



Diplomats Gathered to Discuss This Year's Challenges

Brdo pri Kranju, 05 January - The annual meeting of Slovenian diplomats opened at the Brdo Mansion on Thursday, 4.1. with Prime Minister Janez Janša underscoring their main job this year would be preparations for EU presidency in the first half of 2008 and business diplomacy. The meeting was also attended by the Slovenian Ambassador to United States Samuel Žbogar.

According to Prime Minister Janša, Slovenia has affirmed itself in the international community, something that also entails greater responsibilities. "If we were part of the problem 15 years ago, today we are part of the solution," Janša said in his address to the diplomats.

Foreign Minister Dimitrij Rupel added that credit for the country's international affirmation must go to Slovenian diplomats. He said the presidency would require Slovenia to successfully run the EU as well as represent the bloc in the world and to deal with world problems.

While the stint at the helm of the EU will be a major challenge, Slovenian diplomats will also have focus on opening the doors to Slovenian companies, Janša said.

Owing to the efforts made so far Slovenia's exports in 2006 surpassed all expectations and buoyed economic growth. According to Janša, the Slovenian economy is healthy, something that he believes is testified by the introduction of the euro.

Janša as well as Rupel assessed the work of the diplomats in 2006 as very successful.



Prime Minister Janša and Minister Rupel with Slovenian Ambassadors and other High-Ranking Diplomats

Senator Amy Klobuchar from Minnesota was sworn in

Washington, DC - January 4th - Newly elected Senator from Minnesota Amy Klobuchar, who is of Slovenian descent, was sworn in on Thursday, January 4th, together with other newly elected Senators and Congressmen.

Amy Klobuchar's swearing in was met with many cheers from the Minnesota delegation, friends and family members who gathered together in a reception at the Russell Office Building. Guests at the reception could also enjoy a taste of the Slovenian dessert - the famous *potica*.

Slovenian Embassy again congratulates Senator Klobuchar for her election victory and wishes all the success in implementing the program and ideas that she put forward in her campaign.



Senator Klobuchar with her husband, daughter and Vice- President D. Cheney at the swearing in ceremony

Slovenia got another friend in the Senate and we are looking forward to welcome Senator Klobuchar to Slovenia soon.

Learning Slovenian

Embassy of Slovenia would like to inform all interested in learning Slovene language, that the *Center for Slovene as a Second/Foreign Language* at the Faculty of Arts, University of Ljubljana, Slovenia, will start with the enrolment in their yearly Morning and Afternoon Courses of Slovene language for all levels of knowledge with the beginning of a summer semester, on February 12.

For more information, please visit the Center's web site: www.centerslo.net/tecaji. We kindly ask you to pass this information to anybody who you think might be interested in starting or furthering their knowledge of Slovene language.

International Art Festival in Slovenia, *Break 2.4*

This year's Break 2.4 is yet again announcing its program and is inviting international artists and artistic organizations to participate in the festival.

Break 2.4 Festival is an international art festival in Ljubljana, Slovenia, that presents emerging artists with orientation towards urban, technologically supported arts and intermedia artistic practices that are perceived as current avant-garde. The date of the next, 9th festival, is November 5-18, 2007. Festival presents some special guests (world-acclaimed artists) with the aim of establishing an innovative dialogue with the other artists. The theme of this festival is Potemkin Village. Break 2.4 festival is organized by Zavod K6/4, non-profit cultural institution from Ljubljana, that produces, organizes and promotes contemporary creativity.

Call for applications is open till February 1, 2007; for further information, see web page: <http://www.break-festival.org>

Prominent Slovenian Athletes in the United States

This time, the sportsmen of a week is Alexander "Sasha" Vujačić (born March 8, 1984 in Maribor, Slovenia), a professional basketball player for the Los Angeles Lakers in the National Basketball Association.

Though he has played the point guard position in Europe, he has found more playing time at the shooting guard equivalent spot in the Lakers' triangle offense (as opposed to the more point guard-like initiator spot).

Vujačić began his professional career at the age of 16, playing with Snaidero Udine of Italy. He received a lot of encouragement and support from his father Vaso Vujačić, a Serbian basketball coach.

While he was drafted mostly for his shooting proficiency (namely from three-point range), Vujačić has proven himself a more than competent defender as well.



Saša Vujčić, LA LAKERS, #18, Guard

His tantalizing, up-close and personal defense has irked some of the NBA's elite guards. Vujacić has shone flashes of future excellence, perhaps most notably in a clutch three-pointer against the Utah Jazz, but still has a long way to go before coach Phil Jackson could consider placing him in the starting lineup.

Born: Mar 8, 1984	2006-07 Statistics
Height: 6-7 / 2,01	PPG 2.0
Weight: 195 lbs. / 88,5 kg.	RPG 1.10
From : Slovenia	APG 0.6
Years Pro: 2	EFF 0.57

Oddly enough, Sasha cheers for the Lakers' arch rival, the Sacramento Kings. This was confirmed in the NBA's Draft day media guide. Sasha names Vlade Divac and Predrag Stojaković (both former Kings players) as his greatest role models and favorite sportsmen.

Upcoming Events

January 16

Ambassador Samuel Žbogar will confer Golden Order for Services, awarded by the President of the Republic of Slovenia Dr. Janez Drnovšek, to former Executive Director of UNICEF Ms. Carol Bellamy.

Where: Embassy of Slovenia, Washington, DC

January 16

Ambassador Samuel Žbogar will hold a press conference on Slovenia's accession to euro area.

Where: National Press Club, Washington, DC

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Best regards,

Embassy of Slovenia
Washington, D.C.