



First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Serbia Ivica Dacic received a letter of appreciation from the Republic of Austria, addressed by Federal Minister for European and International Affairs of the Republic of Austria Alexander Schallenberg. Full text of the letter is as follows:

Excellency, dear Ivica,

The Covid-19 crisis is an unprecedented global challenge that requires strenuous efforts by us all on a bilateral, European as well as multilateral level. We Ministers for Foreign Affairs have to make sure that our citizens abroad who need to travel back can do so.

In this spirit, I would like to extend my gratitude to you and the Republic of Serbia for giving the opportunity to 20 Austrian citizens, 16 Serbian citizens residing in Austria and citizens from other EU Member States to return home on 1 April with an Air Serbia flight from Belgrade to Vienna. This gesture of friendship and cooperation is very much appreciated and will be remembered far beyond the duration of the Covid-19 crisis.

On our side, we are happy to have enabled Serbian citizens to return to Europe from Lima and Sydney and are ready to continue to do so, whenever possible, also in the coming days and weeks.

The support that the EU has given over the last years, in particular also to strengthen the Serbian health system, is an important investment in Serbia's capacity to cope with situations like this. Austria strongly supported further initiatives by the European Union to extend concrete, significant assistance to the countries of the region in the Covid-19 crisis. I am happy to see that the EU has announced a first comprehensive package of assistance, worth 93.4 million euros in donations, together with a number of key non-financial assistance measures.

Let me assure you that Austria will continue to stand by Serbia and the countries of the region.

Yours sincerely,
Alexander Schallenberg
Federal Minister