



**PERMANENT REPRESENTATION OF THE REPUBLIC OF SLOVENIA
TO THE UN, OSCE AND OTHER INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS**

CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY !

Statement by Ambassador Barbara Žvokelj, Permanent Representative of Slovenia to the International Organizations in Vienna, at the 2020 Albanian OSCE Chairmanship Conference “Good Governance and the Fight against Corruption in the Digital Era: Strengthening the Principles of Transparency, Integrity and Accountability”, Vienna, 7 July 2020

Mr. Chairperson,

Let me add, after all these interesting presentations that the Republic of Slovenia recognizes the importance of digitalization and technical innovation in the fight against corruption and that is what I will focus on today. The progress in the field of information technology has helped in the monitoring of public sector money flows, public procurement, companies' ownership and asset declarations of high-level officials. Let me give you some examples from Slovenia.

1. An online application called Erar provides the general public with a free-of-charge and user-friendly access to information on business transactions of public sector bodies since 2011. The application received the United Nations award for excellence of public service in 2013 and has been for nearly 10 years one of the most prominent public databases in Slovenia. Currently, Erar contains data on approximately 180 million financial transactions from both government and local agencies dating back to 2003. The system allows for an oversight of an average of 5 billion EUR of annual public expenditure and represents an important tool for the monitoring of transparency of public expenditure, as it increases the level of responsibility of public office holders for effective and efficient use of public finance, decreases risks for illicit management of funds and limits systemic corruption.

2. Another field where high transparency has been extremely important is public procurement. Slovenia has been ranked in 2019 by the OECD as one of the countries that makes the most information about the procurement process available to the public. The documents published on the Slovenian public procurement platform include: the tender notice, the evaluation criteria, the award notice, the signed contracts and the bidding documents. Furthermore, a web application called Statist provides a comprehensive and updated publication of data on public procurement contracts awarded from 2013 with user-friendly visualisation. Metadata is published as Open Data and can be freely downloaded for further re-use. Also in times of Covid-19 pandemic, when some public procurements related

to health equipment were urgent, we have been aware that these are very exceptional cases which nevertheless require a certain standard of transparency.

3. In 2016 Slovenia was one of the first EU states to establish the Register of beneficial owners. The register is of paramount importance as identifying a physical person, an individual that controls the company, is one of preconditions for effectively combatting money laundering. The register gathers data from 3 other registers: Business Register, Central Register of Inhabitants and Tax Register. In the latest UNCAC report on Slovenia adopted within the Implementation Review Mechanism, the Slovenian register of beneficial owners has been mentioned as an example of successful good practice.

4. Oversight of the assets of public officials serves to enhance trust in performing public offices and managing public affairs. Last year an important project of modernization of reporting took place in Slovenia as a result of which asset declarations must now be reported via E-government portal. The digitalisation of reporting simplifies the process as the system receives information directly from public registers. The system does not make it only easier to report but also to exercise control over reporting, which is crucial for Commission for Prevention of Corruption to effectively perform its tasks.

Mr. Chairperson,

Measures for transparency of functioning and transparency of financing of public institutions play a major role regarding prevention of corruption in Slovenia. Therefore, I would like to especially thank the Albanian Chairmanship for holding this topic very high on their agenda and thus raise its importance.

Thank you.