

“Modern Serbia is all about friendship”
– Ambassador H.E. Marko Djuric

NEW SERBIAN EMBASSY BUILDING IN D.C.

by Milos Rastovic

WASHINGTON, D.C. – On October 11, 2022, H.E. Marko Djuric, Ambassador of the Republic of Serbia to the United States, and Gabriel Escobar, Deputy Assistant Secretary, Bureau of European and Eurasian Affairs at the U.S. Department of State, officially opened a new building of the Embassy of the Republic of Serbia on 16th NW Street, a few blocks from the White House.



Serbian Folklore Group “Opancici” welcomed guests in front of the new Serbian Embassy building

The Embassy of the Republic of Serbia sponsored the opening reception for officials, diplomatic staff, businessmen, Representatives of the Government of the Republic of Serbia, and the Serbian-American communities. Representatives of the Government of Serbia who were present included Vladimir Orlic, President of the Serbian Parliament; Maja Gojkovic, Vice-President and Minister



The exhibition of Serbian traditional costumes

of Culture and Information; and Jorgovanka Tabakovic, Governor of the National Bank of Serbia. On behalf of the Serb National Federation Milos Rastovic, Cultural Outreach Coordinator, and SNF Lodge #23 member John M. Buffalini were present.

In front of the new building, members of the local Serbian Folklore Group “Opancici” in traditional Serbian costume welcomed the guests by serving the traditional salt and bread. Drina Rajic was Master of Ceremony. H.E. Marko Djuric, Ambassador of the Republic of Serbia to the United States, also welcomed guests and pointed out that, “Modern Serbia is



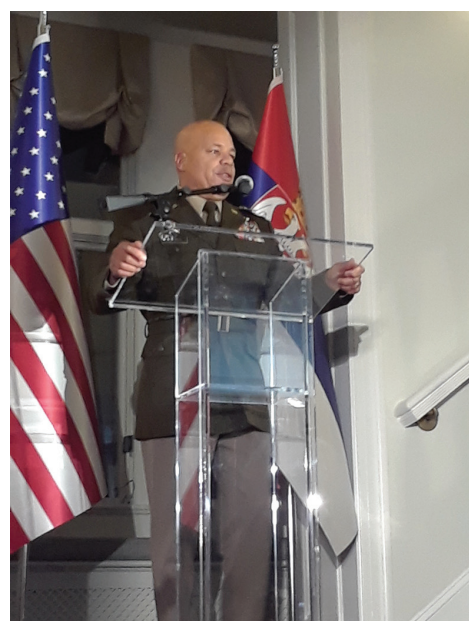
Vladimir Orlic, President of the Serbian Parliament



H. E. Marko Djuric, Ambassador of the Republic of Serbia to the United States



Tamara Vucic, First Lady of Serbia



Major General John C. Harris, Jr., of the Ohio National Guard

tion of our tradition and culture on American soil.” She also said the 140th anniversary of diplomatic relations between the two countries reminds us that “Serbia and the United States were together on the right side of history by sharing the same ideals and values, fighting together for the preservation of freedom.” She added that we are all obliged not to forget the history of alliances in two World Wars and to use that as a foundation for building more solid future cooperation. In conclusion, she added, “The Serbian



Gabriel Escobar, Deputy Assistant Secretary, Bureau of European and Eurasian Affairs at the U.S. Department of State



Serbian Folklore Group “Opancici”

all about friendship.”

Tamara Vucic, First Lady of Serbia, stressed the role of diplomacy as a foundation of better mutual understanding: “Diplomacy is about people, negotiating, building, and maintaining relationships. That is why it is important to host all people from diplomacy in a new Washington home that will be a symbolical mirror of our country and society.» She pointed out that many Serbs contributed to the development of the United States. The new Embassy building will be for Serbs in Serbia and Serbian-Americans “a new place of gathering and preserva-

flag will be permanently raised in this building as a reminder that the United States still has a historical ally in the western Balkans ready to find a joint part in decades to come...Let the new Serbian Embassy building in the United States be the place where new bridges of cooperation will be built, deepening Serbian-American historical bonds.”

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Major General John C. Harris, Jr., of the Ohio National Guard offered congratulations on a great new facility. He was emotional when he described the relationship between the two countries: «The symbol of singing both national anthems is not lost on me. Our nation’s history meets your nation’s future. We share deep values of our cultures, militaries, and every aspect of our lives.»

On behalf of the President of the Republic of Serbia, Aleksandar Vucic, H.E. Djuric thanked the Serbian and American dignitaries. He reminded the audience of the history of the diplomatic relationship between the two countries. “Our partnership remains a key pillar of our foreign policy. The new building is a testament to the growing ties between the two nations and our commitment to expanding the relationship across many areas of cooperation in the future... Through the United States’ efforts, such as the Open Balkan initiative, Serbia and its neighbors made a historic stride to intensify economic cooperation, remove trade barriers, and build stronger ties between our peoples. Serbia will look to the United States as a key partner and friend. As our two buildings are close now, we hope the relationship between the two countries will continue to grow closer in years to come.”

Gabriel Escobar and his wife Elizabeth visited Serbia, and “fell in love with Serbian hospitality, culture, and people.” Escobar distinguished that “the relations between the two countries have never been better. I hope the establishment of the new Embassy building symbolizes a new beginning of our bilateral history. As a diplomat, I am happy to see that the relationship is going in the right direction. As an American, I am proud to say

that Serbs and people from the Balkans contributed greatly to the development of this country. This cultural, diplomatic, and community event symbolizes all that is good in a bilateral relationship. The hospitality and positive feelings we experienced in Belgrade are reflected and reciprocated by you. If you travel throughout the United States, you will see that all doors of friendship are open to Serbia.”

Vladimir Orlic, President of the Serbian Parliament, emphasized that the new Serbian Embassy was the home of the U.S. Secretary of State and Nobel Peace Prize winner Elihu Root (1845 – 1937): “The American tradition in this home and Serbian new spirit and energy will be a winning combination of creating conditions for deepening and strengthening the Serbian and American cooperation.” He distinguished positive points in the relationship between the two countries since its beginning in 1868. One of the events that created close cooperation between the two countries was the Halyard Operation in WWII when Yugoslav General Draza Mihailovic with his troops saved more than 500 American pilots.

Maja Gojkovic, VP & Minister of Culture and Information, discussed the exhibition which was displayed at the new Embassy building. “The exhibition ‘Finding a Way’ is contemporary art from Serbia and a good example of the vision of individuals, private initiative, and understanding between two countries. This event is the best example of cultural diplomacy.” She pointed out that there is “a wide space which has not been explored to strengthen cultural ties between Serbia and the United States. This exhibition is a good way to strengthen our ties and cultures.” Serbia has a rich culture to offer the United States audience.

The exhibition “Finding a Way” is the project of two generations of artists at the University of Belgrade by professors and their students. Authors of the exhibition are Vladislav Scepanovic, Nikola Kolja Bozovic, Aleksandar Leka Mladenovic, Tijana Kojic, Goran Cpajak, Ivan Milenkovic, Jovanka Mladenovic, Djordje Stanojevic, and Vuk Vuckovic. Besides the Republic of Serbia Embassy, the exhibition will be displayed at the Anacostia Arts Center in Washington, D.C. After the official ceremony, the Serbian Folklore Group “Opancici” sang and performed the Serbian kolo. All guests at this wonderful reception had a chance to socialize and enjoy Serbian arts and delicious Serbian food and drinks.

The Serb National Federation congratulates the Embassy of the Republic of Serbia for opening a new building and further developing its relationship with the United States. We hope a new historic building will be a beacon of the relations between the two countries and help preserve Serbian culture and tradition in the United States.



H.E. Marko Djuric and Gabriel Escobar officially opened the new building of the Embassy of the Republic of Serbia



A view of the new building



From left are H.E. Marko Djuric, Maja Gojkovic, and Jorgovanka Tabakovic

All photographs provided by Milos Rastovic and by the Embassy of the Republic of Serbia, Washington, D.C.

SRBO ON THE ROAD

Lisa Kosanovich of SNF Lodge #91 “Florida Gold Coast” North Miami, FL took the *Srbo* on her October trip to “new heights of 8,000 feet overlooking Machu Picchu, the 15th century Incan citadel built high in the Andes Mountains in Peru. For her it was a checkmark on her bucket list. “This amazing adventure included sailing and visiting inhabited islands on Lake Titicaca, the world’s highest navigable body of water at 12,507 feet. I visited many remote villages and some archeological sites dating back to the 5th century and stood on the Equator with one foot in the Northern hemisphere and one foot on the Southern hemisphere. From Peru, I took in sites of the various Galapagos Islands in Ecuador including the Darwin Research Center, snorkeling beautiful reefs, giant tortoises, hiking a volcano and seeing blue footed boobies!” What an outstanding trip.

