



This year, Serbia could finally have Ambassadors and Consuls General appointed to about a third of the currently vacant positions in the country's diplomatic and consular missions in the world, and Minister of Foreign Affairs Nikola Selakovic is convinced that most of these positions will be filled, as he points out, by the best possible people.

"In the next year, I am convinced that the majority of these vacancies will be filled", Selakovic told Tanjug, emphasizing that the work is being done gradually, because the state wants to show that it has a quality staff who will represent Serbia's interests in the best possible way.

The Head of Serbian diplomacy reminded that in a number of diplomatic missions, the four-year mandate of Ambassadors and Consuls General has already expired, so that the procedure for appointing new ones will follow, after their recall.

One of the "vacant" spots is the post of the Serbian Ambassador to China.

"We are working hard to find the best possible solution for our new Ambassador to China and as we appointed one of the best people in the state system as Ambassador to the United States, who, I am sure, will perform his duties in the best possible way, I am convinced that it will be the same for the Ambassador in Beijing", Selakovic said.

The Minister, who took over the foreign policy sector in the Government a little over two months ago, points out that circumstances in the world, as well as Serbia's position in it, have changed, but that Serbia's foreign policy goals do not change: the country remains strategically committed to European integration and, while pursuing the EU path, it will also strengthen traditional friendships with Russia and China, as well as promote and strengthen new partner relations with the United States.

"Relations in the region, good-neighborly relations, regional cooperation are also important for Serbia, because this fits into the set of requirements on the European path. But, even regardless of the European path, it is always important who you live next to, who you live with, what your neighbors are like and what the relations are like in the neighborhood", Minister Selakovic said.

He also points out that the issue of Kosovo and Metohija is of inestimable importance, it being the main national and state issue for Serbia and the Serbian people.

"When I say that circumstances are changing, but not the goals - the EU and European integration was our goal seven years ago as well, but look at what our room for maneuver was then, in terms of economic aspects, and look at it today. Circumstances changed, and then you adjust your actions to these changed circumstances, to the best extent possible", Minister Selakovic said.

He reminds that foreign policy priorities for 2021 were also outlined by the President of the Republic, and that maintaining peace and stability in the region is the absolute priority.

"Only in a peaceful and stable region of the Western Balkans and Southeast Europe can Serbia thrive economically, culturally and scientifically - in every respect. Peace and stability in the region are "sine qua non" without which there is no development and progress. Serbia has acted, is acting and will act as a factor that stabilizes the entire region and maintains peace in the region, showing that it is the region that benefits everyone the most", Minister Selakovic said.

Relations in the region have always been complex, and the region, Minister Selakovic noted, is to our great regret, burdened with issues that we cannot have a bearing on, and which concern the past.

Serbia's approach is to seek room to influence what is happening today and what will happen in the future.

In this context, he states that the so-called "mini-Schengen" initiative for market unification of the region, which originated from Aleksandar Vucic and was met with a positive response from the Prime Ministers of Albania and North Macedonia, is one of the opportunities to do much more for the region.

"To show how much more we can do if we act together and if we seek our common denominators, and not what separates and divides us ", Selakovic points out.

When it comes to relations with the United States, Selakovic said that one should not expect the great powers to change their positions the way we would like, want or imagine, but that it is important that the Ambassador in Washington, Marko Djuric, also emphasized that his task, among other things, will be to make efforts to change the climate in bilateral relations with the United States - the most important country in the world, as our lacking communication with them in the past seriously affected the position of the Serbian people and Serbia.

"I am convinced that Djuric will work seriously on that, together with President Vucic, Prime Minister Brnabic and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and contribute to a large extent to changing that climate", Minister Selakovic said.

He points out that it is extremely important for Serbia to promote its partner relations with the United States to a higher level.

"This is a country with which we cooperate closely in many areas and a country with which we

must strive, and not give up in doing so, to find what we have in common, our common ground and good examples of our cooperation in the past, and to create space for such cooperation in the future as well", Minister Selakovic concluded.

Source: Tanjug