



First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Serbia Ivica Dacic met with Angelina Eichhorst, Director for Western Europe, the Western Balkans and Turkey at the European External Action Service (EEAS), who is today on a visit to Belgrade.

Angelina Eichhorst and Minister Dacic expressed their satisfaction with the decision to open the first negotiating chapters (Chapter 35 and Chapter 32) in December last year, noting that Serbia would continue to implement reforms and further engage in the European integration process. Eichhorst voiced the hope that, in the coming period, Chapters 23 and 24 would be opened as well. With regard to the normalization process with Kosovo, Dacic stressed that, owing to the active involvement of Belgrade, numerous important agreements were made so far in the dialogue with Pristina, which is to continue in January.

Eichhorst focused in particular on the developments in the Western Balkans and highlighted the importance of further strengthening regional cooperation and mutual trust. In the talks they devoted special attention to Serbia's further activities in the context of Chapter 31 - Foreign, security and defence policy, primarily related to the alignment with the *acquis communautaire*, but also with the EU's common foreign policy. In this respect, both officials agreed that it was necessary to intensify cooperation on the political and expert level.

Discussions also touched upon wider international developments and conflicts that continue to affect regions in Europe's neighbourhood, with special interest being expressed for Serbia's views on these issues.