**Laudacio**

on awarding the second edition of the “Peace Prize from Slovakia for 2015” to the OECD Secretary-General, Mr José Ángel Gurría

Today we are going to bestow the award, perhaps the highest one in human terms, upon Mr José Ángel Gurría Trevino, Secretary-General of the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development. In recognition of his endeavour for promoting economic cooperation and development between the OECD and the non-member countries, which we consider his unique and irreplaceable contribution, with important civilisation implications, to peaceful relations in the world.

José Ángel Gurría was born on 8 May 1950. He graduated from prestigious universities in regular and postgraduate studies. He was appointed Secretary-General of the OECD on 1 June 2006, and will hold this office until 2021. Prior to his appointment, he was Mexico’s minister of foreign affairs and minister of finance and public credit, negotiator of the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), President of the National Development Bank “Nafin,” and “Bancomext” president.“

His contribution would be invaluable today in a number of countries which function beyond the limits of the common sense and “beyond their means.” In fact, he was the architect of effective economic stabilisation of Mexico involving partial reduction in government spending at the time of Prime Minister Ernesto Zedillo. This is how he earned his credentials for his current position. He is an expert on digitalisation and the Internet. His specific field of interest are the issues of global development. He holds Honorary Doctorate from three universities, including the University of Economics in Bratislava. His excellence is also demonstrated by his command, besides his mother tongue, of French, English, Portuguese, Italian and partially also German.

His nomination for the award of the second edition of the “Peace Prize from Slovakia for 2015” was put forward in accordance with the Prize Statute. The decision of seventeen present members, out of a total of nineteen members of the International Peace Committee, was unequivocal. This was primarily due to the consistent efforts of José Ángel Gurría throughout the year 2015 to promote cooperation between the states and to address economic and the resulting social problems in the world of today.

**Ladies and Gentlemen,**

Such a degree of consensus concerning the nomination for the second edition of the “Peace Prize from Slovakia for 2015” is truly unprecedented. This happens at the time of acute awareness of the wide-ranging and even contradictory views concerning the development of human society. His work in the organisation based on cooperation between the member states with non-member countries is the only way for the survival of our civilisation.

The communication with the members of the International Peace Committee has confirmed that he deserves the highest recognition for enhancing the renown and the potential of the OECD. His endeavours have proven the truth that cooperation between the countries represents the only and the safest road towards life in peace. May I add that it is also the road towards making it possible to measure the successfulness of our civilisation by the happiness of the population. Adherence to such course and its strengthening requires a strong character, professional authority and personal charisma.

We have already had among us, either in person or by video-conferencing, a number of international personalities who have proven their worth for the world. All of them reasserted through their lives, work, and achievements the grandeur of the human spirit and the man’s ability to give substance to the ideas for the general good.

They include late Slovenia´s President Milan Kučan, the President of the World Economic Forum Prof. Klaus Schwab, Swiss entrepreneur Helmut Maucher, unforgettable German Chancellor Helmut Kohl, Polish President Aleksander Kvasniewski, German entrepreneur and engineer Ferdinand Piech, American economist Prof. Jeffrey Sachs, American political scientist John Naisbitt, late Russian Prime Minister Yevgeny M. Primakov, late founder of the field of science regeneration of damaged body organs and tissues and entrepreneur Xu Rongxiang, Montenegro´s Prime Minister Milo Djukanovic, and dozens of others, who all together represent a gallery of people of new thinking who, as a whole, are not only from the present but also from the future era. From now on, this gallery will be enriched by José Ángel Gurría.

**Ladies and Gentlemen,**

I now ask the members of the International Peace Committee – Mr Peter Čatloš, Mr Ján Gabriel and Mr Peter Mihók – to join me. I also kindly ask Ms Monika Céreová, Vice-President of the J&T Group, i.e. the company whose activities are, so to say, ahead of our time, to join us. Could please join me also Dr Ivana Šoóšová, PhD, head physician of the National Institute of Cardiovascular Diseases, a close collaborator of excellent surgeon, pioneer of heart transplants, our distinguished member – recipient of the Golden Biatec award and friend, prof. Július Fabián who died in 2010, but whose ideas concerning beneficial effects of peace in the most varied forms for human health and society I would like to remember today.

May the trumpets sound!

I now invite OECD Secretary-General Mr José Ángel Gurría to assume the place of honour at our assembly.

