

Statement made by Dimitrij Rupel at the conclusion of negotiations for accession to the EU (13 December 2002)

Caption: On 13 December 2002, Dimitrij Rupel, Slovenian Foreign Minister, comments on the conclusion of the negotiations for the accession of the Republic of Slovenia to the European Union and emphasises the importance of the European integration process.

Source: Statement by Dr Dimitrij Rupel, foreign minister and chief negotiator for Slovenia's accession to the EU, upon the conclusion of negotiations with the EU (13 December 2002). [ON-LINE]. [Ljubljana]: Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Slovenia, [06.06.2005]. Available on <http://www.sigov.si/mzz/eng/index.html>.

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Statement by Dr Dimitrij Rupel, Foreign Minister and Chief Negotiator for Slovenia's accession to the EU, upon the conclusion of negotiations with the EU (13 December 2002)

- 1.) Today, 13 December 2002, Slovenia successfully completed negotiations for EU membership. The outcome of the negotiations meets expectations and complies with Slovenia's long-term interests. In the last weeks of the negotiations, Slovenia improved its position among the candidates.
- 2.) Entry into the EU is also the beginning of a different era for Slovenia's foreign policy – one for which Slovenia has been preparing ever since it decided to apply for EU membership. Slovenia will continue to act in accordance with its national interests, but this will be reinforced by the power and reputation of the European Union. The European Union is one of the most successful integration processes in European history. Slovenia is delighted and proud to take part in this historic moment of European integration.
- 3.) Slovenia's accession to the European Union will increase its opportunities to gain recognition and to progress and develop in economic, academic, scientific, cultural, political and other areas.
- 4.) When we join the European Union, our world will become larger. Citizens of Slovenia will be equally at home in all 25 member states, from the United Kingdom to Greece, from the Baltic to the Adriatic, from Paris to Ljubljana.
- 5.) The European Union will enable citizens of Slovenia to take an equal part in European and world processes. On the other hand, more will be expected from Slovenia, and the country will be confronted with new challenges, new competition. Slovenia will have to take care to reinforce and enrich its identity in these processes. In addition to Slovene identity, Slovenes will also acquire a stronger European identity.
- 6.) After Slovenia becomes an EU member, it will be fulfilling its foreign policy objectives and tasks in changed conditions. Slovene citizens will be able to contact various European institutions, such as diplomatic missions and consular posts, courts and various financial institutions, directly.
- 7.) Slovenia's diplomatic service will intensify its cooperation with other European diplomatic services and its engagement in the harmonisation of the Common European Foreign and Defence Policy, thus taking an even more active part in international processes. Thanks to its experiences, particularly those based on its knowledge of the situation in South-Eastern Europe, Slovenia will also be able to contribute positively to the European Union's role in the region. Slovenia and its diplomacy will endeavour to ensure that a clear European future will also be open to those countries not included in the present round of enlargement.