

Highly important visit to Republic of Ghana to establish best possible relations

Monday, 20 May 2019.



First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Serbia Ivica Dacic paid an official visit to the Republic of Ghana.

Today in Accra, Minister Dacic talked to the Minister for Foreign Affairs and Regional Integration of the Republic of Ghana, Hon. Shirley Botchwey.

The Serbian Foreign Minister voiced great pleasure at his visit to the traditionally friendly Ghana.

"I would like to express my pleasure at this visit. It is a highly important one, considering that it is the first highest-level visit after many years – more precisely after Tito's visit, i.e. his first visit to Ghana in 1961.

I was delighted to receive my friend and counterpart Hon. Shirley Botchwey in Serbia last year, as well as the Ghanaian Speaker of Parliament and Minister of Communications. These visits created the basis for a renewed advancement of our relations to the level we had at the time of President Tito and Nkrumah. Both of them are historic figures, founding fathers of the Non-Aligned Movement. This is particularly important for me as the president of the former party of President Tito. Bearing all this in mind, it is a great pleasure to work together with my counterpart on overcoming the issues we had in the past years and on establishing the best possible relations. Our political and economic relations were exceptional, commercial exchange reached 80 million euros annually, whereas last year it was only 10 million.

{youtube}TIZ1718HILA{/youtube}

Issues arose after Ghana took, for us a rather unexpected decision to recognize the unilaterally declared independence of Kosovo, in January 2012. Following this event, Serbia changed the decision it had made to open its embassy in Ghana.

{youtube}WszToW7_nUQ{/youtube}

Our request remains the same for everyone – take account of the fact that the dialogue between Belgrade and Pristina is still ongoing and that it is a highly complex issue – preservation of the territorial integrity of a country. This is an issue which can occur in any country in the world.

Should anyone be guided by the policy of unilateral acts, allowing a national minority to unilaterally declare its own country, all countries in the world are in danger. We ask everyone to kindly wait for the dialogue to be finished, to remain status neutral until then and respect the outcomes of the dialogue which will be presented at the United Nations. This would mean giving support to the dialogue. Provisional authorities of "Kosovo" claim that there is no need for dialogue, because their count, a false one indeed, claims that there are 116 countries recognizing the independence of Kosovo. This underlines their message that there is no room for any compromise to be made.

In the last two years 13 countries revoked their previous recognitions of Kosovo. Kosovo did not manage to join UNESCO, Interpol, the UN or any other international organization. This is an issue which needs to be settled between Serbia and Ghana in order for us to have a proper cooperation.

We also took a decision to reopen the Serbian Embassy in Ghana in the course of this year.

Minister Botchwey and I are heading the Joint Committee and our task is to identify the areas in which we can offer each other's support.

Our economic cooperation is by and large based on Serbia's imports of cocoa from Ghana, commercial exchange is therefore low and it can certainly be improved. I wish conditions were created for us to discuss much bigger projects, like we used to, and to expand the circle of countries which are our mutual friends.

Cooperation could be enhanced in the areas of culture and education. There is a Museum of African Art in Serbia, therefore culture and education are areas we are very much interested in.

I hope that our relations will steadily develop in the period to come to the mutual satisfaction of our countries and peoples. I also hope we will have the exchange of visits by our presidents.

We have proposed Mr. Steve Mawuenyega to be appointed the honorary consul of Serbia in Accra. The Foreign Ministry of Ghana is currently considering this proposal.

This year we also mark 60th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between our countries. Collective memory of Yugoslavia, and now of Serbia, sees Ghana as an exceptionally friendly country", said the Serbian Foreign Minister following the meeting with his counterpart, Hon. Shirley Botchwey.

{youtube}UwaShaEjp7w{/youtube}

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