**Govor predsednice Republike Slovenije Nataše Pirc Musar**

**na letnem srečanju platforme GS OZN ženskih voditeljic**

New York, 20. september 2023

Velja govorjena beseda.

*Dear Presidents of the 77th and the current 78th UN General Assembly sessions,*

*Dear Executive Director of UN Women,*

*Dear Fellow Women Leaders,*

What an honour and pleasure it is for me to sit at the same table with all of you, dear fellow women leaders! I am delighted that the UN Platform of Women Leaders’ annual meeting is becoming a cherished tradition.

We are at the midterm review point of the implementation of the SDGs, so please allow me a few remarks in this regard.

First and foremost, we shall not be able to advance properly on the implementation of the SGDs without making progress on SDG5 on gender equality. Global progress on gender equality – or the lack thereof – affects the implementation of SDG5 directly. Indirectly, however, we must take into account 10 additional SDGs that include gender-specific benchmarks. Women's social and economic empowerment is key to a better future for all and without it, accomplishing the SDGs will remain out of reach.

Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen, it is quite simple: women around the world still continue to be responsible for bringing food to the table of their families day in and day out. In my mind, that makes women the principal agents for peace, prosperity, climate action and sustainability.

Women and girls make up half of the world’s population. Rather than leaving them out of the world’s workforce and decision-making, it is critical to empower them to reach their full potential. Much as we, women leaders around this table, have had the opportunity to do.

But we need to practice what we preach. And nowhere is that truer than here, at the United Nations.

Since the UN’s creation, the General Assembly has had 74 male presidents and only four female presidents. Unlike the UN Secretary-General – with a five-year term and a possibility of re-election, every year the Member States elect a president to a one-year term of office. Together with the UNSG, the PGA is the most globally prominent UN face.

If we are serious about SDG5, what better place to start than here, within our UN family. And what better way to commit to it than by means of a UNGA Presidency gender parity rule of procedure? Simply put: I believe it is time for the UNGA Presidency to alternate annually between a woman and a man.

Dear Women Leaders,

I very much hope you can agree with me that we can no longer uphold this tradition of excluding women from the presidency of one of the world’s most important governing bodies. This change to the GA Rules of Procedure would open the door to gender parity at the helm of the UN General Assembly. There is no shortage of superbly qualified female foreign ministers or female ambassadors.

I do hope you can agree with me on the urgency of this proposal while we are trying to accelerate the achievement of SDG5 on gender equality. With your support, dear colleagues, we can start with gender equality right here, at the UN General Assembly, and with this give hope and inspiration to women and girls around the world that yes, it is possible!

Thank you.