



PRÍHOVOR PREZIDENTA SR
na SLOVAK PRO SUMMIT

New York, 24. 9. 2024

Mr Ambassador, Mr Consul General,

Mr Lackovič,

Dear Members of the Slovak PRO Community,

Dear Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am happy to be here with you today. I see many familiar faces I have already met before. In my view, the Slovak PRO Summit is one of the key events of our economic diplomacy. You have my and my team's full support for your continued activities. I am sure that the Foreign Ministry, our Embassy and Consulate General feel the same. We are interested in building stronger Slovakia-US economic relations. And your community is a natural multiplier of these bonds.

You are also the most dynamic expat community. And I am glad you are growing and opening new branches across the US. I would like to thank your leadership and the entire community for a good job. Slovakia – as one of the world's most open economies – has a lot to gain but also a lot to offer in the US today. Looking at you – it is of course smart and gifted people in the first place. But also successful companies and many promising start-ups.

Your US market experience is invaluable. So are your local contacts. Your networking helps other Slovak businesses learn to expand and scale their activities even across the ocean. This is where your help and advice is needed. I don't see your being here as a brain drain. I rather see your community as Slovakia's intellectual capital. You drive the transfer of know-how, skills and new trends. I am sure many of you in this room are future investors and innovators.

Slovakia faces challenges but also many options. You can help to take advantage of them. We have good prospects for energy transition. But we need more green technology experts. We need to improve our innovation ecosystem. But we need to build up our e-government and digital services. We must also prepare for the expansion of e-mobility and the use of AI. These are all areas where many of you excel.

I hope you will continue to advance your expert and business skills. But I also wish that – one day – you bring your ideas and businesses to Slovakia. Our country may also be a useful test market. I encourage you to speak to our state institutions too. I will do my best to lobby for this to be a constructive and forthcoming dialogue. Let us discuss what kind of support you need and where I could do something or help open some doors. I will gladly hear you out.

Dear Slovak PRO community,

I would like to appreciate all you do to bring our country forward. And for promoting Slovakia's good name through your activities and personalities. I very much appreciate your time and all your efforts. I'm looking forward to our further socializing and debates later today. I'm therefore not saying goodbye – but let me once again say a big thank you.