

## EUROPA AT THE CROSSBOARD

I m from wonderful, or even better from the most beautiful country in the world. From Slovenia. My country is the only one, has LOVE in its very name. This certainly means something.

Slovenia gained its sovereignty in 1991. Of course our history riches farther back, but as I already said we announced our independence in 1991. At the time our young country was full of hope. Hope for a better and more beautiful future. Young people were sure that they would have more opportunities, better job market, better conditions for starting a family. **But have we succeed?**

And than in 2004 we joined the EU. Also at these step people saw something new and promising. Is Europe really improving our lives and providing us with opportunities? Dose it ensure safety and security for us? Do people still believe in a united Europe?

I believe and I m sure that this is the only right path for our country. A strong and united Europe is the right solution for our common future. Why? Security and peace are two major reasons. How we forgotten this? Are we aware that security and peace are not self-evident? Do we realize how quickly things can change?

**We should learn from the past and realize that united we stand, divided we fall.**

In last 10 years Europe has faced at least two extra-ordinary tests of our common values. The first time lasted from 2008 and 2013 when member states were hit by the biggest economic crises since 1930. Almost now part of Europe went unaffected. And some countries addressed problems sooner and more effectively, other later and with more severe consequences. But we did know, how to come together and help each other.

Europe was ones again put to the test in 2015 when refugee crises reached our door-step. Unfortunately, Europe failed to find a quick and effective

solution, and the most importantly one, solution that would satisfy all parties. As a result, every country sought its own solution. We were not prepared for such extensive migration, despite the fact that every expert had been warning us about that for years. The reason for the migrations ranged from war to climate changes and all the unsustainable living conditions that arose as a result. And these shouldn't not have come us a surprise!

In addition, unbalanced European Union has repeatedly expressed the view that due to bad demographic picture it urgently needs additional labor power. And all of this has led us to today's situation. The fact is, that Europe was not prepared for that situation, so we were forced to solve the problem as individual member states.

We started to close the borders and impose barriers. And this within the European Union, within the Schengen area. We started to close our doors on one another, and this within the European Union. But, is this really the right solution for the problem of migration and the future of the EU? My answer is no.

In response to all these problems the European commission proposed two-speed Europe. In my view, this is not the right solution to the problems we are facing. When I listen to the leading politicians across Europe I have a feeling that everyone is aware that this is not the right solution, but at the moment they can not find another, better vision for Europe. They say it's better two-speed Europe, than no Europe.

Our, Slovenian president, Mr. Borut Pahor suggested just the opposite - continued integration and stronger integration of the countries within the European Union. **Is this, in the given situation, really impossible? If we don't believe a stronger and more integrated Europe is the only right solution, then it is really impossible.**

At the end I would like to emphasize again. The only solution for Europe is one Europa. And that is what we must strive for. Stronger , more integrated and therefore more powerful European Union. Why? Because this is the only

guarantee for security and peace. And that is why we must strive for. Security and peace. I think that security and peace are the biggest reason that we must succeed. **We shouldn't forget - united we stand, divided we fall.**