



First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs Ivica Dacic during his visit to Qatar had talks today with the Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs of the country.

“I had very good and constructive talks with my counterpart, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Qatar Al Atiyah, who had kindly invited me to pay a bilateral visit to Qatar, in addition to participating in the UN Congress on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice. This is of great importance because Serbia and Qatar have both recently opened Embassies in each other’s capitals. We have an array of specific steps before us in the coming period, aiming to increase the value of our trade.

I have realized there are hundreds of people from Serbia who work here. For this reason it is very important that a bilateral agreement on protection of these people and improving prospects of their employment in this country, existed between our two countries.

I expect a return visit from the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Qatar. He showed great interest in our country, especially with regard to Serbia’s potential for mining. He is about to send representatives of their business sector to Serbia, to explore possibilities for investment in the mining industry.

I met with Prime Minister of the State of Qatar, Sheikh Al Thani. We agreed that it is in our common interest to enhance the bilateral cooperation. It is very important to say that Serbia has expressed interest, the interest shown by Qatar as well, to advance our relations.

We share readiness to intensify our contacts at the highest level, to promote our political relations, and also to embark on strengthening the economic ties. I will remind you that Qatar is one of the world’s wealthiest countries with a GDP per capita of USD 101,000. Unfortunately, the value of trade between Serbia and Qatar amounts to only USD 3 million. It is in our interest to discover all the aspects which could be attractive for Qatari investment funds to come to our country, primarily in the areas of energy and health industry, agriculture and infrastructure.

We agreed that the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Qatar should visit Serbia, with an aim of laying a good foundation for advancement of our economic cooperation.

There is a large number of people from Serbia who work in Qatar, over 1,000 of highly educated

young persons. Bearing in mind that a large number of people from other countries also reside in Qatar and the country's pursuit of fast development, there is vast potential for our cooperation in the future. Development of friendly relations is in our common best interest.

It is my expectation that Qatar will, in the period ahead, become one of the countries showing interest in investing in our country.

Speaking of the UN Congress on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice, this Congress is held every 5 years, and the next one is to follow in Japan in 2020. Serbia has participated in the work of this conference from its very beginning", said the Head of Serbian diplomacy Ivica Dacic in his statement.