



In the first year of office of the incumbent Government of the Republic of Serbia, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs was committed to the implementation of the country's foreign policy objectives – accelerated EU integration process and the earliest possible commencement of negotiations on chapters, promotion of cooperation with the states of the region, neighbours, Serbia's perennial partners and restoration of the traditionally good relations with the countries of the African Union and the Non-Aligned Movement, international institutions and preservation of the country's territorial integrity and sovereignty.

The international position and reputation of the Republic of Serbia have been strengthened by the intensive dialogue between the Ministry and its diplomatic and consular missions and other countries world-wide. Foreign Minister Ivica Dacic alone had more than 80 meetings with his counterparts and other high-ranking officials (meetings within the framework of bilateral visits and on the sidelines of 28 international events which he attended); there were 18 bilateral visits, and Serbia was visited by other high-level officials from more than 30 countries.

Serbia's proactive, clearly defined and well formulated policy contributed to the country's better positioning on the regional and European level, whereby Serbia affirmed itself as a credible partner implementing genuine reforms.

Serbia has affirmed itself as the pivot of regional cooperation, a constructive, devoted and active partner committed to the enhancement of regional relations and the deepening and concrete implementation of cooperation on the bilateral level, as well as in the context of regional initiatives and mechanisms. In order to contribute to transforming the region into a zone of peace, cooperation and prosperity, the Ministry worked actively on addressing the remaining outstanding issues. The trilateral meeting of Foreign Ministers of Serbia, Italy and Albania was realized in January 2015, as well as the visit of Serbia's First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs Ivica Dacic to Croatia, in March 2015. The results achieved in addressing the remaining outstanding issues and creating a better atmosphere on the regional level have been recognized also by European institutions, EU Member States and other international actors.

The Ministry intensified its diplomatic activity to the effect of winning support for opening the first negotiation chapters with the EU. Serbian Foreign Minister Ivica Dacic had meetings with EU officials and participated in numerous European and regional meetings. Among the many officials he met, Minister Dacic also had a meeting with President of the European Commission Jose Manuel Barroso; former and current High Representatives for Foreign and Security Policy Catherine Ashton and Federica Mogherini; former Commissioner for Enlargements Stephan Fule; Commissioner for European Neighbourhood Policy and Enlargement Negotiations Johannes Hahn; new European Parliament Rapporteur on Serbia David McAlister, as well as Head of EULEX Mission to Kosovo and Metohija B. Borchardt.

Foreign Minister Dacic headed the Serbian delegation to the bilateral screening meeting on Chapter 31 (Common Foreign, Security and Defence Policy), held in Brussels, on 10 October 2014.

In 2014, preparations for Serbia's 2015 Chairmanship of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) were stepped up. Serbian Foreign Minister Dacic presented to the OSCE Permanent Council in Vienna, on 14 July 2014, Serbian Chairmanship priorities and participated at the OSCE Ministerial Council in Basel, in December 2014. Consultations with a large number of OSCE participating States were held in the context of Serbia's preparations for assuming the 2015 OSCE Chairmanship. Representatives of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs were also involved in the work of the OSCE Troika; as OSCE Special Representative for Transdniestria Settlement Process, and chaired the Contact Group for Cooperation with Mediterranean Partners for Cooperation, as well as the Budgetary Committee. Under the Serbian OSCE Chairmanship and as a result of intensive negotiation activities, at its meeting in March 2015, the Permanent Council adopted the decision to extend the mandate of the OSCE Special Monitoring Mission to Ukraine (SMM) until 31 March 2016, and the decision concerning the budget allocated for the needs of the Mission.

The Serbian OSCE Chairmanship was positively assessed at all the meetings held with foreign officials and Serbia, as the Chair, was seen as an honest and unbiased facilitator, using OSCE tools transparently.

Efforts continued to be made in the framework of the system of the United Nations and other international organizations to preserve the territorial integrity and sovereignty of the Republic of Serbia and prevent further recognition of "Kosovo". Serbia's positions on addressing the issue of Kosovo and Metohija were presented at regular Security Council meetings devoted to UNMIK operation, underlying in particular the essential role of the United Nations and UNMIK in the process of reaching a sustainable solution.

With regard to continuing efforts to preserve the territorial integrity and sovereignty of the country and prevent further recognitions "of Kosovo", only one country, Togo, recognized the so-called Kosovo in July 2014, following the Government took office. The Ministry worked on preventing admission of the so-called "Republic of Kosovo" to membership in international organizations, as well as the participation of Kosovo representatives in international meetings that could prejudice the statehood. Last year, Minister Ivica Dacic met with the representatives of 42 countries that did not recognize the unilaterally

declared independence of Kosovo and Metohija.

In the context of Serbia's cooperation with NATO through the mechanisms of the "Partnership for Peace" Programme, the Government of Serbia, at the proposal of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, adopted the Individual Partnership Action Plan between the Republic of Serbia and NATO, on 20 December. The procedure has since been closed after the adoption of the document by the North Atlantic Council (NAC).

After the catastrophic floods that hit Serbia in May 2014, the Ministry was active in informing the foreign public about the extent of flooding and in coordinating relief aid and donations coming from abroad. The initiative of Serbia to turn, together with Bosnia and Herzegovina, to the international community for assistance resulted in organizing a Donors Conference in Brussels, in July, which was attended by Minister Dacic as a member of the delegation led by President of the Republic Tomislav Nikolic. The joint approach of Serbia and Bosnia and Herzegovina to this regional problem was a well used opportunity to reaffirm the commitment of Serbia to genuine cooperation with its neighbours.

In addition to its usual consular activities, the Ministry was engaged, as always, in providing consular assistance and protection to our citizens in crisis management situations, doing everything to help them on issues of security and repatriation (Ukraine, Gaza, Libya, Yemen and the RF).

A series of activities was conducted in terms of visa liberalization in order to attract investment and facilitate the arrival of foreign tourists. At the initiative of the Ministry, the Government of Serbia, on 30 October 2014, adopted the Decision on visa-free entry to the Republic of Serbia for holders of foreign passports having a valid Schengen, UK and other EU Member States' visa, or visa of the United States of America and for holders of foreign passports having authorization to reside in the countries of the Schengen Area, EU or the United States of America.

The Serbian Government adopted agreements on the waiver of a visa requirement for holders of diplomatic and official passports with Cambodia, Indonesia, Iraq, South Africa, Georgia, Guatemala, Bangladesh, UAE and Nicaragua. The Agreement on the waiver of a visa requirement for all types of passports with Moldova was also adopted.

The procedure for issuance of diplomatic and official passports was applied restrictively.

Organizational, technical, personnel, material and financial aspects of activities.

A thorough overview of the Ministry's work and its diplomatic and consular missions abroad was made from the personnel, material - financial, technical and security aspects and used as a basis for further regulation of the rationalization of costs and introduction of maximum professional standards of work. Amendments to the Regulation on job classification schemes were adopted in accordance with the new Law on Ministries which delegated to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs authority for the former Office for Cooperation with the Diaspora and Serbs in

the Region attached to the MFA, as well as those relating to the earlier adopted decisions of the Government on the opening of new diplomatic and consular missions. Adequate material-financial, organizational-technical and personnel measures have been undertaken in order to enable the most efficient way of performing the OSCE Chairmanship duties.

Maximum effort has been made to cut the costs of official travel abroad (entertainment costs, use of telephones, official cars, etc.).

The Secretary General conducted a series of bilateral consultations with representatives of the former Republics of the SFRY, in preparation for the imminent resumption of negotiations on the succession of diplomatic and consular properties of the former SFRY. In the wider context of the issue, the Ministry recognizes the usefulness and rationality of using the office space available to the diplomatic and consular network, as well as the need for investing in properties abroad which are owned by the Republic of Serbia.