

ROYAL COUPLE MARK STATEHOOD DAY

Ceremony for 208th Anniversary of First Serbian Uprising

BELGRADE, 15 February 2012 – Their Royal Highnesses Crown Prince Alexander and Crown Princess Katharine accompanied by Mr. Dusan Babac, member of the Privy Council, Mr. Cedomir Antic, member of the Crown Cabinet and Mr. Darko Spasic, member of the Legal team attended today the ceremony marking the Serbian Statehood Day, which also marks the 208th anniversary of the First Serbian Uprising in Orasac. The ceremony was also attended by HE Mr. Predrag Markovic, Minister of Culture.

The ceremony started with Holy Liturgy served by His Grace Bishop of Sumadija Jovan and the clergy of the Sumadija Diocese.

Following the Liturgy, a memorial service was held in Maricevica Gully after which HRH Crown Prince Alexander, HE Mr. Predrag Markovic, Minister of Culture and the President of Arandjelovac Municipality laid laurel wreaths on the monument of Karadjordje. As a part of the ceremony speeches were delivered by HRH Crown Prince Alexander, Mr. Predrag Markovic, Minister of Culture and President of Arandjelovac Municipality.

In his speech the Crown Prince said, "On this holy day, at one of the holiest places of Serbian freedom, I greet you as a host and Karageorge's descendant. Orasac and Oplenac are the symbols of the modern Serbian state and freedom. Earlier in the recent past there were moments when that truth was concealed and another one invented. The untruth travels fast, but the truth is constant and long lasting. The Serbian people have contributed to the foundations of European civilisation not only their heroes, saints and martyrs but also their art, science, ideas and the ideals of their best sons. Europe has already bowed to Serbian culture once. It is up to us if she will continue to do so in the future!"

After the ceremony in Orasac, the Royal Couple attended the celebration of St Patrons Day of the Union of Monarchists that took place in Arandjelovac.

Their Royal Highnesses and members of the Advisory Bodies of the Crown attended a memorial service officiated by His Grace Bishop of Sumadija Jovan in the Church of Saint George at Oplenac. After the ceremony laurel wreaths were placed on the tomb of the Supreme Leader Karadjordje by HRH Crown Prince Alexander and members of the Crown Council.



GOOGLE CONGRATULATES SERBIA

By Milos Rastovic



On February 15, 2012, ("Sretenje") the world's largest internet searcher Google congratulated Serbia with a theme: Happy National Day of Serbia. Google used the motif from the first Serbian Constitution in 1835. If you clicked on Google's congratulation, you were directed to a page with information about Serbian Statehood Day in both Cyrillic and Latin letters.

Serbia was also congratulated by Great Britain's Queen Elizabeth II. She sent greetings to President Boris Tadic with best wishes for the happiness and prosperity of the Serbian people, which were published on the British embassy's website.

February 15th is an important historical, political, and cultural date in Serbian history for two reasons: the first Serbian uprising against the Ottoman Empire was initiated on that day in 1804, and in 1835 Prince Milos Obrenovic proclaimed the first Serbian Constitution as one of the most modern, liberal and democratic in Europe. February 15th represents the beginning of national liberation and creation of the modern Serbian state.

This year, His Holiness, Patriarch + IRINEJ officiated at Divine Liturgy on "Sretenje" (the Meeting of the Lord) in Ruzica Church in Belgrade. After Liturgy, His Holiness Irinej held a memorial service for the Army, the Christian faith, and the Fatherland in all liberation wars. He also attended the celebration of Statehood Day at the House of the National Assembly in Belgrade.¹

At that celebration, President Boris Tadic said that the Sretenjski Constitution symbolizes Serbian unity, the beginning of national liberation, and the gaining of libertarian tradition: human rights, freedom, right of ownership, and equality for all people before the law.² He decorated seventeen individuals and institutions with merit in medicine, security, science, culture and sport. He said that the decorated individuals will be marked in history as victors, like Nikola Tesla, Milutin Milankovic, Ivo Andric, and Michael Pupin.

Among those who received decoration were the theatre director Dejan Mijac, theatrologist Jovan Cirilov, and tennis player Novak Djokovic. President Tadic said that Djokovic deserves the medal, the Order of the Karadjordje's Star of the first degree, "for special merits in representing Serbia. He is the number one tennis player and the best athlete in the world. He is also our greatest ambassador." Djokovic said that he was proud to receive the highest state honor: "I may have dreamed of lifting the trophy at Wimbledon, but I could never have thought that my country would reward me with such a great honor. I am indebted to my people, and I will do my best to continue representing our beautiful country in the best possible way."³

- 1 "Patriarch Irinej serves the Liturgy in Ruzica Church." Serbian Orthodox Church. Official Website. Date February 16, 2012. <http://www.spc.rs/eng>
- 2 "Statehood Day Marked." Glas Srbije. February 16, 2012. http://glassrbije.rog/E/index2.php?option=com_content&task=view&i...
- 3 "Novak awarded the Order of the Karadjordje's Star of the 1st Degree." Novak Djokovic Official Website. Date: February 15, 2012.

