

**The speech of the Director of the Security Information Agency, Mr. Bratislav
Gašić,**

BIA Anniversary 2019

Dear,

Mr. President of the Republic of Serbia,

Ms. Speaker of the National Assembly of the Republic of Serbia,

Your Holiness,

Ministers of Serbian Government,

Representatives of the judicial authorities,

Dignitaries of the religious communities,

Your Excellencies,

Colleagues from our partner services,

Members of the Security Information Agency,

Esteemed friends,

with my heart full of pride I wish You a warm welcome and extend my sincere gratitude for Your being present here today, at this significant anniversary - 120 years since the foundation of Serbian civil security service, thus making this event even greater. I am firmly convinced that the Security Information Agency carries on the tradition of the said service, initiated in 1899, in the best possible manner.

However, the roots of our service to the fatherland go much deeper and can be found even in the Dušan's Code, enacted in 1349.

We also continue the tradition of the protectors of Serbian nation who were given complex security tasks by Karađorđe Petrović and Miloš Obrenović, the leaders of First and Second Serbian Uprising.

Our predecessors, teachers and role models shared the same fate as their nation, trying to defend it even in the most difficult times of history, such as World War I and World War II, when Serbs and Serbia, since that is the only way they know and since their national pride requires so, were always on the better side of history.

We are the heirs of top-level professionals who, during the decades after 1945, regardless of the fact how the Service and State itself were named at a particular point of time, invested huge efforts to maintain the security, constitutional order and stability.

We witnessed and actively participated in many processes that completely changed the architecture of international relations at global, regional and national levels, especially during the nineties.

As for our service, these processes ended to some extent in 2002, when the Security Information Agency was established. This year represented a new beginning for us. In the circumstances in which the essence of our profession and duty remained the same - to be fully committed to protecting our Homeland and nation from all the threats they are exposed to, as honourable people who, immensely and unconditionally love Serbia and are ready to make all the sacrifices.

As such, I assure You, we are recognized and respected in the country and abroad. This has been particularly evident in the last several years when we, with unselfish and strategic support and trust of the President of the Republic of Serbia and the Government of the Republic of Serbia, have significantly strengthened our human resources. We employed a great number of young, professional, honourable and devoted patriots, guided by the fact that does not need to be proved - that people are our greatest advantage in relation to all those who want to put the security of Serbia at risk.

This is the reason why we put so much effort into educating and constant training of our members in the country and abroad. In performing these tasks we are greatly helped by The National Security Academy, which has a very important role in the unique way of educating the staff who are going to represent the future of this service and whose educational programs are in line with the latest international standards.

The values that we, as the Agency, are tasked to defend and that also represent the essence and a condition for the existence of the State itself, have been exposed to serious and real threats and challenges. We are the first in the State that are tasked and obliged to detect, analyse and assess them timely. However, this is not enough, since we are expected to confront these threats and challenges as well, actively reacting in a

specific manner, of course. And even that is not enough. These times call for our sure winning in this “game”.

In order for us to be able to, as a service, perform these complex assignments from our scope of work, we have done a lot in terms of technical equipment, as well as creating the best possible material and logistic conditions contributing to improving the quality of work of our members. We have restored and renovated almost all the existing facilities and built new capacities raising the infrastructure of the Agency to the highest level. And we will not stop there, but work more intensively in this regard in the period to come. We want our members to have the most advanced conditions for doing their important and responsible jobs.

Being aware of the fact how much the development of partnership relations, both internally and on the international level, is necessary for protecting fundamental values such as justice, freedom and independence, but also for confronting complex security threats, challenges and risks, such as contemporary terrorism, illegal migrations, international organized crime, we have raised the cooperation with other related structures to the highest level ever.

We have gained substantial and unselfish assistance in performing our tasks from other state bodies and institutions of the Republic of Serbia. I would especially emphasize the visionary role of the President of the Republic of Serbia, Mr. Aleksandar Vučić who, through his policy of peace and developing good relations with the international community, paves the way for us to overall prosperity. The Ministry of Defence and Ministry of Internal Affairs have been our immense support in the common goal of preserving the security of our homeland. We are also proud of the cooperation with judicial structures, as well as with all the others state bodies, so that, as it has been previously the case, strengthening the cooperation with the competent authorities in the country remains one of the priorities of the Agency,

In the end, I would like to quote a celebrated Serbian writer Miloš Crnjanski, who talks about future in his own way: “Our entire country is composed of pieces of the past. The very idea that we should stop there is distant to me. Far from it. We should look to the future. We should go towards future. All happy people look towards future.”

With a strong desire for all the citizens of our beloved Serbia to go along the path of prosperity towards future, we will, as the national security service, do our best to pave and secure that path.

I am sure that we will succeed in doing so, considering all the support and cooperation related to our foreign partners. Therefore, I avail myself of this opportunity to express gratitude to all the directors and members of foreign security and intelligence services delegations, who have honoured us with their presence, thus making this event even greater and one of the greatest gatherings of intelligence and security community in recent history.

In the end, I would like to express special gratitude to all BIA members and congratulate them on the anniversary. Dear officers, colleagues and friends, thank You for Your efforts and unselfish attitude towards work. We promise that we will keep leading the Security Information Agency towards progress and that we will not let anyone stand on the way of the progress of this service and maintenance of its reputation and the position that belongs to it, which is on the top of the security sector of the Republic of Serbia.

Esteemed guests, thank You once more for coming.

Dear colleagues, members of the Agency, I want to congratulate You on the anniversary!

Long live Serbia!

I would like to ask the President of the Republic of Serbia, Mr. Aleksandar Vučić, to address us!