



PERMANENT MISSION OF SLOVENIA TO THE UNITED NATIONS

No. N-24/06

Permanent Mission of Slovenia to the United Nations presents its compliments to the President of the 60th Session of the United Nations General Assembly and has the honour to communicate the following:

The Government of the Republic of Slovenia has decided to present its candidature for election to the **United Nations Human Rights Council** at the elections to be held on 9 May 2006, during the 60th session of the United Nations General Assembly.

The Permanent Mission of Slovenia wishes to highlight the following **commitments and pledges** of the Republic of Slovenia with regard to its candidature for the Human Rights Council:

The Republic of Slovenia, whose very existence came to be rooted in the popular strive for democracy and the protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms, has continuously strived, as a matter of policy, to contribute constructively and progressively to the universal promotion and protection of human rights. Human rights present an important Chapter of the Slovenian Constitution and they also constitute one of the key pillars of Slovenia's foreign policy.

In its endeavours to contribute to the protection and promotion of human rights worldwide, Slovenia has decided to take its commitment one step further and put forward its candidature for the membership of the Human Rights Council.

Slovenia has always been committed to the aims and principles of the UN Charter, norms and standards emanating from the Universal Declaration on Human Rights and other international human rights instruments. Slovenia succeeded or ratified major international instruments in the field of human rights, international humanitarian law and refugee law, including International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and its two Optional Protocols; International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights; International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination; Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women and its Optional Protocol; Convention on the Rights of the Child and its two Optional Protocols; Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment; four Geneva Conventions and its two Additional Protocols; the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court; and 75 ILO Conventions, including all 8 core ILO Conventions. In 2006 the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture will be ratified and the Additional Protocol III to the Geneva Conventions will be signed. According to the Slovenian Constitution, these international legal instruments are directly applicable in the Slovenian legal order.

Slovenia submits regularly periodic reports required by the human rights treaties and takes steps to publicize and follow-up within Slovenia on treaty bodies' comments and recommendations. Slovenia also accepted being a subject to all communication procedures of the United Nations human rights treaties it has ratified.

H.E. Mr. Jan Eliasson
The President of the 60th Session of the
United Nations General Assembly
New York

Slovenia has further actively demonstrated its support for the drafting of an Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights to provide a communication procedure to the set of rights emanating from this treaty.

In 2002, Slovenia issued a standing and open invitation to the mandate holders of all special procedures of the Commission on Human Rights. We have been and remain committed to fully cooperate with the special procedures.

Slovenia has strongly supported the idea of a new Human Rights Council since it has first been suggested, has actively participated in its creation and welcomed the establishment of the Human Rights Council, including its innovative features, such as the universal scrutiny for all.

At the same time, Slovenia used to and will continue to support the strengthening of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights. This includes Slovenia's support for doubling its regular budget financing in the course of the next five years so as to enable the Office to strengthen the work of the Council by assisting states effectively and objectively in their implementation of human rights norms and standards. Slovenia will also continue to provide, to the best of its abilities, voluntary contributions to the Office and the rest of the United Nations Human Rights System.

Slovenia has an active and independent national human rights institution – Human Rights Ombudsman – providing independent assessment of the implementation of human rights obligations and standards. Ombudsman's annual report on human rights situation in Slovenia is a public document. The last report was made available through official channels to the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights immediately after its publication in July 2005 for the use of the treaty bodies and other interested mechanism. It has also been Slovenia's consistent policy to support the inclusion of the civil society's voice towards the common goal of the improvement of human rights situation both nationally, regionally and internationally. We will continue to promote an inclusive approach with regard to the Council.

It would be a particular privilege for Slovenia to be granted the honour to serve this important body as a member. This candidature is the first effort of Slovenia to serve as a member in the main global intergovernmental human rights body though it has continuously participated as active observer in the work of the Commission on Human Rights. Slovenia would highly value the opportunity to contribute to the work of the new Council, based on its experience in promoting human rights, democracy and the rule of law. Slovenia would appreciate, if elected, to have the possibility to engage with others in a constructive promotion and effective implementation of universal human rights standards. To that end, Slovenia believes the new Council should be a forum where the voice of small states is fairly represented.

Slovenia hopes to be viewed as a country that demonstrates the highest level of commitment to the promotion and protection of human rights and stands ready to engage in substantive dialogue with Member States for further elaboration of Slovenia's views and aspirations for its membership of the Human Rights Council and would appreciate, to facilitate that, to have this communication placed on the Secretariat's list of candidates.

Permanent Mission of Slovenia to the United Nations avails itself of this opportunity to renew to the President of the 60th Session of the United Nations General Assembly the assurances of its highest consideration.



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New York, 4 April 2006