



"There is no doubt that Ratko Mladic should have been convicted of Srebrenica massacres. But what about thousands of Serbs who had been killed during the war. How come no one has been found guilty of those crimes in The Hague? This Tribunal has been set up only to try the Serbs", Foreign Minister Dacic was categorical during his official visit to Argentina.

Dacic came to Buenos Aires to attend yesterday's inauguration of the Republic of Serbia Square, at the corner of Avenues Figueroa Alcorta y Dorrego in Palermo and to sign several bilateral agreements. However, his visit coincided with the verdict that was handed down in The Hague which grabbed the attention of global media.

As a figure coming from the Balkans, in an interview to "La Nacion", he was not surprised that questions ranged from the war in the former Yugoslavia to friendship with Argentina.

"The word Balkans is derived from two Turkish words", Minister Dacic explained, "Bal meaning honey and kan meaning blood. We have had enough bloodshed and now it is time for honey, he said.

What is your reaction to Mladic's conviction?

Serbia has never opposed that those charged face court proceedings. This conviction was expected since the Tribunal and Western countries have consistently embraced this policy towards the Balkans over the past 25 years. However, the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia whose mandate ends in December, has failed to meet its goal of bringing peace to the peoples affected by the conflict. Its sole purpose was to lodge complaints against Serbia. Before the war, 560,000 Serbs lived in Croatia. Today, only 180,000 remain there. What happened to the rest? They were either driven out or killed. Sarajevo used to have 150,000 Serb residents and today only 10,000. In Pristina, there were more than 40,000 Serbs and today there are less than 1,000. A few weeks before Srebrenica, Bosnians killed several thousand Serbs. What about the culprits for these massacres?

The term Balkanization became synonymous of a regional explosion whereby all sides end up as enemies. Bearing that in mind, what is the current situation regarding the

former Yugoslavia in that respect?

The relations among people should be based on common interests. You cannot have a stable relationship if you seek to establish who is more or who is less guilty. And yet, almost 20 years after the war ended we are still debating it. We hope that in the future we shall create a common economic area, but we are still far away from that.