



Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Serbia Ivan Mrkic attended the ceremony "Pogrom ten years on", held on 17 March at the Belgrade National Theatre's big stage.

In commemoration of the tenth anniversary of the March pogrom in Kosovo and Metohija, a number of activities were organized to remind domestic and international public of the crime committed against the Serbian and non-Albanian people on 17 and 18 March 2004.

President of the National Assembly of Serbia Nebojsa Stefanovic, Minister without portfolio responsible for Kosovo and Metohija Aleksandar Vulin and representative of the Israel-Serbia Friendship Association from Tel Aviv Michael Freund addressed the audience at the commemorative event.

His Holiness Patriarch of the Serbian Orthodox Church Irenaeus addressed the audience as well, assessing that the agony started in 1389 was still going on and that it might be even more severe than when it began.

"135 churches and monasteries were burned down, ruined or destroyed from 1999 to 2004. Most of them were under protection as cultural and historical monuments. Some of our holiest places such as Bogorodica Ljeviška, a jewel of the 14th century and Prizren Seminary, which was active in that area even during the Ottomans, were destroyed then", said the Serbian Patriarch Irenaeus.

Minister without portfolio responsible for Kosovo and Metohija Aleksandar Vulin said that if justice had been done and the crimes punished, we would not have talked about it today, but just remembered the victims.

Michael Freund, the representative of the Israel-Serbia Friendship Association, said that he had come to show solidarity with the citizens of Serbia in remembrance of the pogrom, when tens of thousands of Albanian Muslims started a campaign of ethnic cleansing.

On the occasion of the anniversary of the March pogrom in Kosovo and Metohija, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Serbia forwarded, through its diplomatic and consular missions, to the Ministries of Foreign Affairs of other countries, Aide Memoire on the violation of human rights of the Serbian population in Kosovo and Metohija, attacks on life and Serbian property in the last two years.