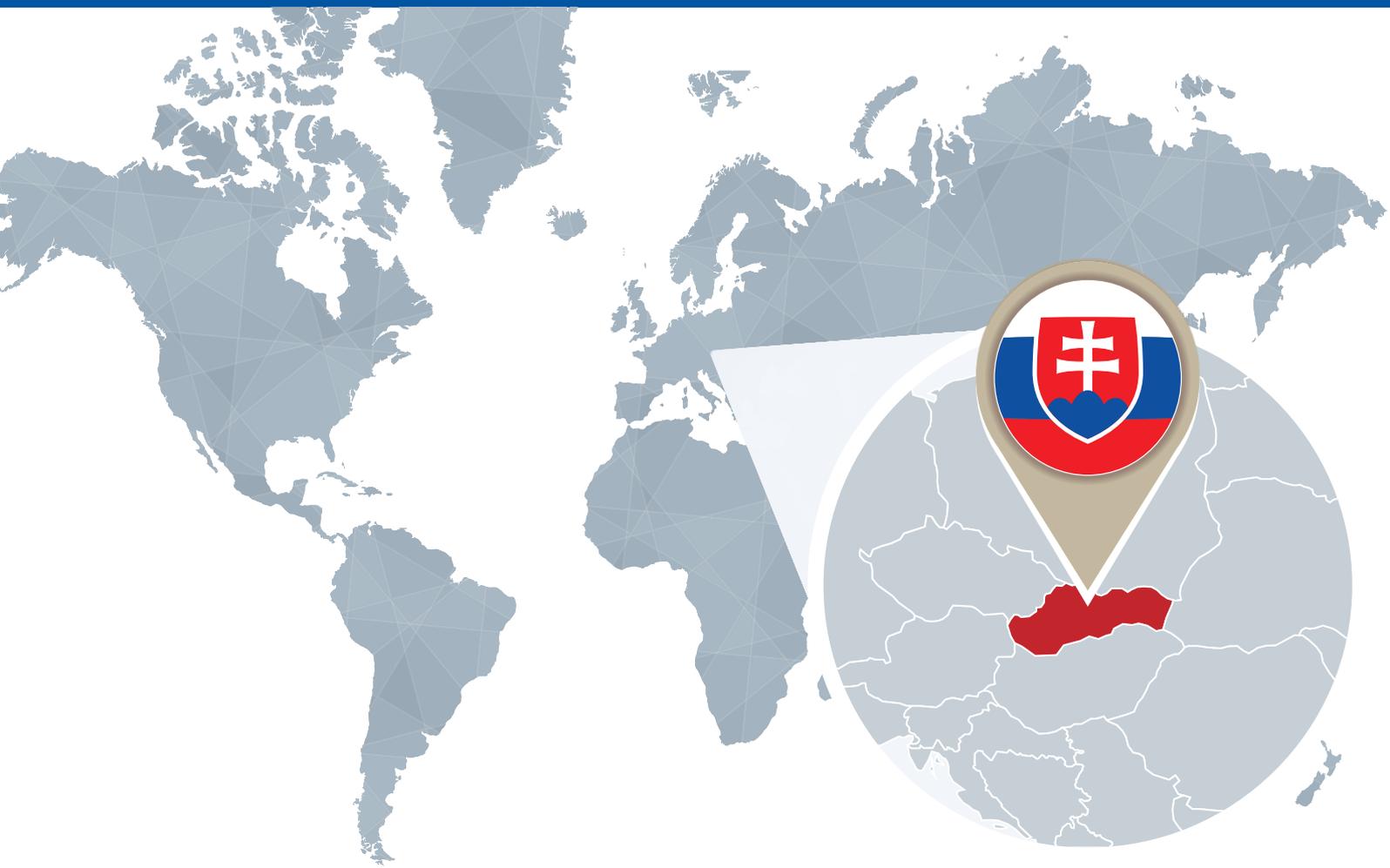




SECURITY STRATEGY OF THE SLOVAK REPUBLIC

2021



A fundamental task of the state in democratic society is to ensure security of all its citizens and protect their rights, freedoms and property. This task requires enhanced readiness of a state to address security challenges, threats and crises, to contribute to the maintenance of international peace and security, to prevent situations, which may threaten the security of the state and its citizens, and to ensure adequate resources, tools and policies as well as trust and confidence of the citizens.

The Slovak Republic remains a safe country. However, global security has deteriorated in several aspects in the past years, which has a direct impact on our security and resilience. The threats and challenges we face are increasingly complex, interconnected, more immediate and with wider security implications. The global pandemic has not only highlighted some of our

vulnerabilities but also accelerated and deepened existing trends of weakening multilateralism, renewed geopolitical competition, assertive pursuing of individual interests and continuing instability in the European neighbourhood along with regional crises around the world.

The world has changed and has become less stable and predictable, and therefore less secure. This situation offers an opportunity for a strategic assessment and setting of our security policy. The Security Strategy of the Slovak Republic is a response to the ongoing changes in the security environment and the need for a comprehensive approach to guaranteeing our security in the context of our membership in the North Atlantic Treaty Organization and the European Union.

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I. INTRODUCTION

1. The Security Strategy of the Slovak Republic (Security Strategy) is a fundamental national security strategic document. It adheres to the Constitution of the Slovak Republic and legislation, the allied and other international political and treaty obligations of the Slovak Republic, in particular the Charter of the United Nations, the Alliance's Strategic Concept and the Global Strategy for the European Union's Foreign and Security Policy.
2. The Security Strategy defines the values of the Slovak Republic, as well as the principles, bases and the interests of the Slovak Republic in the security policy. Based on the assessment of the security environment, it formulates the security policy of the Slovak Republic and determines its goals, the ways and tools for its implementation in order to create preconditions for security, stability, prosperity and the development of the Slovak Republic and its citizens.

The Security Strategy of the Slovak Republic (Security Strategy) is a fundamental national security strategic document.

II. VALUES OF THE SLOVAK REPUBLIC, BASES AND PRINCIPLES OF ITS SECURITY POLICY

3. The Slovak Republic is an independent, sovereign, democratic state upholding the rule of law, committed to the universal values and principles of liberty, pluralist democracy, human rights and freedoms, justice, human dignity, solidarity and a market economy.

4. States that respect democratic values and human rights and act predictably in the rules-based international framework are the best guarantee of security, peace, development and stability. Compliance with principles and norms of international law and rules of conduct provides a basic protection, especially for smaller states.

5. The Slovak Republic is a responsible state, a reliable and trusted ally and partner. It fully respects and promotes international law and a rules-based international order, the principle of peaceful coexistence of peoples and the peaceful settlement of disputes between states, the territorial integrity and political independence of states, their right to individual or collective defence, and the free choice to be a member of international organizations.

The Slovak Republic is a responsible state, a reliable and trusted ally and partner. It fully respects and promotes international law and a rules-based international order.

6. The Slovak Republic is responsible for its own security. The membership in the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and the European Union (EU) is a basic pillar of the security of the Slovak Republic and represents its civilization, value and geopolitical anchorage. For the security and stability of the Slovak Republic is key the ability of both organizations, to prevent, resolve and mitigate, in coordination, the consequences of conflicts and crises, as well as all other security challenges of the Euro-Atlantic area which both organizations and their members are facing.

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III. SECURITY INTERESTS OF THE SLOVAK REPUBLIC

7. The Slovak Republic draws distinction between its vital and strategic security interests. The Security Strategy provides a framework for their coordinated, systematic and effective assertion.
8. **The vital security interests of the Slovak Republic are the preservation of its independence, sovereignty, territorial integrity and the inviolability of its borders, the rule of law and democratic constitutional order, as well as the protection of life and health, fundamental rights and freedoms of its citizens.** The Slovak Republic will use all the legal ways and means, in accordance with international law and its allied and other commitments, to protect and promote its vital security interests.
9. **The strategic security interests of the Slovak Republic**, the protection and promotion of which also supports the achievement of its vital security interests, are:
- Protection of democratic values, fundamental human rights and freedoms and principles of the rule of law and international law in the world;
 - Effective national crisis management and a comprehensive approach to security;
 - Resilience of the state and society against security threats;
 - Trust of citizens in democratic state and independent public institutions and cohesion of society;
 - Security and stability in the Euro-Atlantic area and its neighbourhood;

The Slovak Republic will use all the legal ways and means, in accordance with international law and its allied and other commitments, to protect and promote its vital security interests.

- Functional and stable Euro-Atlantic security architecture with an emphasis on NATO's and EU's effectiveness and capability to act in their areas of responsibility; strategic cooperation between the NATO and the EU based on their complementarity;
- Credible NATO's deterrence and collective defence, transatlantic strategic partnership and the United States military presence in Europe;
- United, prosperous, secure, open and globally respected EU;
- Effective United Nations (UN) capable of responding to existing and new global challenges and threats;
- Effective Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), particularly in conflict prevention and mitigation, confidence-building and dialogue among states;
- Effective conventional arms control regimes in Europe and non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction;
- Intelligence protection and support in promotion of national security interests;
- State and society preparedness to respond effectively and in a coordinated manner to hybrid threats, including disinformation;
- Ensuring a functioning cyber, information and communication security system;
- Protection of critical infrastructure;

- Effective screening of foreign investments on grounds of security and public order and risk capital control;
- Protection of the environment, public health and cultural heritage;
- Energy, raw material, environmental and food security;
- Sustainable development and prosperity of the state and society, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, sustainability of public finances, budgetary responsibility and transparency, social stability and cohesion, competitive economy, balanced regional development;
- High level of education, research and technological development.

IV. SECURITY ENVIRONMENT OF THE SLOVAK REPUBLIC

10. **The Slovak Republic faces several security challenges and threats.**

11. Since the Slovak Republic is a part of the Euro-Atlantic security area, it perceives its security in a broader context. In assessing its security environment, it shall also take into account those challenges and threats to the stability and security of its allies that are important on a global scale or have implications for the neighbouring regions to the Euro-Atlantic area. The Slovak Republic will continuously monitor and evaluate the external security threats, policies and activities of third countries as well as other actors in international relations threatening its security interests, as well as the security of its allies and own citizens being abroad.

THE CHANGING WORLD (STRATEGIC GLOBAL CONTEXT)

12. The global security environment is characterized by a **high degree of dynamism and, conversely, a low degree of predictability**. This is a result of the growing number of factors affecting security and their interconnection. In such an environment, even local events or regional conflicts taking place outside the Slovak Republic can have an impact on its security, even in a relatively short time. External threats interacting with existing or emerging internal threats can amplify their effects. The preparedness and ability of various actors to pursue their own interests to the detriment of others, including thought violation of international law, is constantly increasing.

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13. The **importance and scale of non-military threats and practices** used by states in promoting their interests is increasing. An attack by non-military means can also have the same major impact on our security interests as an armed attack. This development is due to the changing nature of power and influence, as interdependencies, technologies and their interconnections give states new opportunities to influence their competitors. The importance of threats capable of causing significant economic losses due to an interruption or damage to the state basic functions or services that are necessary for a normal functioning of a state and society is also increasing.
14. There is a growing influence of **authoritarian states** promoting non-democratic regimes, as well as **non-state actors** who have the intent, capability and opportunity to seriously jeopardize the interests of states - either at their own initiative or in the service of other state actors. Hostile actors can introduce conflict into democratic societies in order to jeopardize the social consensus on the basic principles of its functioning. Democratic societies with a high degree of openness are particularly at risk in this regard.
15. The **power competition among states** for political, military and economic influence is intensifying. This creates a confrontational environment influencing actions of other states as well. Security and stability in the world, including the immediate neighbourhood of the EU and NATO, are significantly influenced by power ambitions of those actors who do not hesitate to use military in violation of international law. An effort to build spheres of influence using tools of political, economic and military pressure, as well

as operations in the physical space and increasingly in cyberspace, have negative effect.

16. The **weakening of multilateralism** and the violation of international obligations, increase of international tensions and polarization, as well as unilateral actions of several states continue. This has major adverse consequences for the security of countries that rely on the validity and adherence to the international law. We are witnessing efforts to weaken multilateral platforms and organizations, questioning their legitimacy and impartiality. This approach, linked with the selective implementation or non-compliance with agreements and international norms, leads to decline of trust and cooperation between states, increased unpredictability in international relations and, more generally, to the spread of instability.
17. **Climate change** is a global threat, the consequences of which have a fundamental impact on functioning of every society. Extreme weather events, water shortages or food insecurity are ones of its present most visible manifestations in the world. This can lead states to confrontational behaviour, rivalry or even conflicts over territory and natural resources, as well as forced migration of deprived population. Current **consumption growth and use of natural resources** are unsustainable in the long run, leading to a worsening of climate change impacts, and to air, soil and water pollution, which also has a serious impact on human health.

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The biggest threats include **biodiversity loss, collapse of ecosystems** and uneven access to natural resources, especially water, which threatens the functioning of societies, economies and increases the risk of the emergence and spread of dangerous diseases, as well.

18. The global **terrorist threat** remains high, ranging from religiously motivated terrorism to extreme right-wing or left-wing forms. State-sponsored terrorism is particularly serious. Terrorist groups remain interested in acquiring dual-use technologies, and there are often active in failing states and in areas of armed conflict. Terrorism focuses on attacks against the civilian population as well as on the critical national infrastructure. In cyberspace, they can spread terrorist propaganda and extremism and build their own capabilities through extensive networks of sympathizers. The return of radicalised individuals with direct combat experience in armed conflicts also increases the terrorist threat.
19. The erosion of existing **arms control, disarmament and non-proliferation regimes** of weapons of mass destruction (WMD) as well as conventional weapons poses a threat to the maintenance of international peace and security, reduces the trust and quality of relations among states and increases the risk of **arms races** (especially in the field of nuclear weapons). The selective application and violation of arms control, disarmament and non-proliferation commitments, restrictions on specific

weapons, their means of delivery and the control of military activities seriously undermines security and stability in the Euro-Atlantic area. In this context, there is a threat of WMD and their means of delivery in the hands of non-state actors (terrorists) and the inclusion of new types of weapons in the armaments of states that are not part of the arms control mechanisms. The confirmed use of chemical weapons is an alarming fact.

20. The digitization of all spheres of life is advancing rapidly. Extremely fierce global competition over **technological superiority** continues and efforts to gain a strategic advantage and **dominance in cyberspace** are growing. The importance of security in cyberspace for the functioning and resilience of the state and society will continue to increase due to rapid technological development, especially after the introduction of emerging technologies such as 5G networks, artificial intelligence, quantum technologies, autonomous systems, etc. The security, protection and resilience of cyberspace, particularly in case of networks and technologies administered and used by a state, or in selected important areas of public and private sector, is of strategic importance. This opens a new, rapidly evolving area of security threats and their risks, which international and domestic regulation takes into account only insufficiently and slowly, so far. Resumption of arms race, including military rivalry in space, development of new destructive technologies based on artificial intelligence and emergence of serious vulnerabilities in technological systems of the future, are possible consequences of this development. Stockpiling and concentration of large amounts of data by private providers negatively affects the state's ability to act as a national regulator of information flows.
21. There is an increased risk of compromising **critical infrastructure**, including transport, electronic communications, energy, postal services, industry, information and communication technologies, water and atmosphere, health care and finance, which may be more vulnerable due to the digitization and interconnection of systems, their technological sophistication or ownership structure. The abuse of the position of a key supplier of strategic raw materials or a major transit country to advance its own political, economic or security interests has an adverse impact on the energy security of countries. Because of economic growth, increased demand for natural resources is leading to intense competition to ensure favourable **access to strategic raw materials**.
22. The number and scope of subversive and coercive activities of various actors using **disinformation and propaganda** in order to malfunction or manipulate national decision-making mechanisms, influence public opinion in their favour and destabilize the political *situation through i.a. covert support for various extremist, paramilitary and political movements* seeking to disrupt existing constitutional order and public institutions functioning, is growing. The public is exposed to a growing spread of disinformation and conspiracy theories that can endanger human health, disrupt societal cohesion or provoke public violence and social unrest.
23. The seriousness of global **health threats** is growing, which may take the form of unforeseen and uncontrolled threats to public health. This is, for example, a pandemic caused by a communicable disease, or other crisis and emergency situations which can be caused by biological, chemical or physical factors, as well as natural, humanitarian crises and disasters, or various conflicts destabilizing political, economic and social systems and

threatening health care for the population, including immunization. The global spread of diseases is facilitated by the high mobility of people and the reluctance of public health system to respond promptly and effectively to threats and emergencies. Monitoring of sources of the disease and responding to its spread in a coordinated way is a challenge to public health care systems.

24. The continuing growth of the world's population and ongoing **demographic changes**, in particular the gradual ageing of the population and events caused by resettlement and migration, can be a source of regional security threats, but also of political, social, economic problems and major societal changes.

THE TROUBLED NEIGHBOURHOOD (WIDER REGIONAL CONTEXT)

25. **Unresolved conflicts and instability in the neighbourhood** of the Euro-

Atlantic area have direct negative effects on the security and prosperity of the Slovak Republic and its allies. Disputes of an economic, territorial, political, ethnic or religious nature within or between states can lead to an armed conflict or a chronic instability of regions, which creates a permissive environment for a whole range of threats, from illegal migration to terrorism.

Unresolved conflicts and instability in the neighbourhood of the Euro-Atlantic area have direct negative effects on the security and prosperity of the Slovak Republic and its allies.

26. The ongoing conflicts in the region of **Eastern Europe** require immediate and permanent attention of the Slovak Republic. We are witnessing the projection of power and territorial ambitions, the illegal use of force and violations of international law, the strengthening of military and non-military capabilities,

political and economic stagnation and the chronic instability of the region. The conflict in Georgia and eastern Ukraine caused by the aggressive behaviour of the Russian Federation, as well as the illegal occupation of Ukrainian Crimea and Sevastopol, is a gross violation of international law and political commitments. The region of Eastern Europe is a source of many potential threats to the Slovak Republic, including the possibility of armed attack, hybrid, cyber, and intelligence operations, disinformation campaigns, organized crime, the illegal proliferation of small arms and light weapons and illegal migration.

27. The stability of the **Western Balkans** remains fragile due to the slowdown in transformation and integration into Euro-Atlantic structures. Despite the Western Balkan countries' moving towards the EU, the progress they made is not irreversible, due to unresolved disputes, the lack of

reconciliation and the presence of nationalist trends. Socio-economic development lags far behind due to the corruption, organized crime, weak law enforcement and the slow pace of structural reforms. This situation evokes the decline in the population's trust in the Euro-Atlantic integration. Significant impact has the interference of external actors that through getting influence

in countries of the region, also with the support of financial and investment plans, may try to destabilize them over the time, or rather reverse their European and Euro-Atlantic direction and thus weaken the EU and NATO. It is highly likely that the region will continue to be a source of a wide range of potential security threats and challenges for the Slovak Republic,

especially in the form of organized crime, illegal proliferation of small arms and light weapon, illegal migration and the spread of radicalism and extremism.

28. The key factors of instability in the **Middle East, North Africa, the Sahel region and the Horn of Africa** are continued armed conflicts and military coups resulting from intense competition between countries for regional leadership and influence, control over raw materials, and accumulated ethnic and religious conflicts, as well as of economic, social and environmental nature. The situation in these regions also affects geopolitical competition between external actors. A particular problem is the spread of radical ideologies and terrorism, which find a breeding ground in countries with weak institutions and poor government legitimacy. It is therefore highly likely that these regions will be a source of security threats and challenges for the Euro-Atlantic area, such as terrorism, the spread of religious extremism and illegal migration.

29. **Economic lag and social disparities** between states and regions within states, deepening of poverty and social exclusion of certain groups of the population can lead to the extremism, increased crime, unrest and reduced internal cohesion and stability of countries. The decline and stagnation of living standards in the neighbouring regions of the EU and NATO leads to increased migratory pressure on members of both organizations.

The risk of a direct threat of armed attack against the Slovak Republic is low thanks to the NATO and EU membership.

THREATS AND CHALLENGES WE FACE (NATIONAL CONTEXT)

30. **Armed attack on the Slovak Republic**

The risk of a direct threat of armed attack against the Slovak Republic is low thanks to the NATO and EU membership. However, the armed attack remains the most serious potential security threat to the Slovak Republic. The escalation of tensions on the eastern border of the EU and NATO, the hybrid activities of some actors against the security interests of the Slovak Republic or its allies and the growth of conventional and unconventional capabilities of these actors increase the likelihood of serious security incidents and potentially escalation in the region, too.

31. **Terrorist attack**

Although the risk of a terrorist attack in the Slovak Republic is currently low, terrorism can directly threaten the interests of the Slovak Republic and the lives of its citizens abroad, and for many of our allies this threat is extremely acute. The threat of the misuse of the territory of the Slovak Republic for planning attacks, especially terrorist acts in Europe, remains present.

32. **Cyber attack**

Cyberspace is a special operational domain in which an attacker can seriously damage the security interests of the Slovak Republic. Due to the growing sophistication of attacks, it is extremely difficult to reliably attribute the identity of attackers. Not only state, but also private information and communication networks in the territory of the Slovak Republic and its allies and partners are the target of cyber attacks almost constantly. Cyber attacks have become part of regional conflicts and power rivalries, and as tensions between states rise, so will cyber

attacks. In connection with the expansion of a range of civilian targets, cyber attacks can cause damage comparable to the consequences of armed attacks. They can fundamentally endanger the functioning of the state, society and security of citizens, damage and paralyse the main communication, energy and financial systems, cause significant economic loss, disrupt social stability and public order, and weaken the basic functions of the state.

33. **Disruption or destruction of critical infrastructure**

Critical infrastructure is a set of strategically important facilities and buildings of various kinds, of which the failure to operate would have serious adverse effects on the conduct of the basic functions of the state, the provision of the basic needs of the population and the continuity of economic life. The critical infrastructure of the Slovak Republic may be endangered by the intentional interruption of supplies of raw materials for energy and transport connections, the entry of financial capital with a risky or confusing background or a hidden agenda aimed against its interests, as well as sabotage, cyber attacks or economic crime.

34. **Interruption of supplies of raw materials for energy**

The threat of disruption of energy supplies cannot be completely ruled out, as the Slovak Republic remains largely dependent on one dominant supplier, even though the level of its dependence has already been significantly reduced due to new interconnections in the region.

35. **Hybrid threat**

Hybrid threats are coercive and subversive simultaneous activities, mostly under the threshold of a usual response, which threaten the basic attributes of the state or their functionality. The Slovak Republic is increasingly exposed to hybrid activities by intelligence and information operations, attacks on information and

telecommunications infrastructure, support of extremist and paramilitary movements and groups, as well as information activities aimed at influencing public opinion for the benefit of hostile actors. There are influential activities of foreign entities aimed at undermining the credibility and ability to act of public administration institutions, as well as the democratic constitutional order. The most significant hybrid activity is manifested by the targeted dissemination of propaganda and disinformation against the democratic system and the membership of the Slovak Republic in NATO and the EU. The aim of these activities is also to influence political decision-making and public opinion, and results of democratic electoral processes, polarize society and spread public distrust in the state, question the values orientation of society, and manipulate various groups to affect the implementation of security interests. In addition to disinformation aspects on our territory, hybrid threats also reflect efforts to create potentially exploitable dependencies in the economy, energy or critical infrastructure. They are also linked to the foreign support of local extremist groups and to efforts to abuse and manipulate national and other minorities for political purposes.

36. **Foreign intelligence service activities**

Activities of foreign intelligence services in or outside of the territory of the Slovak Republic against the whole spectrum of its or allies' interests have long been one of the most serious threats with potentially significant impacts on security and stability. These activities include, in particular, information seeking, including classified information, efforts to secretly infiltrate state administrative bodies, security establishment and critical infrastructure authorities, as well as strategic corruption, influencing political decision-making and manipulating of public opinion, espionage, sabotage and hybrid threat activities.

37. **Economic crisis, downturn and disruption of social stability**

The security of the Slovak Republic depends significantly on economic and social factors. The Slovak Republic has one of the most open economies in the world, at the same time it does not have its own sufficient raw material resources. It is, therefore, more vulnerable and dependent on economic development in Europe and on global markets. Any significant economic and social downturn in the country causes an additional burden on the state's internal stability and its ability to promote the security interests.

38. **Extremism and incitement to hatred**

Incitement to hatred and violence based on race, nation, national and ethnic group, as well as religion or sexual orientation, threatens human rights and civil liberties and causes tensions in society. Growing manifestations of chauvinism, anti-Semitism and racism are finding fertile ground especially in right-wing extremism. Extremists, possibly manipulated by external actors for political purposes, intentionally bring polarizing messages into the public debate in order to influence public opinion and possibly also decision-making processes in the state. A highly socially dangerous phenomenon is the spread of hateful or extremist content by public figures, public officials, and within armed forces and corps.

39. **Irredentism**

Irredentism, separatism and feeding of historical claims, including by questioning of post-war peace arrangements and peace treaties, are among the tools that can be used by external actors to threaten the vital security interests of the Slovak Republic, or to destabilize its institutions and divide the society.

40. **Illegal migration**

The Slovak Republic is a transit country for illegal migrants and also a destination country for migrants entering the Schengen area legally or pseudo-legally. Their residence becomes unauthorized if there is a violation of the alien and residence regulations or they work illegally. Europe remains exposed to migratory pressure both on the western Mediterranean migration route leading from Africa, and on the eastern Mediterranean migration route from unstable areas extending to Asia and following the Western Balkans route, which also passes through the territory of the Slovak Republic. Illegal mass migration calls into question the positive aspects of immigration and increases the risk of human trafficking. Insufficient integration of migrants to society can be a source of social tensions, security threats and, indirectly can, lead to increased support for extremist political ideologies and groups. The spread of radicalism among migrants is also a threat, to which their social exclusion can also contribute. On the other hand, the proliferation of unverified and untrue information about migration and foreigners can lead to an increase in hate speech and extremism in society. Illegal migration to the Slovak Republic brings also issues as illegal work and employment, introduction of communicable diseases, marriages of convenience and trafficking in human beings, with unaccompanied minors being particularly a vulnerable group.

41. **Organized crime**

In the Slovak Republic, organized crime is present mainly in the form of economic crime, often in combination with corruption and drug crime. It presents itself in increasingly inconspicuous, non-violent and sophisticated illegal activities, including cybercrime. Organized crime relies on significant economic resources, partly of legal origin, and seeks to link to

the political sphere. Its efforts to grow into public administration structures in order to influence decisions on the distribution of funds and public procurements is particularly threatening.

42. **Corruption**

Corruption, as an undesirable phenomenon of the social, economic and management system of the state, affects all spheres of society and weakens the democratic and legal foundations of the state. Systemic corruption causes significant direct economic losses to the state, weakens the functioning of state institutions and reduces their credibility to citizens.

43. **Pollution and environmental damage**

The polluted environment represents a specific threat to the Slovak Republic, especially in terms of impacts on the health of the population and the economy and in the long term potentially poses the threat to the food and environmental security of the state. A particular problem is the transboundary effect of this threat, which is particularly visible in cases of large-scale pollution of air or watercourses, surface and groundwater.

V. SECURITY POLICY OF THE SLOVAK REPUBLIC

44. The security policy of the Slovak Republic will be focused on promoting its security interests and responding to security threats and challenges in order to maintain and strengthen its national security. The Slovak Republic promotes its security interests through security policy instruments, with the involvement and support of citizens and in cooperation with allies and partners.

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- Guarantee the continuity of its operation;
- Improve information sharing between various elements of the security system;
- Systematically practice and evaluate its functionality.

45. The basic instrument of the security policy of the Slovak Republic is the **security system**, which must be prepared to respond to security threats and the changing security environment. Its main priorities are:

- Ensure efficient and effective management in all crisis situations;
- Identify emerging crises and provide an early warning;
- Analyse the impact of the crisis situation on the security interests of the Slovak Republic and propose ways to resolve the crisis;
- Prevent crisis situations and in case of its emergence respond at its outbreak, and increase the resilience of the state and society;
- Respond to confirmed threats and adapt to changes in the security situation, including responses to unexpected threats;
- Ensure rapid elimination of crisis situation impacts and restoration of the status quo;

46. The Slovak Republic will provide adequate resources for the functioning of the security system and ensure their effective and transparent use.

SECURITY AND DEFENCE OF THE STATE AND ITS INHABITANTS

47. **Ensuring the defence** of the Slovak Republic is a necessary prerequisite for preserving its sovereignty, territorial integrity and the inviolability of its borders. Defence of the state is also provided in cyberspace. The Slovak Republic has primary responsibility for its own defence, using NATO's collective defence as the most effective way to ensure its defence. The development of the defence capabilities of the Slovak Republic strengthens its ability to defend

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itself and is a necessary precondition for a full-fledged functioning of NATO's collective defence and the national resilience.

48. Membership of the Slovak Republic in NATO and the EU provides treaty obligations of international assistance and support in case of an armed attack. Similarly, the Slovak Republic is bound to provide such assistance to another NATO ally or EU member state in case of an attack. The Slovak Republic acts responsibly in increasing its readiness for defence, including the collective defence of the Allies, and to the development of military capabilities in NATO and the EU. To this end, it is developing the national defence system and defence capacities and ensuring the necessary resources and their efficient and transparent use.
49. The Slovak Republic will improve its defence management, enhance the readiness of the Armed Forces for the defence of the Slovak Republic and fulfilment of international obligations, as well as the readiness of other elements and capacities of the national defence system to perform tasks in war or state of war. It will regularly exercise the implementation of these tasks, including the tasks of the constitutional authorities. It will also develop the capacity to provide support to foreign armed forces in accordance with its international obligations and the constitution of the Slovak Republic. It will increase its readiness for defence in cyberspace. The Armed Forces will also be prepared to fulfil the tasks of promoting peace, security and stability outside the territory of the Slovak Republic and to perform tasks in the

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event of an emergency and non-military crisis situation on its territory. The Slovak Republic will support the involvement of its defence industry in the national defence system and its participation in international cooperation. It will also strengthen the preparation of the general public for defence.

50. The **fight against terrorism** will be focused on preventing its root causes and strengthening capabilities in this area, including responding to new threats such as radicalised individuals, foreign terrorist fighters and the abuse of social networks. The Slovak Republic will prevent the planning, organization, financing or operation of terrorist activities on its territory and at the same time strengthen the legislative and institutional framework for the fight against terrorism. In particular, it will focus on the readiness and coordination of all elements participating in the prevention, repression, detection and documentation of terrorist acts, the risk reduction of threats to the population and of critical infrastructure related to threats of explosives, chemical, biological, radioactive and nuclear means used by terrorists, as well as the effective implementation of counter-terrorism sanctions regimes. The Slovak Republic will increase the preparedness of counter-terrorism entities, in particular by increasing analytical capacities, conducting exercises and international cooperation. It will also raise public awareness of radicalization, extremism and terrorism, the need to report suspicious activity and behaviour in the event of a terrorist attack or threat. The Slovak Republic will support international efforts aimed at preventing terrorism.

51. The development of information technology requires a constant increase in the level of **cyber security**. The Slovak Republic will take measures to ensure a high level of security in the national cyberspace, which will be based on the rule of law and respect for fundamental human rights and freedoms. It will be based on the application of a comprehensive approach to cyber security and the principles of ongoing risk management, prioritizing support, cooperation and prevention over repression and unilateral decisions. The Slovak Republic will build an effective detection system, improve and accelerate the ability to respond to cyber security incidents, unify the various existing regulations in this area into a single regulatory framework and create modern and effective forms of cooperation between the state and the security and private sectors. It will also cooperate at the international level, develop forms of bilateral cooperation and gain experience from partner countries. The Slovak Republic will ensure that technologies that do not pose a security threat and come from our partners and allies are used in the construction of communications, telecommunications and data networks administered by the state, used by the state or forming part of its critical infrastructure.

52. **Working critical infrastructure** is the basis of modern, economically vital and secure society, functioning economy and

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public administration. The Slovak Republic will increase its ability to withstand and recover rapidly from emergencies, deliberate attacks, accidents or natural disasters. Efforts will be made to build a comprehensive information base that maps in detail the elements of critical infrastructure, their interdependence and the classification of individual threats. With emerging technologies, it is essential to ensure the security and reliability of critical infrastructure and systems and networks owned, used or managed by the state, as well as other communication networks and systems used by the state or a large part of the population. The Slovak Republic will strive to establish links between operators and central government authorities, achieve compatibility of crisis management with other NATO and EU members, improve prevention and increase the ability to respond to security threats and thus reduce damage caused by possible incidents in critical infrastructure.

53. To **increase the resilience of the state and society to hybrid threats**, the Slovak Republic will strengthen its capacity and expertise in public administration, as well as national coordination, especially in the area of planning, management and policy-making at the governmental and departmental levels. This will include measures in areas such as infrastructure, cyber security, economy, armed forces, culture, society, public administration, political sphere, legislation, diplomacy, intelligence and information space. At the same time, the

Slovak Republic will actively contribute to the efforts of NATO, the EU and other international organizations in the fight against hybrid threats in order to strengthen their effectiveness, coherence and capacity to act in this area. It will also cooperate with relevant international centres of excellence in the fight against hybrid threats to benefit from their expertise.

54. In the **fight against disinformation** and propaganda, the Slovak Republic will focus on establishing coordinated national mechanism for increasing resilience to disinformation and information operations. The aim is to strengthen the structures and decision-making processes of early identification, evaluation and response to influential and disinformation effects, as well as the implementation of systemic measures. The Slovak Republic will support the development of critical thinking, especially young people, and will use the best practices and recommendations of international organizations, as well as competent non-governmental sector, in the fight against disinformation and propaganda.
55. The Slovak Republic, in its **strategic communication**, will focus on the active presentation of its foreign policy and security interests. It will develop public administration capacities and strengthen effective mechanism for cooperation with competent non-governmental, academic and media sectors aimed to combat disinformation and propaganda and support strategic communication. It will support the development of civil society and cooperation with the non-governmental sector by adopting inter-ministerial and sector-specific systemic measures, including financial ones, which will enable the non-governmental sector to develop its programs and capacities.
56. **Intelligence services** built on the principles of constitutionality and legality and operating under the effective parliamentary control provide information support to authorized entities in the decision-making process and implement measures to prevent activities, phenomena and events that may endanger the vital and strategic security interests of the Slovak Republic. The intelligence services will focus in particular on protection against activities of foreign intelligence services, prevention of and fight against organized crime and strategic corruption, fulfilment of tasks in the fight against terrorism and specific forms of extremism, participation in cyber security and defence, critical infrastructure protection and participation in combating hybrid threats.
57. The Slovak Republic will strengthen the position and role of intelligence services in providing intelligence support to state authorities and in implementation of security and preventive measures, by supporting the development of their capabilities and capacities and optimizing the legal framework for their effective operation. Intelligence services will continue to exchange and share intelligence with partner services abroad.
58. The Slovak Republic will continue to improve the system of **protection of classified information** as a support tool for the pursuit of its security interests. It will promote the consistent application of the principles of protection of classified information wherever the security of the state's sensitive and critical assets is required. It will modernize the system of protection of classified information and adapt procedures and processes as far as possible to NATO and EU regulations in order to increase the quality and efficiency of security clearances and work with classified information.
59. The Slovak Republic will further **strengthen the civil protection system**. It will increase the preparedness of the population for emergencies and educate

them in the field of civil protection through greater involvement of civil protection units, including their material and technical equipment, social security in crisis situations with the use of the Centre for Concentrated Social Security and Education in the field of threat prevention and self-protection. The Slovak Republic will continue to increase its own capabilities involved in the EU Civil Protection Mechanism and develop cooperation with the EU and NATO civil protection operations centres. In order to ensure effective protection and assistance to citizens abroad, the Slovak Republic will strengthen the system and mechanisms of assistance in times of crisis, including through cooperation within the EU and NATO.

60. **Effective integrated rescue system** is an essential part of the national security system. The Slovak Republic will build an efficient integrated rescue system and support the intensified cooperation between the rescue services of the integrated rescue system in providing emergency assistance, as well as the development of integrated rescue system coordination centres with an emphasis on increased resilience to security threats. The Slovak Republic will provide modern material and technical equipment for the basic rescue components of the integrated rescue system in order to increase their capability to act and shorten the reaction time.
61. The Slovak Republic will continue to **fight organized crime** and to effectively detect and investigate criminal offences. It will optimize the legal framework by adopting changes to criminal codes reflecting application practice, as well as other laws necessary for the exercise of the tasks of law enforcement authorities. The Slovak Republic will continue to effectively detect and seize the proceeds of crime, as well as assets obtained from illegal income. It

will ensure the effective application of Act No. 312/2020 Coll. on the enforcement of decisions on the seizure of property and the administration of seized property and on the amendment of certain laws, which constitutes the legislative and institutional basis for the effective enforcement of confiscation of property by public authorities in practice. The Slovak Republic will continue to be actively involved in international cooperation in the fight against transnational organized crime.

62. The Slovak Republic will adopt legislative changes to increase the **effectiveness of the fight against all crimes of corruption**. It will focus on the abuse of power of public officials and the legalization of proceeds of crime, especially in the detection and investigation of corruption schemes in public procurement, influencing the decision-making of civil and criminal matters in court proceedings, securing subsidies from the state and EU budgets, high-value public orders and in similar serious areas where extensive damage to public finances is identified. In connection with the protection of whistleblowers of corruption and other anti-social activities in employment relations it will operationalize the office for the protection of whistleblowers of corruption.
63. In the fight against **illegal migration**, the Slovak Republic will actively shape EU migration policy in order to control migration flows to EU countries, protect the EU external borders and promote a sustainable EU migration and asylum policy. It will strengthen the effectiveness of border control in the fight against illegal border crossings and smuggling, and support a due application of regulations on residence of aliens and their rights. It will support the prioritization of return policy vis-à-vis third countries, both in the form of voluntary returns and in the form of forced returns and readmission, and will

participate in international cooperation in this area. The Slovak Republic will adopt legislative changes enabling the extension of the crime of smuggling to the borders of the Member States of the Schengen area. It will play an active role in tackling the causes of illegal migration in countries of origin, including through the use of development cooperation and humanitarian aid instruments and the implementation of effective solutions to mitigate climate change migration.

64. In connection with the **illicit armament and trade in arms**, the Slovak Republic will adopt further legislation concerning the so-called weapons precursors manufactured in the Slovak Republic, in order to prevent their use for criminal offences at home or abroad.
65. **In the fight against extremism**, the Slovak Republic will continue its efforts to detect all manifestations of extremism and extremist radicalization. It will focus on preventing radicalization and eliminating their causes. Competent authorities will continue to actively detect and investigate crimes of extremism, as well as monitor and analyse activities of extremist groups in order to eliminate the threat of extremist-motivated wrongdoing. The Slovak Republic will pay special attention to the detection and suppression of extremist manifestations and actions within the public administration.

The Slovak Republic, in its foreign and security policy, will actively strengthen and promote values of freedom, democracy, the rule of law, equality, human dignity and the protection of all human rights and fundamental freedoms, including freedom of religion, belief and religious tolerance.

SHAPING THE INTERNATIONAL ENVIRONMENT

66. The Slovak Republic, in its foreign and security policy, will actively **strengthen and promote values of freedom, democracy, the rule of law, equality, human dignity and the protection of all human rights and fundamental freedoms**, including freedom of religion, belief and religious tolerance. As an integral part of this effort, the Slovak Republic will promote **compliance with the principles and standards of international law**. Their application has a major impact on conflict prevention and resolution, the development of peaceful coexistence and transnational cooperation. At the same time, it will support international mechanisms to identify and hold accountable violations of international law and initiatives to build trust and increase transparency and security among states.
67. The Slovak Republic will actively support **effective multilateralism**. It will continue to support the necessary reforms and modernization of multilateral institutions to meet their purpose and to respond to the challenges of the 21st century. The **United Nations** is the central pillar of multilateralism, through which it will support measures to strengthen international security, conflict prevention, stabilization and reconstruction of conflict-affected countries, as well as to address issues having direct impact on international peace and security. The Slovak Republic will continue to contribute to UN peacekeeping missions and actively work on the security sector reform

agenda. With the aim to stabilize a rules-based international order, it will support initiatives of like-minded states in the Alliance for Multilateralism.

68. The Slovak Republic will work on maintaining credibility and relevance of existing mechanisms for **arms control, disarmament and WMD non-proliferation**. It will support efforts to strengthen them in the light of the growing capacities and ambitions of states outside existing regimes, or countries applying a selective approach to fulfilling their commitments, specifically in arms control and nuclear disarmament, and commitment to chemical weapons prohibition. The universality of existing multilateral instruments will be sought, including the strengthening of their control mechanisms. The Slovak Republic will support the efforts of the International Partnership against the Impunity for the Use of Chemical Weapons. It will strictly adhere to its international obligations in the area of trade of defence-related products and dual-use items.

69. The **United States of America** (USA) is a strategic transatlantic ally of the Slovak Republic in NATO, with which we share common values and are bound by a strong historical alliance and commitment to collective defence. Our security interest is to maintain the military presence of the USA in Europe, which embodies the indivisibility of Allied security on both sides of the Atlantic. Its continuation contributes to the stability and security in Europe and is the key deterrent and guarantee of effective defence against a possible armed attack on European NATO members. The changing priorities of the USA, which are also being transferred to transatlantic relations, do not call into

We consider the North Atlantic Treaty Organization to be a fundamental pillar of security in the Transatlantic area.

question the importance of strategic alliance and political dialogue, despite sometimes differing views on how to address selected international issues.

Reducing the global engagement of the USA is not in our interest, as it weakens international institutions and the international system based on them, as well as NATO's transatlantic bond, cohesion and capability to act. The Slovak Republic will also promote an open and regular dialogue between the EU and the USA.

70. The Slovak Republic is a part of historically the most effective political-military alliance. Within the **North Atlantic Treaty Organization**, which we consider to be a fundamental pillar of security in the Transatlantic area and a crucial forum for security consultations among the Allies, we share the security and defence umbrella in the form of collective defence. The Slovak Republic will support an actionable, politically cohesive and militarily strong NATO, adapting and responding effectively to traditional and emerging new security threats and challenges, with the effective conventional and nuclear deterrence potential. The strengthening of NATO's political consultations, including the assessment of global and non-military impacts on our security, is the basis for a common approach to crisis management and threat mitigation. The Slovak Republic will gradually increase its defence spending and build military capabilities that will be in line with the Alliance's collective defence plans. With regard to this, it will align its capabilities development plans with NATO's recommendations and requirements. An integral part of the comprehensive position of the Slovak Republic in NATO will be its strategic communication at the governmental level and proper public information.

71. The Slovak Republic will continue to contribute to **NATO operations, missions and activities** with the aim to address security challenges and threats to the Slovak Republic and its allies. Participation of its armed forces in the framework of NATO's enhanced Forward Presence is a manifestation of solidarity and part of the Alliance's Deterrence and Defence policy.
72. The Slovak Republic will continue to actively support the **Alliance's partnership policy** and the development of NATO's relations with individual partners who are interested in cooperating or with whom security interests are shared. The Slovak Republic will reject attempts to question the Euro-Atlantic ambitions and aspirations of partners as Ukraine, Georgia or the countries of the Western Balkans.
73. As a responsible and reliable member of the **European Union**, the Slovak Republic will strive to ensure that the EU will continue to be a pillar of peace, stability, security and prosperity. As part of its activities in the EU, it will actively contribute to the formation of its internal and external policies and programs and to their subsequent implementation. It will focus on strengthening the unity of the Member States, enhancing the EU's ability to overcome crises and promoting the values on which the EU is founded, and on strengthening the EU's self-sufficiency in strategic areas. At the same time, it will strive to increase the involvement of the citizens of the Slovak Republic in European affairs. As a member of the Eurozone, the Slovak Republic will participate in building an economically strong EU. It will support the completing of the Economic and Monetary Union with a high level of social cohesion and economic stability, with an emphasis on adopting necessary structural reforms at the EU and national level.
74. The Slovak Republic will support the fundamental strengthening and making effective the **EU's Common Foreign and Security Policy and the Common Security and Defence Policy** with the aim to make the EU a more influential actor on the international stage. It will support measures to increase the EU capability to act in the area of security and defence.
- The Slovak Republic will actively use its participation in the Permanent Structured Cooperation (PESCO) to develop the military capabilities needed to strengthen the European pillar of transatlantic security and defence. It will continue to participate in EU-led missions and operations and support the building of security and defence capabilities of partner countries, especially in the Eastern and Southern neighbourhoods.
75. The Slovak Republic will support reasonable **adoption of targeted EU restrictive measures** (sanctions) as a political tool to enforce the change of the behaviour of third countries, natural and legal persons responsible for gross violations of international law, human rights and fundamental freedoms. The Slovak Republic will make the application practice in the area of enforcement of sanctions more effective.
76. The Slovak Republic will actively promote the most intensive political dialogue possible and close strategic and practical **cooperation between NATO and the EU** on the principles of complementarity, synergy and efficient spending in the field of security and defence.
77. In the **Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe**, the Slovak Republic will advocate for compliance with and the development of existing confidence- and security-building

The EU is a pillar of peace, stability, security and prosperity.

measures, as well as the regime for the control of conventional armed forces in Europe. Taking into account the OSCE comprehensive approach to security, the Slovak Republic will also support the development of economic cooperation, the principles of the rule of law and the protection of human rights in accordance with the commitments made, as well as ensuring sufficient OSCE capacities for conflict prevention, monitoring and conflict resolution.

78. The Slovak Republic will promote the comprehensive development of **good neighbourly relations**, their conflict-free nature, and support a stable security situation in the surrounding countries. The main challenge is to end the armed conflict in **Ukraine**, to restore its sovereignty and territorial integrity, including in the illegally occupied Crimea. The Slovak Republic will make every effort to support a political solution to the conflict in Ukraine and will contribute to the fulfilment of Ukraine's Euro-Atlantic ambitions. In relation to its other neighbours, the Slovak Republic will develop intensive cooperation at the **bilateral level**, including within the existing **regional forums**, in particular the Visegrad Group and the Slavkov format. It will ensure that regional cooperation reflects its interests, commitments and values within the EU and NATO and contributes to addressing challenges in the European and Euro-Atlantic area.
79. The **European neighbourhood** is also our neighbourhood, in the context of our EU and NATO membership. In both its main directions - East and South - the Slovak Republic will support the resilience of partners to security threats and challenges and will contribute to eliminating the causes and consequences of local and regional conflicts. The Slovak Republic will support an ambitious agenda of the **Eastern Partnership** after 2020, with

an emphasis on the implementation of reforms, and development of the rule of law, democracy and human rights. It will continue to support reform efforts of the **Western Balkan** countries with a view to advancing the EU and NATO enlargement, provided that the criteria set are met, and thus enlarging area of stability and security. In the **Southern neighbourhood**, it will support preventive diplomacy, reducing tensions in the region, tackling the causes of illegal migration, terrorism as well as local and regional conflicts. In addition to bilateral and multilateral activities, the Slovak Republic will also use targeted instruments of its **development cooperation and humanitarian aid**.

80. The Slovak Republic will actively build **partnerships** with other states with the aim to support the development of friendly relations, dialogue and cooperation, especially in areas where the crisis of multilateralism has impacts. As a result of Brexit, the Slovak Republic will support the strategic partnership with the United Kingdom on European and global security policy. Furthermore, it will strive for enhanced cooperation and the building of coalitions with all like-minded countries sharing same values and interests.
81. The Slovak Republic is interested in developing good mutual relations with the **Russian Federation** (Russia). Russia is an important actor and partner in addressing international threats and challenges, but at the same time, with its confrontational approach in the military, security and political areas, represents a key challenge for the security of our Euro-Atlantic area. The Slovak Republic cannot ignore violations of the basic principles of international law, interference in democratic processes of other states and efforts to weaken the foundations of the European security architecture, including the unity of NATO and the EU. Taking this into account, policy of the Slovak Republic

towards Russia will remain based on seeking intersections of common interests, but also on an open critical dialogue on issues where our values and interests diverge, and if necessary, the Slovak Republic will also support the application of restrictive measures.

82. The **People's Republic of China** (China) is an important actor and partner in addressing global challenges, but also an economic and technological competitor and systemic rival of the EU. China is significantly increasing its power potential and political influence, backed by rapidly growing military capabilities, which in combination with its economic strength and strategic investment is using assertively to advance its interests. It promotes its own model of governance and a different understanding of human rights and freedoms, which the Slovak Republic will take into account in its mutual relations, as well as in its positions within international organizations.

RESILIENCE AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

83. **Building the resilience of the state and society** is a necessary response to a dynamically changing security environment with a low degree of predictability of its development. In this area, the Slovak Republic will focus on strengthening the cooperation of all responsible components of its public administration. It will involve a broad public in this effort in order to streamline the coordination of activities of individual ministries and institutions. The emphasis will be put on the readiness

Building the resilience of the state and society is a necessary response to a dynamically changing security environment with a low degree of predictability of its development.

of the state and society to withstand crises, to preserve the basic functions of the state and society, to ensure recovery and take lessons from crisis situations, in accordance with its comprehensive approach to security. In this effort, the Slovak Republic will focus on identifying and eliminating potential vulnerabilities in the state and society. The Slovak Republic is interested in developing a healthy and diverse civil society. It will work on increasing citizens' trust in the state and public institutions, as well as on the readiness of the population to respond to security threats and crisis situations, including developing their security awareness, which are one of the basic preconditions for strengthening the resilience of the state and society.

84. The Slovak Republic will take a responsible approach to the **protection of its environment**. It implements the vision for a greener Slovakia defined in the *Strategy of the Environmental Policy of the Slovak Republic until 2030*. In the context of climate change, the Slovak Republic has committed itself to achieving carbon neutrality by 2050 in line with the objectives of the European Green Agreement as a strategic document of the European Commission providing a framework for achieving EU climate neutrality and green economic transformation. To meet this goal, it will focus at the national level on reducing greenhouse gas emissions, promoting carbon sequestration, measures to develop renewable energy sources, measures to develop nuclear energy, energy efficiency in industry, buildings and the deployment of low-emission transport. At the same time, efforts will be made to improve air quality and reduce the negative effects of polluted air on human health and the environment.

85. With the aim to avert the impending collapse of ecosystems and the ongoing loss of biodiversity, the Slovak Republic will work to **effectively protect nature and landscape** and prevent the deterioration of protected species and habitats. It will focus on maintaining non-intervention in the highest level of protection, preserving all forest functions, building green infrastructure and revitalizing and renaturalizing watercourses. Increased efforts will be made to remediate environmental burdens and to manage waste properly. It will follow the „polluter pays“ principle, tighten up waste policy and focus in particular on the highest priority environmental burdens.
86. Inclusive and sustainable economic growth, sustainable public finances and a competitive and productive economy are key interests in ensuring the **economic stability** and resilience of the Slovak Republic. In order to achieve these interests, the Slovak Republic will focus on the implementation of structural reforms, the digitization of the economy, the implementation of modern technologies and the effective use of the benefits of international economic cooperation and its EU membership. By implementing the measures of the Modern and Successful Slovakia (2020) program, the Slovak Republic will aim to improve the fulfilment of quality of life indicators in order to shift to advanced economies. The Slovak Republic will build an economy connected to the education system and able to stimulate and use innovation, digitization and new technological trends and develop a pro-export policy. At the same time, it will introduce an **effective system for screening foreign investments** to protect security and public order, and a system for the indication of risk capital. However, the Slovak Republic will remain an open economy for foreign investors.
87. The Slovak Republic will use all available economic and fiscal instruments to support **financial stability** and will continuously optimize protection mechanisms in the economic and financial field. In the interest of the long-term sustainability of public finances, it will align general government revenue and expenditure with macroeconomic and strategic policy objectives. It will support the efficiency of public spending in the security sector through regular expenditure reviews and investment evaluations. It will develop more effective approach to the fight against tax evasion, the collection of taxes and levies and the management of government debt and liquidity. The Slovak Republic will be a responsible and constructive member of the Eurozone and will use the potential of the common European currency to strengthen its economic and fiscal stability and international competitiveness.
88. The Slovak Republic will deepen the organization of its social security system. Effectively designed social policy will contribute to **increasing social security**. Through social policy measures, it will support the sustainable demographic profile of society, the improvement of tools for assistance in material need, more effective financing of social services, tools for the social integration of people with disabilities, measures for the social and legal protection of children. A special area is represented by tools supporting the social inclusion of vulnerable groups in the society through community centres, the education system and the support of field social work. The primary goal of the social policy of the Slovak Republic is to increase the living standards of the population, reduce unemployment and support families by maintaining and creating new jobs through active labour market measures. As part of this effort, it will take measures aimed at reducing the departure of skilled labour abroad and making the

labour market more attractive for Slovak foreign graduates.

89. **Raw materials and energy security** are the primary preconditions for economic development and ensuring the functioning of the state in other areas. The Slovak Republic will actively use all energy policy instruments, support energy efficiency and energy saving. Its resilience to possible attempts of disrupting the supply of raw materials for energy is increasing thanks to the significant progress in the diversification of transit routes and sources of raw materials for energy, as well as the growing use of renewable energy sources, which it will continue to do. The Slovak Republic will emphasize security and reliability of energy supply, as well as cost-effectiveness and impacts on industrial competitiveness. As a starting point for these policies, it will promote the preservation of the right to establish a national energy mix, including the safe and sustainable use of all low-carbon resources. It will continue to promote the maintenance of natural gas transit through its gas infrastructure as well as through the territory of Ukraine. It will also further develop bilateral and multilateral energy cooperation, including active energy diplomacy. At the same time, it will continue to support cooperation with traditional transit partners and suppliers of raw materials for energy.
90. The Slovak Republic will support the **building of sufficient stocks of strategic raw materials**. It will verify, efficiently use and protect its raw materials for energy and non-energy raw materials as well as other natural resources, and strengthen its raw material security. It will support the transition to a circular economy that handles materials and raw materials in a sustainable and efficient way. Water is one of the main strategic resources of the Slovak Republic. The Slovak Republic will focus on protecting and ensuring the good status of its water resources and their efficient use, preventing their pollution, addressing drought and water scarcity, and improving spatial and landscape planning.
91. The Slovak Republic will strive to **strengthening food security**, sustainable land management and a reliable and resilient food system that is able to provide the population with access to a sufficient supply of affordable, quality food and that works in all circumstances. The Slovak Republic will implement the gradual restoration of landscape elements on agricultural land and will support organic farming, which is more environmentally friendly. In this context, it will also advocate stricter controls on the sale and use of chemicals in agriculture. It will also approach the use of the rock environment and forests in a sustainable way. Efforts will also be made to support the food supply chain, which should ensure increased local food production and consumption, i.e. stimulate sustainable food processing practices, ensure a lower carbon footprint, reduce emissions and green production, modernize technological and production facilities in the food industry and support vertical cooperation within the food supply chain.
92. To improve **public health protection**, the Slovak Republic will increase the quality of health care. This care also applies to the protection of the health of the citizens of the Slovak Republic against pandemics, radiation and environmental accidents, as well as the ability to act in the event of natural disasters, terrorist attacks or other threats to state security. Monitoring and early warning and follow-up measures to respond rapidly to exceptional health threats are essential elements to ensure a high level of protection of public health. The priority of the Slovak Republic will be to streamline the current national and European systems for ensuring the protection of

public health by improving preparedness and strengthening the capacity for a coordinated response to public health emergencies. Within the World Health Organization, the Slovak Republic will contribute to strengthening international coordination and cooperation in increasing the preparedness and resilience of states to future crises threatening the health of the population, including addressing long-term structural challenges of health systems on the principle of solidarity. Health care preparedness in the Slovak Republic requires the maintaining and strengthening of critical infrastructure and its systematic maintenance in the context of the provision of personnel and resources for the protection of public health and the provision of healthcare. The aim of this effort is to maintain an adequate inpatient fund and adequate capacity of the emergency medical service, specialized medical workplaces and laboratories, as well as a sufficient level of personnel and material equipment of public health offices, supplies and provision of medical materials and medicines. It also includes the adequate vaccination of the population and health education of the population.

93. The Slovak Republic will pay due attention to **educational reforms**. The priority is to build a modern and inclusive education and strengthening the country's innovation potential. A comprehensive curriculum reform focusing on skills, reading and media literacy, critical thinking, digital and business skills is a necessary step. The Slovak Republic will create conditions for the inclusion of pupils from socially disadvantaged backgrounds and marginalized groups. As part of building social resilience, it will pay special attention to raising students' awareness of the dangers of extremism, intolerance, xenophobia, disinformation and hoaxes, cyber (information) security, the importance of nature and environmental protection. It

will strengthen educational and training programs focused on democratic values, the prevention of extremism, intolerance, xenophobia, including anti-Semitism, and the development of critical thinking, especially of the young generation, which is key to recognizing disinformation and hoaxes. In the field of **science, research and innovation**, the Slovak Republic will prepare a set of reforms that will help strengthen the innovation potential and turn on the knowledge economy. It will increase resources for science, research and innovation and adopt support tools towards an innovative country.

94. The Slovak Republic, through **demographically oriented policies and measures**, will create a suitable reproductive environment, including a balanced age structure of the population. During periods of long-term low birth rates, demographic measures must be pronatalist. Stable and functioning families are a basic prerequisite for increasing the birth rate. The Slovak Republic will create framework conditions for family stability, mainly through legislative and financial instruments. Creating conditions for the functioning of families will focus mainly on three areas - housing, reconciling work and family, and compensating for lost opportunities that arise for parents as a result of child care. Suitable and affordable housing is a basic prerequisite for starting a family. The main prerequisite for reconciling work and family is flexible participation in the labour market, affordable, high-quality and variable care for pre-school children and quality services for families.

VI. CONCLUSION

95. The Security Strategy is the result of the joint work of ministries and other central state administration bodies and the Office of the President of the Slovak Republic. Its goal is to adopt a comprehensive framework for addressing security challenges and threats and to strengthen a non-partisan, consensual approach to security as an important prerequisite for the successful and long-term sustainable implementation of the security policy of the Slovak Republic.

96. The Security Strategy is followed by other cross-cutting and sectoral documents (strategies, policies, concepts, frameworks, programs, plans and priorities) and other implementing measures, including decisions on resourcing national security.

The Government of the Slovak Republic is responsible for the security of the state, and for the implementation and ongoing evaluation of the Security Strategy.

97. The Government of the Slovak Republic is responsible for the security of the state, and for the implementation and ongoing evaluation of the implementation of the Security Strategy. Once a year, the Security Council of the Slovak Republic submits a Report on the state of security of the Slovak Republic to the Government of the Slovak Republic with proposals for measures to preserve it. As a rule, the Security Strategy will be updated every 5-7 years or in case of a significant change in the security environment

of the Slovak Republic, as it can result from the Report on the state of security of the Slovak Republic.

98. The Government of the Slovak Republic submits the Security Strategy for approval to the National Council of the Slovak Republic.





