



First DPM and Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Serbia Ivica Dacic, together with Honorary Consul Mr Salih Akgül, established the Consulate headed by Honorary Consul in the city of Edirne, former capital of the Ottoman Empire, and a cultural and historical jewel of the region.

The ceremony was attended by a large number of invitees from the world of politics, culture and public life, including a number of MPs of the Turkish Grand National Assembly, Governor and Mayor of Edirne, presidents of several municipalities in Istanbul and representatives of our expat associations.

Minister Dacic used this occasion to underscore once again the importance of good relations between Serbia and Turkey, pointing out that the establishment of a consulate headed by an honorary consular officer contributed to the joint aspirations of the two countries and peoples to raise their relations to an even higher level. Minister Dacic was particularly pleased with the development of economic cooperation. Reminding that the volume of trade between the two countries exceeded one billion dollars, he expressed the hope that the two economies would continue to cooperate in the same direction. "This is the second consulate that we are establishing in less than a year, with the aim of expanding the network even further", stated Minister Dacic.

The Edirne Consulate, apart from assisting our nationals as the main activity, will also perform the function of establishing new and reinforcing existing relations between the two countries' economies, to which special contribution will be made by Mr Salih Akgül, a prominent businessman and owner of Salcano company, a renowned bicycle manufacturer and sponsor of national cycling teams of both Serbia and Turkey. Mr Salih Akgül is an attested true friend and a national of both countries, who received recognition for his humanitarian work as well as for his efforts to foster ties with the mother country.

One of his first duties in this capacity will be to secure that Serbian soldiers who lost their lives in the Balkan Wars, specifically in the Battle or Siege of Odrin which was fought in this very place with the famed Vojvoda/Field Marshal Stepa Stepanovic as commander, are honoured at the local cemetery where they are buried.

The establishment of the consulate of Serbia in Edirne was also an opportunity to exchange views with high-ranking Turkish officials on other bilateral and regional issues of importance. After the opening ceremony in Edirne, Minister Dacic is expected also to have a bilateral meeting with Turkish Foreign Minister Çavuşoğlu.