



REPUBLIC OF SLOVENIA  
MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS

# NEWSLETTER

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**The new Ambassador of the Republic of Slovenia to the United States, H.E. Dr. Božo Cerar, arrived to Washington, D.C., on Wednesday, September 4, 2013.**

Ambassador Dr. Cerar previously served as Ambassador of the Republic of Slovenia to Canada (1997–2001), Poland (2004) and as Ambassador and

## Welcome to Ambassador Dr. Božo Cerar

Permanent Representative at the Permanent Representation of the Republic of Slovenia to NATO (2007–2011). During his career, he was also Head of the Department for Europe and North America (1991–1992), Minister Plenipotentiary at the Embassy of the Republic of Slovenia in London (1992–1996), Head of Minister's Office (1996–1997), Head of the Department for Multilateral Relations (2001) and Head of the NATO Department (2002–2003).

From 2005 to 2006 as well as in 2012 and 2013 prior to his appointment as the Ambassador

of the Republic of Slovenia to the United States, he served as a State Secretary/Deputy Foreign Minister at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Slovenia .

Ambassador Dr. Cerar holds a BA in Law, MA in Diplomatic Studies and PhD in International Law. Next to his mother tongue he speaks English, French, Russian, Serbian and basic Greek.

We warmly welcome the ambassador and wish him a pleasant and memorable start of his life and work in Washington, D.C.



## 8th Bled Strategic Forum

The changes in Europe in the wake of the economic and financial crisis were in the focus of the 8th Bled Strategic Forum, the annual conference dedicated to deliberations on topical international issues. A high-profile international event under the title of "A Changing Europe in a Changing World" took place on September 2 and 3, and featured top politicians, business officials and academics from more than 50 countries.

The conference saw in attendance Prime Minister of the Republic of Slovenia Alenka Bratušek, President of the Republic of Slovenia, Borut Pahor, Austrian President Heinz Fischer, Italian Prime Minister Enrico Letta, the Chief Prosecutor of the International Criminal Court, Fatou Bensouda, the Deputy Secretary General of the OSCE, Yves Leterme as well as 17 ministers and multiple high



From left: Austrian President Heinz Fischer, Slovenian President Borut Pahor, Prime Minister Alenka Bratušek, Foreign Minister Karl Erjavec and Constitutional Court's Chief Justice Ernest Petrič at the conference.

representatives of international organizations as the forum was also an opportunity for some bilateral meetings.

An opening ceremony on Monday, September 2, afternoon featured addresses by

Bratušek and Foreign Minister Karl Erjavec and was followed by the main panels. This year's debates focused on pressing international issues, such as a changing Europe in a changing world, the future of the EMU, dilemmas regarding respect for human rights and the role of the International Criminal Court, water resource management, and the EU's enlargement to Turkey and the Western Balkans. Participating in panel discussions were also Phillip Reeker, Deputy Assistant Secretary at the U.S. Department of State, and Stephen Rapp, United States Ambassador-at-Large for War Crimes Issues.

As the Forum has developed in recent years into one of the most prominent international events, gaining visibility in the region and beyond and attracting an increasing number of distinguished guests



The three days of debates – at the Young Strategic Forum, the Business BSF and the Bled Strategic Forum – featured about 500 participants.

and experts from politics, international relations and business, this year's Business BSF was another valuable feature of the Bled Forum that focused on economic cooperation and new business opportunities for Slovenian companies.

The proceedings for BSF 2013 got under way on Sunday, September 1, with the Young Bled Strategic Forum, which brought decision-makers of the future to Bled to discuss issues facing young people. The opening of Young BSF was addressed by BSF Secretary General Brian Alain Bergant, who welcomed the young professionals and future leaders on behalf of Foreign Minister Karl Erjavec and the co-organizers of the Young BSF Solutions Generator Conference, the Centre for European Perspective. Coming



Prime Minister Alenka Bratušek addressed yet on Sunday, September 1, the participants of Young Bled Strategic Forum. (Photos: Nebojša Tejić/STA/MZZ)

from 21 countries across the world, participants at the third annual Young Bled Strategic Forum shared their experience on innovation, digital politics,

entrepreneurship and mobility in relation to education and ethics. More information and photos of the event are available at: <http://www.bledstrategicforum.org/>

## CULTURE

# Mladinsko Theater Performs in Washington, D.C.

Monday through Friday, August 26–30, the Mladinsko Theater from Ljubljana, Slovenia, performed in Washington, D.C. its production of "Nijinsky's Last Dance" solo drama. Written by the local playwright Norman Allen and directed by Marko Mlačnik, the show presented by the Cultural DC starred Primož Bežjak as the legendary ballet dancer Vaslav Nijinsky, who joined the Ballet Russes in 1909. The production premiered at the Mladinsko Theatre in November 2010.

Mladinsko Theater performances in the Flashpoint Mead Theater Lab were a part of National Art Gallery's homage to one of the most celebrated ballet



Ovations for Primož Bežjak as Nijinsky.

ensembles and its founder Sergei Pavlovich Diaghilev. The exhibition in the East wing of the National

Gallery of Arts, titled "Diaghilev and the Ballets Russes, 1909–1929: When Art Danced with

Music" is on display till October 6.

Nijinsky's Last Dance production by Mladinsko Theater triumphed with reviews in the Washington Post and on websites such as DC Metro Theater Arts. The renowned writer John Stoltenberg wrote: "He speaks in Slovenian as his words appear on overhead screens in English. At the end of our fleeting hour in this presence, we sit in rapt awe. A performance is so magnificent that one barely dares breathe. Nijinsky's Last Dance, by local playwright Norman Allen, has had several productions—but I cannot imagine any as fine as this." Critic Susan Galbraith stressed: »Rarely in Washington can one experience something so raw and emotionally truthful. Anger. Terror. Desire. It's all there, and isn't that what theater is supposed to be about?«

In addition to support from CulturalDC, the Mladinsko Theater's visit was funded by the City of Ljubljana, the Slovene Ministry of Culture and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Tuesday's performance was



Tuesday's performance was followed by a reception at the Flashpoint Gallery.

followed by a reception featuring Slovenian wines and pastry and where the guests were addressed by Ms. Juanita Hardy, Executive Director of CulturalDC, and Ms. Ondina Blokar Drobič, Deputy Chief of Mission at the Embassy of the Republic of Slovenia, who thanked the creative team of Mladinsko Theater, especially the Mladinsko Theater artistic director Uršula Cetinski, choreographer

Mateja Rebolj, also translator Jakob J. Kenda, composer Bojana Šaljić Podešva, set and costume designer Barbara Kapelj Osredkar, lighting designer Matjaž Brišar, sound designer Silvo Zupančič, Malič Tina, Prevec Boris and Pernat Dušan. More about Mladinsko Theater can be found at: <http://en.mladinsko.com>.

## CULTURE

# Writer Boris Pahor Turns 100

Boris Pahor, a Slovenian writer, celebrated his 100th birthday on August 26 when an event marking his anniversary was organized in Ljubljana, at which also a special book entitled "Tako živim" (This is the Way I Live), about his life and work was launched.

The acclaimed author and a living witness to the horrors of 20th century totalitarianisms, who is a member of the Slovenian minority in Italy, became also the

first Slovenian to be declared an honorary citizen of Trieste, when Mayor Roberto Cosolini conferred the title to him on August 23. The survivor of fascist persecution and of several Nazi concentration camps also received the European Citizens' Prize, conferred by the European Parliament on individuals or groups who have made a significant contribution to mutual understanding and fostering of ties among EU countries.



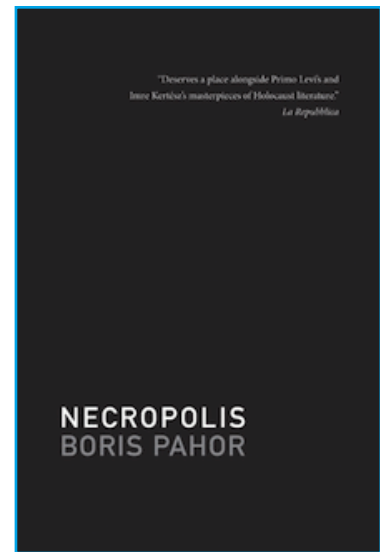
Boris Pahor's is a living witness to the horrors of 20th century totalitarianisms.

Growing up in Trieste, he witnessed the persecution of Slovenians by the Fascists before WWII, was imprisoned by the Nazis during the war and was banned from entering Slovenia by the Communists after publishing an interview in which fellow writer Edvard Kocbek spoke about summary post-war killings.

However, Pahor is considered one of the best known Slovenian writers. His fame in Europe stems from publications about the atrocities in Nazi concentration camps, but in Slovenia and among Slovenian minority in Italy he is well known for his social and political engagement, in addition to his writing. Pahor is best known for his novel "Necropolis"

(also available in English in translation by Michael Biggins) describing his experience of the Nazi labor camp Mittelbau-Dora near Nordhausen, Germany. He is also known for the collection of novels entitled *Grmada v pristanu* (The Bonfire in the Quay), and the novels *Nomadi brez oaze* (Nomads without an Oasis) and *Spodaj s pomladjo* (A Difficult Spring).

To mark his birthday, a symposium called *Pahoriana* was organized by Mladinska knjiga Publishing House in April 2013 at the Cankarjev Dom Cultural and Congress Center in Ljubljana where panelists were analyzing Pahor's work and a series of speakers paid tribute to his moral authority. Also in April, his novel *Mesto*



Pahor is best known for his novel "Necropolis" that is also available in English in translation by Michael Biggins.

*v zalivu* (The City in the Bay) was published in French under the title *Quand Ulysse revient à Trieste*.

## SPORTS

# EuroBasket 2013 Opened in Ljubljana

The opening ceremony for EuroBasket 2013 was held in Ljubljana's Congress Square on Tuesday, August 27, evening, on the eve of the first day of the biggest sporting event in independent Slovenia. The ceremony was addressed by Prime Minister Alenka Bratušek, who praised Slovenian athletes and welcomed basketball fans to Slovenia. The mayors of all four host cities of Ljubljana, Koper, Celje, and Jesenice also briefly addressed the event, saying that their cities were ready for the tournament. The ceremony was also attended by President Borut Pahor and several other state officials and political figures.

Also in attendance were representatives of the Slovenian Basketball Association and FIBA



The second round and the knock-out stage will be played in Ljubljana's Stožice Arena.

Europe and representatives of all 24 nations that will take part in the tournament. The tournament was officially opened by FIBA Europe Secretary General Kamil Novak and the Slovenian national

basketball team started their EuroBasket 2013 campaign with a hard-fought 62:60 (21:19, 36:32, 51:46) win over the Czech Republic in Celje on Wednesday, August 28.

EuroBasket 2013 will be played between 4 and 22 September, with the preliminary round taking place until September 9 in Ljubljana, Koper, Celje and Jesenice. The second round and the knock-out stage will be played in Ljubljana's Stožice Arena, starting on September 11. More information, schedule and final scores of this biggest European basketball championship, where also many NBA players will be featured, can be found at: <http://www.eurobasket2013.org/en/default.asp>.

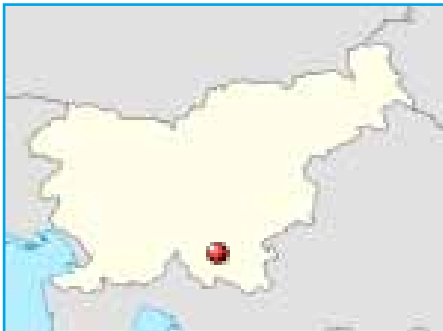
(Source: STA)



Goran Dragić, a guard for the Phoenix Suns, scored 18 points to lead Slovenia to a 78-69 upset victory over defending champion Spain on Thursday night.

## TOURISM

### Kočevje



The town of Kočevje lies within the meanders of the Karst river Rinža in the southeastern part of Slovenia only about 20 miles from the border with Croatia. This economic, cultural and sports center of the Kočevska region is known for its natural beauty, numerous animal species, forests which cover 90% of the area, and diverse Karst caves.

In 1247, the Patriarch of Aquileia granted the area around the town of Ribnica to the Carinthian counts of Ortenburg. When the counts, in 1336, received from Patriarch Bertram further estates on the wooded plateau



The town lies within the meanders of the Karst river Rinža.

down to Kostel on the Kolpa River, they called for German-speaking settlers from Carinthia and Tyrol. In the following decades, these established the town of Gottschee (Kočevje), which was first mentioned in a 1363 deed. The settlement received market rights in 1377 and town privileges in 1471.

Until 1918, the town was part of the Austrian Empire, when the region was among the most developed areas of Slovenia, with a public electricity system, gas pipelines, and one of the biggest sawmills in Eastern Europe. However, in the year 1941, almost all the inhabitants who were of German descent

were moved to a new area near the confluence of the rivers Sava and Sotla, and after World War II, a Yugoslav labor camp for political prisoners was located in Kočevje.

Nowadays, one can find extraordinary natural and cultural heritage in Kočevje. In the very center of Kočevje, stands a mighty parish church, designed by the famous architect Friedrich Freiherr von Schmidt and dedicated to St. Jernej (St. Bartholomew). In Kočevje, one can still admire the castle that dates back to the 15th century. The castle is named Fridrihštajn after the owner, count Friderik II Celjski, who was there secretly meeting his young fiancée Veronika Deseniška.

One of the many nearby attractions is the Lake of Kočevje, which was created after the coal production was stopped in 1978. The lake is home to numerous kinds of animals: over 64 species of birds come to nest there. The



Kočevje is also known for its unexplored forests that are home to a growing population of brown bears. ([www.slovenia.info](http://www.slovenia.info), photographer: Bobo)

lake is also a wonderful site for brown bears. A few years ago, Slovenian experts even captured near its banks nest numerous and transported a few brown bears crabs, and the lake area is known to the French Pyrenees to help for 15 species of dragonfly. replenish the falling population of

Kočevje is also known for brown bears in southern France. More information are available at its unexplored forests that are a home to a growing population of [www.kocevje.si](http://www.kocevje.si).

EMBASSY

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## Farewell to Ms. Margit Pugh

Ms. Margit Pugh, whom many of you knew personally as she provided support to individuals requesting consular assistance, ended her tenure with the embassy and left Washington.

Ms. Pugh was not only exceptional as a consular officer, she also often took tasks in economic affairs. Her help was very much appreciated in public diplomacy events where she was involved in cultural and other promotion of Slovenia in the United States.

She was an excellent member of our team, known both for her professionalism and hard work, and, most importantly, to all of us she was a great colleague and friend. We wish her all the best with her future endeavors as she begins a new, challenging and demanding chapter of her professional career.

Ms. Pugh on the very left at the U.S. Department of State.



# SWU Scholarships for Academic year 2014-2015

For the academic year 2014-2015, The Slovenian Women's Union Scholarship Foundation is offering the following scholarships for college and graduate students to be awarded during April 2014:

**Rose Marie Princ Scholarship** of \$4,000 for a Graduate Student majoring in the field of Education. Applicant must be of Slovene ancestry. Application forms are available online at [www.slovenianunion.org](http://www.slovenianunion.org) "scholarship" and must be submitted via postal mail

before March 1, 2014. E-mailed materials will not be accepted.

**Slovenian Women's Union Scholarships** of \$2,000 and \$1,000 will be offered to high school seniors and college students majoring in any field and attending accredited colleges or universities during the 2014-2015 academic year. Students applying for these awards must have held membership in the Slovenian Union of America for the past three years, beginning before March 1, 2011.

Application forms are available

online at [www.slovenianunion.org](http://www.slovenianunion.org) "scholarship" and must be submitted via postal mail before March 1, 2014. E-mailed materials will not be accepted. For more information contact Mary Turvey [mturvey@aol.com](mailto:mturvey@aol.com) or Marge Church [yemec1@windstream.net](mailto:yemec1@windstream.net)



## TO DO LIST

### Small Nations Poetry Night 2013 - Women in Poetry

Would you like to listen to great poetry from Austria, Bulgaria, Iceland, Lichtenstein, Malta and Slovenia? Then attend the 8th Annual Small Nations Poetry Night 2013 at the Katzen Arts Center at American University. Ambassadors of the participating countries will read poetry from their home countries. This year's topic is Women in Poetry. The Small Nations' Poetry Night will be followed by a reception provided by the Embassy of the United Kingdom of Bahrain. Wines from the participating countries will also be served.

When: **Thursday, September 12 at 6:30 p.m.**

Where: **Katzen Arts Center, American University, 4400 Massachusetts Avenue, NW, Washington, DC 20016**

Admission is free. RSVP is required due to limited space at: <http://smallnationspoetrynight2013-efbnend.eventbrite.com/>

### Slovenian -American Heritage Foundation 2013 Lecture Series: Slovenian Folk Music

The Slovenian-American Heritage Foundation, along with our partners, the Slovenian Museum and Archives and the Slovenian Genealogy Society International, invite all to attend the fourth talk in the 2013 Lecture Series. Dr. Mojca Kovačič and Dr. Marija Klobčar from the Slovenian Academy of Sciences and Arts will discuss folk music in Slovenia today and the role of folk songs in defining the Slovenian national identity.

When: **Tuesday, September 10, 2013 at 7:00 p.m.**

Where: **Lower Hall of the Slovenian Society Home, 20713 Recher Avenue, Euclid, OH**

Free and open to the public.

More information: **(216) 696-3460 x.306** or [ahiti@hgfarchitects.com](mailto:ahiti@hgfarchitects.com)



## 5th Annual Slovenefest in Kansas City

When: [September 28, 2013](#)  
Where: [Kansas City, Kansas.](#)

Holy Mass starts at 4:00 p.m. in Holy Family Church at 274 Orchard Street.  
Festivities will take place from 5:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m. at Msgr. Mejak Hall, Gym, & School Grounds, 513 Ohio, Kansas City, Kansas.  
Music & Dancing will feature The Don Lipovac Orchestra with Brian McCarty & Hrvatski Običaj. The evening will include authentic Slovenian dinner, big silent auction, children & adult games, cultural booth and souvenirs.  
For more information contact (913) 371-1561 or [www.holyfamilychurchkck.com](http://www.holyfamilychurchkck.com)

## SlovenSki Calendar for 2014 Ski Season

### **SlovenSki Weekend**

Where: WINDHAM MOUNTAIN, NEW YORK  
When: Friday, January 31 to Sunday, February 2, 2014.  
Slovenian GS Ski Race championship on Saturday.

### **SlovenSki trip #1 (Presidents Week)**

Where: SUN VALLEY, IDAHO  
When: Monday, February 17 to Sunday, February 23, 2014.  
Total cost \$1,495.00 from LaGuardia, NY to Boise, Idaho.  
6 nights lodging at Sun Valley; 3 bedroom condominiums, 5-day ski pass.  
Kids under 15 stay and ski FREE.  
Call for air info from other airports: Cleveland, Toronto, Chicago

### **SlovenSki trip #2**

Where: ASPEN / SNOWMASS, COLORADO  
Top of The Village 3 bedroom Condominiums, ski in, ski out.  
When: Monday, March 24 to Sunday, March 30, 2014  
Snowmass is home of 2014 Nastar Nationals Ski Championships during last week of March.

### More information and application:

John F. Kamin a.k.a. Ivan Kamin  
Government Council for Slovenians abroad Representative, USA  
61-32 75th Place, Middle Village, NY 11379  
Tel: (718) 424-2711, Cell: (917) 723-2456, Email: [jfkamin@verizon.net](mailto:jfkamin@verizon.net)

## The Visual Identity of Slovenia – Design for a State exhibition

This touring exhibition presents the range of designs elaborated for the young state and its institutions by one of Slovenia's top designers, Miljenko Licul. Over the course of his artistic career, Licul has created a number of great works of visual culture that are closely related to the identity of the nation and the state, and are, by any means, the most recognizable visual images of Slovenia's identity to have been created over its 22-year history as a sovereign state. Licul designed the banknotes for Slovenia's former currency – the tolar. Working together with Maja Licul and Janez Boljka, he also designed Slovenia's euro coins. Miljenko Licul is also responsible for the visual image of Slovenia's biometric passport, ID and health insurance cards, and driver's license. Licul also designed a series of postage stamps with ethnographical motifs.

When: [Monday to Friday, 9 a.m. – 5 p.m., closing in October 2013](#)  
Where: [Embassy of Slovenia, 2410 California Street NW, Washington, D.C. 20008](#)