



REPUBLIC OF SLOVENIA
MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS

NEWSLETTER

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Parliament Endorses Janša for PM

The **National Assembly, on Saturday, January 28, 2012, endorsed Janez Janša, leader of the center-right Democrats (SDS), for prime minister by 51 votes to 39, opening the door for Slovenia to get a full-fledged government.**



Janša, who was sworn in immediately, has two weeks to nominate candidates for cabinet posts, who must be confirmed in a separate vote of the National Assembly.



Coalition partners .

In a brief statement to the National Assembly, Janša thanked his coalition partners: the Virant List, the People's Party (SLS), the Pensioners' Party (DeSUS) and New Slovenia (NSi) for their support. He reiterated that his coalition would work on three key priorities: stabilizing Slovenia's public finances, restarting the economy, and enabling job growth.

If his cabinet is confirmed, the 53-year-old Janša will become the prime minister of the tenth Slovenian government. It will be his second stint as PM, after having led the government in the 2004-2008 term.



Ambassador and Ms. Kirn Attend 55th International Red Cross Ball in Palm Beach

Ambassador Roman Kirn and his wife Jovana, on January 28, 2012, attended the 55th International Red Cross Ball in Palm Beach, Florida.

Each year, the International Red Cross Ball welcomes ambassadors, dignitaries, government and civic officials, and philanthropic leaders from around the world in support of the Red Cross as it works to enable people to perform extraordinary acts in the face of emergencies.

For almost 100 years, the local American Red Cross South Florida has given hope and help by meeting the needs of disaster victims, teaching lifesaving skills, and serving the members of the military, veterans and their families through the Service to the Armed Forces program.

This year's gala fund-raising event was attended



From the right: Ambassador Roman Kirn and Ms. Jovana Kirn next to Ms. Melania Trump and Mr. Donald Trump.

by over 400 guests, including the ambassadors of Barbados, Denmark, Morocco, Slovenia, Sweden, and Trinidad and Tobago. Among other prominent guests were also Senator Bill Nelson (D, FL) and his wife Grace, Donald Trump and his wife Melania (who is Slovenian)

and a businessman of Slovenian descent, Robert Tomsich, and his wife Susanne.

Prior to the gala event, a panel discussion on foreign policy affairs was held, attended by a group of ambassadors, including the ambassador of Slovenia, and moderated by Senator Nelson.



Ambassador Kirn with his wife Jovana next to Mr. Tomsich and his wife Susanne.



Senator Nelson and the Ambassadors of Morocco, Trinidad and Tobago, Barbados and Slovenia at the round table discussion on foreign policy.

Velenje

Velenje, which lies at the heart of the majestic Šalek Valley, with its 30,000 inhabitants is the fifth largest town in Slovenia. The area of Velenje has been inhabited for centuries, even dating back to prehistoric times.

Simultaneously ancient and modern, Velenje was first mentioned in 1250, and its famous castle, situated on a dome-like hill and overlooking the town, dates back to the second half of the 13th century. The castle is one of the finest examples of castle architecture in Slovenia. It hosts nine permanent museum and art gallery collections.

Despite its long history, Velenje as we know it today originated after the end of World War II, contributing to its reputation of being modern and lively. This new town was intended to be built in place of



Velenje castle.

initially proposed cottages for the large number of miners from the entire Yugoslavia.

Under the leadership of Mr. Nestl Žgank, design engineers led by architect Janez Treznar began developing plans for a modern town with approximately

30,000 residents. Žgank's motto that "... the dwelling places of miners, who spend half of the day underground, should be filled with light and sunshine..." resulted in a contemporary, modernistic town with free-standing structures situated in large, green areas. Town planners managed to preserve the late modernistic character of the town center, which makes it one of only a few in Europe.

Focusing on its industrial heritage, Velenje is the site of the underground Coalmining Museum of Slovenia at the Old Pit, and when visiting this site you are literally fitted with a miner's vest and helmet before descending into the depths. A 120-year old mine lift will take you 180 meters (590 ft.) below the surface, where you will see how miners used to pry 'black gold' out of the depths of the Earth into the light of day.



Nearby lake.



Geologic cross-section of Šalek Valley, showing different sediments.

The museum is managed by the Velenje coal mine, the largest and most modern coal mine in Slovenia, with an annual production of four million tons of lignite. In 2001, the museum was honored for outstanding achievements by the Committee for the European Museum of the Year Award.

In addition to producing coal, Velenje is home to the main production facility of a huge appliance manufacturer, the Gorenje Group. The Gorenje Group produces household appliances, along with kitchen and bathroom furnishings. The bulk of these products

are sold in European markets, primarily Germany, Austria, and Russia.

Velenje takes pride in its focus on youth, and every year it hosts the Pippi Longstocking Festival, which is the largest children's festival in Slovenia and one of the finest children's festivals in Europe. The author of the world-famous story of Pippi Longstocking, Astrid Lindgren, has even described the event in Velenje as one of the most beautiful embodiments of her work.

Serving in the ECOC (European Capital of Culture) project as a featured partner of the city of Maribor, Velenje, with its modern feel, will add a special playful touch, since most of its programs are intended for children and the youth -- the future potential of culture.

SPORTS

Bled Winter Swimming Cup 2012

On February 11, 2012, Lake Bled will host the most daring winter swimmers from the U.S., the U.K., Germany, Finland, Czech Republic, and Slovenia. After the World Winter Swimming championships in the year 2010, Bled Tourist Board decided to launch another winter swimming event, with hopes to become an ever larger event in the following years.

On the opening evening, Bled Winter Swimming Cup will be projecting two open-water films: Winter Swimming by Jack Bright, and Big River Man, starring Martin Strel. Swimmers will be able to compete in



different categories: 25 m. (82 ft.) and 50 m (164 ft.), individual, and relay. Great support in the organization

of this event was rendered by Strel Swimming. Expected temperature of Lake Bled is 5°C (41°F).

Eco Glamping Village Wins Two Awards

In 2010, Camping Bled launched the development of an eco-village inside its campground, consisting of eight wooden huts of a unique design.

Through this project, Camping Bled is following the newest trend in camping tourism: glamping (glamorous camping). Guests are not only offered an especially comfortable stay in natural surroundings, but they also spend their holiday in an environmentally friendly manner.

The basic idea for the wooden huts came from makeshift accommodations that were used in the past by charcoal burners. Only natural materials were used in the construction of the new huts, which are adapted to the requirements of modern tourists.

The huts are constructed from untreated eco-larch wood and covered with larch shingles. The camping houses are insulated and heated, providing sufficient comfort even in colder times of the year.



Heating will be implemented using heat pumps, the toilets will use rain water and, to reduce electricity usage as much as possible, all bathrooms will be naturally illuminated and ventilated.

At the recent travel trade show Benelux-Vakantiebeurs in Utrecht, Netherlands, Camping Bled won the prestigious Alan Rogers award in the active holidays category.

The key factor that contributed to Camping Bled receiving this international award

is the wide offer of outdoor activities available in Bled and its pristine natural environment. Also, Camping Bled was certified in 2008 as being a cyclist-friendly campsite, offering cyclists a wide range of services for a perfect holiday on two wheels in Bled.

The second international award was presented at the Alpe-Adria Tourism and Leisure Show in Ljubljana, Slovenia. The international Jakob prize for excellence and quality in tourism, under this year's theme of Innovative tourist programmed in the field of alternative forms of leisure and relaxation, was given to the project of Ecological Village of Forest Fairies at Camping Bled, Sava Turizem d.d. - Camping Bled, and a project in Austrian Styria entitled Nature Park in Motion, Nature Park Zirbitzkogel-Grebenzen.

Please, visit the following web page to find out more about Camping Bled: www.camping-bleed.com/en-glamping.html



Expiration of Passports and Identity Cards in 2012

A large number of passports and identity cards are expected to expire in 2012, which may result in a longer waiting period for obtaining new documents.

We encourage citizens of the Republic of Slovenia to check the validity of their documents and submit applications for new documents in a timely manner. Thus, citizens are encouraged to apply for a new document at least one month before the expiry of the

old document.

Certain countries require a passport valid for at least six months when entering their territory. Citizens are advised to find out the specific conditions of entry, especially to countries with a visa regime, in advance of traveling.

Through diplomatic-consular representations of the Republic of Slovenia abroad, citizens can apply only for a new passport (not for the renewal of an expiring one).

Instructions on how to obtain a new passport through the Embassy of the Republic of Slovenia in Washington are available at the following link: <http://washington.embassy.si/index.php?id=421&L=1>



TO DO LIST

Neue Slowenische Kunst Passport Office.

Led by the Slovenian artists' collective IRWIN, Print Studio hosts the NSK (Neue Slowenische Kunst) Passport Office.

When: February 3, 2012

Where: New York Museum of Modern Arts (MOMA), New York

More information: <http://www.moma.org/> or www.irwin.si or www.moma.org/visit/calendar/exhibitions/1227.

All-Star Accordions exhibition

For the first time, the accordions of legendary polka bandleaders are brought together on display. The exhibition celebrates the 25th anniversary of the Polka Hall of Fame Awards Show with award-winning musicians performing in person.

When: Opening Wednesday, March 21, 2012. The program begins at 7:00 p.m. Admission free.

Where: National Cleveland-Style Polka Hall of Fame and Museum

More information: call (216) 261-FAME, toll-free (866) 66-POLKA, or check www.polkafame.com.

Koline Dinner

When: February 12, 2012 at noon, prepaid reservations due by February 4, 2012.

Where: Slovenian Cultural Center, Lemont, IL

More information: www.slovenian-center.org