



First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Serbia Ivica Dacic met today with the Director of the Simon Wiesenthal Center's Israeli office Efraim Zuroff, who is visiting Serbia and the region with the aim of participating in the work of the Holocaust Conference, to take place tomorrow in Zagreb, in the presence of the heads of the Serbian Orthodox Church and of the Ecumenical Patriarchate, His Holiness Serbian Patriarch Irinej and His All-Holiness Bartholomew, the Ecumenical Patriarch.

In the talks, the interlocutors accorded special attention, and jointly condemned, the attempt at revising the history of the Second World War, as reflected in Croatia in the current relationship towards Stepinac, Budak and Baresic, while in Europe and at the level of certain OSCE participating States, this is also manifested in the attempt of erasing any distinction between Fascism and Communism.

When it comes to the construction of the "Staro sajiste" Holocaust Memorial Center, Mr. Efraim Zuroff emphasized that its construction had a national, regional and global importance to Serbia, for it would raise the awareness not only about the Jewish victims, but also about the Serbian and the Roma victims in these lands during the Second World War, which is less known world-wide.

Father Jovan Culibrk, member of the Committee on the construction of "Staro sajiste", acquainted Minister Dacic and the Israeli guest Efraim Zuroff with the details regarding the construction of "Staro sajiste", as well as with tomorrow's events in Croatia and the work of the Joint Committee of the Serbian Orthodox Church and the Catholic Church set up by Pope Francis, with the aim of establishing the facts regarding the life of Cardinal Aloysius Stepinac. Father Jovan Culibrk stressed the special importance of the fact that His All-Holiness Bartholomew, the Ecumenical Patriarch, was coming to Croatia, in order to participate in the activities organized by Bishop Porfirije and the Serbian Orthodox Church in Croatia.

Minister Dacic touched on the adoption of the Law on the restitution of property to the Holocaust victims having no living successors, and on his planned meeting with representatives of the World Jewish Congress, to take place on the margins of the upcoming 71st session of the United Nations General Assembly in New York, as an illustration of Serbia's treatment of the Jews and Israel. In this context, the Minister pointed out that he felt the need, following yesterday's incident at Nikola Tesla Airport, to reiterate to Mr. Efraim Zuroff as well, the familiar positions and stances of the Republic of Serbia concerning the State of Israel.