

## Slovak-Italian relationships between 1939 and 1945

Diplomatic relations between the first Slovak Republic and the Kingdom of Italy began developing after April 11, 1939, when the Italian government acknowledged the independence of Slovakia. The first Slovak ambassador, M. Zvrškovec, served in Rome from the middle of May 1939 and was replaced in summer 1940 by B. Galvánek. The Italian consulate in Bratislava directed by F. Lo Faro was transformed into an embassy in September 1939. Count G. Roncalli, the first ambassador, was succeeded by P. Cortese in March 1942. In the years 1939 to 1943 the Slovak-Italian relationships were very active and rapidly extended in many fields of diplomacy, business, culture, propaganda and sports. These activities are described in detail in several chapters. This period of contacts was very fruitful, but compilation of a cultural agreement was not finalized and the planned visits at the highest level never took place. The above communication abruptly came to an end after the Italian military and political break down in summer of 1943. Slovak Republic tried to keep diplomatic contacts with the Italian Social Republic newly established in northern Italy by Mussolini under German protectorate, but these relations could not be as intensive as those in the earlier years. They functioned in a limited form until April 1945, and performed only basic diplomatic contacts and small business exchange. All other plans ceased to exist at the end of World War II and after cessation of the both states.