Slovakia: Energy Adviser

Confidential: for the assigned participant only. Do not share with other participants, including the other members of your delegation. Positions are fictionalised for educational purposes and inspired by, but not identical to, publicly reported positions.

The Council in this scenario. Seven member states sit at the table: Bulgaria, Slovakia, Germany, Italy, Poland, France and the United Kingdom (this is 2009; the UK is a member state). Each state has one vote, cast by its National Representative. A common position endorsing the protocol needs a **simplified qualified majority: at least five of the seven, including at least two of Germany, France, Italy and the United Kingdom** (the facilitator will state the numbers for the actual cast). The small states cannot carry a position without the big ones; the big ones cannot decide alone. If the threshold is met, the Czech Presidency signs on the Council's behalf. Member states may also conclude side agreements outside the protocol (bilateral or trilateral understandings); these should be written down and supported by the stakeholders involved, and they are published only after the scenario. The Commission does not vote during the negotiation, but it votes last, to support or sabotage the result. The Presidency chairs without voting.

Your delegation: Germany (2 members)

Slovakia is about 100 % dependent on Russian gas, all of it arriving through a single corridor from Ukraine. Yesterday Slovakia declared a formal state of energy emergency, the only EU country to do so. Your situation is somewhat less acute than Bulgaria's: you have several weeks of storage. That buys time; it does not remove the urgency. Industry is already hit (car plants have suspended production) and the economic damage is mounting by the day.

Slovakia feels betrayed. It invested in the transit infrastructure, it fulfilled its contractual obligations, and now it is paying for a dispute it had no part in. Your prime minister has publicly demanded €500 million in compensation for lost transit fees and economic damage.

Key facts (all members):

- Russian gas dependency ~100 %, all via Ukrainian transit; several weeks of storage at crisis demand.
- State of energy emergency declared 6 January; major industrial disruption.
- Government demanding €500 million compensation from Russia and/or Ukraine.
- Broadly aligned with Poland on EU solidarity and diversification.

Decision rule: Slovakia's National Representative casts the state's vote in the Council.

Your role

Motivations & constraints: You are Slovakia's energy and technical expert: storage levels, industrial impact, pipeline infrastructure, and the options (or lack of them) for alternative supply. You support the National Representative and handle the technical negotiation. Your aims: quantify the damage with specific data (depletion rates, lost production, estimated economic cost); push for technically concrete solidarity measures (reverse flows from Austria or the Czech Republic, coordinated storage releases, emergency interconnector protocols); and engage the Commission's Energy Commissioner's Representative and the Presidency's energy adviser on what is actually feasible. You need solutions on paper, not statements.

Red lines: No protocol that ignores transit-fee compensation: Slovakia earns revenue from transit and has lost it through no fault of its own.

Style: Pair with Bulgaria on the urgency message but differentiate on approach: they bring the emotion, you bring the data. Engage the Commission early and specifically: "can Austria release X via Baumgarten? can Czech storage cover Y days of Slovak demand?" Draft language: text on the table about transit compensation or a future solidarity mechanism is harder to ignore than a verbal demand, and the Presidency's energy adviser will take a clean paragraph gratefully.

Confidential (for you alone, not for your delegation): You think the National Representative's confrontational style is mostly right but risks overplaying: the €500 million is a negotiating tool, not an expectation, and attacking Germany in public over Nord Stream could isolate Slovakia rather than win it sympathy. Your preferred division of labour: they provide the political heat, you provide the technically feasible proposals (a specific reverse-flow arrangement, a solidarity mechanism with measurable commitments) that are more likely to get results. You hold one important technical insight: Slovakia's infrastructure could support reverse flow from Austria through the Baumgarten hub if the political will existed. Austria has multiple sources and significant storage, and such an arrangement would meaningfully cut Slovakia's vulnerability. Austria is not in the room, so you need the Commission or the Presidency to broker it: raise it with them. And you know that your storage, while serious, gives you more time than Bulgaria, so you can afford to be the credible, data-driven voice of the vulnerable coalition rather than its most desperate one.