



Predsednica Republike Slovenije

NATAŠA PIRC MUSAR

**Address by the President of the Republic of Slovenia Nataša Pirc Musar
at the COP28 side event, co-organised by Slovenia and FAO,
»Scaling up integrated actions to address malnutrition and climate change:
An intersectional and intergenerational dialogue«**

Dubai, United Arab Emirates, 3 December 2023

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Director General, Excellencies, colleagues,

We are witnessing an unprecedented global food crisis, affecting some 345 million people in 79 countries. The links between food and fragility are stark. To talk about food on the COPs' first-ever Peace Day is symbolic. Nobody has put it better than UN Secretary-General Guterres: "If you don't feed people, you feed conflict."

We must add the climate to this equation, though, as if we don't safeguard the climate, we can't feed people nor prevent the multiplication of conflicts.

Our responsibility is huge.

I thank the FAO for its great support to the global community in addressing this challenge.

Director General,

We last met on World Bee Day in Rome. Pollinators are a great example of an integrated approach to ecosystems, food and peace. They take care of nearly 90 percent of wildflower plants and of a third of the world's total crop production. They are also a uniquely successful means to empower vulnerable social groups in fragile, conflict-affected areas.

Bees for peace, as we call it.

Many vulnerable groups around the world are already benefitting from beekeeping. Examples include female Afghan refugees in Iran, mine victims in Bosnia and Herzegovina, and indigenous people in Amazonia. By keeping bees, they are also taking care of the environment, food and livelihood security at the same time.

At the launch of the Climate, Relief, Recovery and Peace Declaration in just an hour's time, Slovenia will announce its biggest-ever development project, helping communities in fragile African transboundary areas to adapt to climate change through ecosystem restoration and beekeeping.

Our panelists will present many more success stories of such an integrated approach. I am also pleased to see the youth take center stage. We must ensure that they are fully, equally and meaningfully included in both dialogue and decision-making on climate and alimentation.

Another dimension, very important to me, is international law, including human rights law. Different conflicts around the world are a stark reminder that the environment and food should never been used as a weapon of war. The international community must reprimand and sanction such attempts in the strongest terms – and, most importantly, prevent them.

As a new member of the UN Security Council from 1 January on, Slovenia is putting climate security at the top of its agenda, food security included. We also keep responding to the rising humanitarian needs, just as with our recent fivefold increase in the financial support to food security.

However, we must put prevention first. It safeguards not only lives and the planet, but also development gains and the return on investment. I hope that this day will be remembered not only as the COPs' first Peace Day per se, but as a day which put the whole humanitarian, development and peace nexus at the heart of climate action.

Thank you.