



First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Serbia Ivica Dacic met today with Heads of diplomatic missions from the countries of the Asia-Pacific region serving in Serbia.

In the talks with Ambassadors of Australia, India, Indonesia, Japan, China, the Republic of Korea, Myanmar and Charges d'Affaires of the Embassies of Malaysia and Pakistan, Minister Dacic pointed to the importance that Serbia attached to cooperation with these countries which belong to one of the most dynamic regions in the world. Particular emphasis was placed on the permanent commitment of Serbia to the continuation and strengthening of cooperation with these countries to which we were tied by a traditional and long-lasting friendship.

Minister Dacic informed the senior diplomatic representatives about the foreign policy priorities of the country, the process of its accession to the EU, as well as the priorities of Serbia during its OSCE Chairmanship. Special emphasis was put on currently dominant international issues and topics related to Asia-Pacific and Western Balkans regions.

Highlighting the importance of Serbia as a central and key country of the Western Balkans, Minister Dacic called for intensification of political dialogue and promotion of economic cooperation with the countries of the Asia-Pacific region. Last year, the trade with the nine countries from the region reached \$2.2 billion. Minister Dacic called for a greater presence of companies and investors from these countries, pointing to many benefits and a favourable business environment in Serbia.

Expressing their gratitude for initiating the meeting and the talks with Minister Dacic, the Ambassadors in attendance highlighted their readiness for strengthening and promoting cooperation with Serbia, which would be fully supported by their respective Embassies. Head of Serbian diplomacy used the meeting with the Ambassadors of the countries of the Asia-Pacific region as an opportunity to reiterate his gratitude for the help and donations they provided to Serbia after last year's catastrophic floods, as well as on the development aid which they have been sending continuously.