



First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Serbia Ivica Dacic met today with Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation Sergey Lavrov, who is visiting Serbia within the framework of marking the 180th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between Serbia and Russia.

After the meeting of the two delegations, Ministers Dacic and Lavrov emphasized, in particular, the considerable identity of positions of their respective countries on most international issues.

The Serbian Foreign Minister pointed out the official position of Serbia – that it is satisfied with the level of cooperation with Russia not only "on paper", and that the cooperation truly reflects substantive, strategic partnership.

"I am grateful to Russia for its continual support of Serbia's territorial integrity and sovereignty. It is well known that Russia has vetoed the attempt at accusing the Serbian people of genocide, and that it has understanding for Serbia's position regarding the unilateral declaration of independence of Kosovo."

Dacic recalled that his country's trade with Russia totalled 2.5 billion USD, and that Serbia and Russia were implementing great many projects together.

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"Minister Lavrov and I have agreed to regularly meet in Serbia and Russia annually, in order to contribute to the development of our bilateral relations, and I am pleased that he is here now – as one of the greatest friends of Serbia worldwide, when we are marking the 180th anniversary of diplomatic relations between our two countries", stated Minister Dacic.

Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov stated that 180 years of diplomatic relations reflected

the true magnitude of the friendship existing between the two governments, and that he was impressed by the ceremony of laying wreaths on the Monument to the Soviet Soldier within the Memorial Complex devoted to the liberators of Belgrade, and the monument to Russian diplomat Nikolai Hartvig, at the New Cemetery, as well as the inauguration of the dome of St. Sava Congregation Church.

"We have considered positions on international relations in great detail. We share identical views that the Intergovernmental Joint Committee co-chaired by Dacic and Rogozin plays a great role", said Minister Lavrov.

The Russian Foreign Minister pointed out that Russia was guided by the same principles insofar as its positions in the United Nations, OSCE, Council of Europe, reaffirming Russia's commitment to international law and respect of UNSC resolution 1244 (1999).

Minister Dacic concluded that the visit of Minister Lavrov was very substantive, and that this was justified because he was a great friend of Serbia.

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