



The First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs Ivica Dacic reveals in his interview to "Blic" his foremost tasks since he took office, what would be the outcome of the diplomatic passports scandal, but also speaks about relations within the Socialist Party of Serbia (SPS).

The primary goal in his new position would be, as he said, to bring to Serbia Heads of State or Government from Europe, Russia and the United States, the Participating States of the OSCE which Serbia will be chairing next year.

What are the first tasks to be addressed?

- The first meeting that I will attend is the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe, where discussions will certainly be focused on Ukraine and relations with Russia. Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov is also expected to attend. The Ministerial Conference EU - Western Balkans will be held in Thessaloniki, next week. It will be a very important meeting, since our performance and the progress made on the European integration path will be analyzed, in June. The third event scheduled for May is the meeting of the Committee of the Ministers of Foreign Affairs of Non-Aligned Countries to be held in Algiers. Furthermore, Serbia will assume the OSCE Chairmanship-in-Office next year, which is also among the responsibilities of the Foreign Minister. During Serbian Chairmanship, I will endeavour to convene a session of the OSCE Ministerial Council in Belgrade and, if permitted by the international situation, I will propose that the summit of Heads of State or Government be held in Belgrade.

Will the state maintain its neutrality with regard to the EU-USA-Russia crisis?

- Yes. This position will be expressed already at the Council of Europe meeting where it is important that Serbia maintains its principled position. We respect the territorial integrity of every UN Member State, including Ukraine, but on the other hand, Serbia will never join any sanctions against Russia not only because it is a friendly country to Serbia, an economic and a political partner, but also because this country has never imposed sanctions on Serbia.

Will the negotiations on Kosovo be resumed?

Resumption of the dialogue has not yet been scheduled. However, when it comes to dialogue,

matters are absolutely clear; the negotiation process is held on the Prime Ministerial level. It was commenced on that level. However, I am ready to make my contribution if the Prime Minister deems it necessary.

Will ambassadors to major states eventually be appointed?

- Appointments will soon be made to fill all such vacancies in crucial countries, including those in Berlin, Washington and Beijing. However, the appointments have not yet been discussed on the personal level, and that decision does not solely depend on me, but also on the Prime Minister and the President of the Republic.

Will there be personnel changes in the Ministry and will diplomatic passports be seized from all those to whom they were issued without foundation?

- If there proves to be any administrative mishandling in the previous work of the Ministry, it will be rectified. Saying this, I also have in mind diplomatic passports if their issuance was in violation of the regulations. What I know for sure is that I have no intention of turning the Ministry into a party institution, because it is my aim to make the foreign affairs Serbia's best positive reference. In the coming days, I will examine the situation in the Ministry and propose some solutions.

How did you take your departure from the Ministry of Interior?

- I bid farewell to all those with whom I worked over the past six years. This certainly doesn't go without emotions. I must admit that I left the official farewell cocktail shortly, to avoid being overwhelmed by emotions. I wish the new Minister all the best and he will have my support and assistance for anything that he may need.

Are any SPS officials dissatisfied with joining the government coalition and is that a threat to you as the party leader?

- The decision to join the government coalition was unanimously adopted by the party bodies. Any comments released in public may only reflect personal attitudes of individuals or their dissatisfaction for not being part of the government. Essentially, there is no division in the SPS. Anyone may ask that decisions be re-examined, but only at the meetings of party bodies. At SPS sessions, I said that if anyone has any objections, he/she should leave and thus make their point or if they have anything against me, they should submit their own candidatures, although out of four candidates, I won. The decision on holding the SPS congress will be made soon, for the party must have a new policy, but new members of party bodies will also have to be elected.