ROYAL NORWEGIAN EMBASSY

**Opening remarks – Opening conference of the Educational Centre Dropie**

**Mr Jørn Osmundsen, deputy head of mission**

**State secretary, Dear director general, Dear partners, distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen,**

**It is my pleasure to be here on behalf of Norway to mark the launch of the predefined project *Educational Centre Dropie*. This project is part of the Green Transition Programme launched just a month ago.**

**It represents another concrete step in the continued cooperation between Norway and Slovakia - the cooperation rooted in the EEA Agreement and in the European values we share: human dignity, freedom, democracy, equality, the rule of law, and respect for human rights.**

**These values are also reflected in the way we respond to climate change: through knowledge, participation, responsibility, and cooperation across borders.**

**Dropie is a particularly fitting place to put these principles into practice. The centre itself will demonstrate practical approaches to energy, water, nature-based solutions, adaptation, and mitigation, while the educational programme will help translate these approaches into knowledge that teachers, students, and pupils can use and share.**

**The focus on education is especially important. A genuine green transition depends not only on technology or infrastructure, but also on people who understand change and feel able to shape it. By working with teachers and young people, the project can extend its impact far beyond this site and bring climate awareness into classrooms, communities, and everyday decisions.**

**Dropie also builds on valuable work already carried out here. During the visit of our former ambassador, H.E. Susan Eckey, earlier this year, she saw how the previous Living Lab Dropie project had created opportunities for hands-on environmental learning across different age groups. The new project can take this experience further and develop the centre into a recognised hub for innovative environmental education.**

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**We are very pleased that the Norwegian University of Life Sciences will contribute as a project partner. Its involvement offers an opportunity for professional exchange, joint learning, and fresh perspectives. This is where bilateral cooperation can add real value: not by transferring one ready-made model, but by bringing together different experience and expertise to develop solutions suited to the local context.**

**Ladies and gentlemen,**

**Today marks the formal beginning of the project, but its success will be measured by what happens next: by the quality of the learning created here, by the partnerships that grow around the centre, and by whether the ideas tested at Dropie travel further.**

**Buildings, technologies, and demonstration measures can show us what is possible. But it is people who turn possibility into lasting change. If this centre gives teachers new tools, encourages young people to ask questions, and helps communities see practical climate solutions as part of everyday life, it will have achieved something truly meaningful.**

**Norway is pleased to be part of this next chapter for Dropie. I wish the project team and all partners every success, and I hope that when we return in the years ahead, we will see not only a transformed centre, but also a growing community of people carrying its knowledge and ideas well beyond Dropie.**

**Thank you.**