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Bastille Day Celebrates a Partnership Looking Forward

Bastille Day reception in Belgrade highlights the enduring Franco-Serbian friendship, Serbia's European perspective and a new chapter in the two countries' strategic partnership

France's National Day, 14 July (Bastille Day), was celebrated at the French Embassy in Belgrade with its traditional annual reception. Among the guests were National Assembly Speaker **Ana Brnabić**, Deputy Speaker **Marina Raguš**, Serbian government ministers **Nenad Vujić**, **Aleksandra Sofronijević**, **Dejan Vuk Stanković**, **Ivica Tončev**, and **Dubravka Đedović Handanović**, Commissioner for the Protection of Equality **Milan Antonijević**, BIA Director **Vladimir Orlić**, representatives of religious communities, ambassadors accredited to Belgrade, as well as members of the armed forces and police, according to Tanjug.

Ahead of the reception, **H.E. Florence Ferrari**, French Ambassador to Serbia, told reporters that this year's celebration carried special significance for France and Serbia, as Serbian President **Aleksandar Vučić** had attended the Bastille Day military parade in Paris at the invitation of French President **Emmanuel Macron**.

"His presence on the Champs-Élysées, the first ever by a Serbian president—further confirms the enduring Franco-Serbian friendship, a brotherhood forged during the trials of the First World War, when we fought side by side, sometimes wearing the same blue uniforms, and together paid the price

of freedom. Today, that dynamic friendship continues to grow through numerous forms of cooperation that bring our two countries closer every day," the ambassador said.

She emphasised that the bilateral relationship is firmly oriented toward the future and toward a shared European horizon within the European Union.

"That was precisely the central theme of today's parade in Paris—Europe's strategic awakening. We firmly believe that Serbia should be part of that strategic awakening, which is why it was invited to participate," she added.

Ambassador also reflected on the embassy's work over the past year, noting that **2026 marks the 15th anniversary of the France-Serbia Strategic Partnership**, characterised

by a relationship built on trust and enriched by broad, practical and dynamic cooperation.

"France remains a strong supporter of Serbia's European integration. That was the key message delivered by the Minister for Europe and Foreign Affairs, **Jean-Noël Barrot**, during his visit to Belgrade on 16–17 January this year. A secure, strong, and sovereign Europe cannot prosper without the Western Balkans, particularly Serbia. The enlargement of the European Union to include Serbia, and the Western Balkans more broadly, is a French priority, in line with Serbia's own stated commitment to EU membership as a strategic objective," the ambassador said.

The ambassador also paid tribute to **Milovan Jovanović**, a member of the Serbian Armed Forces who lost his life while serving in Lebanon.

"I bow before the grief of his family and salute his commitment to the ultimate sacrifice in the service of a more just and secure world—the very world our two countries strive to build together," she said.

She added that France and Serbia had agreed to deepen their strategic partnership by adopting a **Franco-Serbian roadmap**.

"That roadmap will help strengthen our cooperation, particularly in areas that were not high on the bilateral agenda fifteen years ago. One such example is artificial intelligence, where Serbia selected the French company **Bull** to provide the technology for its supercomputer in Kragujevac," Ferrari said.

