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SLOVENIA

1. Title of the Legal Adviser and the Legal Office

The Legal Adviser is Head of the International Law Department. The Legal Advisers are part of the Diplomatic Service.

2. Principal functions

The principal function of the Office of the Legal Adviser is to provide legal advice to the Minister of Foreign Affairs and other Departments within the Ministry of Foreign Affairs on issues of public international law and EU law. It also provides legal advice to all other Ministries of the Government, assists with drafting the texts of the agreements, the administrative procedure with regard to their conclusion and ratification in the Government or the Parliament. Its representatives attend bilateral and multilateral agreement negotiations. It also prepares legal analyses, reports and other information for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, other bodies of the Government, and the Parliament. The Legal Adviser or his deputies attend meetings of the Parliament committees and the plenary Parliament sessions. It supervises all the phases of the conclusion of international agreements and other international legal acts of Slovenia, keeps the register and acts as a guardian of the treaties. The Legal Adviser and members of the Office frequently attend conferences and meetings in Slovenia and abroad.

3. Number of lawyers including overseas staff

There are currently about 12 lawyers working in the International Law Department in Ljubljana. The Slovenian diplomatic service has no special career track for lawyers, and there are also no special legal postings abroad.

4. Organisation of the Legal Office

The Legal Office has two units: the Unit for public international law and the Unit for EU law. Both units perform similar functions, and the legal advisers in those units specialise either for questions of public international law or EU law, respectively. Each legal adviser is assigned a number of areas, i.e. internal affairs, environment, defence, including the international organizations, and his work focuses mainly on those areas. Legal advisers are, however, expected to take on a variety of work from different areas of law.

The work of the office is supported by a registry.

5. Place within the Ministry of Foreign Affairs

As has been said the Legal Adviser is a head of the International Law Department and reports to the State Secretary. Officers, who serve in the department, are part of the Diplomatic Service.

6. Main contacts within Government

The Office of the Legal Adviser is the principal service within the Government for the issues of public international law and EU law. The Office has close contacts mostly with the Government Office for Legislation and the Ministry of Justice.

The Office of the Legal Adviser has a general advisory role and must be consulted in advance on all the international agreements and other legal acts, entered into by the Government.

7. Relations with lawyers in private practice, academics and legal institutions

Lawyers in private practice are retained by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs mostly in cases of suits abroad, or where the need arises. The Legal Office is supported by the Law Professors at the Law Faculty of the University of Ljubljana, and often retains them as consultants.