



**PRÍHOVOR PREZIDENTA SR
pri príležitosti prijatia veľvyslancov krajín EÚ**

Bratislava, 4. 6. 2025

Dear Excellencies,

Let me welcome you to the Presidential Palace in the HoMs format. I am glad to see you all here, and I hope we will have a fruitful exchange of views. It is exactly this kind of interaction that helps us understand each other. Before we start our discussions, let me underline few topics.

First of all, I would like to thank for the hard work of the Polish Presidency in the Council of the European Union. Excellency, your commitment to security, competitiveness, and simplification underscores the spirit in which we need to draft and implement common EU policies. Slovakia stands ready to support you until the last moment of your Presidency.

Regarding the situation in Ukraine, we firmly believe that there is no military solution to this tragic conflict. Slovakia will continue to back all initiatives aimed at achieving peace. The violence must end immediately. There are too many casualties, especially human ones. A full ceasefire is essential, paving the way for direct negotiations focused on lasting peace based on international law. I am glad to see that direct talks between Ukraine and Russia are taking place. Let us hope for the best outcome.

A secure and stable Ukraine is crucial for a peaceful Europe. Therefore, we need to do our utmost to be, as the EU, part of the solution. Slovakia is ready to help when needed.

As we approach the NATO summit in The Hague, we recognize the importance of unity and our commitments to assist Ukraine. The upcoming meeting must enhance NATO's ability to respond to threats. Strengthening our defense, including increasing spending, is vital. The B9 + Nordic countries summit, which took place on Monday, was a great opportunity to see where we are aiming. I believe we still have a lot of work to do at the Brussels NATO headquarters towards a positive outcome from the NATO summit at the end of June.

In terms of EU-US relations, we observe significant changes in American policies, especially in tariffs. Let's hope Commissioner Maroš Šefčovič will achieve good solutions together with his US counterparts. Despite the challenges, maintaining a strong transatlantic relationship is essential for our strategic interests. The EU must become more competitive and resilient, capable of addressing challenges independently.

Furthermore, the EU's enlargement process is essential, and we need to do our utmost for the Western Balkan countries. I just returned last week from Montenegro and I also visited Albania in March. The momentum is here, and as they need us, we also need them within the EU. Slovakia is dedicated to supporting the integration of all candidate countries.

There is no alternative to EU integration. In our view, it is the solution to the region's challenges.

Let me conclude my short address to you, before we start our discussions, by underlining that Slovakia is and will always be a responsible member of the EU and a NATO ally.

Thank you!