



Predsednica Republike Slovenije

NATAŠA PIRC MUSAR

**New Year message
from the President of the Republic of Slovenia, Nataša Pirc Musar**

Presidential Palace, 31 December 2023

*Dear Slovenians in our country, across its borders and around the world;
Dear Citizens and Residents,*

The year that is coming to an end has been a year of difficult trials. The powerful forces of nature did not choose. Water carried away everything in its path. Including human lives. It did not, however, take away our humanity, kindness and solidarity. Out of the flooded fields, they grew sprouting even stronger and sturdier branches that touched each and every one of us. We are only at the beginning, but the renovations will continue. Both to buildings and in our hearts. Anyone who needs help will receive it. This is what we Slovenians have in us. No one will be left forgotten.

As I look back on the year that is bidding farewell, I feel proud and deeply grateful that we have each other. That we are a mature and cohesive community, aware of how strong we are when we lend a hand and listen to one another.

This also applies to countries in the international community, where Slovenia has a role to play. Next year will mark 20 years of its membership in the European Union and NATO, and on 1 January Slovenia will assume a seat on the United Nations Security Council for two years. This important responsibility, entrusted to us by the countries that elected us, will also be a test of the maturity of our foreign policy and human conscience. We are aware of this and I believe that we will fulfil the responsibility entrusted to us in the spirit of Prešeren's lines, which we proudly sing in our anthem – "When o'er earth's habitations no war, no strife shall hold its sway."

Therefore, my heartfelt wish to all of you is that 2024 will be a year of peace. That the branches of humanity, kindness and solidarity reach out to the innocent suffering in Gaza, to the victims of the Israeli attack as well as to the hostages and victims of Hamas, to Ukraine and to all the places where armed conflicts are taking place.

Dear Slovenians, Citizens and Residents,

When I visited people affected by floods in the summer, they told me how neighbours they had not spoken a word to for years or even decades had come to their rescue and reached out to them. Such scenes and stories have been with me ever since. Their message is a call for maturity and wisdom.

Nature does not choose. But humans can. Let us choose kindness, solidarity and humanity. Each of us will thus leave a mark that will make the world a better place and someone happier.

Happy New Year Slovenia, a land full of beauty and solidarity.