

Strasbourg, 10/02/2026

Dear Commissioner McGrath,

I am writing to you to express my deep concern regarding recent developments in Slovenia that raise serious questions about respect for the rule of law, the independence of the judiciary, and democratic norms.

As you know, Slovenia is approaching its parliamentary elections scheduled for 22 March 2026. In this sensitive pre-electoral period, actions taken by law-enforcement and prosecutorial authorities must meet the highest standards of impartiality, legality and proportionality.

I have been informed that the Specialised State Prosecutor's Office has filed criminal charges against four members of the opposition party New Slovenia (NSi), including senior figures such as Ms Janez Žakelj, Mr Jožef Horvat, Mr Jernej Vrtovec and Mr Matej Tonin, a Member of the European Parliament. These charges relate to alleged abuse of office in connection with oversight activities carried out in the Parliamentary Commission for the Oversight of Intelligence and Security Services (KNOVS).

It is my clear position that parliamentary oversight of intelligence and security services is a constitutional and democratic function. Members of parliament must be able to perform their duties without fear of unwarranted criminalisation or judicial pressure. The current indictments, and in particular the timing of these proceedings only weeks before the national elections, give rise to serious concerns that the prosecutorial process may be perceived as politicised and potentially used as a tool to influence political competition.

I also recall that this is not the first time that serious concerns have arisen in Slovenia in relation to the use of criminal proceedings in a politically sensitive context. The leader of the opposition, Mr Janez Janša, was imprisoned shortly before the parliamentary elections in 2014 and was released after several months. The proceedings were subsequently brought to an end, because no final finding of guilt was upheld. This case was widely perceived as politically motivated and seriously undermined public trust in the justice system.

In addition, I would like to refer to a fact-finding mission to Slovenia carried out in April last year, which identified serious concerns under the current government of Prime Minister Robert Golob with regard to the rule of law, the proper functioning of independent institutions, and the freedom and pluralism of the media.

In light of the present situation and in view of similar concerns raised in the past, I therefore urge the European Commission to closely monitor the ongoing judicial proceedings and any actions taken by law-enforcement authorities related to elected representatives or political actors in Slovenia; to assess whether the timing and substance of these prosecutions are compatible with Slovenia's obligations under EU law, including respect for the rule of law and democratic standards; to consider any appropriate follow-up measures within the Commission's mandate, including the use of available instruments under the Rule of Law Framework and related mechanisms; and to ensure that all relevant developments are duly reflected in the Commission's regular reporting on the rule of law in the Member States.

The rule of law is a foundational value of the European Union. It must be upheld consistently and irrespective of political context or electoral calendars. Criminal proceedings against members of parliament carrying out oversight duties must not create a chilling effect on democratic accountability or on the ability of elected representatives to exercise their constitutional responsibilities.

I would be grateful for your reply on how the Commission intends to address these concerns. I remain at your disposal to provide further information or to engage in a detailed exchange on this matter.

Yours sincerely,



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