



Predsednica Republike Slovenije

NATAŠA PIRC MUSAR

**Address
by the President of the Republic of Slovenia Nataša Pirc Musar
on the occasion of the 2nd anniversary of the Russian military aggression
on Ukraine**

Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs of the Republic of Slovenia,
23 February 2024

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*Excellencies,
State Secretary Marko Štucin,
Distinguished Diplomats,*

I have said many times that our planet is facing greater threats to life than ever before. Everywhere I turn, I see risks and threats looming. In the midst of the challenges posed by climate change, the battles are even harder to win. Poverty remains the scourge of the modern age. With the numerous wars and conflicts we are witnessing today, there will be no peace between countries and peoples for a long time to come. While we must acknowledge these concerns, we must also seek, through various means, to mitigate the conflicts and save at least some lives.

For Ukraine, an independent country seeking equal standing in the international community, this aspiration remains limited, if not denied. Over the past 100 years, the people of Ukraine have endured immense suffering through numerous wars and collective massacres. Today, the nation continues to grapple with ongoing aggression from Russia. Ukraine's territorial integrity is being violated. International law, including the United Nations Charter, is being blatantly trampled on. Too many Ukrainian lives are being lost as the country tries to defend itself.

Slovenia remains firmly committed to supporting Ukraine. I have consistently emphasised, including in personal talks with President Zelenskyy, that human rights and democracy belong to all peaceful people and that violators of these fundamental

rights must be punished. Slovenia is committed to ensuring that all those responsible for the crimes committed on the territory of Ukraine are held accountable.

Slovenia stands in solidarity with Ukraine and with the millions of people, not only on the Ukrainian side, who never sought this war.

According to the Ukrainian Ministry of Health, 90% of the people in Ukraine suffer from anxiety disorders, prolonged stress and trauma. These silent but profound consequences of war in Ukraine, as well as in Gaza, Sudan and Yemen, are being brought to light by the First Lady of Ukraine, Olena Zelenska, through her foundation and advocacy work. Slovenia is committed to helping Ukraine alleviate the consequences of the war, including through the efforts of NGOs such as Slovene Philanthropy and the International Trust Fund for Demining. We will help with psychosocial support for women and children, rehabilitation and demining. The people of Ukraine will need our support and yours long after the guns have fallen silent.

Ladies and gentlemen,

Slovenia emphasises that any solution to this conflict that does not respect Ukraine as a sovereign state on an equal and fair basis cannot and will not be acceptable to the international community. Any alternative outcome entails a resurgence of imperialism, territorial ambitions, and an attempt to “rectify historical wrongs” in Europe. Such a scenario would mean the end of the international order established since 1945, order based on the principles of sovereign equality and the territorial integrity of states.

Therefore, I would like to underline to everyone, not only to the people of Ukraine, that the future can only be envisioned and shaped in an atmosphere of peace and stability, under the rule of international law. This is the goal we must relentlessly pursue every step of the way, at every moment, until the final victory.

Thank you.