



SLOVENIA



2002



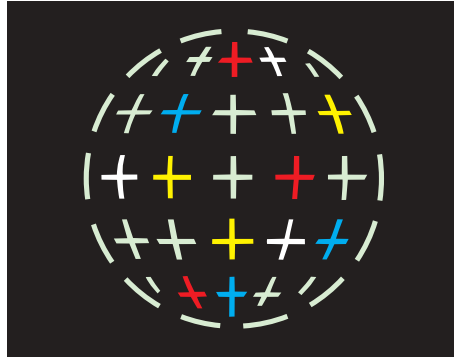
LJUBLJANA

IPI

Congress Report

IPI WORLD CONGRESS and 51st GENERAL ASSEMBLY





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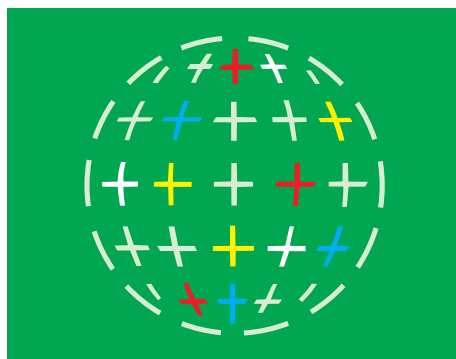
Ruth Davies
Verity Wood

International Press Institute (IPI)
 Spiegelgasse 2/29
 A-1010 Vienna
 Austria
 Tel: + 43 1 - 512 90 11
 Fax: + 43 1 - 512 90 14
 E-mail: ipi@freemedia.at
<http://www.freemedia.at>

IPI CONGRESS REPORT

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PROGRAMME



THURSDAY, 9 MAY 2002

WELCOME RECEPTION AT THE GRAND HOTEL UNION

FRIDAY, 10 MAY 2002

Grand Hotel Union

OPENING CEREMONY

Mitja Meršol,
Chairman of IPI Slovenia;
Editor-in-Chief, Delo, Ljubljana
Hugo Büttler,
Chairman of IPI; Editor-in-Chief,
Neue Zürcher Zeitung, Zurich
Johann P. Fritz,
Director of IPI

Speaker:
Borut Pahor,
President, Parliament of Slovenia

SESSION I

“Visions for the Balkans”

Chairperson:
Jiri Dienstbier,
Ambassador-at-Large; former Foreign
Minister of Czechoslovakia;
UN Special Rapporteur on Human Rights
in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia and
Yugoslavia (1998-2001)

Speakers:
Milo Djukanović,
President, Montenegro
Stjepan Mesić,
President, Croatia
Zivko Radišić,
Member of the Presidency, Bosnia and
Herzegovina

Interviewers:
Mark Damazer,

Deputy Director, BBC News, London
Sami Kohen,
Senior Editor, Milliyet, Istanbul
Armen Oganessyan,
Chairman, Voice of Russia, Moscow
Daniel Vernet,
Director, International Relations, Le
Monde, Paris

LUNCH

SESSION II

“What Went Wrong in the Balkans?”

Chairperson:
Boris Bergant,
Deputy Director-General, RTV Slovenija,
Ljubljana

Speakers:
Erhard Busek,
Special Coordinator, Stability Pact for
South Eastern Europe, Brussels
Wolfgang Petritsch,
High Representative in
Bosnia & Herzegovina

Interviewers:
Mehmed Husić,
Director & Editor-in-Chief, ONASA News
Agency, Sarajevo
Remzi Lani,
Director, Albanian Media Institute, Tirana
Radimir Ličina,
Chairman of the Board/Senior Editor,
Danas, Belgrade
Stjepan Malović,
Vice Dean, Faculty of Political Science,
University of Zagreb;
Director, International Centre for
Education of Journalists, Zagreb

RECEPTION AT THE NATIONAL
GALLERY

SATURDAY, 11 MAY 2002

Grand Hotel Union

IPI GENERAL ASSEMBLY, PART I
for IPI Members only

SESSION III

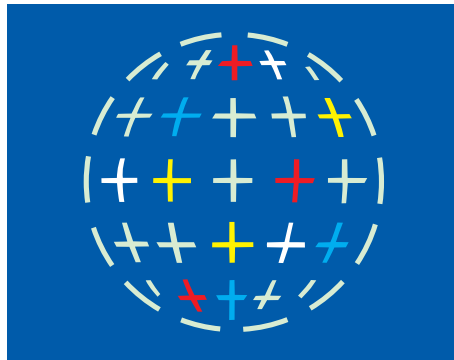
“EU Enlargement - What Price
Accession?”

Chairperson:
Janne Virkkunen,
Senior Editor-in-Chief, Helsingin Sanomat,
Helsinki

Speakers:
Graham Avery,
Chief Adviser, Directorate-General
for Enlargement,
European Commission, Brussels
Jan Kohout,
Political Director, Ministry of Foreign
Affairs, Czech Republic
Lojze Peterle,
Member of the Praesidium, European
Convention; former Prime Minister and
Minister of Foreign Affairs of Slovenia
Janez Potočnik,
Minister for European Affairs, Slovenia
Béla Szombati,
Undersecretary of State, Ministry
of Foreign Affairs, Budapest
Jan Truszczyński,
Chief EU Negotiator, Ministry of Foreign
Affairs, Poland

Interviewers:
Michael Ehrenreich,
Editor-in-Chief, Berlingske Tidende,
Copenhagen
Paul Lendvai,
Editor-in-Chief, Europäische Rundschau,
Vienna

LUNCH



SESSION IV (A)

"How to Guarantee Editorial Independence" (Public Media)

Chairperson:

Sandra Bašić-Hrvatín,
President, Slovenian Broadcasting
Council, Ljubljana

Panelists:

Danail Danov,
Programme Director, Media
Development Centre, Sofia
Christina Jutterström,
Director-General, Swedish Television,
Stockholm
Antonio Riva,
former Director-General, SRG - Swiss
Radio & TV, Zurich
Albert Scharf,
former Director-General, Bayerischer
Rundfunk, Munich
Milan Stíbrál,
Director-General, CTK Czech News
Agency, Prague
István Wisinger,
President, Association of Hungarian
Journalists, Budapest

SESSION IV (B)

"How to Guarantee Editorial Independence" (Private Media)

Chairperson:

Peter Preston,
Director, The Guardian Foundation,
London

Panelists:

Kim Dae-joong,
Editor-in-Chief, Chosun Ilbo, Seoul
Ljubica Marković,
Director, BETA News Agency, Belgrade
Alexander Pumpiansky,
Editor-in-Chief, Novoye Vremya, Moscow

Richard Steyn,

former Editor-in-Chief, The Star,
Johannesburg

CONCERT AT THE LJUBLJANA
PHILHARMONIC HOUSE

RECEPTION AT LJUBLJANA CASTLE
hosted by the Mayor of the City of
Ljubljana, Viktorija Potočnik

SUNDAY, 12 MAY 2002

Grand Hotel Union

IPI GENERAL ASSEMBLY, PART II
for IPI Members only

SESSION V

"Protection of Journalists in Regions of Conflict"

Chairperson:

Richard Tait,
Editor-in-Chief, ITN, London

Keynote Statement:

Chris Cramer,
President, CNN International Networks,
Atlanta

Panelists:

Robert Cox,
President, Inter American Press
Association (IAPA), Miami
Ronald Koven,
European Representative, World Press
Freedom Committee, Paris
Rafael Marques,
Freelance Journalist; Country Director,
Open Society Foundation, Luanda
Rodney Pinder,
Editor, Video News, Reuters, London

Aidan White,

General Secretary, International
Federation of Journalists, Brussels

LUNCH

PRESENTATION OF THE "FREE MEDIA
PIONEER 2002"

awarded to Danas, Belgrade

Radomir Ličina,
Chairman of the Board/Senior Editor,
Danas, Belgrade

SESSION VI

"Terrorism - The New Threat to Global Security"

Chairperson:

H.D.S. Greenway,
Columnist, The Boston Globe,
Boston, MA

Panelists:

Owais Aslam Ali,
Chairman, Pakistan Press International
(PPI), Karachi
Melissa Fleming,
Senior Information Officer, Division of
Public Information,
International Atomic Energy Agency
(IAEA), Vienna
Yosri Fouda,
Deputy Executive Director, Al Jazeera
Satellite Channel,
London (UK) Bureau
Fernando Reinales,
Professor and Chair in Political Science,
King Juan Carlos University, Madrid

PRESENTATION OF THE IPI WORLD
CONGRESS 2003, NAIROBI, KENYA

FAREWELL DINNER AT THE GRAND
HOTEL UNION

Editorial: Increasing Understanding Between Journalists



Michael Kudlak,
Congress Coordinator and Editor,
IPI Congress Report

In June 1991, Slovenia and Croatia declared full independence from the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. Federal troops responded by bombing Ljubljana airport, among other targets, but soon withdrew from Slovenia. Fighting, however, intensified in Croatia and a decade of wars and inter-ethnic conflict in the former Yugoslavia followed, leaving tens of thousands dead and millions homeless.

Ten years after the recognition of the independence of Slovenia by the international community, the IPI Slovenian National Committee invited IPI to hold its World Congress and 51st General Assembly in Ljubljana - now the capital city of a small and ambitious republic on the verge of accession to the European Union (EU) - in order to discuss, among other things, what went wrong in the Balkans.

From the outset, the media was tragically entwined in the deadly cycle of violence in the Balkans. A brave few, including the journalists at the independent Belgrade-based daily newspaper *Danas*, the recipient of the 2002 IPI Free Media Pioneer Award, were determined to report objectively on events unfolding in the region, often facing appalling consequences as a result, but others added to the tensions through biased or sensationalist reporting, fanning the flames of hatred.

With this in mind, IPI, together with its affiliate, the South East Europe Media Organisation (SEEMO), decided to hold, in conjunction with the Ljubljana Congress, a seminar on "The Media and Conflict Prevention in the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (FYROM)". At the beginning of 2001, a conflict had erupted in northern Macedonia as the country fell victim to ethnic tension and violence. Many accused the Macedonian media of disregarding objectivity and exacerbating tension through unbalanced reporting. Another long and bloody Balkan war seemed imminent. In an attempt to improve the situation, IPI and SEEMO brought together for the first time 35 editors and leading journalists from all the ethnic groupings in the FYROM in order to enter into a dialogue and promote mutual understanding through accurate and fair reporting.

IPI has had a long tradition of organising bilateral meetings intended to achieve understanding among journalists and, consequently,

among peoples. The first series of such meetings was held between French and German editors in the early days of the Institute, when press relations between France and Germany were severely strained. The first session took place in January 1954 in the building of the Council of Europe in Strasbourg, considered neutral territory by both sides. The meetings, ten in all, continued until 1960 when, happily, there were no points of difference left for discussion.

Important results in terms of mutual understanding and more sophisticated reporting were also achieved in meetings between British and German editors, and between the Dutch and Indonesians, in the 1950s. Greek and Turkish editors met on Rhodes in March 1961; the Japanese and Koreans held five meetings during the 1960s; and Austrian and Italian editors met in 1970 and 1971 to improve press coverage of the South Tyrol. A series of IPI-initiated talks between Japanese and American editors, beginning in 1970, when old frictions between the two countries were on the rise, helped to moderate the attitude of the media on both sides.

The IPI/SEEMO seminar in Ljubljana also proved to be a success, with all sides cooperating to produce some sensible agreements. Among other things, it was agreed that they should meet again in Skopje, the capital of the FYROM, for further discussions.

During the following three days, participants of the Ljubljana Congress were able to hear the opinions of three of the region's leaders - Milo Djukanović of Montenegro, Stjepan Mesić of Croatia, and Zivko Radičić of Bosnia-Herzegovina - who gave their own perspectives on regional development and long-term stability in the post-Milosević era.

In the session entitled "What Went Wrong in the Balkans?", two representatives of the international community - Erhard Busek of the Stability Pact for South Eastern Europe and Wolfgang Petritsch, High Representative in Bosnia-Herzegovina - analysed the role of the wide array of international actors who were unable to prevent Yugoslavia's descent into civil war.

A highly-qualified panel of EU experts discussed the current enlargement facing the European Union in the session "EU Enlargement - What Price Accession?" and examined the political problems facing the candidate coun-

tries as they try to meet the tough entrance requirements set by the EU.

Following two sessions on important professional issues, "How to Guarantee Editorial Independence" and "Protection of Journalists in Regions of Conflict", the IPI Congress closed with a session on a timely subject, "Terrorism - The New Threat to Global Security", which examined what the international community is doing to combat an enemy that is faceless, obeys no rules of war and considers no targets off limits.

As was the case during the Balkan conflict, the media is inextricably entwined in the "war on terror". After the events of September 11, the United States found itself engulfed in a debate over the balance of national security, freedom of expression and patriotism. Fears that the Bush administration's anti-terrorism measures could infringe on press freedom were soon confirmed when the U.S. State Department attempted to interfere in the editorial independence of both Voice of America and an independent TV station based in another country, al-Jazeera in Qatar. In addition, the White House asked the major TV news organisations - ABC News, CBS News, NBC News, CNN and the Fox News Channel - to abridge any future videotaped statements from Osama bin Laden after they had broadcast, unedited, a taped message from bin Laden. The White House also asked U.S. newspapers to refrain from publishing full transcripts of statements issued by the terrorist leader.

The United States and Canada, as well as many other countries, have now passed anti-terrorism legislation, which many fear will undermine civil liberties, including freedom of expression and freedom of information, and could serve as examples for authoritarian regimes around the world who wish to silence their opponents in the name of fighting terrorism.

The media have a fundamental role to serve the public's right to know. It will be up to IPI and other free press groups to ensure that any strategies to combat the threat of terrorism must respect freedom of expression as set out in Article 19 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and to ensure the right of journalists to report freely and fully on terrorism in the public interest.



Friday, 10 May 2002

OPENING CEREMONY

Grand Hotel Union



WELCOME

OPENING STATEMENTS

SPEAKER

Mitja Meršol,

Chairman of IPI Slovenia; Editor-in-Chief, Delo, Ljubljana

Hugo Büttler,

Chairman of IPI; Editor-in-Chief, Neue Zürcher Zeitung, Zurich

Johann P. Fritz,

Director of IPI

Borut Pahor,

President, Parliament of Slovenia

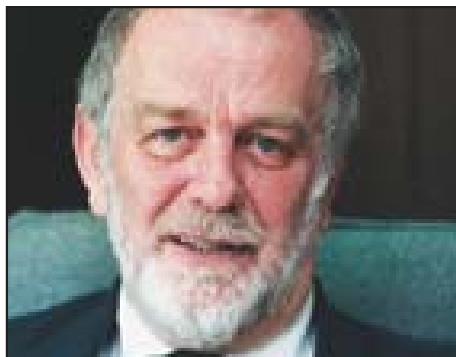
"You have come to a small country with great ambitions. A country which is trying to eliminate historical backlogs in the development of democracy, enforce human rights and enhance the rule of law, and at the same time promote a strategy of rapid modernisation which will allow us to join the most advanced European countries. This is not an automatic process. It can only be implemented in a free and open environment that cannot be established without freedom of the media."

Borut Pahor





Dobrodošli!

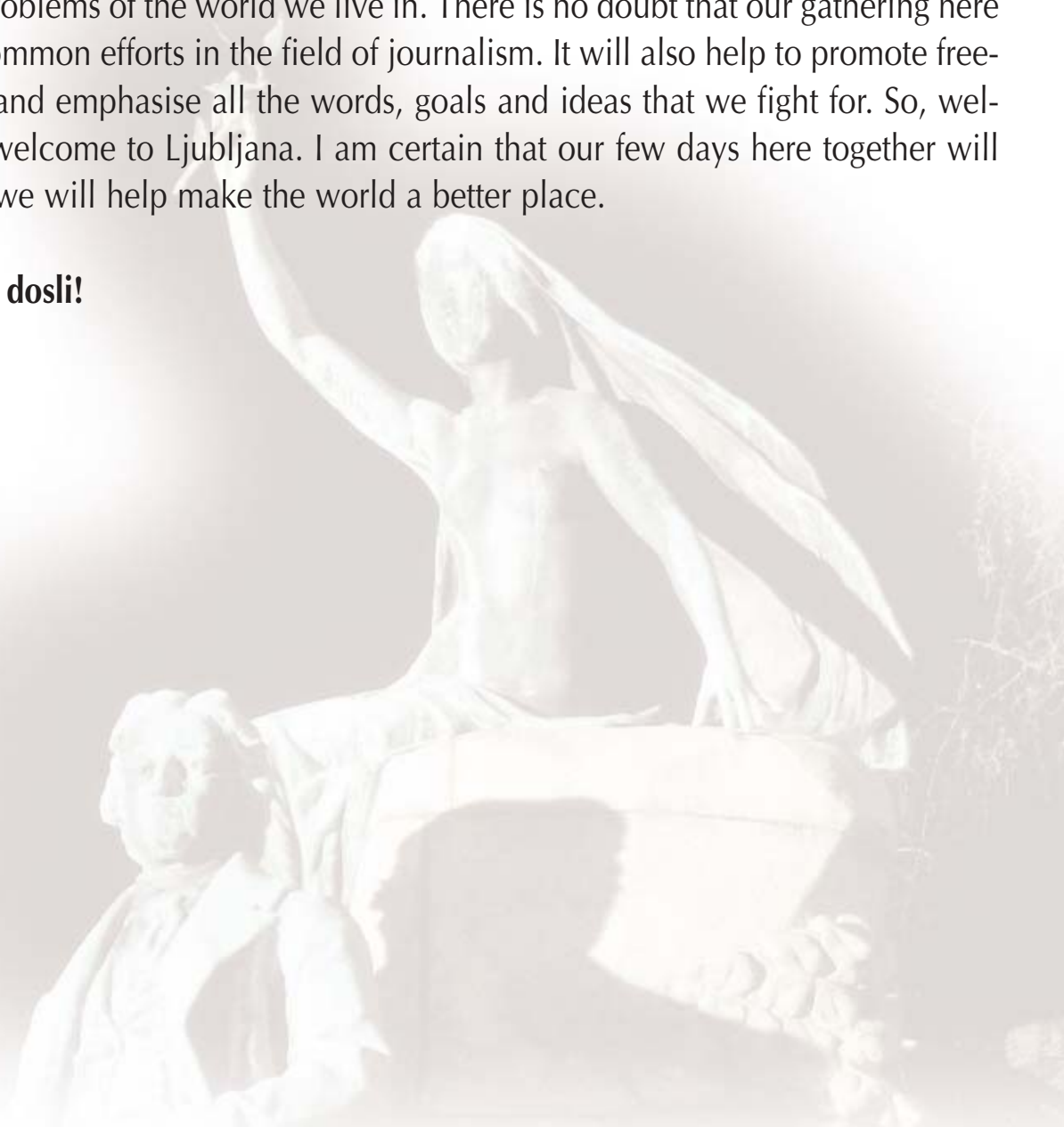


Mitja Meršol,
*Chairman of IPI Slovenia;
Editor-in-Chief, Delo, Ljubljana*

Dobrodošli! Welcome!

Welcome to Ljubljana, welcome to Slovenia. The IPI family is once again together. 460 participants from 64 countries are here today in Ljubljana, and your presence is important to Slovenia, my country, on the sunny side of the Alps. The IPI World Congress and 51st General Assembly will contribute toward raising awareness about - and seeking possible solutions for - the problems of the world we live in. There is no doubt that our gathering here will generate our common efforts in the field of journalism. It will also help to promote freedom of expression and emphasise all the words, goals and ideas that we fight for. So, welcome to Slovenia, welcome to Ljubljana. I am certain that our few days here together will be fruitful and that we will help make the world a better place.

Once again, Dobro dosli!



With Words it All Began



Hugo Büttler,
*Chairman of IPI; Editor-in-Chief,
Neue Zürcher Zeitung, Zurich*

Almost 11 years after the proclamation of its independence from the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, Slovenia stands as a successful example of Eastern Europe in transition. The economic and political reforms have advanced very far, and the country belongs to the leading group of candidates for the EU accession. Negotiations are expected to be finished by the end of this year. Slovenia might then even be able to take part in the voting process for the European Parliament in 2004, as a member of the European Union. Chances are also very good that Slovenia will be invited to join NATO at the summit in Prague in November.

In the final phase of Marshal Josip Tito's multi-ethnic Yugoslavia, Slovenia was also the pioneer of economic openness, freedom and political democratisation. The first attempts to reject Communism and to modernise the economy took place at a relatively early stage. Towards the end of the 1980s, the calls for the state's independence from Yugoslavia rang ever louder. The Slovenian media profoundly influenced and enabled the political and economic reforms, and helped to initiate the secession from Belgrade, which ended on June 25, 1991, with the declaration of independence.

It is, therefore, no coincidence that in June 1991 the transmitter masts of the main television station were one of the prime targets during Belgrade's military incursion into Slovenia. This type of aggression was repeated in the wars in Croatia and Bosnia-Herzegovina. The state-owned media in each of the republics played a highly important and sometimes fateful role prior to the bloody break-up of Yugoslavia.

A part of the media allowed itself to become a political instrument by nationalist leaders. The majority of the media became complacent tools of the ruling power and were used in the service of nationalist ideologies. They helped stir up ethnic hatred, spread defamation, and instigated veritable hate campaigns. With their hate speech, they fomented and instilled the concept of war in the public mind. The war in the

Balkans began with language. The media war raged before the first shot was even fired. It should, however, not be forgotten that some media outlets kept their independence despite the enormous pressure exerted on them. They rejected the ruling parties and bravely countered destructive, aggressive nationalism.

The Croatian writer Dubravka Ugrešić wrote the following in an essay of December 1993:

"With words it all began, and with words it will all end. And over the time of reality in between - thousands of dead, beaten, wounded and evacuated people; destroyed houses, villages and towns! One day, a steam-roller of words will roll and cover the factual tragedy with concrete, with interpretations - historical, political, military-strategic, cultural, and literary."

This essay can be found in the "Culture of Lies", which was written as a reaction to the destruction of Yugoslavia and the wars in Croatia and Bosnia-Herzegovina.

To prevent the tragedy of the past decade from becoming sealed in words and set phrases or, in what amounts to the same thing, from being swept under the carpet, is one of the most important, but at the same time most difficult tasks of the media in former Yugoslavia.

After the political changes of the past two years, the media in Croatia, as well as in Serbia and Montenegro, face new challenges. The same applies to the press and to the electronic media in Bosnia, Kosovo and in Macedonia.

After the end of the Balkan wars, the construction of a new democratic order and the creation of a civil society under the rule of law is of prime significance. Similarly, one of the most important challenges facing the media consists of the painful task of dealing with the recent past. The media also have a role to play in uncovering war crimes.

I cannot accept the points of view of those who think that such work is unnecessary, or even damaging, as this would only

serve to open old wounds that have yet to heal. The digging up of the past, so the argument runs, prevents the pragmatic shaping of the future.

It is however a fact that the old Yugoslavia also broke up because the war crimes of World War II had not been dealt with. In the spirit of a new "Brotherhood and Unity", these atrocities were simply swept under the carpet. As a consequence, nationalist leaders were able to play with national prejudices for years. A part of the media supported them in this. By evoking the crimes committed by the other side in World War II, they were fostering a climate of fear and menace. This was the soil on which violence grew.

The examination of the recent past is therefore no luxury. It is a political necessity and an important precedent for democratic renewal and lasting peace in the Balkans. It is the basis for reconciliation and tolerance between ethnic groups. It is to be hoped that the media will continue to focus on this.

In this spirit, the International Press Institute opens its Ljubljana World Congress.

In this spirit, we have dedicated the political topics of this event to a re-evaluation of the past and to the vision of a political future.

And in this spirit, a parallel event takes place here in Ljubljana. The IPI-affiliated South East Europe Media Organisation (SEEMO) has invited editors-in-chief and other media representatives from Macedonia and neighbouring regions to a seminar on "The Media and Conflict Prevention in Macedonia". Over 35 editors and leading media representatives from the various ethnic groups in Macedonia are gathering here for discussions and consultation on how to promote mutual understanding.

I wish this seminar, as well as the IPI World Congress, a good and successful run, and would like to take the opportunity to express my heartfelt thanks the President of the National Assembly and to President Kučan for their support and co-operation, and I wish President Kučan a fast recovery from the operation that he has to undergo.

Food for Thought



Johann P. Fritz,
*Director, International
Press Institute (IPI)*

This meeting here in Slovenia is a very impressive and interesting one. Today, we will be confronted with the visions for this region formulated by leaders from the former Yugoslavia.

However, we must realise that minorities have been and still are the most dangerous and complicated potential for conflict in the region. Minorities are defined as groups of citizens who have different ethnic, linguistic, cultural or religious backgrounds than the majority of the population in a specific country.

Max van der Stoep, the long-time OSCE High Commissioner for national minorities in the Balkans, blames the governments of the region that they did not and still do not take enough initiative to prevent obvious potential crises. They, as well as almost all other European states, spend up to 40 times more for military budgets than for conflict prevention.

South Eastern Europe urgently needs a revitalisation of civil society. In 1999, the United Nation's Secretary General Kofi Annan stated: "Emerging slowly but surely is an international norm against violent repressions of minorities that will and must take precedence over concerns of state sovereignty."

Citizenship is not constituted by groups but by individuals interacting as citizens with specific interests and goals. Thus, common citizenship must not require a common form of life, common existential values or a common historic past. With a proper democratic approach, multi-ethnic societies do have the opportunity for a greater cultural enrichment and a more dynamic development than others.

However, even if equal rights exist, this does not automatically mean equal chances. Anti-discriminatory training for public officials at all levels of the administration is needed. And governments would be well advised to learn best practices from their counterparts in the transitional countries of Central and Eastern Europe. Furthermore, they must realise that civil movements, non-governmental organisa-

tions and citizen groups can play a leading role in social change, innovation and transformation. But they require a set of legal mechanisms which permits their independent existence and could foster their growth.

Tomorrow our attention will be devoted to the perspectives of the enlargement of the European Union. The current enlargement project embraces 13 countries and will represent an increase in area of 34 per cent and in population of 150 millions. This development could be a historic opportunity to further the integration of the European continent by peaceful means.

However, it is a costly experiment since the European Investment Bank believes that these 13 nations need about US\$ 30 billion in order to adapt their infrastructure according to the requested standards. But the most important criteria for accession is the need for applicants to achieve stability of institutions guaranteeing democracy. Only this way can a larger European Union develop into a zone of stability and sustainable growth.

The most exciting session for the media professionals gathered here will be tomorrow afternoon on the issue of editorial independence. It will certainly not be easy to bridge the gap between public media and private media, as well as the many different cultural approaches which we find in various regions and continents.

On Sunday morning, the debates will focus on the issue of protecting journalists in regions of conflict. Our colleagues at the frontline are not putting their lives at risk for the sake of sensationalism, but to obtain facts and to bring home to the public the news untainted by lies and propaganda. Afterward, we will hand over the 2002 "Free Media Pioneer" Award.

During the final session we will see that terrorism is a particularly vicious species of psychological warfare. Islamic extremists, for example, are not so much aiming at influencing the West, but at expelling the West from the Muslim world because of its secular, modernising influence.

They are skilled at shaping political opinion in the Arab world against the Western societies in order to undermine moderate Islamic regimes and to radicalise their populations. This is a war of words as much as of bombs.

However, the manifold new and sophisticated threats to global security are not just limited to conservative means of attack, but also entail potential attacks with nuclear weapons, or chemical and biological weapons of mass destruction.

In addition, there is the perspective of cyber-space warfare, not only against the military sector, but also the civilian and commercial sectors. Attacks launched against Internet-based companies, primarily Yahoo, Amazon and so on by viruses and denial of services have already cost Western businesses up to US\$ 7 billion in damages over the past 10 years.

The potential disruption of publication and information systems and other potentially effective attacks on IT systems will have priority in the interests of this gathering of international journalists and editors.

The chosen topics for this conference should provide enough food for thought and ample opportunity for discussion and an exchange of views. I wish you successful deliberations here in this hospitable country and charming city.

A Small Country with Great Ambitions



Borut Pahor,
President, Parliament of Slovenia

On behalf of the President of the Republic, I would like to welcome you most warmly to Slovenia. The President considers your decision to choose our country for the venue of the congress as a recognition of Slovenia and its media activity.

You have come to a small country with great ambitions. A country which is trying to eliminate historical backlogs in the development of democracy, enforce human rights and enhance the rule of law, and at the same time promote a strategy of rapid modernisation which will allow us to join the most advanced European countries.

This is not an automatic process. It can only be implemented in a free and open environment that cannot be established without freedom of the media. I would like to take this opportunity to ensure this assembly that the Slovenian Parliament is determined to investigate the assault on journalist Miro Petek and thus contribute to protecting freedom of the press.

Last month I visited Belgrade, Priština and Sarajevo. It was my first visit after the war. One of the most significant changes I noticed concerned the freedom of the media. The media may provide pessimistic assessments of the efficiency of post-war reconstruction, yet my counterparts believe that the mere fact that such things can now be read or seen is the most solid proof that the reconstruction is successful and irreversible. This is indeed a very important and encouraging statement for a future of peace, security and welfare in a region so unstable in the last decade.

My visit was not coincidental. Slovenia wishes to enhance bilateral cooperation and friendship, share its experience regarding democratic transition and learn about the ambitions of those countries. Our counterparts in the international community justifiably ask us to provide our views about the situation in the region and about our respon-

sibility and readiness to join the international community in its efforts towards establishing peace, security and democracy. Slovenia, a candidate for accession to the European Union and NATO, understands such responsibility and is ready to accept it.

A democratic, economic and social rebirth of Southeast Europe contributes to the elimination of historical backlogs in European integration processes. Prior to the fall of the Berlin Wall, such processes had been limited to the Western Europe, yet upon the rise of new democracies they have expanded towards Eastern and Central Europe and should include the whole Europe for the sake of peace in the Balkans.

Europe is not integrating merely to protect and strengthen its democratic values, but also to organize itself as part of the global world. New questions about its internal identity arise with regard to the individual citizen, along with those concerning its image and role in the international community.

What the European experience has to offer to the world in the third millennium is a message of tolerance and respect for differences as the foundations for a life in common. There is nothing idyllic about it; it is an effort towards mutual respect and consideration. It is rivalry enriched with solidarity.

I am not speaking about a medicine that will save the new world but only describing an experience which can give it new hope. The more free the world is, the more hope there will be for it. To a great extent this also depends on the power of the media - your power and freedom.

I therefore wish the congress all the best and I wish you successful work and a pleasant stay in Slovenia.

A Global World in Need of Ethics



Milan Kučan,
President of Slovenia

It gives me great pleasure to be able to welcome you here in Slovenia. It is a true commendation to Slovenian journalism and to my country that you have chosen the Slovenian house as the venue for your meeting in our global village. Welcome.

Free expression of opinions, editorial independence and the sensitive perception of the true dilemmas of mankind are as indispensable a prerequisite for the freedom of the individual, for internal freedom and for the openness of any society and the global world as water is indispensable to life. I therefore hope that the congress here in Slovenia, where you will be deliberating on these issues, will fulfil your expectations and bring new hope for democracy in the world.

Without a free media allowing for the self-reflection of a society there is no bright future for the world. Today that world does not only project its lighter sides. It is divided into people, nations and states with grand opportunities on the one hand, and those without a future on the other. It is divided into safe regions of peace and regions of war and violence against human dignity and rights. It is divided into a world of democratic principles and tolerance, and a world of fundamentalisms of all shapes. It is divided into a world of knowledge and modern technology, and a world to which all this is inaccessible.

There are no impenetrable borders between these worlds, though. Globalisation of the economy, information and the environment has made the world a single, indivisible world. Whatever plight comes to one of us has consequences on every one of us. But in spite of that an awareness of our interdependence is setting in only very slowly. Even slower at setting in are actions expressing a common responsibility for mankind and for life on our planet.

Understandably, such a world generates ever louder calls for a more profound dialogue on humanity's global dilemmas, on world ethics, on the common values serving as the guiding principle for all our actions in order for us to live safely in peace and for all of us to enjoy a better future, greater prosperity and social justice, with less violence, less

environmental, humanitarian and social disasters. No society, not even a global one, can exist without moral values and without rules based on ethical principles regulating the functioning of such a society. Respecting these rules allows for active coexistence and prevents the world from turning into a clash of civilisations, into a battle of all against all.

This is so much more the reason why an interdependent world requires such ethics. It requires common fundamental standards of behaviour, with all of us protecting life and human dignity, human rights, protecting nature and preserving it for future generations, not producing weapons of mass destruction, be they biological, chemical or nuclear, overseeing genetic and medical experiments, not offering refuge to terrorists, preventing international crime of all sorts, etc. The world needs such rules of behaviour and global governance that will implement a common responsibility for the future of humanity and of our planet based on such standards.

Is it therefore not time for us to start considering some sort of treaty between countries? A treaty voluntarily binding countries to the respect of common values and common standards of behaviour for our common benefit and because of our common responsibility, a treaty whereby countries would agree to democratic oversight of their actions and to measures to be taken against offenders? Perhaps this sounds utopian right now as it is striking on a formidable obstacle - the phenomenon of national sovereignty. In spite of the anachronism of understanding national sovereignty as an absolute value developed in political theory and practice through the centuries, it still remains the basis of international relations. The UN has nevertheless reached beyond the absolute application of this idea with the principle of humanitarian intervention.

Any agreement or treaty between countries can therefore only be realistically considered within the UN, whose universal nature, in spite of its known deficiencies, obviously makes it the only forum capable of

conducting a dialogue on these issues and on such a treaty. Such an agreement would be even more realistic if it were based on the principle of equality between all major civilisations and the states and nations belonging to them. It would be even more effective if it were not based solely on repression of violations. No regime, not even the international community, can be effective only through repression or military supremacy. Also, the fight against terrorism cannot prove effective in the long run if we fail to fight with equal vigour against poverty, ignorance and disrespect of man, his dignity and rights.

The world needs balanced development. Every person, every nation, every state has the right to a future in this world, while having a responsibility for their actions not only towards themselves, but to everyone. The world needs global responsibility, and that starts on each of our doorsteps. An agreement of the entire democratic world is needed on how each of us individually and all of us together could responsibly work towards a peaceful and better world.

On our path towards this aim we shall certainly require fundamental intellectual, ethical and political consideration. I suppose, though, that there are no serious doubts anymore as to the need for global dialogue and that the UN must be enabled for such a dialogue. That dialogue will be made easier and tolerant if made accessible to the public, if the media will have their doors wide open, as many already have.

A dialogue is also needed on the future of Europe, on the common goals and values that are the prerequisite for a united Europe. We want a Europe that will successfully engage in a dialogue with other centres of this global world. A Europe that will be capable of assuming its own share of the responsibility for the situation in the world, that will be capable of connecting all its voices into one single voice of peace and social justice for the entire world. A Europe that will participate in the world and in the global dialogue as a special and recognisable political entity. Or can we perhaps say that it is already acting in such a way? The Conven-



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tion on the Future of Europe is an opportunity for joint deliberation on such a united Europe. That is why we Europeans expect so much from it. We first of all expect a common European consideration on the modern world and its diversity, a consideration of our desired role in such a world, our influence and our responsibility, as well as the ways to come nearer to achieving that desired role. If the Convention will succeed in inciting such thought, it will certainly clear the path towards our goal.

Perhaps it is Central Europe, the heart of the old continent in both sunshine and in rain, that has the greatest expectations of this Convention. This is where the values allowing for a tolerant and creative coexistence of differences were created. This is also where fundamentalisms were born that threaten these values. This is where the Berlin Wall separated democracy from totalitarianism. This is where nations and states were violently thrust in ideological and political monolithy, into civilisations foreign to them. This is where a decade ago a common area of democratic values was reborn, values that are the moral foundations for coexistence between the peoples, nations and states across Europe.

Yet Central Europe leads a life that is far from being idyllic. This is where aggressive national populisms reside, conjuring up the evil spirits of the past. They are at their most comfortable in a provincial and xenophobic atmosphere and therefore nurture it, fomenting against any kind of difference. These phenomena are the complete opposite of the desired shape of future states, nations and the majority of people in Central Europe. But they are here, smothering the free spirit. They profess an unkind future if the democratic world of Central Europe and of Europe as a whole will give them way or even give in to them, as has already happened in the first half of the previous century.

The Western Balkans are a tragic example of such events. The Balkans are also a place where good people had always lived, people with their own dreams, hopes and ambitions. But politics that drew their

strength from national traumas and myths instead of reality and good ideas for the future caught them in the web of national exclusivity that does not recognise the same rights for others and for those that are different. The consequences in this ethnically mixed region were horrendous and it seems that the way out of the entanglement in national ideas elevated above the clouds is much longer than the path towards them.

Nevertheless, democracy is returning to the region. The endeavours of the international community for the long-term stabilisation of this part of Europe were extremely great, although grave mistakes were also committed. The final success depends for the most part on the unity of European and global interests and views as to the future of the Balkans. It depends also on the recognition that even in this region the same principles, values and relations must apply as apply elsewhere in Europe, that here too nations must live together, one with the other, not one against the other. It depends on the recognition that also the Balkan nations create the future together with other Europeans in processes of European integration and unification. Dreams, hopes and ambitions are coming back to life. The expectations are great also of the media, that their professionalism - implying a critical distance from elevating certain ideas above all others, from the iconography and mythology of the past - will see them fulfil their task in environments that, just like Central Europe, belong to the common European home.

Historical circumstance had Central European Slovenia live as part of this region for 70 years, a region that in the past century was an arena of ethnic clashes and wars rather than peace, democracy and development. A free, European way of life and the right to a future were the values that incited Slovenes over a decade ago to form a strong will for our own country and with it to enter European and Euro-Atlantic structures. In ten years, Slovenia transformed into a modern European country. It is capable and willing to decide on the future of Europe and of the world together with other democratic

nations, in order for Europe and the world to be made also to its own measure. It is mature enough to see beyond the grudges and injustices it suffered in the past and expects the same of others.

Slovenia's ambitions are great. It wants to become a country of excellence, since only that can serve as its comparative advantage. It wants to be competitive in an increasingly competitive world, while at the same time working with all those who are prepared to respect common rules. It wants to offer its citizens good education, create a country of lifelong learning, to become an area with an information technology industry, a free market for goods, services, capital, labour and ideas, a democratic space of difference, a pluralistic country with an independent media. A country that is sufficiently self-confident to maintain its spiritual and cultural identity. Slovenia, a democratic and open market economy, a welfare state of free people, already is such a country in many respects. Where and what its problems are is something, I trust, you will be able to tell for yourselves.

Ladies and Gentlemen, you have great power in your hands and you share the responsibility for the future of humanity with all the other levers of democracy in modern society. That is why I wanted to focus your attention on some of the problems and great challenges of the modern world that require considered answers. These challenges are common to us all. We are all facing them. It will perhaps be easier to find the answers with your involvement. That is why the future of this world also depends on you. I firmly believe that you share my hope for a kind future.

Editor's note: President Kučan, who was hospitalised on 8 May 2002 due to health problems, was unable to deliver this speech. He was released from hospital on 10 May after having a small kidney stone surgically removed.