

Check against delivery!

**SPEECH BY DEFENCE MINISTER ROMAN JAKIČ AT THE 16TH INTERNATIONAL
INFORMATION SOCIETY MULTICONFERENCE AT THE JOŽEF STEFAN INSTITUTE**

Distinguished Director of the Jožef Stefan Institute Dr Jadran Lenarčič,
Distinguished representatives of the Jožef Stefan International Postgraduate School,
Distinguished spiritual leader and organizer of the Information Society Conference,
Distinguished researchers,
Ladies and gentlemen,

It is my great honour to address you as the keynote speaker at the opening ceremony of the 16th International Multiconference Information Society. Allow me to initially excuse myself for my short delay, which has been caused by the discussions on Budget Drafts for 2014 and 2015 presently underway in the National Assembly of the Republic of Slovenia.

The information society is regarded as the successor of the industrial society. We all know that the industrial society and its revolution had a tremendous impact on development of industry at the beginning of the 20th century, if we just take the example of inventing steam machine. Similarly, the information society is on good track to lead the economy and economic development of the 21st century to the era of new renaissance hoping, to put it more humorously, that you will invent a new machine in the field of information technology.

In light of the significance of information science and development of new technologies, while drafting the programme of the Republic of Slovenia's Government, under the leadership of the first Slovenian female Prime Minister Mag. Alenka Bratušek six months ago, we also noted our intentions to enhance our competitiveness, to improve our business environment, to intensify the Green Development Policy, to increase disbursement of EU funds, and many other things.

If we really want to give effect to all these proposals and ideas generated during creation of the programme, we should, of course, provide good business environment, and even more importantly, ensure better connection between educational institutions, institutes and economy, since no competitive economy is viable without science, scientists and development.

Failing to ensure competitive economy means failing to ensure economic growth, and without economic growth there will be no new jobs. Consequently, highly educated individuals, scientists, will go abroad and we will have great difficulty bringing them home unless the necessary measures are taken immediately.

You, young researchers, postgraduate students and scientists should be provided with good working conditions that are a source of your main motivation for work. I have been informed that the Jožef Stefan Institute has developed good cooperation with the economic sector. While these relations should be further strengthened, I am also aware that the Government of the Republic of Slovenia will also have to do its part of the job and try to meet your needs by endorsing appropriate legislation and strategic documents.

There is a new financial perspective of the European Union and the Horizon 2020 Framework Programme ahead of us designed specifically for you, researchers. More than 70 billion Euros are currently earmarked in the budget of the European Union for Horizon 2020. The aim of the programme is to boost economic growth and new jobs through innovation and science in member countries of the European Union. In its working document, the European Commission declared that science and innovation are the key factors bringing the European Union to the path of sustainable development and innovation delivering better employability and hence greater social security, which is of key importance to all of us.

Ladies and gentlemen,

As I have already mentioned, the Government of the Republic of Slovenia will prepare strategic documents, such as the Development Strategy of Slovenia up to 2020, including in particular the key document endorsed in 2011, titled the Resolution on Research and Innovation Strategy of Slovenia 2011 – 2020, which was created during the term of office of Minister for Higher Education, Science and Technology Mr Gregor Golobič. In this Resolution, which will serve as an excellent basis for the drafting of the Strategy, agreement should be reached on priority areas that will be based on implementing and other documents related to disbursement of funds from the European Financial Perspective for the period 2014 - 2020. Moreover, attention should also be given to the well-organised implementation of the on-going projects funded through the EU Financial Perspective 2007 – 2014.

Particular attention within the Ministry of Economic Development and Technology's area of work should also be given to the setting up of the Micro Financing Scheme, support of innovative companies and job creation. As an example of this, I would like to mention that the Government of the Republic of Slovenia embarked on the project of successful transition of spin-off companies from the scientific institutional environment to the market, which also necessitates adequate legislation, especially in light of eliminating administrative barriers.

In its programme, the Government of the Republic of Slovenia made a commitment to speed up the approval procedure for the required call for tenders' documents which takes on average between 6 and 9 months to the targeted 3 months, focusing in particular on operational measures reducing administrative burdens on the part of

the end users of funds. In this context - and this is partially a critique of all previous governments, hoping that it will not turn into a critique of the current government at the end of its mandate - we should increase the efficiency of public administration in disbursing EU funds, which for you as well too often represents an obstacle, rather than serves as help and guidance through complicated EU tender procedures.

Personally, as defence minister, I regularly deal with issues related to the information technology and its development in defence industry and security, and in the field of human rights. When referring to defence industry and development of new technologies of Slovenian companies it is of key importance that the companies are fully supported by the competent ministry. I gave my commitment to defence industry already at the hearing for the office of defence minister, when I stressed the fact that every segment of economy, including the segment of military industry, is highly important and should be protected as every job should be kept in Slovenia. I gave my commitment to the companies operating as part of the Military Industry Cluster and are development-driven that under my leadership the Ministry of Defence will support companies seeking business opportunities abroad, therefore, whenever possible, my delegations also include representatives of the Military Industry Cluster. As an example of good practice I would like to mention my latest visit to the Russian Federation, during which I was accompanied by representatives of five Slovenian companies that had the opportunity to get to know the partners of their future business cooperation.

The decision to make this step derived mainly from the fact that only 3 per cent of the Ministry of Defence's budget is unfortunately dedicated for innovation and development.

In the area of security, ministers of defence in the European Union and in the North-Atlantic Treaty Organization deal with the issues of cyber security as an increasingly important issue of modern time. In this area, make no mistakes, we mainly address the issue of data protection in computer systems, prevention of cyber terrorism, attacks against the websites of governmental and non-governmental institutions, prevention of thefts of personal data, economy technology and so on. Special threats may also be seen in attacks against financial institutions and stock exchanges, which can have a negative impact on financial markets posing specific risks in today's world.

In light of this, NATO member countries have established the Cyber Defence Centre of Excellence based in Tallinn, Estonia. Estonia is one of the first countries to be affected by a cyber-attack. This may also be linked with its status of being one of the more, if not the most, advanced countries in the field of information technology and society.

Estonia was also the first country in the world to introduce the electronic voting system and to develop an excellent programme for internet security. All these activities are derived from the concept adopted by the Estonian Government in the past, which could also be largely followed by Slovenia. Slovenia came closest to the

Estonian model between the years 2000 and 2004 with the Ministry of Information Society led by a good friend of mine Dr. Pavel Gantar. The then Ministry of Information Society paved the way in the area of comprehensive strategies and development documents based on innovation, science and development of informatics, information technology and society. This ministry is no longer in existence, I am afraid, and has become part of the Ministry for Education, Science and Sport, and the Ministry of Economic Development and Technology. Such organization in the coming decade will no longer be relevant and I am convinced that the politics will, as a result of continued development of technology, innovation and synergy between science and economy, recognize the need for an autonomous ministry that will be in charge of coordinating and drafting the documents guiding the further development of Slovenia.

In preparing this speech on the information society and views about it, I also relied on an article by Domen Savič, which I read in the MonitorPro magazine, in which I fully support his thesis, namely: »Estonia is paving the way for other member countries (of the European Union and NATO), among them Slovenia as well«. In the article, the author raises the question about the level of commitment and determination of other EU and NATO member states in following Estonia, which I would personally answer by: »I hope in a very determined way«, adding that there is still a lot to be learned in Slovenia, wishing at the same time to remain flexible and in particular more open to development and innovation, as well as to monitor countries already paving the way and leading the global area of cyber security, such as Estonia that should be taken as an example for all of us.

I have already mentioned that I am particularly concerned with human rights. Therefore, I should also mention my past activities in the National Assembly of the Republic of Slovenia, where, as Chairman of the Committee on EU Affairs, I organized a public presentation of opinions on the signing of the Anti-Counterfeiting Trade Agreement known under the name ACTA.

I opposed the ACTA agreement for a number of reasons. The first reason was that the Agreement was coordinated in secrecy, which, for me personally, is completely unacceptable. The second reason was that to the belief of many experts the text of the agreement was much too indeterminate. The vagueness of the text presented a great threat, as it was not clear who and in what way will decide on issues pertaining to the protection of intellectual property and the fight against counterfeiting. The third reason was that the providers of internet services would have to monitor the users of their networks and forward any personal information of the alleged infringers. Such activity would be extremely harmful for the freedom of expression, communications privacy and the access to cultural goods. To me, and perhaps to you as well, this is an encroachment on rights that relate to the freedom of expression which is one of the basic human rights. I am therefore glad that the ACTA agreement was not adopted. Moreover, I am also glad that you have awarded the agreement the

award for the worst solution in the field of information society, the Information Lemon.

Let me conclude by saying that as a pedagogist by profession I am deeply devoted to knowledge and to the knowledge-based society, and that I strongly promote innovations in all areas. For this very reason I, in the function of the Minister of Defence, supported Dr Daria Daniels Škodnik in her candidacy for the Dean of the NATO Defence College who was later unanimously elected to this post by NATO member states. Ms Daniels Škodnik is the first woman to be the dean of NATO Defence College since its establishment sixty years ago and the first non-American in this position after more than twenty years.

Dear participants of the 16th International Multiconference Information Society, I am greatly honoured to be the first to confer the Michie-Turing award for life-time achievements. As far as I know, the son of the great scientists Alan Turing also agreed with the name of the award.

Dear researchers,

You alone create innovations, conditions for economic growth and conditions for a better tomorrow. Slovenia can be proud of you and it is only right that we stand by your side and support you in your ideas and your knowledge, that we open you doors to foreign markets, support you in good and bad, just as you support Slovenia by staying here even in these times when the situation is not the best.

I would like to thank you for your patience and for all that you do to be the best in the world. With the scientists like you, Slovenia will have a better opportunity to fight the crisis. However, it is the responsibility of us, politicians, to provide conditions for your work and to defend you at all times, which is my biggest commitment to you. I also promise that my door will always be open for you.

Thank you for your attention.

