

Speech by the PDHR and Brcko Supervisor Scanlan at the Academy on the 19th Anniversary of Brcko District Police

Police Chief Pusic,

Mayor Milic,

Speaker Kadric,

Distinguished guests and friends of Brcko District, Ladies and gentlemen,

It is an honour to be here with you today as we celebrate Brcko District Police Day.

At the outset, I would like to publicly extend my congratulations to Police Chief Pusic for his appointment in February to another four-year mandate.

That is four more years to lead the brave men and women of the Brcko District Police in their service to the community, and in strengthening the professionalism of this outstanding police force.

Chief Pusic and the Brcko District Police can count on my continued support.

The Brcko District Police are a driving force in promoting coordination among the police throughout the country. They have also engaged in regional cooperation on law enforcement operations. Criminals have no boundaries and thus coordination across internal administrative boundaries as well as across international boundaries is critical.

In close cooperation with my Office, the Brcko District Police drafted legislation to strengthen the effective financial and personnel management of the police force as well as the transparency in the selection procedures for the top police managers. With commendable efficiency, the Government and the Assembly turned the draft legislation into law. In particular, I want to applaud the equitable and fair retirement provisions for all of the Brcko District Police.

We look forward to the police moving into a new, modern premises – planned for January – and I applaud the efforts of Chief Pusic to reach out to the youth of Brcko District through the Police Summer School. I assure you no effort is too small in convincing your greatest resource – your children – to see that their future is in this beautiful community, including as part of this excellent police force, for without them there is no future.

In all my meetings in the District, I've reminded politicians that progress is only possible when the public interest is at the top of the agenda.

In that regard, a top priority needs to be immediate actions to stem the outflow of the young population, where regrettably Brcko is leading relative to other communities in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

This trend should be an alarm bell for everyone in the District. How can this happen in the community that has the highest per capita budget in BiH?

In that regard, I welcome the commitment from the District's leadership, and indeed every political party in Brcko that I have met, to address this challenge immediately. This fall we will see budget allocations and new legislation adopted to improve the delivery of public services, to attract local and foreign investors that create good paying jobs, and to accelerate the development of infrastructure in the District, including finishing the modernisation of the port and the reconstruction of the bridge.

Each segment of society has a role in making the District a vibrant community where young people will want to stay, work, and raise their families. This is the primary responsibility of Brcko's elected official, but it is also the primary criteria residents of the District should use to judge their officials, including in how they cast their vote at the next election.

Today, I call on the leaders of this truly remarkable community to redouble their efforts to strengthen the rule of law and to create the bright future the District and its residents should have. I know the Brcko District's excellent police force is ready to play its part.

Thank you once again, Chief Pusic, for your excellent cooperation. I particularly appreciate you and your teams efforts in facilitating my visits to the District and I offer you and every member of the Brcko District Police my very best wishes on this day of celebration.

Hvala vam.

Živjeli.