

**INTRODUCTORY ADDRESS BY MR LOJZE PETERLE, MINISTER OF
FOREIGN AFFAIRS, AT THE 2ND SLOVENE-HUNGARIAN GEOGRAPHICAL
CONFERENCE HELD ON APRIL 1, 1993**

Please, allow me at the beginning to extend a warm welcome to all participants in this Conference and express my personal satisfaction that it was possible to organize it. After all, this is also an event which is a part of the policy of good neighbourly relations.

This Conference was organized with the aim to raise the cooperation between the Geographical Institutes of the Slovene and Hungarian Academy of Sciences to development projects at international level, in which both sides have expressed their interest.

The two minorities, the Hungarian in Prekmurje and the Slovene in Porabje could serve as a bridge in the strengthening of this cooperation. Both of them are experiencing many difficulties, but the people who speak both languages and are familiar with both cultures could act as a significant factor of development in this region. Now that the iron curtain has fallen, it would be necessary to take advantage of the new possibilities of cooperation. In light of the progress of negotiations between the two countries, it has become obvious that it is precisely this area, populated by both minorities, that will become an important region of transition. The geographers from both sides of the border can contribute a good deal to the appropriate development of this region.

Regional cooperation at the level of the Central European Initiative is of great importance for the geographers, too. We have been cooperating with Hungarian regions in the Alps-Adria working community and in its working bodies, dealing with issues similar to those which will be discussed at this Conference. The Austrian geographers have also expressed a desire to cooperate with Slovene and Hungarian geographers, and we are all interested in such cooperation.

The Slovene geographers were successful in obtaining full membership in the International Geographical Union. Today's Slovene-Hungarian Conference will be placed in a broader context of the Regional Conference on Central Europe of the International Geographical Union which will be held in Prague in August 1994, and in whose organizing committees we are already involved as equal partners. The overall theme of the Conference will be the quality of life in Central Europe and the related great changes of recent years. I believe that the themes that you will be discussing in the working groups are very important and topical, and I note with particular satisfaction that you have included in your activities

also an excursion to nationally mixed areas. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs as well has paid a great deal of attention to this particular area by appointing, within the Ministry, a State Secretary for Slovenes abroad and minorities in Slovenia. Mutual cooperation on scientific and research basis is important not only for professional reasons but also for friendly relations between the two neighbouring countries.

Regular exchange of information on new research methods and results of scientific work in the various areas of geographical research is of great importance for the development of institutions on both sides of the border as well as for easier integration into and cooperation with the International Geographical Union or other related institutions.

Allow me, Ladies and Gentlemen, to close by wishing you a great deal of success in your work in the hope that this Conference will become a traditional form of cooperation between the two institutes and countries, and that both institutes will become successfully involved in the projects of the International Geographical Union.

**UVODNI GOVOR MINISTRA ZA ZUNANJE ZADEVE G. LOJZETA
PETERLETA NA 2. SLOVENSKO-MADŽARSKI GEOGRAFSKI KONFERENCI
DNE 1. 4. 1993**

Najprej bi želel lepo pozdraviti vse prisotne na tej konferenci in izraziti tudi osebno zadovoljstvo, da je do organizacije konference prišlo, saj je to dejanje tudi v okviru politike dobrososedskih odnosov.

Ta konferenca je bila organizirana z namenom, da bi prešli s sodelovanja med geografskima inštitutoma Slovenske in Madžarske akademije znanosti na razvojne projekte na meddržavnem nivoju, za kar sta zainteresirani obe strani.

Manjšini, tako madžarska v Prekmurju kot slovenska v Porabju, bi lahko bili most pri poglabljanju sodelovanja. Obe se srečujeta z mnogimi težavami in ljudje, ki govorijo oba jezika in poznajo obe kulturi, bi lahko bili pomemben dejavnik razvoja na tem področju. Po padcu železne zaves bi bilo potrebno izkoristiti nastale možnosti sodelovanja. Glede na razvoj meddržavnih pogajanj je razvidno, da bo ravno področje, kjer živita obe manjšini, postalo pomembno prehodno območje. In k pravilnemu prostorskemu razvoju tega območja lahko pomemben delež prispevajo tudi geografi z obeh strani meje.

Regionalno sodelovanje v okviru Srednjeevropske pobude je tudi za geografe zelo pomembno. Z madžarskimi regijami sodelujemo že dalj časa v delovni skupnosti Alpe-Jadran oz. v njenih delovnih telesih, v katerih se obravnavajo med drugim tudi vprašanja, podobna tem na današnji konferenci. Tudi avstrijski geografi so izrazili željo, da bi sodelovali s slovenskimi in madžarskimi geografi, za kar smo vsi zainteresirani.

Slovenskim geografom se je uspelo včlaniti kot polnopravni član v Mednarodno geografsko zvezo. Današnja slovensko-madžarska konferenca bo našla širši okvir v Regionalni konferenci za Srednjo Evropo Mednarodne geografske zveze, ki bo avgusta 1994 v Pragi, kjer smo kot enakopravni partnerji že vključeni v pripravljalne odbore. Tema konference bo kvaliteta okolja v Srednji Evropi ter s tem povezane velike spremembe v zadnjih letih.

Ocenjujem, da so teme, ki jih boste obravnavali v delovnih skupinah, zelo pomembne in aktualne. Še posebej me veseli, da ste v svoje delo vključili tudi ekskurzijo na narodnostno mešana območja, saj smo tudi v zunanjem ministrstvu posvetili temu območju več teže s tem, da smo pod svoje okrilje vzeli državnega sekretarja za Slovence po svetu in manjšine pri nas. Ne samo za stroko, tudi za medsebojne prijateljske sosedske odnose je pomembno medsebojno sodelovanje na znanstvenoraziskovalnih osnovah.

Redna izmenjava informacij o novih raziskovalnih metodah in rezultatih znanstvenega dela na različnih področjih geografskega raziskovanja je zelo pomembna za razvoj inštitucij z obeh strani meje kot tudi za lažje vključevanje oz. sodelovanje v okviru Mednarodne geografske zveze ali drugih sorodnih inštitucij.

Ob koncu vam želim veliko uspeha pri delu konference z željo, da bi postala konferenca tradicionalna oblika sodelovanja med inštitutoma in državama ter še posebej uspešno vključitev v projekte Mednarodne geografske zveze.