



21st Jeju Forum Opening Ceremony

Congratulatory Remarks



Nataša PIRC MUSAR

President of the Republic of Slovenia

Good day everyone. Thank you very much for inviting me to take part in the 21st Jeju Forum and please accept my apologies for addressing you through this recorded message.

I would have much preferred to be with you in person. Unfortunately, this was not possible on this occasion, but I trust there will be opportunities in the future to attend the conference in person.

Let me begin with the overarching title of this year's forum: "Reinventing Cooperation in a Fragmented World." I do not think one could choose a more fitting title to describe the state of world affairs and the dilemma we face as we look to the future.

Fragmentation of the international community is not a new phenomenon. It occurs whenever existing patterns of cooperation no longer keep pace with the progress of international society, or when certain countries actively seek to dismantle them.

For smaller and middle powers like Korea and Slovenia, the most important thing is to understand not only the causes, but above all the consequences of this fragmentation



and how they can influence these processes.

I see at least three ways in which this could be achieved:

Through a commitment to international cooperation and support for multilateral institutions through multilateralism, minilateralism, by harnessing the power of knowledge to assert a role in the governance of rapidly developing new technologies.

First, regarding Multilateralism. Advocating multilateralism is essential as the problems we face today are largely transnational, even global in nature.

However, things have gone awfully wrong. The great powers are no longer the guardians of the rule-based world order. They are now joined by multinational corporations and wealthy individuals who show little commitment to global governance, no empathy for people in need, and a voracious appetite for profit.

In such circumstances, crises that pose an existential threat to humanity, such as poverty and climate change, cannot be adequately addressed.

Last year, I proposed that smaller and middle powers organize themselves to actively support the Pact for the Future by creating a special forum-an inclusive movement of states committed to multilateralism, mutual respect, and the defense of norms they share despite their heterogeneity: cooperation, responsibility, human dignity, and protection of our planet.

I underscored that the forum should not be a talking shop. It should agree on ways to address those systemic issues where the problems are universal, but the power to resolve them, it is not.

The scope of using the veto power in the UN Security Council is an example. Can the P5 claim the right to place themselves above the law to defend the interests of some at the expense of others? We should seek an advisory opinion from the International Court of Justice on this matter.

Second, regarding Minilateralism.

This innovative approach to foreign policy opens up the opportunity for smaller and middle powers to pursue their interests more effectively, even in geo-strategic areas of cooperation such as critical minerals.



To address vulnerabilities in the supply chain, smaller states tend to diversify more and more away from the great powers by making separate deals. "My way or the highway" is simply not a policy that smaller and middle powers are willing to accept.

Third, regarding the Power of Knowledge.

Knowledge is perhaps the most important source of influence that smaller and middle powers can exert in international affairs.

Consider artificial intelligence. By placing AI on the agenda of the UN Security Council in 2025, the Korean Presidency sent a clear message to the world: AI belongs in the domain of high politics.

Slovenia participated in that session. I was there. We agreed that AI has already become a reality with a visible impact not only on peace and security but also on human rights and development.

The misuse of AI, whether on the battlefield or through cyberattacks, disinformation, organized crime, or terrorism, has become such a serious problem that the global regulation of AI should be a top priority.

Korea and Slovenia are ready. They have the vision, political will, and many competitively internationally acclaimed top-level scientists to address this problem.

Ladies and gentlemen, these are a few observations I wished to share with you today.

Over the next few days, you will engage in many discussions aimed at finding solutions to the current global crisis.

Let me emphasize that successfully charting a path to a more stable and prosperous future depends on such forums. We cannot expect overnight improvements, but we must not give up.

If we persist in discovering, rediscovering, inventing, and reinventing solutions to our contemporary problems, future generations will be grateful to us.

I wish you every success in your work.

Thank you very much.