

## Press Release – Bled Strategic Forum 2024

# The 19th Bled Strategic Forum will be held under the title "A World of Parallel Realities"

The 19th International Conference of the Bled Strategic Forum will take place in Bled on 2 and 3 September. This year's event will be held under the title "A World of Parallel Realities". The aim of this year's conference will be to bring new innovative approaches to the programme and for young people to play a bigger part. The Bled Strategic Forum is an intergovernmental project of the Republic of Slovenia, organised by the Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs and the Centre for European Future, and is one of the most visible foreign policy events in Slovenia.

"The Bled Strategic Forum, as an established international conference and an extended arm of the soft power of Slovenian diplomacy, brings an additional platform for listening, hearing and understanding each other to the global space. This year's forum has a particularly great responsibility, as Slovenia sits alongside the world's greatest superpowers. Under the title 'A World of Parallel Realities', the 19th Bled Strategic Forum will focus on working together for the common good, by listening and understanding beyond our own views. At a time when the international community is facing a cycle of competition, insecurity, and antagonism, manifested in instability, violence and conflict, dialogue and sustainable solutions are a social imperative," says Tanja Fajon, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign and European Affairs. The Bled Strategic Forum as a platform expands the capacity of small countries – to listen, hear and understand others – into the international space. In this way, the programme of this year's Bled Strategic Forum reflects Slovenia's efforts as a non-permanent member of the United Nations Security Council.

## Continuing to strengthen the quality of the conference programme

One of the new features of the programme of the Bled Strategic Forum 2024 will be the introduction of the innovative concept of the "Living Library". The "Living Library" is an interactive event where people with different experiences and backgrounds on a chosen topic act as "books". Conference participants ("readers") talk to them and get to know their stories and perspectives on the topic.

The Bled Strategic Forum continues to strengthen its partnerships and has this year already worked with more than ten key global thinkers from different continents to shape the programme. It continues its long-standing collaboration with leading organisations such as the Atlantic Council, the Nelson Mandela Center and the BMW Foundation, and this year for the first time it is collaborating with the Jeju Forum and the Oxford Process on International Law Protections in Cyberspace. Collaborating with global partners allows for a broader understanding of global issues, diversification of speakers and content, and the inclusion of unfamiliar perspectives.

### **Listen to each other for the common good**

Within the framework of the title, *A World of Parallel Realities*, the thematic focus of the Bled Strategic Forum 2024 will call for cooperation for the common good, by listening and hearing beyond one's own views. Sustainable solutions are needed at a time when international society is confronted with a cycle of competition, insecurity and antagonism, manifested in instability, violence and conflict. The awareness that we live in a world of parallel realities encourages us to bring these realities together for the common good.

Peter Grk, Secretary General of the Bled Strategic Forum: "We are living in a time of great global transformation, which has the potential to shape our common future. At such a time, the ability to hear and listen in the international community is crucial if we are to find effective and sustainable solutions. This is what this year's Bled Strategic Forum offers – an inclusive platform where the diverse voices, views, and reflections of key players in the global multilateral environment are heard and taken into account. We believe that constant and constructive dialogue is the only way to build a multilateral system that operates on universally accepted norms."

The concept and content of the Bled Strategic Forum are available on this [link](#).

### **Young people to be actively involved in the Bled Strategic Forum 2024**

This year, for the 13th time, the Young Bled Strategic Forum will take place on the margins of the Bled Strategic Forum. Around 40 selected young people from all over the world will take part in the event this year, which will take place in Pokljuka between 30 August and 1 September. The programme, entitled "Restoring Common Ground", will focus on the reasons why different realities exist and how we can bring them back together. Participants will be selected through a call for proposals which will open in the first week of May.

This year, the participants of the Young Bled Strategic Forum will also be actively involved in the Bled Strategic Forum international conference. They will have the opportunity to participate as speakers in the discussions, have a primary/preferential

position in asking questions in the debate (the so-called first question option) and organise their own discussions within the Forum.

Details of the Young Bled Strategic Forum are available on this [link](#).

*About the Bled Strategic Forum international conference*

*The Bled Strategic Forum international conference is the leading international conference in Central and South-Eastern Europe, bringing together participants from diverse fields and backgrounds to exchange views and generate ideas to overcome current and future challenges.*

*The conference is the flagship event of a global platform of the same name, which aims to generate ideas and exchange views on contemporary society and its future. As a soft power of the Republic of Slovenia's foreign diplomacy, it hosts and participates in key debates in Slovenia and abroad throughout the year.*

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