



Serbian Minister of Foreign Affairs Ivica Dacic said today that our country now needed, above all, assistance in the form of equipment and rescue teams in order to save all cities and people at risk of flooding, following which there would be a need for another kind of assistance – that in the form of reconstruction of the country and donations to that effect.

"We will first have to save the cities and their population, and then we'll focus on the reconstruction of the country and donor assistance. We will require EU and UN emergency relief", said Dacic in an interview for RTS national television.

"At this time it is essential that we save as many people as possible and that the incoming relief should take the form of rescue effort support", he emphasized adding that the Minister responsible for European integration, Ms. Jadranka Joksimovic, would speak about what would follow once the state of crisis was over and that the EU would, no doubt, provide its assistance.

Dacic pointed out that it was necessary, in the first place, to receive aluminum motor boats, helicopters, blankets and trained rescue personnel.

"As Government, we have contacted all countries in due time, initiating the EU crisis response mechanism. They will make an estimate of the damage caused, which is important for setting up some kind of a compensation fund", he said.

According to him, the EU immediately issued a directive to all Member States to respond without delay in providing the necessary equipment and teams.

The Serbian Foreign Minister underlined that many countries, including Montenegro, Israel, Macedonia, Croatia and others were quick to respond and help in many ways, while the Ministry of Interior established the Crisis Staff tasked to coordinate action related to collection of emergency relief.

He further added that many rescuers from foreign countries came to Serbia to help and the citizens of Serbia should be very grateful to them for all that assistance.

"We also sent a note to all international missions located in Serbia, expressing our thanks and requesting their assistance in the delivery of equipment and machinery", stated Dacic adding that a giro bank account had been opened to make payment of donor assistance.

He said that Serbia even addressed the United Nations for assistance in personnel.

The Prime Minister said that Serbia was thankful to all those who heeded the call for help to the flood-stricken population, both the countries and individuals, especially the Russian Federation. Commenting on the situation in the region, primarily the Republic of Srpska, he observed that it was proved there once again that one country alone could not cope with the disaster of these proportions.

Now that the heavy rains had stopped at critical points, there was a risk of flood water coming from the Republic of Srpska, warned the Prime Minister hoping that the worst case scenario would be avoided.