

STATEMENT
OF DR. BOŽO CERAR, STATE SECRETARY
MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS OF THE REPUBLIC OF SLOVENIA

Mr. Countryman, Mrs. Rood, Mr. Pietsch, Ambassadors, distinguished colleagues, Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen!

Allow me at the outset to welcome you all here in Portorož at the occasion of opening of the 13th International Conference on Export Control. Slovenia is pleased and grateful for being offered to co-host this important international conference with the U. S. State Department and the German Export Control Agency (BAFA) [Federal Republic of Germany's Federal Office of Economics and Export Control] on behalf of the European Union.

Holding this conference here in this hotel has also a symbolic meaning. Through the windows of this beautiful hotel you can see Croatia in the south and Italy in the west. You can feel the geographical proximity of our countries, which clearly demonstrates how important cooperation among different states—not only in our region, but on an international level—is today, in an era of peace, cooperation and open borders that we enjoy here in Europe. Open borders with our neighbors have facilitated economic, commercial and cultural flow that improves the wellbeing of our citizens. That is very important for us. But, on the other hand, open borders also mean opportunity for illicit trafficking, including a proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, their means of delivery and other dual-use goods.

In Slovenia, we believe that the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, their means of delivery, dual-use goods and the risk that non-state actors, in particular terrorists, gain access to such weapons, continue to be a major threat to international peace and security. We are convinced that in addition to actions at the national and regional levels, we need to strengthen a global approach. In this context, we particularly underline the need for compliance with obligations under United Nations Security Council Resolutions 1540 (2004) and 1887 (2009), and call for improved nuclear security for highly radioactive sources. Effective multilateralism, prevention and international cooperation are the three main pillars of our work. In this context, we promote universal adherence to and full implementation of all non-proliferation and disarmament treaties and conventions, in particular the NPT [Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear

Weapons], not only through diplomatic means and initiatives, but also through practical training and assistance.

During these three days you will discuss issues related to national and international export controls. In Slovenia, we consider export control as an important element of national security. That is why we attach such importance to national and international export regimes. In Slovenia, we started with efforts to create an efficient and sustainable national export control regime around 15 years ago. We have also worked with the United States in the framework of the EXBS [Export Control and Related Border Security] program and the EU partners and institutions, from which we also benefited even before our membership in the European Union. Our membership in the European Union was an important landmark and steered our efforts. After 1 May 2004, we directly implement EU regulations on dual-use goods.

In those days, not only my country but also international export regimes that are still evolving, were very young, and the implementation of the international commitments was not always an easy process. In the course of these years, we learnt many lessons. One of the most important ones was that one country cannot succeed alone. We have to work with other states and partners on regional and global level. From the humble beginnings, when we were mostly seeking assistance in putting national export control system in place, we can now provide assistance to other countries in the region.

In the framework of our national export system, we are promoting culture of inter-agency dialogue and cooperation, which is essential for the success. Link between policy making and licensing authorities on one hand and the law enforcement agencies, namely customs, police and intelligence agency on the other hand, proves to be essential.

We are proud of what we have achieved. Our national achievements enabled us to become members of the international regimes, mainly the Wassenaar Arrangement, the Australian Group, Zangger Committee and the Nuclear Suppliers Group. The question of enlargement of the Missile Technology [Control] Regime, the only international control regime that we are not member of, is still open. I hope that the countries in the regime will find a political will to reach consensus on that issue.

In the context of our common global efforts, we must not forget [the] invaluable role of private-public partnerships, academics, and the civil society. Export systems and regimes do not mean only states and state institutions. Awareness raising, studies, intellectual input and wider strategic look—these are all elements that we often forget when we

speaking about our work. Allow me to use this opportunity to express my gratitude to representatives of the non-governmental sector for their presence here today.

Finally, I would like to warmly thank the colleagues from the State Department and BAFA, notably Mr. Countryman, Mr. Pietsch, Mrs. Rood and others for their confidence, commitment and their efforts to work with my colleagues to organize this important conference.

Again, allow me to welcome you all and wish you a successful conference.

Thank you for your attention!