



First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Serbia Ivica Dacic is visiting Brussels, where he took part today in the roundtable discussion titled Serbia on its path towards the EU, organized by the Friends of Serbia parliamentary group, and held on the European Parliament premises.

Minister Dacic also recalled yesterday's talks between Belgrade and Pristina.

"Becoming an EU Member State is, incontestably, Serbia's key strategic commitment; in this regard, we are maintaining our twin-track activities.

The former implies building our capacity to keep track of Serbia-EU membership negotiations.

Having in mind that the issue of Kosovo and Metohija had been highlighted long ago as the top political priority in Serbia's EU accession, it is a foregone conclusion that the success of the Belgrade- Pristina dialogue will be the crucial benchmark relevant not only for the opening of chapters, Chapter 35 in this case. Opening of chapters for Serbian membership negotiations will generally be contingent upon Germany's position that no other chapters could be opened before Chapter 35", Minister Dacic said.

The Minister stressed that the Serbian delegation had demonstrated an exceptionally high level of willingness to cooperate, constructiveness, and that it treated the Brussels dialogue in a highly responsible manner.

The Serbian Foreign Minister pointed out that the yesterday's round of dialogue was very lengthy, and that at no point did the Serbian delegation depart from its principled positions.

"The Pristina delegation refused to agree to what we have already regulated under the Brussels Agreement and what has to do with the Community of Serbian Municipalities, whereby the adoption of certain documents was practically made impossible last night.

We will not budge an inch from what has set out in the Brussels Agreement, any solution must be based on the Brussels Agreement.

The Pristina delegation travels today to Berlin on a visit to Germany, and this will be the subject

of very serious discussions in Brussels.

We will maintain the dialogue, we will consistently defend our national and state interests and what we have already agreed upon, i.e. the Brussels Agreement whose crucial wording, as confirmed by HR Federica Mogherini and as believed by almost all EU Member States, refers to the establishment of the Community of Serbian Municipalities as a matter of high importance for the progress of the dialogue, for the realization and implementation of the Brussels Agreement, and therefore we will continue to insist on it.

Opening of negotiations is in the interest of the whole of Europe, and I hope the dialogue will be maintained, meaning that we will successfully fulfil our goal of opening the chapters by the end of the year. This would add a great impetus towards our European integration", highlighted Minister Dacic in his statement