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Serbian president has dinner with Nato chief in Brussels



Nato Secretary General Mark Rutte meets with the President of Serbia Aleksandar Vucic. / Source: Nato

By Tatyana Kekic in Belgrade March 20, 2025

Serbia's President Aleksandar Vucic held a cosy dinner meeting with Nato Secretary General Mark Rutte in Brussels on March 19, discussing regional security challenges.

The meeting comes at a time of rising political tensions in the Balkans, particularly in Bosnia & Herzegovina, where the recent conviction of Republika Srpska President Milorad Dodik by a state-level court heightened concerns over regional stability.

Vucic expressed his belief that the dinner would pave the way for better cooperation between Serbia and Nato. The discussions covered Serbia's relationship with Nato, Kosovo and the tense situation in Bosnia.

"We have countless topics to discuss with Secretary General Mark Rutte, from bilateral cooperation between Serbia and Nato to the situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina, and relations with KFOR in Kosovo," Vucic wrote on Instagram, his favourite mode of communication.

The dinner was timely given the growing instability in Bosnia following the conviction of Dodik. Dodik was sentenced to a year in prison and banned from politics for six years by the state court in Sarajevo in February after defying the Office of the High Representative, a protectorate body that still oversees the Dayton peace agreement of 1995. In response, the Republika Srpska parliament moved to ban federation police and judiciary from the entity's territory, a move one step short of secession.

Vucic, who has expressed grave concern over the situation, highlighted the delicate nature of the current political climate. "I don't know if it is clear enough how complicated the situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina is," he said. "We all want to avoid that, and one incident would be enough for all of us to be in trouble."

Vucic praised Rutte's approach to Serbia, calling him "very fair" during his previous visit to Bosnia. "I am convinced of even better cooperation between Serbia and Nato in the future," Vucic added.

Serbia's relationship with Nato has long been fraught, stemming from the legacy of the 1999 Nato bombing of Serbia and Montenegro during the Kosovo War. While Serbia remains militarily neutral and has no plans to join Nato, it has maintained cooperation with the alliance, including hosting military drills on its territory.

Despite its close ties with Russia, particularly in opposing Western sanctions against Moscow following its invasion of Ukraine in 2022, Serbia has participated in several Nato-led exercises, including the US-led Platinum Wolf drills. Serbia has also continued to

support the presence of Nato's KFOR mission in Kosovo, viewing it as a stabilising force.

The situation in Kosovo remains a major sticking point for Serbia, which has never recognised its former province's 2008 declaration of independence. Diplomatic efforts to normalise relations, including EU-brokered talks, have stalled in recent years.

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#NATO

#Rutte

#Vucic

#Brussels

#Bosnia

#Kosovo

#KFOR

#Russia

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Mark Rutte 

@SecGenNATO



Good follow up meeting with [@predsednikrs](#) in Brussels after our call two weeks ago. We discussed the critical importance of upholding regional security as well as how to continue to bolster NATO-Serbia relations.



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