



REPUBLIC OF SLOVENIA
MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS

NEWSLETTER

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Ambassador Dr. Cerar Presents his Credentials at CARICOM

On January 22 and 23, the Ambassador of Slovenia, Dr. Božo Cerar, visited Georgetown, Guyana, to present his credentials to the Secretary General of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM), Ambassador Irwin LaRocque. After the ceremony, Ambassador Dr. Cerar spoke with the Secretary General about the work of the CARICOM, and its future priorities and goals.

CARICOM is an organization of 15 Caribbean nations and dependencies. Its main purposes are to promote



From left, Slovenia's plenipotentiary representative to CARICOM, Dr. Božo Cerar, presents letters of credence to CARICOM Secretary-General, Ambassador Irwin LaRocque.

economic integration and cooperation between members, to ensure that the benefits of integration are equitably shared and to coordinate foreign policy. Its activities include coordinating economic policies and development planning, operating as a regional single market for many of its members and handling regional trade disputes. Slovenia has an observer status to this international organization.

During the visit in Georgetown, Ambassador Dr.

Cerar met with the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Guyana, Ms. Carolyn Rodrigues-Birkett. They spoke about the bilateral relations between the Republic of Slovenia and the Co-operative Republic of Guyana, its relations with the E.U. and also about CARICOM. Furthermore, Ambassador Dr. Cerar met with the Head of the E.U. Delegation in Georgetown, Ambassador Robert Kopecký, and with Mr. Ben J.H. ter Welle, Honorary Consul of Austria and Germany in Guyana.



Concert by Barbara Jernejčič Fürst and Žarko Ignjatović

In cooperation with Things To Do, Inc. - The Young Professionals Cultural Society, an organization that aims to help young professionals that work and study in Washington, DC, to immerse themselves into different world cultures through diverse cultural experiences, The Embassy of Slovenia, on January 30, organized a Slovenian cultural evening which featured Slovenian food, wine, art, a short film on Slovenia and a musical performance by the Slovenian mezzo-soprano Barbara Jernejčič Fürst and guitarist Žarko Ignjatović.

After opening remarks by Mr. Greg Bland, CEO of Things To Do, around 60 guests were welcomed by the Slovenia's Ambassador to the United States, Dr. Božo Cerar. In addition to presenting the most interesting geographical and historical features of Slovenia, the



Mezzo-soprano Barbara Jernejčič Fürst and guitarist Žarko Ignjatović performing at the embassy.

ambassador commented that the cultural event nearly coincided with the forthcoming Slovenian Culture Day, celebrated throughout Slovenia on February 8. That day every year commemorates the Slovenian foremost poet, France

Prešeren, whose wonderful works from the first half of the 19th century are a supreme example of European romanticism. One such work is A Toast, a stanza of which is now Slovenia's national anthem.

The concert by Barbara Jernejčič Fürst and Žarko Ignjatović which followed, featured music by Henry Purcell and Roberto Gerhard, Six Native American Songs arranged by Dušan Bogdanović and compositions K slovesu and Strunam by Slovenian composer Davorin Jenko. Arrangements of Slovene folk songs by contemporary Slovene composer Peter Šavli: Sijaj, sijaj, sončece (Shine on, sun), Nocoj pa, oh, nocoj (Tonight, oh, tonight) and Da hora ta Banorina (The Banorina Mountain) were also presented by the duet. The evening concluded with a buffet dinner that included some Slovenian culinary specialties and Slovenian wine Pullus.



Guests were members of Things To Do - The Young Professionals Cultural Society, an organization that aims to help young professionals that work and study in Washington, DC, to immerse into different world cultures.

VTIS Society (Society of Foreign-Educated Slovenians)

On December 26, 2013, a group of Slovenian students, researchers and alumni of foreign educational institutions founded "Društvo v tujini izobraženih Slovencev" (Društvo VTIS), or in English, the Society of Foreign-Educated Slovenians. This is the first association of its kind in Slovenia and creates a platform for Slovenians who were previously or are currently studying or researching at institutions outside of Slovenia.

The prime purpose of the Society is to bring together and represent the interests of Slovenian citizens who were educated or conducted academic research outside of Slovenia. The Society will aim to build ties between its members and strengthen their link with Slovenia.

In particular, the Society intends to:

- present the process of studying and researching abroad to those who are interested in it,



Members of the Society were invited to a reception hosted by the President of the Republic of Slovenia, Mr. Borut Pahor.

- encourage the cooperation between Slovenian experts based abroad and their collaboration with academic/research institutions and the private sector in Slovenia,
- contribute to the design of educational and research programs and policies in Slovenia using the experience and best practices from abroad,
- promote education in service of the general wellbeing of the society as a whole,

- contribute to creating conditions for successful dissemination of knowledge and experience of foreign-educated Slovenians.

The Society will work towards fulfilling its goals by organizing various events in Slovenia and abroad.

You can follow the Society's activities on Facebook (<http://www.facebook.com/dvtis>) or get in touch with them via email on info@drustvoVTIS.si.

PRESS RELEASE

Slovenia Still Gripped by Blizzards

The latest sleet and snow mainly in the central and south-central part of the country have worsened conditions in many parts of the affected areas. Large numbers of people remain without electricity, while several thousand fire fighters joined by members of the armed forces are still dealing with the impact of the heavy snow and ice.

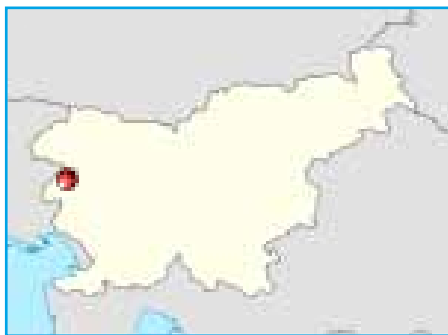
The PM, Alenka Bratušek, the Minister of Defence, Roman Jakič, and the President of

Slovenia, Borut Pahor visited the affected areas. The PM stressed that she was very proud of the great solidarity which had been shown in the difficult situation, the efforts of the fire fighters who had rushed to help from all across Slovenia, including less affected areas, together with the members of the armed forces, who are still working to stabilise the situation. According to the PM, the greatest problem remains the electricity supply. Speaking of the damage

assessment, the PM reiterated that the current priorities are to ensure a normal situation and protect people, while a damage assessment will be made after the situation in the country is stable.

The press release is available on Government website: http://www.vlada.si/en/media_room/government_press_releases/press_release/article/slovenia_still_gripped_by_blizzards_44458/

Avče



The village of Avče lies on a terrace above the river Soča west of Kanal in northwest Slovenia. Due to its flysch terrain, there are many water springs in the Avče area. The village is squeezed and situated above the tectonic valley of the torrential stream called Avšček, which divides the Banjšice plateau into two parts: Zgornje (Upper) and Spodnje (Lower) Banjšice. Also part of Avče are the settlements of Dolnji (Lower) and Gornji (Upper) Avšček, as well as Nadavče, which lies at an altitude of 343 m. (1122 ft.). Altogether, the community of Avče has a population of approx. 300 people.



Pilgrimage church of Marija Snežna.
(Photo courtesy: Teo Golja)



Avče. (Photo courtesy: TIC Kanal)

In the village of Avče stands Saint Martin's church, built in the late Gothic style with a rectangular, straight nave and a star-like, ribbed arched presbytery with frescoes dating back to 1470. In the church, there is an oil painting of Saint Martin with a beggar, painted by Andrej Avgust Bucik, who was born in the vicinity of Avče. It was painted for the occasion of the church renovation after World War I. During the renovation in 1924, Roman coins and jewelry were found in the ground, proving that the settlement existed there already in Roman times.

In the center of the village, stands a monument, erected to the local people who fell in the National Liberation Struggle and to the victims of wartime internment. Along the road in the direction of Kanal, built in a place of honor at the Avče village cemetery, is a vault for the victims of the National

Liberation Struggle, who died in the Avče territory.

Pilgrimage church of Marija Snežna (Our Lady of the Snows), situated in Nadavče, has many interesting details in its interior, but also, looked at from the outside, is an imposing building with a free-standing bell tower, which is thought to have been built on the remains of a former Roman tower. The church presbytery dates back to 1515. Dating back to nearly the same time are statues which were part of the altar in the Gothic style, while the marble altar in the form of a front gate dates back to 1701; altars in the nave are from the 17th century. The paintings in the nave are the work of Jernej from Loka and date to 1530.

According to local people, the Močila spring, situated above the Avšček creek, is said to have curing powers. Close to the spring is one of the rarest natural places where the

Mediterranean fern *adiantum capillus-veneris* L. grows, and is, therefore, protected.

In the plain close to the Avšček creek is an abandoned Italian military cemetery with a monument from First World War.

Avče and its surroundings and hamlets are an interesting place for many visitors who want to spend their free time in unspoiled countryside. Because of the picturesque surroundings of Avče, a downhill cycling path has been built. Nowadays, this type of cycling is very popular, and that is why Avče is becoming year by year one of the favorite gathering places for many devotees of this sport. (Source: TIC Kanal)



Detailed map of the area.

SLOVENIA

Annual Reception for the Diplomatic Corps

The President of the Republic of Slovenia, Borut Pahor, received members of the diplomatic corps in Slovenia alongside Prime Minister Alenka Bratušek on Monday, January 27 at the Brdo pri Kranju estate. At the annual diplomatic reception, they both underlined the need for Slovenia to continue building ties with other countries and improve cooperation within the country.

In the coming months, Slovenia will draft a new foreign policy strategy but the document will not change the long-term guidelines. "The key guideline in our E.U. and foreign affairs remains the maintenance and strengthening of friendly ties with other nations and countries," outlined the president. Further, he said that "if Slovenia is to overcome the crisis by the end of the year, a number of practical



From left, Bishop Geza Filo and Bishop Andrej Glavan, former President of Slovenia Dr Danilo Türk and his wife Ms. Barbara Miklič Türk, President of Slovenia Mr. Borut Pahor and Mrs. Tanja Pečar, Prime Minister Mrs. Alenka Bratušek and President of the National Council of the Republic of Slovenia Mr. Mitja Brvar.

measures and structural changes will have to be adopted."

The doyen of the diplomatic corps, Apostolic Nuncio Archbishop Juliusz Janusz, expressed hope in his address

that the program for economic and social stability drafted by the government will be successful and that all social partners will cooperate for the benefit of all citizens. (Source: STA)

85 Years of Zarja – The Dawn

In 1929, the first issue of Zarja – The Dawn came hot off the press. Envision those early days when wagons, brimming full of Zarja, were being pulled down the street in Slovenian neighborhoods for door-to-door delivery. In that by-gone era, when many of the founding members and ancestors were newly immigrating to this country, Zarja was the teaching tool that guided the Slovenian woman into the new society.

Zarja was introduced only months prior to the worst stock market crash in history, which then launched the Great Depression. This horrendous financial and social catastrophe was followed by years of mass poverty when many people lost their jobs and were forced to live in shantytowns. Then, on

the heels of such hard-wrought adversity came World War II, where life changed not only here in the U.S., but also dramatically in the homeland, Slovenia, where our fellow Slovenians suffered greatly. Despite the overwhelming obstacles during that time, not a single issue of Zarja went unpublished! Down through the years, Zarja has always emerged as a strong voice, celebrating the courage and spirit of the women before us and keeping sisters in touch throughout America.

Today, our younger generation has become a cross-cultural blend of heritages. Sadly, most of the Slovenian neighborhoods are gone, as are the Slovenian churches. Once again, Zarja has shown its perseverance and strength. Following the vision, mission

and purpose of Slovenian Union of America (formerly, the Slovenian Women's Union of America), Zarja has become the information tool, the communication agent that serves to preserve our legacy, promote our culture, honor our traditions, and educate through research and provision of scholarships for our multigenerational, male and female membership.

Throughout its long history, not one issue of Zarja failed to come off the press. Zarja was the binding force for the Slovenian immigrant woman. Today, this same force has been enhanced with the emergence of technology that has allowed Zarja to continue its high standards of publishing as well as allowing it to become a state-of-the-art publication with the addition of full color.

Zarja is 85 years old in 2014. This is truly a milestone in history, not merely for us Slovenian-Americans, but because it appears that Zarja is one of the oldest ethnic magazines in the United States. We hope that you join in as we celebrate 85 years of Zarja. You are invited to join us for a spectacular trip, Živio, Zarja! September 17 – 28 in Slovenia. Call Bonnie at (815)223-9596 or email wprokup@aol.com for further information. We will also introduce a cookbook for this special occasion for the holiday season. (Written by Ms. Bonnie Pohar Prokup, National President, Slovenian Union of America)



More information and subscription: <http://slovenianunion.org/zarja>

Consular Hours in New York City

The consular officer from the Embassy of the Republic of Slovenia in Washington, DC, will hold consular hours and provide consular services (authentications, certifications, passport applications, etc.) in New York City on **Friday, February 14, 2014**, at the premises of the Permanent Mission of the Republic of Slovenia to the United Nations, located at 630 Third Avenue, 20th Floor, New York, N.Y. 10017 (**Please, note the new address!**).

To schedule an appointment, please, fill out the form available at the embassy's website and send it to the Embassy of Slovenia at vwa@gov.si by **February 11, 2014**, to allow the embassy enough time to verify your data.

The embassy will suggest the time of your appointment and give you further information on the documentation you need to bring along. You may also

visit the embassy website <http://washington.embassy.si/> (Consular Affairs, Visas) for documents required for most consular services. Please note that the consular fee must be paid with a money order made out to "Embassy of Slovenia". Cash, personal checks or credit cards will not be accepted.

Due to security reasons, prior appointment is needed to enter the premises of the Mission.

CALL FOR APPLICATIONS

SWU Scholarships for Academic year 2014-2015

The Slovenian Women's Union Scholarship Foundation is in 2014 celebrating 65 years of financially assisting students. The mission of the foundation is to generate funding to financially assist students with hope that they will promote and preserve Slovenian Culture.

The Slovenian Women's Union Scholarship Foundation is offering the following scholarships, for college and graduate students for the academic year 2014-2015, to be awarded in 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. Applications are available online 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 www.slovenianunion.org

slovenianunion.org "scholarship" and must be submitted via postal mail before **March 1, 2014**. E-mailed materials will not be accepted.

For more information on the SWU Scholarship Foundation or to send much needed and appreciated contributions, please contact: Mary Turvey, Director, 4 Lawrence Drive, Marquette, MI 49855, e-mail: mturvey@aol.com or Marge Church 1028 Skyland Drive, Macedonia, OH 44056 yemec1@windstream.net

Consular Hours in Lemont, IL

Mr. Jure Žmauc, Consul General of the Republic of Slovenia in Cleveland, will hold consular hours at the Slovenian Catholic/Cultural Center in Lemont, IL. The consular jurisdiction of the Consulate General of the Republic of Slovenia in Cleveland comprises ten states: Ohio, Wisconsin, Illinois, Michigan, Pennsylvania, Minnesota, Missouri, Indiana, Iowa, and Colorado. Anyone who has a consular question or concern is invited to attend.

When: [Saturday, February 8, 2014 at 5:00 p.m.](#)

Where: [Slovenian Catholic/Cultural Center, 14252 Main Street, Lemont, IL 60439](#)

For more information contact: jurcek.zmauc@gov.si or see <https://www.slovenian-center.org/>

Slovenian Cultural Day in New York

*A reading of Prešeren's poetry in Slovene is organized by Slovenian Union of America, New York Branch 93.

When: [Saturday, Feb. 8, 2014 at 5:00 p.m.](#)

Where: [Marlene Tavern, 41-11 49th Street, Sunnyside, NY 11104](#), <http://www.marlenetavern.com/>

*A concert by pianist Gašper Konec and saxophonist Lenart Krečič.

When: [Sunday, February 16, 2014 at 11:15 am](#)

Where: [Church of Saint Cyril, 62 Saint Marks Place \(in Lower Manhattan\), New York 10003](#)

More information: Tanya Vajk, President of SUA Branch 93, e-mail: vajkusa@aol.com

Art Exhibition Japanism in Contemporary Art

Through this exhibition, The Nippon Club from New York will be introducing artwork inspired by Japanese culture. Exhibition pieces will consist of works by world-renowned contemporary artists, while works by a new generation of young artists will also be included. Participating artists are from a variety of countries; there are three Japanese, eight Americans, four Germans, two French, one each Briton, Pole, Korean, and Panamanian, and three Slovenians: visual artist Emil Memon, who is also a guest curator, Tobias Putrih and members of the IRWIN collective. Support for the exhibition is being provided by the Japanese Consulate General in New York in cooperation with the Embassy of the Republic of Slovenia in Washington.

Where: [The Nippon Gallery at the Nippon Club, 145 West 57th Street, New York, NY 10019](#)

Tel. (212) 581-2223

When: [February 6- March 6, 2014](#)

Closing event on March 6 is open to the public.

More information: <http://www.nipponclub.org/>

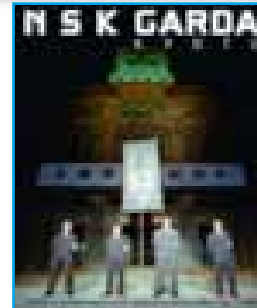
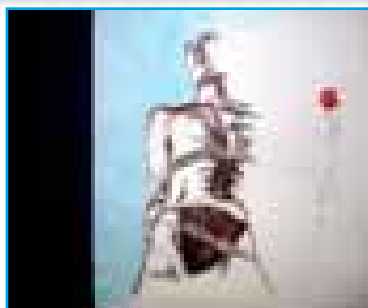


Photo exhibition "Afghanistan: Unordinary Lives" by Manca Juvan in Knoxville, TN

The 20 images in the exhibition portray civil society in Afghanistan. Juvan made several trips to the country between 2003 and 2009, documenting the lives of Afghans who, after the fall of the Taliban, had been promised much by the international community. Their lives, unfortunately, were little changed for the better. The images have been published in a book of the same title that aims to encourage continued discussion of Afghanistan, particularly of the daily lives of ordinary citizens, who are usually omitted from the political/war discussions in the media. Presented by The Arts & Culture Alliance, Emporium Center in Knoxville, Consulate of the Republic of Slovenia in TN, Embassy of the Republic of Slovenia in Washington, D.C. with the support of Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Slovenia.

When: [February 7 – March 1, 2014](#)

Where: [Emporium Center in Knoxville, 100 S. Gay St #201, Knoxville, TN 37902](#)

[Free public reception will take place on Friday, February 7, from 5:00-9:00 PM](#) with complimentary hors d'oeuvres available, and chocolate fondue provided by the Melting Pot of Knoxville.

RSVP: Honorary Consul of Slovenia in TN, Lydia M. Pulsipher, lpulsiph@comcast.net

Celebration of Prešeren Day in Seattle, WA

The celebration will include recitations of favorite classic and contemporary Slovene poets, followed by a Slovenian documentary film with English subtitles. Recent activities by the Slovene Society Slovenska miza and the Department of Slavic Languages and Literature will also be presented. The celebration will conclude with a potluck social hour.

When: [Sunday, February 9, at 1 p.m.](#)

Where: [Simpson Center for the Humanities, room CMU 204, University of Washington](#)

[Communications building, Seattle, WA](#)

Please RSVP to slovenska.miza@gmail.com

SLOWIND Quintet in CA

The Slovene National Benefit Society of Orange County and St. Timothy's Church cordially invite you to an "Evening of Music" by SLOWIND QUINTET of the Slovenian Philharmonic Orchestra.

When: [Saturday, February 22, 2014 at 7:30 p.m.](#)

Where: [St. Timothy's Church, 29102 Crown Valley Parkway \(at Nueva Vista\), Laguna Niguel, CA](#)

[Followed by reception with traditional Slovenian pastries.](#)

Adults, \$10.00 – Youths 18 & under, \$5.00

For tickets and information call: Jean Koci (949) 495-0097 or email ajkoci@cox.net

A Taste of Slovenia with International Club of DC

The International Club of DC, with the cooperation of the Embassy of Slovenia, cordially requests the pleasure of your company for an enchanting evening of Slovenian culture, art, music, cuisine, and wine at the Embassy of Slovenia. This is a wonderful opportunity to discover Slovenia through all your senses while meeting other ICDC members! The evening will begin with a short presentation about Slovenia and Slovenian culture, geography, trade, and tourism. Afterwards, you will be invited to feast on a buffet of traditional Slovenian delicacies along with Slovenian wine served at the open bar. The evening will also provide an opportunity to meet diplomatic personnel of the embassy as well as International Club of DC members in attendance. During the evening, you will also enjoy a concert of Slovenian music by the SLOWIND Quintet.

When: [Thursday, February 27, 2014 at 7:00 p.m.](#)

Where: [Embassy of Slovenia, 2410 California Street NW, Washington, D.C. 20008](#)

More information and RSVP: <http://www.internationalclubdc.com/Events/EventDetails.aspx?EventGUID=7AEFE4C2-C32A-485F-861D-482EA5711250>

Ansambel Saša Avsenika in Cleveland, OH

Slovenska Pristava, Slovenian National Home and The Slovenian Hour present the grandson of the legendary Slavko Avsenik, who continues the Avsenik tradition. In February, Sašo Avsenik will introduce his sound to North America; however, his Cleveland, OH, concert will be the only one in the U.S.

When: [Wednesday, February 19, 2014 at 7:00 p.m.](#)

Where: [The Slovenian National Home, 6417 St. Clair Avenue, Cleveland, OH](#)

Tickets: [\(440\)537-1941](#)

\$20 pre-sale | \$25 at the door | students \$10.

Bridges to the World International Film Series

Slovenian documentary "The Stubborn Memory" (Trmasti spomin) about a centenarian Slovene writer, holocaust survivor and Nobel literature prize nominee, Boris Pahor, will be presented at the seventh annual international film series organized by the World Artists Experiences. The series introduces free screenings of five international films, one each from Ukraine, Chile, Kenya, Slovenia and Thailand. The series will run for five weeks from the first week of February through the first week of March at five venues throughout the state of Maryland. Each film will be introduced, screened, and followed by a discussion. All films will be shown with English subtitles. Tickets are not required for these free screenings; however, seating is on a first-come basis. Screenings begin at 7:00 p.m. The Slovenian film The Stubborn Memory will be shown in Maryland daily during the first week of March, and in Reading, PA, on March 13. More information: <http://www.woldartists.org/> SCHEDULE:

In [Salisbury, MD](#), the film will be shown on [Monday, March 3](#) at 267 Holloway Hall, Salisbury University, 1101 Camden Avenue, telephone: (410)543-6271.

In [Frostburg, MD](#), it will be shown on [Tuesday, March 4](#) in Room 111, Lane University Center, Frostburg State University, telephone: (301)697-4049.

In [California, MD](#), it will be shown on [Wednesday, March 5](#) at the Southern Maryland Higher Education Center, 44219 Airport Road, telephone: (301)737-2500, ext. 203, www.smhec.org.

In [Annapolis, MD](#), the film will be shown on [Thursday, March 6](#), at the Maryland Hall for the Creative Arts, 801 Chase Street.

In [Towson, MD](#), the film will be shown on [Friday, March 7](#), at the Center for the Arts, Towson University, 8000 York Rd., telephone: (410)704-6390.

In [Reading, PA](#), the film will be shown on [Thursday, March 13](#) at 6:30 p.m. at BCIU Main Office, 1111 Commons Blvd., 19605 Hohl Room.

Second Annual Cleveland Kurentovanje in Cleveland, OH

The Second Annual Cleveland Kurentovanje will take place on [March 1, 2014](#), on St. Clair Avenue between East 62nd and Addison Road. This cultural event, which connects ethnology, culture, arts, and people from all over Europe, has been celebrated in Slovenia for the past 50 years. The central figure of the carnival, the Kurent, is believed to chase away winter and usher in spring with his supernatural powers. Last year, the first annual Cleveland Kurentovanje was attended by over 2000 people, and the 2014 celebration promises to be even larger.

More information at: <http://clevelandkurentovanje.com/>

If you are interested in joining a festive 1/2-mile parade along St. Clair Ave, please fill out the form which you will find on the following link <http://clevelandkurentovanje.com/join-the-parade/>