



Speaking on Pink TV Morning programme, Leader of the Socialist Party of Serbia (SPS) and Minister of Foreign Affairs Ivica Dacic said that the time had come for making significant changes in the party in response to the current political situation.

"I think that party reform is the most appropriate response to the new political situation that we are all facing. Unlike some other parties, SPS has weathered the storm of its political tsunami, but it must, nevertheless, seek a place for itself. Therefore, it is time to think about reform that would affect party platform, personnel and organization", Dacic underlined.

Commenting on the allegations in some media that possible candidates for SPS Deputy Leader are Aleksandar Antic and Branko Ruzic, Dacic replied that, at the moment, it was also hard to say who would be the next Leader, since he had not yet decided whether to run or not.

When asked whether representatives of SPS coalition partners, PUPS and JS, would remain at the helm of some public enterprises, Dacic replied that it was irrelevant who were the CEOs in public enterprises, as long as they were worthy of such posts.

He added, "according to the political agreement reached, the coalition around my party got three ministerial positions and they all belong to SPS ", that JS was not interested in having one of the ministers from its party and that it was agreed with PUPS that their party would not hold a ministerial position, either.

According to Dacic, this does not mean, however, that these parties would not participate in the work of the government with their representatives, state secretaries and assistants in areas where they believe they could help the most.

Foreign Minister Ivica Dacic stated that the purpose of today's visit by EU Commissioner for Enlargement Stefan Füle to Belgrade was to accelerate the European integration process as much as possible in the coming period.

"The negotiation process is a long and painstaking one. Our interest is that it be carried out as rapidly as possible and that it be a quality process, meaning that we should not only be able to open it, but to close some chapters quickly, as well", stated Dacic.

He said that it was necessary to see where we are in terms of screening and that it was expected that certain chapters be opened by the end of the year, and that most difficult Chapters 23 and 24 be opened in the first half of the following year.

"We have done our best to ensure that some other chapters, such as Chapters 32 and 35, be opened by the end of the year," Dacic announced.

Foreign Minister Dacic also said that he was pleased that EU High Representative Catherine Ashton and Stefan Füle visited Serbia as soon as the government was installed, indicating that he went to meet and greet Füle, who arrived last night, and that he already discussed with him regional issues and the negotiations perspective.

By 2018, Serbia will be institutionally ready for EU membership, Dacic confirmed, and announced that a meeting will be held in Thessaloniki, on Wednesday and Thursday, on the occasion of the 10th anniversary of the Thessaloniki Agenda, that is, EU enlargement to the Western Balkans, to be attended also by Füle and all foreign ministers of the Western Balkans countries.

Responding to the journalist's question concerning the new EU Parliament, Dacic replied that it was most likely that Füle and Ashton would not continue to hold their current positions, but that it was still unknown who they would be replaced by. This means "that we will have new negotiators" and that the dialogue will be resumed after the new government has been installed.