



**PRÍHOVOR PREZIDENTA SR
pri príležitosti prijatia honorárnych
konzulov v SR**

Bratislava, 4. 6. 2025

Distinguished Honorary Consuls,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

warm welcome to Bratislava. It is my great pleasure to meet you at this forum for the first time since taking up the office last year. I am delighted that so many of you have taken the time to be with us today and share your insights and practices.

Our network currently includes almost 170 honorary consuls in 84 countries. I have already had the opportunity to meet some of you and get familiar with your outstanding achievements in your respective fields.

Only recently, I visited Italy with a delegation of Slovak startups and opened our new Honorary Consulate in Turin. Do we have Mr. Stefano Buono with us over here? Thank you, good to see you again.

Today, we have both the most recent and the very first of our honorary consuls with us — a powerful symbol of continuity and dedication. Warm welcome to Mrs. Zuzana Opavská Wahl from Norway, our first honorary consul abroad.

In a sense, the beginning meets the present, reflecting how far we've come. Highlighting your enduring commitment that has accompanied our journey since the founding of the Slovak Republic more than three decades ago.

Dear Ladies and Gentlemen,

you are an integral part of our diplomatic network abroad and it is an honour to have you represent us. Let me express my sincere gratitude to each one of you. For all that you do for the Slovak Republic and our citizens. At personal cost, investing your precious time and resources. At times, despite challenging conditions.

Your dedication, local expertise, and commitment to representing our nation's interests are truly invaluable. By building connections, supporting our citizens and advancing our values, you play a key role in linking our country with your communities. In a best-case scenario, your deep knowledge of your home countries turns formal diplomatic relations into lasting partnerships and true friendships. This kind of service is both admirable and essential.

In many parts of the world, you are the only point of contact for the Slovaks travelling or living abroad. I understand that helping individuals who often approach you in distress is not always easy. Thank you for your empathy and assistance in these moments. They are deeply appreciated.

I recognize that your range of activities extends well beyond this. Your personal influence and extensive networks are vital in uncovering new opportunities. Not only in business.

There are various areas in which we can develop common projects that inspire and benefit our country. From science and innovations, through education and culture, to city partnerships or promoting our country abroad.

I encourage you to go off the beaten track with your suggestions and activities. You know best that ideas don't have to come with a high price tag to deliver big results. Originality or willingness to break from routine is mostly rewarded by unexpected opportunities and fresh perspectives. I suppose you are all familiar with this kind of experience.

Of course, to carry out your role effectively, it is important to understand both the potential of Slovakia and the challenges we face.

Our position in the heart of Europe, together with membership in the EU, NATO and the Eurozone makes Slovakia an attractive partner and destination for business opportunities. With a strong industrial base, supported by innovation incentives and skilled workforce, we offer a stable and competitive environment for investment.

But I am sure that your ambitious agenda in the next three days will bring many opportunities to know our country even better.

Let me conclude again by saying thank you for the commitment to serve the interests of our country. Your efforts have our deep respect and full support.

Enjoy the conference, your discussions and meetings here. I wish you a pleasant stay in Slovakia and every success in your valuable work.

Thank you.