

**Nomination form
International Memory of the World Register**

Telegram of Austria-Hungary`s declaration of war on Serbia on 28th July 1914

2014-60

1.0 Summary (max 200 words)

Telegram of Austria-Hungary`s declaration of war on Serbia on 28th July 1914 marked the beginning of the First World War – one of the world's most tragic conflicts in the history of human race and initiated the era of unprecedented suffering. The telegram is the unique testimony of the world's diplomacy and an internationally important document which places Archives of Serbia as one of the most important archival centers in the world .

2.1 Name of nominator (person or organization)

Archives of Serbia

2.2 Relationship to the nominated documentary heritage

According to the Law on Cultural Goods of the Republic of Serbia, Archives of Serbia, a central cultural institution that collects, holds, protects and arranges archival material, is in charge of the affairs of preservation, presentation and conservation of the Telegram of Austria-Hungary`s declaration of war on Serbia. Telegram is the property of the Republic of Serbia.

2.3 Contact person(s) (to provide information on nomination)

Dr. Miroslav Perišić

2.4 Contact details

Name
Dr. Miroslav Perišić, director
of the Archives of Serbia

Address
Arhiv Srbije
Karnegijeva 2
11000 Beograd

Telephone
+381113370246
+381113370781

Facsimile

Email
office@archives.org.rs

3.0 Identity and description of the documentary heritage

3.1 Name and identification details of the items being nominated

If inscribed, the exact title and institution(s) to appear on the certificate should be given

Telegram of Austria-Hungary`s declaration of war on Serbia, sent by Foreign Affairs Minister of Austria-Hungary, Count Leopold Berchtold on July 28, 1914. Declaration of war against Serbia arrived by regular mail, written in French, and was delivered to the President of the Serbian Government and the Minister of Foreign Affairs Nikola Pašić in Niš. Delivery of an open telegram started the First World War.

Declaration of war came after The July Crisis, caused by Gavrilo Princip`s assassination of the heir presumptive /Crown Prince/ to the Austro-Hungarian throne, Archduke Franz Ferdinand of Austria – Este. The Austro-Hungarian consul in Belgrade Baron Giesl delivered an ultimatum to the Serbian government on July 23 with a 48 hours deadline for response. Serbian government accepted all the terms of the ultimatum except those which violate the sovereignty of the Serbian state since Austro-Hungaria demanded its authorities to participate in the investigation /interrogation/ of those organizers held responsible for the assassination inside the Serbian territory. Serbian government had not even completely rejected controversial terms given, but suggested the settlement to be reached in accordance with the provisions of the international law. A declaration of war followed three days after Serbia responded to the ultimatum.

„Having not received a satisfactory reply to the note that had been handed to the Royal Government of Serbia by the Minister of Austria–Hungary to Belgrade dated 23 July 1914, the Imperial and Royal Government finds it necessary to see to the safeguarding of its rights and interests and, with this object, to have recourse to force of arms. From this moment Austri-Hungary accordingly regards herself as in state of war with Serbia“.

3.4 History/provenance

Telegram is kept within the archives of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Kingdom of Serbia. As integral part of the archives of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the telegram was handed to the Archives of Serbia in 1981. It was first presented to the public in a joint exhibition "Nikola Pašić - trail of documents" prepared by Archives of Serbia, Archives of Vojvodina, Novi Sad and Historical Archives "Timočka krajina" of Zaječar in 1996. It was printed as well in a book published on the occasion of the celebration of the centenary of the Archives of Serbia. The document is displayed on the exhibition "Serbia: Existence and Memory. Selection of Documents from the Archives of Serbia", a makes a part of the current exhibition "First World War. In the Documents from the Archives of Serbia".

4.0 Legal information

4.1 Owner of the documentary heritage (name and contact details)

Name	Address
The owner is Republic of Serbia, and is kept in the Archives of Serbia, Belgrade	Karnegijeva 2

Telephone	Facsimile	Email
+381113370781		office@archives.org.rs

4.2 Custodian of the documentary heritage (name and contact details if different from the owner)

Name	Address
Archives of Serbia	

Telephone	Facsimile	Email

4.3 Legal status

Provide details of legal and administrative responsibility for the preservation of the documentary heritage

Telegram of Austria-Hungary's declaration of war on Serbia is part of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs - MID (1839 - 1918) fond, kept in the Archives of Serbia. Based on the Executive Council of the Republic of Serbia decision, the fond was declared as archival material of great importance (RS "Official Gazette", 18/ 1979). According to the Law on Cultural Property (RS "Official Gazette", 71 /1994), the archives of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs fond acts as a cultural asset of exceptional importance that is a "testimony to the crucial historical events and persons, and their activities in the nation's history."

4.4 Accessibility

Describe how the item(s) / collection may be accessed

All access restrictions should be explicitly stated below:

Usage of the archival materials is regulated in details by the Regulations on the conditions and terms of utilization of archival and library holdings in the Archives of Serbia Reading room.

A digitized copy of the telegram is presented on the web site of the Archives of Serbia (www.archives.org.rs) and is available to anyone who intend to gain insight into a document in Serbia and abroad.

4.5 Copyright status

According to Article 73 of the Law on Cultural Property (RS „Official Gazette“, 71 /1994) title, name and character of the cultural heritage of great importance may be used for commercial purposes only with the approval of the Ministry responsible for culture affairs .

For the purpose of propagating cultural property, in accordance with Article 91 of this Law, the institution may transfer, with or without compensation, copy, castings and reproduction of cultural goods, if it is in accordance with the nature and purpose of these goods.

5.0 Assessment against the selection criteria

5.1 Authenticity

The authenticity of the Telegram of Austria-Hungary`s declaration of war on Serbia was confirmed by a large number of archivists and historians and was never questioned, given the characteristics of the document.

5.2 World significance

Telegram of Austria-Hungary`s declaration of war on Serbia has global significance and value because it marked the beginning of one of the world's most tragic conflicts that led to destruction of millions of lives. The war resulted a thorough and comprehensive reshaping of the political map of the world: marked the end of the German, Austro-Hungarian and Russian empires, and ended with the establishment of the Bolshevik government in Russia, contributed to the change in the balance of power between Europe and the United States .

5.3 Comparative criteria:

Does the heritage meet any of the following tests? (It must meet at least one of them.)

1 Time

A telegram was sent on 28 July, 1914. It marked the beginning of the conflict in the First World War, and thus represents a unique document in world history.

2 Place

A telegram was sent by regular mail over Bucharest, which is an unusual practice in international relations, a Serbian Prime Minister Nikola Pašić was forced confirm its authenticity with the Romanian government.

After the end of the war, Austro-Hungarian Empire ceased to exist and its territory divided into a number of smaller states. Kingdom of Serbia also ceases to exist as a state in 1918, and its territory became part of the newly formed Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes.

3 People

Context of the document indicates significant aspects of diplomatic relations, especially relations of great powers towards smaller, as an example of the diplomatic correspondence of the time .

Actors of correspondences are Austro-Hungarian Foreign Minister Count Leopold Berchtold and Serbian Foreign Minister and Prime Minister Nikola Pašić.

The document marks the start of the First World War which was the biggest ever military clash in history of the world, and also initiated a process of social and political changes that took place during most of the 20th century.

4 Subject and theme

The First World War, which began by dispatching a telegram of Austria-Hungary's declaration of war on Serbia, marked the beginning of an era of unprecedented suffering that mankind experienced.

5 Form and style

The fact that the war was declared on Serbia – outside international customary procedures – with an open telegram, sent by regular mail, makes this document unique testimony of world diplomacy.

6 Social/ spiritual/ community significance:

Telegram of Austria-Hungary's declaration of war on Serbia has been used as a primary historical source in the world literature that deals with the causes, the beginning and development of the First World War. In the year marking the centenary of the First World War, we believe that the sources documenting the key events and historical figures occupy an important place in programs marking the anniversary and discover new viewpoint in relation to this important topic.

6.0 Contextual information

6.1 Rarity

Telegram is unique and irreplaceable.

6.2 Integrity

The document is well preserved and conserved by the classical method of coating.
