

Dear Mr. Chairman,

Dear Members of the European Parliament,

Ladies and gentlemen,

- Thank you for the opportunity to be here with you today and to present you the programme and priorities of the Slovak Presidency for the next six months in the area I am responsible for – **electronic communications** and **Galileo**. After my speech I will also look forward to hear from you about what is important for you and then to look for ways how to improve our work in the Council, as well as strengthen our mutual cooperation.
- Constructive relationship of our two institutions as colegislators, together with the European Commission being the EU's executive body, is a prerequisite, if we want to **achieve tangible results** and **prevent fragmentation of the internal market**. This is especially needed given the **latest political developments** that are **challenging the very foundations of the EU**. The result of the UK referendum shows that the EU has to **connect more with its citizens**, it has to be more transparent and it has to make life of businesses, SMEs and citizens in general, easier.
- As a Presidency **we are ready** and **fully committed to stand behind the steering wheel** in the next 6 months, in order to deliver positive results that will in concrete ways improve lives of the EU citizens.
- In close cooperation with our trio partners, we will work intensively on the implementation of the Digital Single Market strategy, which turned one year in May this year. This anniversary is a good opportunity to assess the state of play of the strategy and to prepare for yet more work. The Slovak Republic considers the Digital Single Market not only as a unique opportunity for economy, but also as a positive agenda serving the objectives of our joint European project.
- In the area of Telecommunications and Information Society, the Slovak Republic welcomes the adoption, under the Dutch Presidency, of the **General Approach to the Proposal for harmonisation of the 700MHz frequency band**. This achievement allows the Slovak Presidency to start negotiations with the European Parliament, with the view to concluding this file.  
This legislation is important not only for preparing ground for deployment of 5G services, but also for preserving the lower part of the UHF band for terrestrial provision of broadcasting services, including free television, and for the use of wireless audio programme making and special events equipment. **We acknowledge, that the deadline 2020 is important, but we should also allow for some flexibility,**

**as modification of TV broadcasting can be costly and time-consuming.** From what I've gathered, the views of the Council and the European Parliament in this regard are not diverging. That is why I am hoping for good cooperation in reaching agreement on this file.

- The Slovak Presidency will also devote its best efforts to ensure maximum progress in negotiations on the **wholesale roaming review**, which is an **essential precondition for the abolition of roaming surcharges from June 2017**. Its successful conclusion will represent a **massive win for consumers** and a big step towards the European Digital Single Market. The Council and the European Parliament, as the two co-legislators, have to reach an agreement as early as February next year, for this goal to materialize. We therefore count on your willingness and readiness to negotiate as soon as possible. We will devote maximum efforts to finding constructive compromise to the open questions.
- Another important legal act, which is essential for the establishment of the Digital Single Market, is the **revision of the regulatory framework for electronic communication networks and services**, which should be presented by the EU Commission after the summer. The modernization of EU telecommunication regulation is inevitable due to increasing demand for high speed services, persisting digital divide between urban and rural areas, new technological developments, as well as new players – online service providers – on the market. The Slovak Presidency intends to lead a political debate on the elements of the revision during the Telecom Council, which will be held on 2nd December this year and to prepare the ground for the Maltese Presidency to be able to make progress in this legislation.
- Last but not least, let me also touch upon another area I am responsible for – **Global navigation satellite systems (GNSS), and more specifically, Galileo**. The year 2016 marks an important milestone in the development of the Galileo programme. It is the year when we will see initial services provided by Galileo signals. It will also coincide with the adoption of the European Space Strategy, which will come later this year.
- In our role of a Presidency we are ready to fully endorse the Strategy, which will provide an important overall vision for the Union's activities in space, and notably in the GNSS field. It is especially important to encourage new investments in the applications sector, providing significant societal and economic benefits.
- The Slovak Electronic Toll System is recognized for its innovative use of GNSS technology for road tolling. Similarly, Slovak global-renown company Sygic belongs to the world's leading brands in the navigation systems market. These are only two examples, but we are hoping for many more innovative companies to benefit from

the Galileo system, once it reaches its full operational phase. Let me therefore assure you of **our readiness to continue our common European effort to have Galileo up and fully running by 2020.**

- Dear Members, these are our priorities in the field of electronic communications and global satellite navigation. I count on your support and I am sure that together we will be able to achieve good results, benefitting all EU citizens. I am very much looking forward to working with all of you.

Thank you very much for your attention and I am ready to answer any questions you may have.