



Predsednica Republike Slovenije

**NATAŠA PIRC MUSAR**

**The 5th UN Conference on the Least Developed Countries**

***Statement by H.E. Ms Nataša Pirc Musar, President of the Republic of Slovenia at the Plenary Session***

Mr President,  
Mr Secretary-General,  
Excellences,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

The 5<sup>th</sup> UN Conference on the Least Developed Countries takes place against the backdrop of multiple crises and global geopolitical challenges.

*We have witnessed cascading crises and no country has been spared. Although least developed countries are not responsible for those crises, they remain most vulnerable to external shocks. In addition to this, the COVID-19 pandemic still perseveres among us. This is not merely a health crisis. It causes serious disruption of economies, societies and individuals everywhere, and in particular in the least developed countries.*

*The combination of insecurities such as climate change, rising energy, food crises, and ultimately many wars and conflicts have reversed progress in achieving sustainable development goals. This is particularly the case when it comes to poverty reduction, inclusive and equitable quality education, food security and health. Without determined and co-ordinated action, the gap between developed high-income countries and least-developed countries will indeed continue to widen, as will the number and percentage of the world's population living in the least-developed countries, whose inhabitants so often have little choice but to leave their homes, not because they want to, *but because they have to*. Regarding the co-ordinated and truly global action, let me be clear: its main precondition is solidarity.*

We must accept historical facts. We must take the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities seriously. Only then will effective, rule-based multilateralism become *truly effective*. And the results equitable.

*Excellences,*

Slovenia firmly supports the belief that the ownership, leadership and primary responsibility for development in least-developed countries rests with the least-developed countries themselves. At the same time, let me underscore that Slovenia, as a developed state, like other developed countries, carries great responsibility and is ready to contribute to building peaceful and resilient societies, and assist in green transition. Climate Justice is a prerogative that we all must internalise.

Allow me to address one topic that is high on the agenda at this conference: science, technology and innovation. Financing for development needs to be accompanied by technological innovation, expertise and technical assistance. Slovenia's scientists have developed solutions that could be of wider interest: satellite imaging, remote sensing and Artificial Intelligence tools.

That being said, it is important to discuss science not only as an opportunity but also as a challenge. Artificial intelligence, for example, is broadly used – in production processes, global chains, logistics, and in our everyday tasks, such as searching in web browsers. However, if in the wrong hands, it may have damaging effects. We need to be aware of that *and* we need to be prepared for that in the future. As pointed out in the DPoA, private sector, civil society and academia can make a valuable contribution to meet such challenges.

Last but certainly not least, Slovenia is a strong advocate of human rights-based approaches to development. The principles of non-discrimination and inclusiveness are essential to delivering on our pledge to leave no one behind.

I particularly welcome the commitments in the Doha Programme of Action to promote the equality and empowerment of women and girls. We reaffirm that gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls and the full realization of their human rights are essential to achieving sustained, inclusive and equitable economic growth and sustainable development for all.

*Excellences,*

We all share one planet. The Doha Programme of Action sets out ambitious targets and commitments. Achieving them is our shared responsibility, based on the principle of multilateralism, with the United Nations at the core of our combined endeavours. The success of the international community in addressing global challenges depends on the success of our weakest and most marginalised and hence vulnerable members. As we are gathered here in Doha, we must take a *sincere* pledge to work together and use all our resources and capacities to achieve our common goals.

Thank you for your attention.