



**PRÍHOVOR PREZIDENTA SR
pri príležitosti udelenia štátneho vyznamenania
generálnemu tajomníkovi OECD Mathiasovi
Cormannovi**

Bratislava, 24. 11. 2025

Dear Mr. Cormann, dear Mathias, distinguished guests, Ladies and gentlemen,

Today, we came together to celebrate a truly special occasion. A moment to honor Mr. Cormann, the Secretary-General of the OECD, for his determined support of the Slovak Republic and for amplifying our voice on the world stage.

Dear Mr. Cormann, dear Mathias, you were among the very first international figures I had the privilege of meeting when I took office as President of Slovakia.

And it was you who was the very first foreign guest I had the honor of welcoming into the re-opened Presidential Office in my beloved hometown, Banská Bystrica.

Over the years, you've visited Slovakia time and time again, each visit marked by a genuine desire to understand our country, not just through official reports or the formality of meeting rooms, but by immersing yourself in our culture, meeting our people, and experiencing our landscapes.

Perhaps it's your international background, Belgian and Australian, that gives you a natural curiosity for other cultures. But I believe it's also your extensive professional experience, especially in high-level politics, that has taught you the value of building consensus. It's what's allowed you to foster meaningful partnerships grounded in honest dialogue and a belief that by listening to one another, we all grow together.

Throughout our journey, we have built a relationship of trust and respect, and you, Mr. Cormann, have become a true friend to Slovakia. You've demonstrated this time and again, offering invaluable guidance to our country, always aligned with the OECD's guiding principle: Better policies for better lives.

With your leadership, Slovakia has been able to tap into the best global practices and innovative solutions, helping us navigate both complex economic challenges and seize new opportunities.

In the 25 years since Slovakia became a member of the OECD, we have come a long way. It has not only been a story of achievement, but also of heavy transformation: a journey that helped pave the way for our membership in the European Union and catalyzed a profound transformation in our society, our institutions, and also in our economy.

Today, we stand proud as an active member of the OECD, with the ability to shape global agendas, as we're doing right now in Bratislava, discussing the future of Artificial Intelligence.

Thanks in large part of your tireless support, Slovakia's voice is heard, loud and clear, within the organization and beyond.

For a country like Slovakia, one of the most open economies in the EU, it is essential that we continue to protect international cooperation, dialogue, open markets, and a rules-based global trade system. These principles are not only crucial for our economic future but to our social progress. And you, Mr. Cormann, stand unwaveringly behind these values. I have no doubt that the OECD is right now in very capable hands.

Dear Mathias, this state decoration is a symbol of our deep gratitude for your commitment, your friendship, and the indelible mark you've left on our country. It is a heartfelt expression of respect for your tireless efforts in building a better world based on dialogue and cooperation between nations.

Congratulations, Mr. Cormann! Congratulations, Mathias! I wish you continued strength, good health, and every success in the important work that lies ahead.

Thank you very much and congratulations!