



First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Serbia Ivica Dacic has received today Minister of Europe and Foreign Affairs of the French Republic Jean Yves Le Drian.

Minister Dacic emphasized that the political dialogue between Serbia and France was very intensified and substantial, and that this visit too served as a confirmation of the shared aspiration to make the relations between our two countries even more dynamic and substantial. Being the strategic partners and historical allies, Serbia and France will continue to contribute to the promotion of the overall cooperation through the friendly dialogue and respect of mutual interests.

In the cordial talks, both sides agreed on marking together the centenary of the end of WWI and, in 2019, 180th anniversary since the establishment of formal diplomatic relations between the two countries.

Minister Dacic expressed gratitude for the support of France to Serbia's European integration process, recalling that the EU membership of Serbia was our foreign policy priority, as well as for the French support to Serbia's candidacy as an associated member in the International Organization of La Francophonie.

France's Minister of Europe and Foreign Affairs Le Drian ascertained the interest of France in intensifying political dialogue and bilateral relations with Serbia. He conveyed the intention of President Emmanuel Macron to visit Serbia by the end of the year and to unveil the Monument of Gratitude to France on that occasion, the reconstruction of which was done jointly by the two countries. Minister Le Drian also underlined that France considered Serbia a leader in the region and particularly commended efforts invested by Serbia in the promotion of cooperation and preservation of the stability in the region.

Minister Dacic presented his French counterpart with the reprint edition of a book by Jovan Cvijic from 1918 "Balkan Peninsula and Southern European Peoples", as well as with the gold coin devoted to our grand army commander Zivojin Misic. Minister Le Drian handed Minister Dacic a Document from 1915 on the instructions the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs sent to its Embassies in London, St. Petersburg and Rome concerning the support of the allies to the

Serbian army and its people.

Following the talks, the Foreign Ministers of Serbia and France laid a wreath at the French military cemetery. Minister Dacic wrote in the book of honourable guests as follows:

"We will always remember the heroism of the French soldiers who, far from their homes, together with the Serbian soldiers, gave their lives for the liberation of our country. Serbia will never forget unselfish help to its army when it needed it most. It will always remain a testimony of friendship between the two peoples and of the alliance between Serbia and France but also an inexhaustible source of inspiration for the love of freedom. That is why Serbia loves France just like France loved Serbia.

Let eternal glory be to the heroes!"