



First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs Ivica Dacic participated today in the conference "The Economist - The World in 2016".

The conference was opened by Prime Minister Aleksandar Vucic, while Minister of Construction, Transport and Infrastructure Zorana Mihajlovic, Belgrade Mayor Sinisa Mali and numerous representatives of the diplomatic corps attended the conference.

In his address, Minister Dacic, alluding to the name of the conference "The World in 2016", pointed out that he did not know what the world would be like in 2016, but that he knew what Serbia would be like. He estimated that Serbia would certainly be on the good track in 2016.

The First Deputy Prime Minister, looking back on the Prime Minister's speech, said that the fact the Head of the Serbia Government talked about "years, and not about the year ahead" clearly showed the great progress Serbia had made, and he reiterated that it meant it was on the right track.

The Head of Serbian Diplomacy emphasized that the Government had learnt its lessons and put right the mistakes made in the past, securing a new position for Serbia.

Dacic stressed that Serbia's track record in 2015 is historic.

"Above all, Serbia has started its journey towards the EU by opening the first chapters, and it successfully chaired a complicated organization such as the OSCE. It is virtually impossible to ensure leadership of any consensus-bound organization in the difficult conditions of today's international relations, without the great influence and strength of a country. Serbia was successful in this," he said.

The Head of Serbian Diplomacy also pointed to the results Serbia had achieved in defending international and state interests, like the UNESCO vote or stopping the Srebrenica Resolution in the United Nations, given that this would have, as he put it, cast a long shadow over the Serbian people.

He stated that the Prime Minister and he could have read, at the recent OSCE Ministerial

Council, parts of Josip Broz Tito's keynote speech of over forty years ago, without anyone noticing it was such an old address, because today there were also conflicting interests of the great powers, even though there were no longer two opposing blocs.

"These are the global relations which Serbia, as a small country, cannot influence like other bigger countries, but we can change our position and role. Every step we take within Serbia will bring us a step closer to the achievement of our foreign policy objectives. That is why, by reforming Serbia, we can get closer to modern Europe and the world," he underlined.

Minister Dacic pointed out that Europe was not an aim in itself, and that a perfect recipe for Europe had not yet been invented, but that Europe was the perfect recipe for Serbia.

"I think we have made some big steps forward," he said.