



First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Serbia Ivica Dacic gave a statement at the ceremony on the occasion of the inauguration of a building for refugee families in Krupanj, in the framework of the implementation of the Regional Housing Programme in Serbia, Subproject 5.

The goal of the Regional Housing Programme is to provide housing solutions to the most vulnerable families from the territory of the former Yugoslavia with refugee status. The programme is carried out in the Republic of Serbia as well as the Republic of Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Montenegro.

On this occasion, Minister Dacic said that the flats were in use since March this year but that, due to the circumstances amid the epidemic and fight against the coronavirus, he was only now able to congratulate our compatriots – beneficiaries of the Programme - on their new homes.

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"To you and your families this is a new beginning, and to us involved in the negotiations and realization of the Regional Housing Programme this is a kind of humanitarian and moral obligation", Minister Ivica Dacic emphasized.

The Minister stressed that it was planned to provide 1,847 housing solutions in the framework of this Subproject, 827 of this number being flats in 25 local self-government units.

"According to a number of assessments from the international community, the Regional Housing Programme has been an example of successful cooperation in the region and a proof that it is possible to maintain mutual cooperation on the basis of respect, understanding and agreement on common interests. It is our hope that we will continue in this spirit and expand our cooperation, all with the aim of creating conditions for a better quality of life for all our citizens and developing the society as a whole", Minister Dacic said.

He was pleased to inform that it was expected that tenants would soon move into the buildings in Svilajnac, Sevojno, Backi Petrovac and Backa Palanka, as well as that the construction of a 276-flat building complex in Novi Sad was brought to an end.

"As early as tomorrow, we will deliver keys to 20 flats built in Valjevo", Minister Dacic said and congratulated once again the beneficiaries on their new homes, wishing them a happy and care-free future.

Full text of the speech is as follows:

"Distinguished guests,
Ladies and gentlemen,
Dear friends,

We have gathered here today in Krupanj on a highly positive occasion. Today, we will formally inaugurate the building constructed here in the framework of the Regional Housing Programme. Taking into account the circumstances which surrounded the fight against the coronavirus pandemic, people were able to move into their flats in March this year, and I take this opportunity today to congratulate our compatriots and beneficiaries of the Programme on moving into their new homes.

This is a new beginning for you and your families, and a kind of humanitarian and moral obligation for us involved in the discussions and realization of the Regional Housing Programme. Let me remind you that the goal of the Regional Housing Programme is to provide housing solutions to the most vulnerable families from the territory of the former Yugoslavia with refugee status. The Programme is carried out in both our country and the Republic of Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Montenegro.

The Regional Housing Programme is funded through donations, the largest donors being the European Union and the United States. The RHP Fund is managed by the Council of Europe Development Bank and the Commissariat for Refugees and Migration is the leading institution implementing the programme in Serbia. The process of selection of beneficiaries is being carried out in cooperation with local government authorities under the supervision of UNHCR and OSCE.

The flats we can see here today were built as part of RHP Subproject 5. This Subproject amounts to a total of EUR 52 million, 38 of which were secured through the Regional Housing Programme donations, while the national contribution amounts to a little over EUR 13 million. It is envisaged to provide 1,847 housing solutions within this Subproject, with 827 of these being flats in 25 local self-government units. The funding for the five-flat building in Krupanj amounting to EUR 175,000 was secured through the RHP Fund, but to come up with the total value one would need to add up the construction property and infrastructure value donated by the local authorities, for which we are most grateful.

I take this opportunity to greet our hosts today – President of the municipality of Krupanj Ivan Isailovic who with his colleagues secured the plot and related infrastructure required for the construction of flats, and also Commissioner Vladimir Cucic as a person who has been at the forefront of the efforts concerning the realization of the Regional Housing Programme.

Of course, I also take this occasion to thank the EU Delegation in the Republic of Serbia and UNHCR Serbia, and all other partners jointly contributing to the implementation of this project of solidarity.

Dear friends,

According to a number of assessments from the international community, the Regional Housing Programme has been an example of successful cooperation in the region and a proof that it is possible to maintain mutual cooperation on the basis of respect, understanding and agreement on common interests. It is our hope that we will continue in this spirit and expand our cooperation, all with the aim of creating conditions for a better quality of life for all our citizens and developing the society as a whole.

I am pleased to inform you that it is envisaged that tenants soon move into the buildings in Svilajnac, Sevojno, Backi Petrovac and Backa Palanka, as well as that the construction was brought to an end of a 276-flat building complex in Novi Sad. As early as tomorrow, we will deliver keys to 20 flats built in Valjevo.

I would like to congratulate the beneficiaries once again on their new homes and wish them a happy and care-free future.

Long live Serbia!"