



First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Serbia Ivica Dacic met today in Banja Luka with Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation Sergey Lavrov.

Serbian and Russian Foreign Ministers, Dacic and Lavrov, ascertained that the level of trust and confidence and a high dynamic of Russia-Serbia contacts demonstrated a continued and productive development of the two countries' relations. The two Ministers agreed that the relations between Moscow and Belgrade were developing in all areas and assessed that the mutual relations had reached an advanced level of strategic partnership.

Minister Dacic informed his Russian counterpart about the course of the Belgrade-Pristina dialogue. He reiterated Belgrade's position that no long-term, sustainable solution for Kosovo and Metohija can be found unless supported by the Russian Federation.

Minister Lavrov underlined that Russia supported the Kosovo-Serbia dialogue, while complying with UNSC Resolution 1244. He reiterated that Kosovo Albanians had for years failed to honour the EU-facilitated agreements with Serbia, despite Serbia maintaining a constructive position, and added that the EU needed to use its influence on Kosovo.

Russian Minister of Foreign Affairs Sergey Lavrov conveyed to Minister Dacic that Moscow strongly supported the Dayton Accords, territorial integrity and sovereignty of Bosnia and Herzegovina, equality of three peoples, and the powers vested in the two entities by the BiH Constitution. He underscored that Russia had always had a constructive cooperation with the EU and the United States on Balkan issues, and that he saw no reason for this to be changed and for just one of the parties to interfere in the resolution of regional matters.

Both Ministers concluded that a successful and sustainable conclusion of the Belgrade-Pristina dialogue would strengthen regional stability.

In their meeting in Banja Luka, the two Foreign Ministers also discussed mutual support in international organizations and preparations for convening the Intergovernmental Committee session scheduled for October.

During his visit in Banja Luka, Minister Dacic attended the foundation stone laying ceremony for the construction of a Serbia-Russia church and cultural centre.