



There are difficult moments in the history of Serbia and Bulgaria, but never before in modern history has there been such a high level of mutual relations, d Serbian Ambassador to Bulgaria Zeljko Jovic said. "We have excellent personal relations between our President Vucic and

your political leaders, numerous joint infrastructure projects, and most importantly, we have an obvious overlap of our cultures and traditions. We only have to work hard, without prejudices and with a clear perspective forward, towards the future, and not backwards", Ambassador Jovic said for the Bulgarian TV Europa.

As he said, the matter of relations between Serbs and Bulgarians depends mostly on themselves, and if we want to improve the relations as much as possible, much more needs to be done while being completely open.

"I have always said and I keep saying that there is much more that brings us closer than what separates us. There are no two nations in the Balkans closer to each other than Serbs and Bulgarians, we are brothers and it is time to fully turn to each other", the Ambassador said.

Jovic believes that only economy and good economic ties, and progress in this area, can solve most of the problems that exist in the region and that this is the only way to go forward.

"The potential for such cooperation is huge and serious", Jovic pointed out, adding that a good example of this has been the cooperation aimed at overcoming the consequences of the corona

virus in Bosilegrad and Dimitrovgrad municipalities, given that, since the outbreak of the pandemic, those municipalities populated by the Bulgarian national minority, have received "significant support and help" from Bulgaria. That is also an example, the Ambassador pointed out, of how we should work and live together.

Jovic also said that he will always strive for deepening cooperation, especially in areas where the possibilities are huge, as is the case in the field of tourism, and stated that the two countries, in addition to two-way passenger flow, should also appear together on third markets, which, he believes, will be a huge opportunity for both Serbian and Bulgarian tourism.

Speaking about the issue of Kosovo and Metohija, Ambassador Jovic pointed out that the position of the Republic of Serbia is clear and transparent and that Kosovo and Metohija is an integral part of Serbia and that any recognition is out of the question. At the same time, Jovic emphasizes that President Vucic, the Serbian Government and its institutions have continuously shown readiness for talks and necessary compromises, in order to provide the region with much-desired stability and progress, and that the recent Washington agreement affirmed such positions of Serbia, a country that is "trusted, and a desirable collaborator and partner".

Speaking about the level of arms procurement in the Balkans, the Ambassador of our country in Sofia said that Serbia and the Serbian people are not afraid of anyone, but also that it is normal to take care of their security in the modern world, which is full of new threats, risks and challenges and that "those with no bad intentions" should not be concerned and worried about Serbia procuring arms.

Jovic points out that the trend of procuring arms is growing both in the region and in the whole world, but that the most important thing is for everyone to understand that the Serbian people know very well what the horrors of war and suffering are.

"Exactly because of that knowledge, I can say without hesitation that we are a people who value peace and freedom above everything else. And I will repeat the words of our President, that we are firmly committed to maintaining peace, at almost any cost", Jovic emphasized. He added that the key foreign policy orientation of Serbia remains to be towards good neighborliness and intensive regional cooperation, and on the domestic level, intensive development of infrastructure and further acceleration of economic growth.

"We want to create conditions, above all, for young people to stay in the country. This is not only important for Serbia, it is important for all in the region. As I said, only through economy, good connections, understanding and reason, can we succeed and solve all the problems we are facing", Ambassador Jovic concluded.