



Serbian Foreign Minister Ivan Mrkic said that Serbia would withdraw its Counter Memorial filed to the International Court of Justice (ICJ) in The Hague as soon as Croatia dropped its case concerning the Genocide Convention.

"Serbia is ready for an extrajudicial settlement of the proceedings between Belgrade and Zagreb pending before the International Court of Justice in The Hague for more than a decade, on genocide charges; but it is upon Croatia to make the first move".

He said that contacts with the Croatian side existed.

"It is necessary to recall that Serbia did not even bring the case against Croatia, but that such a motion was first filed by Zagreb. We consider it totally unfounded and believe that it was prompted by narrow political interests dictated on their internal scene. This means that our Counter Memorial will be withdrawn as soon as Croatia drops its charges", underlined Mrkic.

In a series of meetings held between representatives of Serbian and Croatian leaderships, the resolution of outstanding issues in the relations between the two countries has been intensified in the past few months, including those from borders and restoration of property to military cooperation, and particularly three topics that are the key prerequisites of possibly reaching an agreement on the withdrawal of the case: destiny of missing persons, return of cultural heritage and trial of those indicted for war crimes.

Minister Mrkic pointed out that Serbia would not have to bear any expenses based on the ICJ proceedings, i.e. that it had no extra costs, because the normal engagement of competent bodies and experts is understood.

The talks between the two sides are expected to intensify in the coming months, prior to the oral hearing.