

## At UN, Serbian President discusses future of peaceful, prosperous Western Balkans region

21 September 2017 – Kicking off the third day of the high-level segment of the United Nations General Assembly, Aleksandar Vucic, the President of Serbia, drew attention to the future of the Western Balkans region – with a focus on how to preserve peace and ensure prosperity.

Mr. Vucic said that while Serbia does not recognize “the unilateral declaration of independence of the so-called Kosovo,” he would not speak about disrespect for his country’s territorial integrity and sovereignty, but instead about Serbia’s efforts to resolve the problem because “peace and reconciliation are more important than gaining easy political points.”

Noting his country’s commitment to responsible fiscal practices, he laid out a list of its achievements that included a decrease in unemployment, a new flexible labour market and its investment in it youth. “Digitalization and artificial intelligence are becoming important topics in Serbia and not only in the most developed countries of the world,” the President explained.

A better and improved economy is also a priority for the region, including Serbia. Mr. Vucic stressed that Serbs are eager to continue with economic reforms along with the creation of the Regional Economic Zone. Telling the Assembly that the former Yugoslavia is a respected market that attracts investors and international attention, he pointed out that today, the regional countries are too small as individual markets, but he believed that “unique customs zone and taxation system is the future of the region.”

As part of Serbia’s economic progress, the President also underscored the importance of its becoming a member of the European Union. Calling the EU Serbia’s “most important trade and investment partner,” he elaborated that membership is seen as “a path towards greater stability, economic progress and strengthening democracy acquis.”

[Full statement available here](#)