

Remarks by Ambassador Brent R. Hartley
AmCham Slovenia's Election Night Party
Tuesday, November 8, 8:30pm

As prepared for Delivery

Good Evening and thank you to our colleagues at the American Chamber of Commerce for inviting me to welcome you to tonight's event.

Dober večer in hvala našemu partnerju ameriški zbornici za povabilo in priložnost, da vas pozdravim na današnjem dogodku.

It's a pleasure in so many ways to work with AmCham Slovenia:

- to promote increased trade, investment, and business cooperation between the United States and Slovenia,
- to campaign for reforms to improve the business environment here; and, of course,
- to advocate for U.S. companies.

The AmCham community is united by shared business values and our belief in the enormous potential for shared economic prosperity when the United States and our European partners work together.

We've come together tonight on the occasion of the 2016 U.S. presidential election. Despite the mock ballots and the lovely candidate cut out decorations, our purpose tonight is not to celebrate one candidate's victory or another candidate's defeat. That is what the American voters will decide over the course of the next few hours.

And while plenty has been said about the tone and the rhetoric of this year's campaign, I think it is worth celebrating that today, across the United States, we are engaged in a free and open presidential selection process for the 58th consecutive time. And compared to a lot of places in the world, it is pretty amazing and it's something to celebrate.

I suspect that many of you, like me, have been closely watching the campaign for quite a long time. We are reaching the last stages of what has been a very long and interesting presidential campaign – zelo zanimivo.

Electoral campaigns aren't always beautiful, but as President Obama recently said, "one of the great things about America's democracy is we have a vigorous, sometimes bitter, political contest. And when it's done, historically, regardless of party, the person who loses the election congratulates the winner, reaffirms our democracy, and we move forward. That's how democracy survives, because we recognize that there is something more important than any individual campaign – and that is making sure that the integrity and trust in our institutions sustains itself. Because democracy, by definition, works by consent, not by force."

The U.S. political system is enormously resilient. As the American people make their choice today, I'm confident that American democracy continues to be strong. And regardless of the winner, we will emerge ever stronger.

Thank goodness for that, because from the first day in office, whoever is the new President of the United States will have an agenda that is arguably more complex and challenging than any that his or her predecessors have faced.

People all over the world are unsettled by the rapid changes in the global economy, and trying to adapt to new employment demands.

Governments are confronting both legal and irregular migration and assessing the impact of new threats and challenges such as cyber security and climate change.

As we emerge from this campaign and the President-elect makes the transition to governing, she or he will look to our indispensable partners in Europe, including here in Slovenia, to help shape a better world, founded on the elements that have shaped U.S. foreign policy over past decades:

- promotion of democratic values;
- promotion of shared prosperity;
- promotion of shared security.

Thank you again to AmCham and AmCham members for your partnership. My best wishes for an enjoyable evening celebrating American democracy.

Najlepša hvala.