

## **Access to the Diplomatic Archive of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Serbia for scientific research**

In accordance with law and internal regulations of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Serbia, the archives of the Ministry (from 1945 to date) are now available and may be accessed to 30 years after they have been established (in 2017, including the year 1986).

Access by foreign nationals to the archives of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Serbia for scientific research is subject to permission by the foreign minister, whereas access by nationals of the Republic of Serbia is granted to by the secretary-general of the Ministry. Written request should be sent to the following address: Ministarstvo spoljnih poslova Republike Srbije, Odeljenje za administrativne i arhivske poslove, Kneza Miloša 24-26, pp1, 11168 Beograd, PAK 112804, SRB or by e-mail to oaap@mfa.rs.

The request should contain the subject matter of the research, timeframe of requested documents and the purpose of the research (for example, writing a book, monograph, post-doctoral studies, etc.). The request should be sent along with a copy of the passport (for foreign nationals) or a copy of the identity card (for Serbian nationals). Should there be a need for an interpreter, it is necessary to state his/her name in the request and to enclose a copy of his/her identity card or passport. In case research is conducted on behalf of an institution or institute, the request should also contain a letter of recommendation.

The permission to access the archives is valid for a calendar year and the research is conducted in the reading room of the Diplomatic Archive of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Serbia. The opening hours are from 9.30 a.m. till 1.30 p.m., Monday to Friday. The reading room closes from 1-31 August and from 15 December – 15 January.

In the reading room of the Diplomatic Archive it is allowed to use personal computer while it is forbidden to use a camera. Upon request of the interested party, the Diplomatic Archive shall make paper copies of the requested documents at the price of RSD 15.00 for A4 paper size and RSD 30.00 for A3 paper size.

The archives of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs for the period until 1918 have been transferred and permanently stored in the Archive of Serbia and the archives for the period from 1918 to 1945 to the Archive of Yugoslavia. Those interested to access these archives should contact the said Archives.

## **History of the Diplomatic Archive of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs**

The diplomatic archive of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs is based on former activities of the diplomatic archive of the Kingdom of Serbia and Kingdom of Yugoslavia.

It was founded soon after the creation of the Kingdom of the Serbs, Croats and Slovenes. As the date of foundation 05 May 1919 is taken, when the Decree of organization of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs (MIP), diplomatic and consular missions of the Kingdom of the Serbs, Croats and Slovenes, was passed. As one of the organization units, the Main Archive was founded on

the basis of the Decree, and it consisted of Documentation and Library of the Ministry, taken over from the Ministry of the Kingdom of Serbia and Montenegro. The Main Archive started to operate more effectively in the fall of 1924 since it was then that the Minister of Foreign Affairs formed an expert commission whose task was to inspect gathered documents on the creation of the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes, and make a plan of future operation of the Main archive.



The Law on archives of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and diplomatic and consular missions of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia abroad has from 05 April 1930 been precise in stating which holdings of the archive would become part of the Main Archive. Those were the archives of former Ministries of Foreign Affairs of the Kingdom of Serbia and the Kingdom of Montenegro and their missions abroad, as well as foreign diplomatic and consular archives or correspondence, which belong to our country according to international contracts, or which were given to the State by foreign states, to preserve. Under the same conditions, the Law protected private archives as well, which had, as a gift, by means of purchase or any other, become part of any of the archives of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs or missions of the Kingdom abroad.

Ever since that time, destroyed documents or damaged papers are being reconstructed; the scientific and other research is granted to private persons according to regulations; diplomatic documents of interest for the national history are being published; the research in foreign archives and papers of foreign documents concerning the national history; arrangement and preservation of holdings of interest to our diplomatic history; participation in signing and

implementation of international contracts and conventions concerning the archives.

By the Decree with legal power, on organizing of MFA and DCM (Diplomatic and Consular Missions) of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia abroad from 10 August 1939, the Main archive was reorganized by becoming the History Department whose competence included:

- arrangement, technical processing and keeping of old archives of all departments of the Ministry and diplomatic and consular missions and delegations for which it is necessary to be transferred to this department;
- retrieving of all missing or lost papers referred to by the Law on archives of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs and diplomatic and consular missions of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia abroad.

The Library of the Ministry was part of the History Department, and was interrupted by the war for the period of almost four years. At that time, the Archive suffered irretrievable damage due to destruction of material and its transfer to Germany, and later to the USSR.

The History Department of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of the Democratic Federative Yugoslavia began to operate in March 1945. The needs of the new Ministry soon started to enlarge, and therefore the History Department was soon organized into three sections - Diplomatic Archive, Documentation and Library. The Diplomatic Archive soon became independent as a separate organization unit of the Ministry. From March 1945 until the middle of 1949, it mainly dealt with restitution of documents taken from our country in the course of the Second World War. Due to the external danger, to which Yugoslavia was exposed at the time, the Diplomatic Archive was closed again in 1949, and the documents transferred in the country's province. It started to operate by the end of 1957 in Dubrovnik, in the old building of the Benedictine monastery St. Jacob. In 1960 it was moved to Belgrade, and is since 1961, permanently open for scientific research.

Since its foundation, the Diplomatic Archive had performed a conventional archival function, with the organization of work similar to archives of other Ministries in the world. It is a specialized archive necessary for the regular operation of the Ministry and other institutions of the country in charge of activities concerning foreign affairs, as well as scientific research.

The basic task of the Diplomatic Archive is systematic gathering, arranging and preservation of

material resulted from the work of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and diplomatic and consular missions, as well as the use of the material for scientific, cultural, educational, informative and operational needs.

By dividing of competence in 1981, the complete archive of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of the Kingdom of Serbia and its diplomatic and consular missions, from the period of 1854-1918, in total 128 files, was handed over to the Archive of Serbia.

On the basis of Article 46 of the Archive material of the Federation Law (Official Register of the SFRY No. 11, March 7 1986), the archive material of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia and its diplomatic and consular missions for the period of 1918-1945, as well as the material which was not made by the Ministry, was handed over to the [Archives of Yugoslavia](#)

Out of all archive holdings of the Kingdom of Serbia and Kingdom of Montenegro, in other words, the Kingdom of Yugoslavia, the Ministry (Foreign Legal Affairs Service) is only in possession of the Collection of international contracts, which, together with the contracts of the Republic of Yugoslavia, makes 9,840 files of bilateral contracts and 1,622 files of multilateral contracts (all computer processed).

The Diplomatic Archive today handles 132 holdings resulting from the work of the Ministry and its missions in the period from 1945. year till today, which consist of materials from bilateral and multilateral activity of our country. The information means - registers of material, books and guides to the archive material and depots - were also made.

The use of the archive material in the Diplomatic Archive is done on basis of the Regulations for use of archive material (Official Register of the SFRY No. 49, July 25 1987) and may be accessed for purposes of research or any other, after 30 years since its foundation. The archive also includes a reading room and information card catalog about the users.

The Diplomatic Archive has published the collections of public documents on foreign affairs of the SFRY from 07 March 1945-1950, by the name of **Blue edition** in eight volumes:

- The Documents on foreign affairs of the SFRY from 1945, published by Yugoslav Survey, Belgrade, 1984;
- The Documents on foreign affairs of the SFRY from 1946, both the volumes 1 and 2, Yugoslav Survey, Belgrade, 1985;
- The Documents on foreign affairs of the SFRY from 1947, volume 1, Yugoslav Survey, Belgrade, 1985, and volume 2, Yugoslav Survey, Belgrade 1986;
- The Documents on foreign affairs of the SFRY from 1948, Yugoslav Survey, Belgrade, 1989;
- The Documents on foreign affairs of the SFRY from 1949, Yugoslav Survey, Belgrade 1991;
- The Documents on foreign affairs of the SFRY from 1950, Yugoslav Survey, Belgrade, 1993.

As well as the collection of documents from the period of 1941-1945; documents on foreign affairs of the SFRY from 1941-1945, volume 1, Yugoslav Survey, Belgrade, 1988 and volume 2, Yugoslav Survey, Belgrade, 1989.

The Federal Ministry for Foreign Affairs of the FRY and the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation have published a document code ***Relations between Yugoslavia and Russia (USSR) 1941-1945***

The Code was published by the Federal Ministry for Foreign Affairs, the Military Historic Institute and the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation, in Belgrade, 1996, in Serbian language.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Serbia and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation published, in 2010, a collection of documents entitled "Yugoslav-Soviet Relations 1945-1956", in Serbian and Russian.