



Address by First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs Ivica Dacic at the ceremony of presenting Milica Mila Pivnicki Mulroney with the honor of Knight of Saint Sava Pacifism :

"Excellencies,  
Ladies and gentlemen,  
Distinguished guests,

Allow me at the outset to express my deep satisfaction that we have gathered here today in the Museum of Serbian Diplomacy for such a noble and outstanding occasion. I am very pleased that we shall today present the honor of the Knight of Saint Sava Pacifism on our own Milica Mili Pivnicki Mulroney, a person truly deserving such a recognition.

{youtube}BQYJqAghx4M{/youtube}

Thirty-five years have passed since Milica last visited her homeland. However, during that time neither she nor her family have forgotten Serbia and the Serbs. Even when she was Canada's First Lady, between 1984 and 1993 until today, she remained the pride of her mother Boba and father Dimitrije Pivnicki and the pride of Serbia since she managed to preserve her Serbian identity, faith and language and at the same time made a contribution to the development of Serbian-Canadian ties.

Ladies and gentlemen,

Serbian diaspora is a major resource of Serbia's own development and a unique bridge of cooperation with states and peoples around the world. The Pivnicki family exemplifies how diaspora should relate to the motherland and I would therefore like to say a few words about them.

The Pivnicki family comes from Novi Becej. In 1958, they moved to Canada but they maintained their Serb identity and traditions in that faraway country. Father of Mila Mulroney Pivnicki, Dr.

Dimitrije Pivnicki graduated from the Medical School of Belgrade University. Even after he had left for Canada, he continued to nurture the Serb identity and spirituality by selflessly supporting young talented people in diaspora. Even today, Dr. Dimitrije Pivnicki Foundation, with a seat in Montreal, is handing awards to young scientists to support research in the field of neurology.

His daughter Mila – Milica Pivnicki, our laureate, in 1973 married a talented and dynamic Canadian of Irish descent, Brian Mulroney. Decades of their life together, filled with love and mutual respect, produced a family of their own, famous and respectable in their own right. Their four children are today well-established in Canadian society. I would like to emphasize that their daughter Caroline followed in the footsteps of her parents and already achieved great success at the Canada public scene – she was Ontario's Attorney General and Minister of Francophone Affairs, while their son Ben is a famous TV host at one of Canadian TV stations.

Mila – Milica Pivnicki, the former First Lady of Canada, and her husband Brian, the 18th Prime Minister of Canada, were and have remained the focus of interest of highly influential political and social circles, and their close ties with the White House and the Buckingham Palace have for a good reason secured their family a cult status in Canada.

Allow me to take this opportunity to express my pleasure over the fact that the Municipality of Novi Becej, with the assistance and support of Ambassador Dr. Ljiljana Niksic, Mila's mother Boba Pivnicki, Jelka Acimovic and Professor Davidovic, has made possible the publishing of a book on the role played by the Pivnicki family in the history of Novi Becej. The book entitled "The Pivnicki Family in the History of Novi Becej" is greatly important for the preservation of the Serb identity, culture and tradition, as well as of their ancestors' customs, not only for the Serbs of Canada, but also all of the Serbian diaspora worldwide.

Ladies and gentlemen,  
Distinguished guests,

At the very end, I wish to emphasize that events like the one we are having today call attention to the importance of our fellow citizens living abroad for the development of their motherland and vice versa. We need to work even more persistently and diligently to attract interest of our people from the diaspora, and have them support us the best they can, by enabling them to properly employ their capacities, acquaintances, contacts and resources in the same patriotic spirit and with love for their homeland as the Pivnicki family did and is doing.

Dear friends, Mila and Brian Mulroney,

I want you to know that you will always be welcome in the country of Mila's ancestors. Our next meeting is planned for the following year already, on the occasion of the opening of the Museum of Serbian Diaspora and the Memorial House devoted to the Pivnicki family in Novi Becej. In my capacity as First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs with diaspora among my duties, I am particularly glad that the central spot in the Museum will be devoted to the Pivnicki Salon, the place where many great people who indebted Serbia forever with their work had gathered and socialized, such as one Mihajlo Pupin, Branislav Nusic and Laza Kostic.

## **Minister Dacic confers on Mila Mulroney the honor of Knight of St. Sava Pacifism**

Monday, 21 October 2019.

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Dear Mila, may I express my deep gratitude again for everything you have done and continue to do for Serbia – the land of your ancestors!

Long live the Canada-Serbia friendship, long live Serbia!"

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