



Address by Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Serbia Ivica Dacic at the ceremony of delivering keys to the 2,000th beneficiary of the Regional Housing Programme in the Republic of Serbia:

"Distinguished guests,
Dear friends and beneficiaries of the Regional Housing Programme,

In June 2017, we had a ceremony of delivering keys to the 1,000th beneficiary of the Regional Housing Programme, in Pancevo.

I am very pleased that we have gathered here today, in Backa Palanka, a year later, to deliver the keys to the 2,000th beneficiary – Zoran Mileusnic, who presented himself and shared with us his life story and impressions about the Programme.

Zoran is one of the Serb refugees from Croatia, who came to Serbia, with his brother and parents, in 1995, during the "Storm" operation. He settled here, got married, fathered two children and, after more than twenty years, he will have a home of his own.

I would like to thank our beneficiary for his patience and perseverance, because his example is a proof that solutions do exist and that our fellow citizens, who left their homes as refugees and IDPs, have not been forgotten. The true strength and the purpose of our Programme are to contribute, on the practical level, to the improvement of the living conditions and resolution of the difficult refugee situation.

Many of you know that I continually participate in all events related to the Programme's implementation. In the past few years, ever since the Programme entered the stage of intensive implementation, I visited many villages, towns and municipalities in Serbia, witnessing the amount of effort put into the entire process and its outcome. Some 2,000 families have been accommodated thus far, and we expect to deliver more specific solutions before the end of the year.

I further wish to recall that Serbia has been implementing the Programme through eight subprojects, providing for the delivery of four types of housing solutions: assistance in purchasing village houses with farmsteads, distribution of building material packages, construction of prefabricated houses and delivery of apartments. There are currently 25

construction sites across Serbia, while preparations are underway for opening new ones. We also expect to deliver additional 30 prefabricated houses and 100 packages of construction material.

Many individuals and institutions participating in the Programme are working hard and with dedication on the Programme's implementation. I take this opportunity to thank them sincerely for their engagement, selfless efforts and enthusiasm, in every segment of their work. Our gratitude also goes to our international partners and bilateral donors, who have recognized the importance of the Programme and offered assistance to its implementation.

In conclusion, I would like to wish our end-users, the Mileusnic family, all the joy and success, and many celebrations in their new home. I believe that you will be able to accomplish all your life goals, in this prosperous municipality.

Thank you."