



EVRO-ATLANTSKI SVET SLOVENIJE
EURO-ATLANTIC COUNCIL OF SLOVENIA



BALKAN SAYS 2024

M Hotel, Ljubljana, Slovenia, 12 – 14 September

12. *Balkan* *SAYS 2024*

PROGRAMME



This project
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the North Atlantic
Treaty Organization



TIMELINE OF SEMINAR (all times are given in CEST – Ljubljana time)

Thursday, 12 September, 2024

Morning –

Early Arrival of participants

Afternoon

09:00 Seminar registration opens

Opening Address

Speakers:

- 13:00
- **Assist. Prof. Jelena Juvan**, Vice-President of the Euro-Atlantic Council of Slovenia
 - **Mr. Igor Zidarič**, President of the Youth Section of the Euro-Atlantic Council of Slovenia
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Keynote Speech

13:30

Speaker:

- **H. E. Borut Pahor**, Former President of the Republic of Slovenia
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14:00 Coffee Break

Panel I – NATO 75th anniversary: Providing peace, security and stability

- 14.30
- What are the biggest challenges for NATO member states in enhancing their military capabilities and defence industrial base, and are the recent commitments at the Washington Summit 2024 and Vilnius 2023 sufficient to address these challenges and mitigate the effects of several decades of disinvestment in military capabilities?
 - What does enhancing resilience entail, and how should we develop and implement robust, comprehensive strategies to effectively counter both conventional and hybrid threats?
 - How can European nations demonstrate the political will to coordinate and align their defence policies, ensuring that a stronger Europe complements and enhances NATO cohesion rather than undermining it?

Speakers:

- **Mag. Aljoša Selan**, Deputy Director-General of the Defence Policy Directorate, Ministry of Defence of the Republic of Slovenia
 - **Mr. Paul Saverieux**, Former NATO Director of Defence Planning, Defence Policy and Planning Division, International Staff at NATO HQ
 - **Mr. Primož Šavc**, Secretary at the Defence Policy Directorate, Ministry of Defence of the Republic of Slovenia
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- **Mr. Johan Sigroth**, Kingdom of Sweden's Deputy Ambassador to Hungary and Slovenia

Moderator: Matic Kosirnik (Euro-Atlantic Council of Slovenia)

16.20 Workshop I

19.00 Dinner

Friday, 13 September 2024

Panel II – Information disorder: Towards building resilience in the West against foreign information manipulation

- What are the most pressing challenges in identifying and combating information disorder?
- How do foreign actors, especially Russia, use local actors and exploit the specific vulnerabilities of the Western Balkans in their information warfare? How can the EU and NATO effectively counter disinformation campaigns and propaganda targeting the Western Balkan countries, especially those aimed at disrupting the Euro-Atlantic integration processes?
- 09:30 ○ How can international cooperation be improved to counter information disorder? What frameworks are needed at national and international levels to combat information warfare while preserving freedom of expression?

Speakers:

- **Ms. Petra Bezjak Cirman**, Director of the Government Communication Office of the Republic of Slovenia
- **Major General Dobran Božič**, Military Advisor to the Minister of Defence, Ministry of Defence of the Republic of Slovenia
- **Mag. Katja Geršak**, Executive Director at Regional Dialogue

Moderator: Igor Zidarič (Euro-Atlantic Council of Slovenia)

11:00 Coffee Break

11:30 Workshop II

12:45 LUNCH BREAK

Panel III – Footprints of the organized crime in the Western Balkans

- 13:45 ○ How does organized crime impact political stability and governance in the region today?
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- What ongoing reform initiatives aim to reduce organized crime in the region? How can regional and international cooperation be enhanced to combat organized crime?
 - What potential future challenges exist in combating organized crime in the region? What role can civil society and the media play in this effort?

Speakers:

- **Mr. Leo Pongračič**, Office for Money Laundering Prevention of the Republic of Slovenia
- **Mr. Rajko Kozmelj**, Former director of the Slovenian Intelligence and Security Agency
- **Mr. Vinko Zlomislíć**, Member of GIFCT Incident Response Working Group

Moderator: Evdokija Josifoska (Euro-Atlantic Council of Slovenia)

15:15 Coffee Break

15:45 Workshop III

Panel IV – **The resurrection of the EU enlargement policy**

- What are the main drivers behind the revival of the EU enlargement policy, and how has the changing global landscape influenced this renewed focus? Additionally, what lessons can be drawn from previous enlargement rounds to ensure a more effective and sustainable expansion process?
 - How can the EU effectively balance its accession criteria with the need to integrate countries at different stages of economic and political development?
 - Given the extensive repercussions of EU enlargement on regional stability and global geopolitics, particularly within the context of the ongoing war on European soil, how does the EU's enlargement policy impact its relationships with significant geopolitical players such as Russia?
- 17:00

Speakers:

- **Ms. Petra Balazič**, Advisor to UN SC Task Force, Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs of the Republic of Slovenia
- **Mr. Adnan Čerimagić**, Senior Analyst for the Western Balkans, European Stability Initiative
- **Mr. Marko Todorović**, Researcher at the European Policy Centre
- **Prof. Dr. Boštjan Udovič**, Professor at the Faculty of Social Sciences, University of Ljubljana

Moderator: Tara Miler (Euro-Atlantic Council of Slovenia)



19:00 Dinner

Saturday, 14 September, 2024

Panel V – Global partnership or a competition?

- 09:30
- What are the primary challenges and opportunities in extending NATO's influence through its Open Door Policy?
 - How can NATO balance the integration of new members with the existing security dynamics and reactions from adversarial states?
 - What can we expect in a multipolar world? What is the future of BRICS? Can it become a significant stable block that will counter the West?

Speakers:

- **Brin Najžer, PhD**, Vice-President of the Euro-Atlantic Council of Slovenia
- **Assist. Prof. Primož Šterbenc**, Assistant professor at the Faculty of Management, University of Primorska
- **H. E. Andrej Slapničar**, Head of Security Policy Department, Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs of the Republic of Slovenia

Moderator: Rok Kovač (Euro-Atlantic Council of Slovenia)

11:00 Coffee Break

Lecture – The Role of Artificial Intelligence in security, defence and intelligence dimensions

11:15

Speaker:

- **Prof. Dr. Iztok Prezelj**, President of the Euro-Atlantic Council of Slovenia, Dean of the Faculty of Social Sciences, University of Ljubljana
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11:45 Presentation of Workshops conclusions

12:30 Closing session and presentation of seminar certificates

13:00 Conclusion of Balkan SAYS 2024
