



Predsednica Republike Slovenije

NATAŠA PIRC MUSAR

**Address by the President of the Republic of Slovenia Nataša Pirc Musar
at the COP28 Leader's Event
» Leaders' Event: Accelerating Water and Climate Action«**

Dubai, United Arab Emirates, 2 December 2023

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Madam Chair,

The right to water has been included in the Constitution of Slovenia. We are very keen on the understanding of water as a public good that needs to be accessible to all.

The role of water in climate adaptation is gaining recognition, yet the relevant interplay between freshwater and mitigation is still not generally accepted. I therefore applaud the attention our hosts are giving to water security at COP28, in both adaptation and mitigation, including through this important event during the high-level segment.

Slovenia is here to show our strong engagement and commitment on the water and climate nexus. Slovenia is a partner of the COP28 Water Pavilion and is co-curating a thematic day on Water, Health and Peace at the pavilion on 6 December.

At the Water and Food Day, Slovenia, together with partners of the Green Group, will launch a virtual Water Knowledge Platform. I thank Costa Rica, Cape Verde, Iceland, Singapore and the UAE for this and the ongoing excellent cooperation.

We are putting our scientific and technological solutions at the service of greater water security, protecting water resources and ecosystems, and improving the resilience of water infrastructure. Examples include the use of artificial intelligence to help track and monitor SDG 6, the application of satellite technology in promoting transboundary cooperation, and applying remote sensing for first-class flood forecasting and an early warning system in a transboundary river basin.

The urgency of water-related challenges demands immediate action at all levels. We need to keep alive the motivational drive that the UN 2023 Water Conference created. For this, we need regular intergovernmental conferences, the appointment of the UN Special Envoy on Water and the adoption of the UN Strategy on Water.

In the meantime, the third UN Water Conference in 2026 has been agreed upon, and the UN Strategy on Water is in the making. On the other hand, I am disappointed by the fact that after more than a year, the call, supported by 150 member states, to the UN Secretary-General to appoint a UN Special Envoy for Water has yet to be heeded.

We know there is no life without water. By accelerating water action, we are accelerating climate action. I appreciate this event today as a crucial first step in our understanding of the importance of water for both adaptation and mitigation measures.

Thank you.