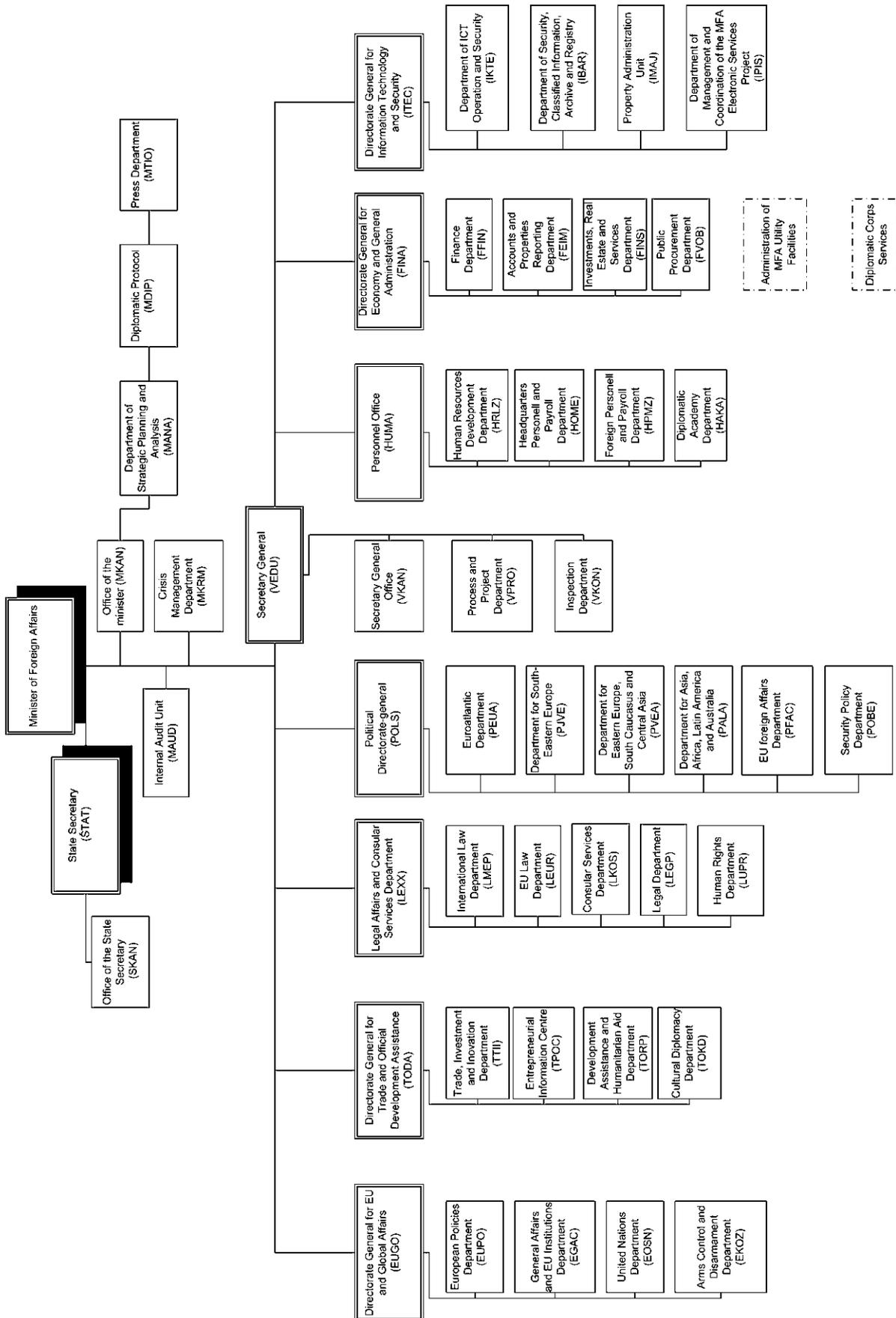
(a simplified summary of the program structure – actual drawing in millions of euros)

Programme: Development of Foreign Relations	106.68
Representation of the Slovak Republic Abroad	69.37
<i>Diplomatic Representation of the Slovak Republic Abroad</i>	64.20
<i>Cultural Representation of the Slovak Republic Abroad</i>	2.20
<i>Foreign Local Human Resources</i>	2.97
Policy Creation and Implementation	37.30
<i>Programme Management</i>	37.12
<i>Cooperation with the Third Sector</i>	0.12
<i>Employee Education</i>	0.06
Interdepartmental Programmes:	
Programme: Official Development Assistance	7.15
Programme: Slovak Republic's Contributions to International Organisations – Foreign Affairs Ministry	11.78
<hr/>	
Total Expenditure	125.61

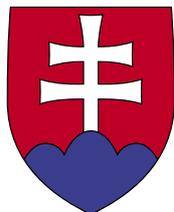
Organisational Structure of the MFA SR



As of November 2011



Stovak Agency for International Development Cooperation



MINISTRY
OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS
OF THE SLOVAK REPUBLIC

Foreign Policy in 2011