

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Without energy there is no life. Without the sun there is no life, without electricity we can not imagine our life, without cars, ships, airplanes, trains – so without oil - we can not imagine life. Today I will not talk about black gold today I will talk about energy and the importance of the changes that lie ahead of us.

If we are talking about energy, I can say that Europe is too energy dependent. My home country Slovenia – which is an amazing country - integrated in to the European Union family ten years ago. For me this was a dream come true. My generation and I know: the European Union is a place where we belong. It is the solution, not the problem.

The President of the European Commission decided, that Europe should create an Energy Union too. Why? Because bringing together Member States in energy and climate policies will provide every chance of becoming a building block in Europe's strategy to overcome the crisis.

The European challenge is: **The European Union must cater to people's needs. Ensuring Energy security, the competitiveness of European industry in the global market and fostering sustainable green growth on the basis of clear climate targets are some of the major challenges of our time.**

My home country is not the only EU Member State that, due to its geographical position is exposed to energy security risks, such as an excessive dependence on a single non-EU supplier. It is therefore extremely clear that no EU Member State can tackle its energy challenges on its own.

The EU imports 53 % of its own energy. Every day we import 1 billion EUR worth of energy. In 2013 the energy cost amounted to 400 billion EUR and accounted for one fifth of our total imports.

I would like to mention 3 most important points for the European union in terms of energy:

1. **must strengthen the internal market** and increasing the security of energy supply through the diversification of energy resources, interlinking of infrastructure (interconnectors), and a united presence in international energy markets;

Due to its strategic location, Turkey is a bridge between the most important areas of oil and natural gas in the Middle East and the Caspian region and markets in Europe. Turkey is located very near to 72% of the world's natural gas reserves and 73% of oil stocks. Turkey is therefore of the utmost importance for the stability of energy supply to the EU, especially an important transit route for achieving one of the main objectives of EU energy policy - diversification of routes and sources of supply partners (Europa.eu).

2. **We must continue promoting renewable energy sources** – by expanding European leadership in technology, R&D, through incentives for investment, promoting public awareness for the need to transit steadily towards a low-carbon society and, stimulating market forces to reach competitive energy prices;

3. **We must boost sustainable development and green growth**

Achieving our climate objectives while at the same time increasing the competitiveness of European industry must remain the top priority of European agenda.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Of course this will require both time and hard work. And it requires cooperation between the institutions and countries themselves.

Prime Ministers of Slovenia and Turkey in March 2011 in Ankara confirmed the Slovenian-Turkish strategic partnership, which stipulates that the two countries will conduct a dialogue and promote cooperation in energy:

As the agreement says:

"Slovenia and Turkey have faced common energy challenges. Both require diversification and security of energy supply, energy market reform, development and modernization of energy infrastructure, energy efficiency, energy savings and the use of renewable energy sources. Therefore, both countries will make every effort to improve cooperation in energy.

As I have already mentioned, the use of renewable energy sources is very important, and we should replace fossil fuels with them. Year in, year out there is a greater need for a change in the energy mix to more ecological. The agreement that was reached in Paris at the end of 2015 is important for the whole world. A lot of effort has been applied to the agreement, but now will need a lot energy to put words into action.

Without energy there is no life and we should be aware of that every day. Everyone on this planet including us has responsibility to those who come after us. It is the duty of us, politicians, to make good decisions on behalf of the people.

Thank you for letting me share with you some of my thoughts.