



Participants of the Western Balkans Conference 2014 commended today great solidarity of the Western Balkan countries in response to the catastrophic flooding that recently hit the region and expressed their readiness to extend additional support and cooperate in dealing with the consequences of the heavy floods. They also strongly supported further enlargement of the European Union to Western Balkan countries.

EU Commissioner for Enlargements Stefan Fule and Foreign Ministers of Greece, Italy and Austria underlined the priority importance attached to the EU negotiations with Serbia and expressed their readiness for close cooperation in the implementation of the necessary reforms. To the last day of its Presidency of the EU Council, Greece will work on the opening of new chapters. Italy, as the next Presidency of the EU Council, will also include among its priorities EU enlargement to the Western Balkans. Particular emphasis was laid on the progress made by the Republic of Serbia on its European integration path and the objective of opening further negotiation chapters.

First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Serbia Ivica Dacic thanked all those who provided rescue and flood management assistance, indicating that the damage was enormous and that it was unrealistic to expect the damage rehabilitation activities to be fully funded by the European Union. He further underlined that Serbia's foremost strategic foreign policy priorities are membership of the European Union, strengthening of regional cooperation and resumption of the dialogue with Pristina.