



Serbian Assistant Minister of Foreign Affairs Ljubica Vasic said today that in her frank, constructive and earnest talks with the German politicians, official Berlin positively assessed the reforms being implemented by the Serbian Government and supported Belgrade on its EU path.

"Berlin positively viewed the Government's reforms, in particular actions against corruption and organized crime as well as those related to the judiciary ", said Vasic to journalists in Berlin as she wound up her visit, underlining the German support to Serbia in its European integration process.

Referring to her meeting with the Advisor to German Chancellor Merkel, Mr Nicholas Meyer-Landrut, Vasic pointed out that a good and correct relationship and a proper communication line had been established. "Mr Meyer-Landrut listened to our position, showed an interest in the ongoing reforms in Serbia and also in the continuation of the Belgrade-Prishtina dialogue, whereas we explained our position that we are in favour of an open dialogue and solutions through dialogue for all outstanding issues", she said. German interlocutors of the Serbian Assistant MFA conveyed their position that it was necessary to expand the EU to South Eastern Europe, which was, as she explained, important for the democratization, stability of the whole of Europe and for strategic interests. Assistant MFA Vasic told the press that in the light of the ongoing Brussels talks, her Berlin meetings had not specifically focused on the precise indication of their answer regarding the opening date for the negotiations. She said that the German officials heard the Serbian position, that they accepted her as an interlocutor and that good communication was established.

She reminded that Serbia had undertaken to apply European standards even before there was talk of the date, emphasizing that Serbia needed reforms to revitalize its system and restore public confidence in the institutions.

"To have the date is important and is a positive signal given to the country ", said Vasic adding that she had drawn the attention of her interlocutors to all that the Serbian Government had done and was doing to that end. On Belgrade-Prishtina dialogue, Vasic said that it took two to reach agreement. She said that Serbia's cooperation with major EU countries offered the possibility of instruments for the rule of law and a successful economy, adding that Serbia

should continue with the changes taking the country closer to the EU and that proper reforms required meeting of the Copenhagen criteria.

With regard to access to EU pre-accession funds, Vasic said walking out of the meetings with the German officials that Serbia had the Stabilisation and Association Agreement which remained in force until the very last day prior to Serbia's entry into the EU, and that the use of EU funds depended on the projects and specific interests.

Vasic met in Berlin, besides Mr Meyer-Landrut, influential Advisor to Chancellor Merkel on European affairs, a man with high negotiating skills and strong arguments, also with Christian Democratic politician Gunther Krichbaum, who was well-versed in the Serbian circumstances, wishes and intentions and who currently chaired the Bundestag Committee on the Affairs of the European Union.

She also met Ms Emily Haber, State Secretary in the German Foreign Ministry, Mr Peter Weiss, a Christian Democrat and Chairman of the Parliamentary Group for Cooperation with South Eastern Europe, and with Mr Michael Klaus, Head of Department for the EU in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Berlin.

On her three-day visit to the German capital, Vasic also had meetings in the Konrad Adenauer Foundation, which is close to the Christian Democrats of Chancellor Merkel, and with the German press.