



Predsednica Republike Slovenije

NATAŠA PIRC MUSAR

**Address by the President of the Republic of Slovenia, Nataša Pirc Musar
at the Slovenia–Uzbekistan Business Forum**

Ljubljana, 22 May 2025

Spoken word prevails.

President Mirziyoyev,
Ministers,
Ambassadors,
Businesspeople,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

Thank you very much for attending today's Slovenia-Uzbekistan Business Forum, which marks an important milestone in the strengthening of economic cooperation between our two countries. I would like to extend a particularly warm welcome to you, President Mirziyoyev, and your delegation, whose visit on the occasion of the 30th anniversary of diplomatic relations between our two countries confirms your sincere commitment to strengthening our political, economic and cultural ties.

Today's forum is the result of consistent and constructive efforts by both sides over the past years. It reflects our growing political and economic relations and builds on a series of high-level meetings, including the visit of Slovenian Minister of Foreign and European Affairs Tanja Fajon to Uzbekistan in 2023, the recent visit of a Slovenian business delegation to Tashkent and visits by Uzbek government delegations to Slovenia earlier this month. This forum is proof that a common vision for the future, based on cooperation, mutual respect and sustainable development, can be created between two countries that are geographically distant but rich in potential.

Slovenia and Uzbekistan strive for greater integration in international economic relations in spite of these uncertain times. As a member of the European Union, Slovenia fully understands the importance of Uzbekistan's partnership with the EU. Uzbekistan played an excellent role in hosting the historic first Central Asia–EU Summit, which took place in Samarkand in early April this year and strengthened the ties between our regions. Uzbekistan is one of the fastest-growing economies in Central Asia, with abundant natural resources, a strategic location and ambitious economic reforms. In this combination, we see an opportunity for a truly strategic partnership.

Človekovo dostojanstvo v nas, dostojanstvo za vse, dostojanstvo okolju, ki nas obdaja.

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I am pleased to note that the economic cooperation between Slovenia and Uzbekistan is gaining momentum. The volume of trade has increased and there is still a lot of untapped potential, especially in pharmaceuticals, energy efficiency, information and communication technologies, sports infrastructure, high technology in industry, logistics, tourism and education. Digitalisation also offers great potential for mutual cooperation, as Slovenia recently won an EU call for proposals to develop a high-performance supercomputer with an artificial intelligence factory.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Today, you have had the opportunity to network extensively and to lay the foundations for future projects. I have no doubt that these discussions will lead to concrete results.

In today's globalised world, we cannot act alone and solely at the national level; we need partnerships to exchange best practices and find solutions to the challenges we face. The Slovenian and the Uzbekistani economies share many similarities on which we can build the future.

Memorandums and agreements which have been signed during the visit of President Mirziyoyev, including in the fields of tourism, transport and logistics, education, science and culture, water conservation technologies, smart city management and standardisation, will give additional impetus to our cooperation. And speaking of new opportunities, I am particularly pleased that business contracts were also signed on the sidelines of the visit between Slovenian and Uzbek partners.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Both Slovenia and Uzbekistan are proud of their rich cultural heritage and share many values – from respect for tradition and education to mutual understanding. Today's forum can mark a new chapter in our relations. It is vital that we invest in trust, open dialogue and long-term partnerships.

Allow me to take this opportunity to thank the organisers – the Public Agency SPIRIT Slovenia, Slovenian and Uzbekistani business delegations, institutions and individuals who have worked hard to make this successful event possible.

Mr President,

Your visit sends a strong message of friendship and trust. Let it also encourage both nations to deepen their bonds, not only in business, but also in culture, science and

people-to-people ties. I believe that together we can build the bridges of tomorrow, based on knowledge, innovation and shared visions of the future.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Thank you for being here, thank you for your energy and for your ideas. I wish you continued success in forging mutually beneficial partnerships, finding inspiration and creating abundant opportunities for the benefit of both countries and their people.