



Address of First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs Ivica Dacic at a ceremony in Negotin on the occasion of refugees moving in the apartments granted as part of the Regional Housing Program in the Republic of Serbia:

"Distinguished guests,
Ladies and gentlemen,
Dear friends,

We have gathered here today, as part of the Regional Housing Programme, and in cooperation with the Commissariat for Refugees and Migration and the local government, to deliver 20 sets of keys for flats to 20 families who had fled Bosnia and Herzegovina and Croatia during the conflicts of the 1990s.

{youtube}e3BzUJi7yRw{/youtube}

All of us who on our bank of the Drina river heard about your suffering at the time as well as your testimonies later on, cannot help but be moved by the horrors and personal sacrifices you went through. Many of us here are originally from the same areas you came from, still having many relatives there. In fact, everything that happened is a plight shared in common by all Serbs. Therefore, we need to cherish the days of joy, as we do today.

Giving credit where credit is due, now we need to thank those who arranged for this festive occasion and made it possible.

The regional Subproject 4 is worth EUR 18.7 million, 16.6 million of which was secured through donations, and 2.1 million by means of national contributions.

In the context of this Subproject we have already delivered keys to our fellow citizens in Arilje, Zrenjanin and Loznica, and today, in addition to Negotin, apartment keys will also be given to families in Kladovo.

The total contribution of the Republic of Serbia under the Regional Housing Programme amounts to EUR 25.3 million, earmarked primarily for land and accompanying infrastructure in local self-government units where refugee flats are built. In the framework of the said programme in Serbia, funding for housing solutions has been secured to over 7,000 refugee families. Total non-refundable grants allocated so far equal EUR 127 million.

I would like to take this opportunity, too, to thank the European Union who is the largest donor to the Regional Housing Programme, and also the Council of Europe Bank which is managing the Fund, and also the OSCE and UNHCR.

I am glad that we brought smiles to your faces in two cities – in Kladovo, as well as here in Negotin.

From the bottom of my heart I wish you to enjoy your new homes the best you can, free of any worry. May your children grow up in them in happiness! May your grandchildren visit you there! May you celebrate your family anniversaries and look forward to the future with courage and in peace!

Here's to you!"

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