
SERBIA REMAINS NEUTRAL, DM TELLS ATLANTIC COUNCIL DELEGATION

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Djordjevic made this statement during his meeting in Belgrade with Damon Wilson, executive vice president of the Washington-based Atlantic Council.

Serbia respects European and Euro-Atlantic orientations of its neighbors and is committed to long-term partnership relations with the West and the East, the minister said.

The Atlantic Council delegation members and Djordjevic also discussed "the political and security situation in the region, with special emphasis on the migrant crisis and cooperation between Serbia and NATO within the Partnership for Peace program."

Stating that Serbia is trying to be recognized as a reliable, predictable and responsible partner, Djordjevic said that the country sees participation in activities under the auspices of Partnership for Peace as the optimal framework to achieve security goals and improve defense capabilities.

He pointed out that Serbia will, in relations with its neighbors, continue to adhere to the policy of restraint, while solving all outstanding issues in a principled manner, fully respecting the norms of international law.

Although not an EU member, but only a candidate, Serbia is trying to, as a responsible member of the international community, provide an adequate response to the current migrant crisis without building walls, he said.

"Serbia wants to be part of the solution within the European framework, but taking into account its national interests and their protection above all," said Djordjevic.

He stressed that the Ministry of Defense and the Serbian Army (VS) provide strong support toward mitigating the effects of the migrant crisis to other state authorities and stressed that regional cooperation remains a key element of Serbia's foreign policy.

"This is evidenced by the fact that the Republic of Serbia, as a major factor of stability in the region, is a full member of all regional security initiatives, with the exception of the US-Adriatic Charter (A-5) where it participates as an observer," said Djordjevic.

The minister also stated that UNSC Resolution 1244 and the Military Technical Agreement recognize KFOR exclusively as the guarantor of security in Kosovo and Metohija, and the only partner to the VS in securing the administrative line between Kosovo and central Serbia - and added that KFOR "cannot transfer the responsibility for security in Kosovo and Metohija KFOR to any other institution or organization."

On Monday, members of the Atlantic Council delegation met with Serbian Foreign Minister Ivica Dacic.

SOURCE: TANJUG

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