



Statement By First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Serbia Ivica Dačić at the 26th OSCE Ministerial Council Bratislava, 5-6 December 2019

Dear Mr. Chairman, Minister Lajčák,
Excellencies,
Dear colleagues,
Ladies and gentleman,

One more year in succession is coming to an end, a year in which our Organization faced serious and accumulated problems. Despite the tireless efforts made by the Slovak and previous Chairmanships to engage participating States in a meaningful dialogue resulting in the strengthened Organization and its efficient performance, thus increasing stability in the OSCE area, this goal is still a long way off while the "Organization dynamics", let me quote Chairman Lajčák, is not what we want it to be. A good point of departure in finding a way out of this complicated situation would be for the participating States to recognize that we do not all necessarily need to share the same views on the current issues and challenges but that we need to respect our differences, demonstrate openness in approaching dialogue in good faith and seek a compromise in eliminating or at least in reducing security risks. We must not give up diplomacy because that would open the door to conflicts.

The coming year is symbolic for several reasons. We will commemorate the 75th anniversary since the end of WWII, the lessons of which must not be forgotten. Representing a country which has suffered enormous loss of life in fighting Nazism, special responsibility and commitment lies with me to emphasize that the horrors of WWII must not be repeated ever again, in any shape or form. Therefore, it is the moral duty of all of us to fight together against any attempt at relativizing WWII developments, which is unfortunately taking place even today, in the OSCE area.

In that context, the Republic of Serbia welcomes, in particular, the endorsement of the Ministerial Declaration marking the 75th anniversary since the end of WWII, which it co-sponsored.

Next year, we will also celebrate the adoption of the most important OSCE documents which

not only laid the foundations of our Organization but consolidated the international order created in the post-WWII period. In addition to the commemoration of the 20th anniversary since the adoption of the Charter for European Security, next year will also mark 45 years since the adoption of the Helsinki Final Act which defined 10 core principles governing relations between the participating States, such as equality between States, respect for territorial integrity and sovereignty, inviolability of internationally recognized borders, resolution of all disputes peacefully and through mutually acceptable solutions.

I would like to briefly reflect upon the situation in the Western Balkans as well, since the countries of the region are currently bitterly disappointed not only over the slowed pace of, but a stalemate in, the EU accession process. Such a situation sends a negative message to these countries, while providing a fertile ground for the rise of radicalization and the strengthening of unilateralism in resolving common problems.

I strongly believe that only through compromise, flexibility and a readiness to appreciate the interests of others, in addition to one's own only, can we reach sustainable solutions for problems facing the region.

Despite such an approach applied by the Republic of Serbia, I have to say that the Pristina-Belgrade dialogue has been deadlocked for over a year. The Pristina politicians and their irresponsible, unilateral moves like imposing 100% tariffs on goods originating from central Serbia, have not only jeopardized the survival and rights of the Serbian community in Kosovo and Metohija, but also made it impossible to reach a compromise and sustainable solution that no side would perceive as their win or loss. With a view to reaching this kind of solution, Serbia expects the international community to exercise its influence on the new administration in Pristina and have them revoke this unilateral measure and return to the dialogue in good faith, as the only way to resolve problems existing in the Province.

Thank you!

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