

First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs Ivica Dacic and European Commissioner for Regional Policy Johannes Hahn visited Obrenovac today, which is the most afflicted area by the floods, and on this occasion it was emphasized that Serbia could count on EU assistance.

In his statement to the press Dacic said that he had asked the European Commissioner, during his recent visit to Brussels, to come and witness first-hand the extent of the tragedy that befell Serbia.

"His visit means a lot to us because it sends a political message which is that the EU will assist Serbia", said Dacic adding it was now important for our country "to put together a well-prepared request for assistance from the EU Solidarity Fund, where we expect Hahn's help as a Commissioner".

Dacic explained that a Commission, headed by Minister of Construction, Transport and Infrastructure Zorana Mihajlovic, would assess the overall damage over the next ten weeks at the latest, regardless of whether in the public or private sector.

According to Dacic, Hahn promised that he would help our administration in the formulation of the application, which would be followed by filing checks, and after the decision of the European Commission, approval should be given by the European Parliament and the EU Council.

He underlined that it was important that we did our part of the job as soon as possible, so that the EU could decide promptly.

"We hope to be able to finish it all by September, meaning to apply by July", said Dacic.

He said that the Solidarity Fund was just one of the mechanisms, and that the IPA and development funds, donor conferences, bilateral assistance are the others.

At the same time, he underlined that Serbia was equal in this respect to all EU member states regarding the use of funds, adding that the level of the damage was such that "unfortunately we qualify for the Solidarity Fund".

Commissioner Hahn said that the EU would certainly support Serbia, and also pointed out that in this situation Serbia was treated like any other EU member state, and therefore all measures of assistance and the Solidarity Fund applied to it, as it would be the case with the Member States.

"In such a difficult situation, it is a positive sign. Serbia can count on Europe not only today and tomorrow but also in the future," stressed Hahn, who extended his condolences to the families of the victims, saying he could not imagine what it was like a few days before, seeing the present situation in Obrenovac which was still very difficult.

Minister Mihajlovic and Energy Minister Aleksandar Antic also accompanied the European Commissioner, on a visit to Obrenovac.

FDPM and MFA I. Dacic, European Commissioner for Regional Policy J. Hahn visit Obrenovac

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FDPM and MFA I. Dacic speaks about the visit by European Commissioner for Regional Policy Johannes Hahn

{youtube}xMZhPKe2Mul{/youtube}

Source: Tanjug

FDPM and MFA I. Dacic in Obrenovac: To assess flood damage as soon as possible

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