



EVRO-ATLANTSKI SVET SLOVENIJE
EURO-ATLANTIC COUNCIL OF SLOVENIA



BALKAN SAYS 2025

M Hotel, Ljubljana, Slovenia, 11–13 September 2025

13.
Balkan
SAYS 2025

PROGRAM

PROGRAM

Thursday, 11 September, 2025

09:00 – 12:30 Arrival of Participants and Seminar Registration

Opening Remarks

13:00

- **Prof. Dr. Iztok Prezelj**, President of the Euro-Atlantic Council of Slovenia (ATA)
 - **Mr. Matic Kosirnik**, President of the Youth Section of the Euro Atlantic Council of Slovenia (YATA)
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Opening Address

13:20

- **Mr. Borut Sajovic**, Minister of Defense of the Republic of Slovenia
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14:00

Coffee Break

Panel I – **Defending NATO Values: Europe's Role in Upholding Freedom, Human Rights, Democracy, and the Rule of Law**

Speakers:

14:30

- **Ambassador Jelko Kacin**, Former Permanent Representative of the Republic of Slovenia to NATO; Former Minister of Defense of the Republic of Slovenia
 - **Mr. Uroš Lampret**, Head of the Defense Department, Permanent Representation of Slovenia to the EU; Former State Secretary at the Ministry of Defense of the Republic of Slovenia
 - **COL (Ret.) Tucker Mansager**, U.S. Army, Political Advisor to Allied LANDCOM, Izmir, Türkiye
 - **Mr. Paul Savereux**, Former Director General, Defense Planning Directorate, NATO Defense Policy and Plans Division
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16:20

Workshop I

19:00

Dinner

08:45	Keynote Speech ▪ Mr. Borut Pahor, President of the Republic of Slovenia (2012–2022)
Panel II – Frozen Conflicts in the Western Balkans: Fundamental Obstacles to Euro-Atlantic Integration?	
Speakers:	
09:30	▪ Mr. Srečko Zajc, Bilateral and Multilateral Affairs Division, Defense Policy Directorate, Ministry of Defense; Former Director General of the Defense Affairs Directorate at the Ministry of Defense ▪ Dr. Klemen Grošelj, Defense and Security Specialist; Former State Secretary at the Ministry of Defense of the Republic of Slovenia; Former Member of the European Parliament ▪ Dr. Sead Turčalo, Dean, Faculty of Political Sciences, University of Sarajevo ▪ Ms. Petra Balazič, Adviser for Humanitarian Affairs and International Development Cooperation, Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs of the Republic of Slovenia
11:00	Coffee Break
11:30	Workshop II
12:45	LUNCH BREAK

Panel III – **Mainstreaming Equal Opportunities for Women in the Defense and Security Sector**

Speakers:

- 13:45
- **Ambassador Darja Bavdaž Kureš**, Special Envoy for Women, Peace, and Security, Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs of the Republic of Slovenia
 - **Prof. Dr. Ljubica Jelušič**, Former Minister of Defense of the Republic of Slovenia; Professor at the Faculty of Social Sciences, University of Ljubljana
 - **Ambassador Zorica Bukinac**, Counter-Terrorism Coordinator for External Aspects, Security Policy Department, Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs; Former Ambassador to Bosnia and Herzegovina
 - **Prof. Dr. Liliana Brožič**, Executive Editor of *Contemporary Military Challenges* (Ministry of Defense); Associate Professor at the Faculty of Government and European Studies

15:15 Coffee Break

15:45 Workshop III

Panel IV – **Combating Information Threats through the Promotion of Free and Independent Media in the Western Balkans**

Speakers:

- 17:00
- **Ms. Petra Bezjak Cirman**, Director of the Government Communication Office and Head of the Working Group on Disinformation, Secretariat of the National Security Council
 - **Prof. Dr. Marko Milosavljević**, Head of the Department of Communication, University of Ljubljana; Former Member of the Council of Europe's Expert Committee on Media Resilience (MSI-RES)
 - **Mr. Darko Brkan**, Executive Director and Co-founder of the Citizens' Association *Why Not* (Bosnia and Herzegovina); President of the Board of *Action SEE*; Member of several regional and international transparency and media networks
 - **Mr. Gynen Venhari**, Chief Executive Officer, *The Geopost*

19:00 Dinner

Panel V – **Cooperative Security in NATO's Southern Neighborhood: Shared Challenges and Collective Solutions**

Speakers:

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| 09:30 | <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Ambassador Andrej Slapničar, Head of the Security Policy Department, Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs of the Republic of Slovenia; Former Permanent Representative to the CoE▪ Mr. Mirko Cigler, Geopolitical and Security Analyst; Publicist; Former Senior Official and Diplomat at the UN, OSCE, NATO, and the EU▪ Dr. Jelena Juvan, Defense and Security Specialist; Assistant Professor at the Faculty of Social Sciences, University of Ljubljana; Vice-President of the EACS▪ Dr. Faris Kočan, International Relations Specialist; Assistant Professor and Researcher at the Faculty of Social Sciences, University of Ljubljana |
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11:00	Coffee Break
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Special Lecture – **The Impact of Artificial Intelligence on Security, Defense, and Intelligence**

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| 11:15 | <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Prof. Dr. Iztok Prezelj, Defense and Security Specialist; President of the Euro-Atlantic Council of Slovenia; Professor and Dean at the Faculty of Social Sciences, University of Ljubljana |
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11:45	Presentation of Workshop conclusions
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12.30	Closing session and presentation of seminar certificates
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13:00	Conclusion of Balkan SAYS 2025
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