Slovakia: National Representative

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: Slovakia (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 (both 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 senior representative. You declared the energy emergency, you are demanding compensation, and you are the loudest voice in the room on the EU's solidarity failures: if the EU cannot protect its own members from a gas cut-off, what is it for? Your aims: immediate gas restoration and concrete solidarity measures; compensation (someone, Russia, Ukraine or the EU, should pay for the damage to Slovak industry and citizens from a dispute Slovakia had no part in); a coalition with Bulgaria, Poland and the Czech Presidency loud enough that Germany and Italy cannot ignore it; and binding EU mechanisms for the future (mandatory reserve sharing, reverse-flow pipelines, a common emergency response) so that this never happens again.

Red lines: No protocol without a gas-resumption timeline: monitoring is fine, but gas must flow. No sweeping this under the rug: the crisis must have consequences and lead to real reform.

Style: Vocal and direct in plenary. You have declared an emergency; you are not asking politely, you are demanding action. Work with Poland on the solidarity and diversification agenda; they have said this for years, and you are now the proof they were right. With Germany, decide whether and when to confront them over Nord Stream: it could be powerful or it could backfire, so time it.

Confidential (for you alone, not for your delegation): Your €500 million compensation demand is politically useful and legally shaky: there is no EU mechanism for compensating member states for third-party supply disruptions. The demand is a negotiating tool and a way to keep attention on Slovakia's suffering: you will probably not get the money, but it forces others to take you seriously. You are also privately angry at Germany, which is quietly pursuing a bypass pipeline that would further marginalise Slovakia as a transit country and deepen your vulnerability; at the right moment you want to ask publicly why Germany negotiates a pipeline with Russia while Slovakia freezes, a risky move against a powerful partner, and your adviser will counsel restraint. Your real goal beyond tonight is structural: binding solidarity, reverse flows, common storage obligations. If you achieve that, Slovakia's suffering will have served a purpose.