



**Statement by the Delegation of Slovenia, on the occasion of the World Bee Day, at the 1186th Meeting of the OSCE Permanent Council, Vienna, 17 May 2018**

*Mr. Chairperson,*

We would like to alert the OSCE participating States about the upcoming World Bee Day, which will be marked for the first time on Sunday. This is the result of a three year effort by Slovenia, which was crowned with success last December, when the UN General Assembly unanimously adopted a resolution declaring May 20 as the World Bee Day. We would therefore like to use this opportunity to thank you all for your support.

The reason for Slovenian interest in this issue is that beekeeping is part of our historical tradition. The Carniolan honey bee, which is indigenous to Slovenia, is part of our national identity. When the first school of apiculture was established in the Habsburg Monarchy its first lecturer was a Slovenian. His name was Anton Janša and he was born on May 20, 1734. This is also why we suggested May 20 as the World Bee Day.

We regard these efforts as a joint step towards the elimination of hunger and poverty. Bees are priceless when it comes to ensuring global food security, because every third spoonful of food depends on their pollination. The proclamation of the World Bee Day is therefore only the start of a challenging path to preserve pollinators, especially bees. Other steps will be taken, including the establishment of an international beekeeping school in Slovenia.

Before concluding, we would like to remind you why honey is called "liquid gold". To produce 1 kilogram of it, a single bee would have to visit about 4 million flowers, collect 3 to 4 kilogram of nectar, and perform 120,000 flights. The distance covered in those flights would be equal to seven circumferences of the Earth. By the way, two spoonfuls of honey would give a bee enough energy to fly around the world.

Let us therefore finish with the thought that we should all stand united in the care and protection for bees and other pollinators. We must not forget how our existence is interconnected with these incredible tiny beings. We hope that the observance of the World Bee Day will become an important tradition and thus contribute to global food security. We therefore invite everyone to start this Sunday with a spoonful of honey.

*Thank you.*

