

- meetings at senior official level (political directors) between officials of the Slovak Republic, on the one hand, and the Presidency of the Council of the European Communities and the Commission, on the other,
- taking full advantage of diplomatic channels,
- including the Slovak Republic in the group of countries receiving regular information on the issues dealt with by the European Political Cooperation as well as exchanging information with the view to achieving the objectives defined in Article 2,
- any other means which would make a useful contribution to consolidating, developing and stepping up this dialogue.

Article 5

Political dialogue at parliamentary level shall take place within the framework of the Parliamentary Association Committee.

TITLE II

GENERAL PRINCIPLES

Article 6

Respect for the democratic principles and human rights established by the Helsinki Final Act and the Charter of Paris for a new Europe, as well as the principles of market economy, inspire the domestic and external policies of the Parties and constitute essential elements of the present association.

Article 7

1. The Association includes a transition period of a maximum duration of ten years divided into two successive stages, each in principle lasting five years. The first stage shall begin when this Agreement enters into force.
2. The Association Council shall proceed regularly to examine the application of this Agreement and the accomplishment of the Slovak Republic's economic reforms on the basis of the principles established in the preamble.
3. During the course of the 12 months preceding the expiration of the first stage, the Association Council shall meet to decide the transition to the second stage as well as any possible changes to be brought about as regards measures concerning the content of the provisions governing the second stage. In doing this, it will take into account the results of the examination mentioned in paragraph 2.
4. The two stages envisaged in paragraphs 1, 2 and 3 do not apply to Title III.