



Vilnius – Lithuanian Parliament ratified today the Stabilization and Association Agreement with Serbia. Lithuania was the last EU Member State which has not ratified the SAA, and with today's ratification the SAA will automatically become effective.

Serbia and the EU signed the SAA on 29 April 2009, but in order for the SAA to come into force, it was necessary that it be ratified by Parliaments of all Member States and by the European Parliament. Pending its ratification the Interim Agreement on Trade and Trade Related Matters was in force, and the Interim Agreement will cease to apply following the date of the entry into force of the SAA.

Two major obligations undertaken by Serbia with the SAA taking effect are the establishment of a free trade area with the EU and approximation of the national legislation of Serbia to EU Acquis.

Serbian Prime Minister Ivica Dacic visited Vilnius in April 2013 when he had talks with the Lithuanian PM who said then that "Lithuania supports the European integration of Serbia", whereupon Lithuanian President Dalia Gribauskaite gave its consent for the ratification of the SAA sending it to the Parliament for approval.

Foreign Minister Ivan Mrkic recently confirmed that disagreements with Lithuania had been overcome.

SAA provides for relations between the signatories in the political dialogue; regional cooperation; free flow of goods, people, services and capital; justice and home affairs; competition; financial cooperation; harmonization of laws in other areas.

Under the SAA, Serbia undertakes to establish a free trade area and to bring its legislation into conformity with EU law. The obligation of Serbia is to lift progressively tariffs on the import of all goods originating from the European Union in an interim period. On the other hand, the EU confirms, with the SAA, free access to the EU market for goods coming from Serbia.