

Dnevni list: Interview with HR Valentin Inzko

By Sanja Bjelica-Šagovnović

The High Representative Valentin Inzko, commenting on the arrest of FBiH President Živko Budimir, warns that it is important for everyone to avoid speculation while the investigative process is ongoing, along with any prognoses on the outcome of the political situation.

Dnevni list: There have been numerous statements and claims that the arrest of Živko Budimir is directly linked to the reshuffling of the authorities in the Federation. How do you comment?

Valentin Inzko: It would be wise for everybody to avoid such speculation: First and foremost, there is an investigative process ongoing, and the independence of this process, and of the of law enforcement agencies conducting it, must be respected.

Dnevni list: What can be done in this situation? Can Budimir carry out his duties while detained? Can somebody replace him during his absence and what would be a way for his possible release from duty?

Valentin Inzko: We should let the investigation follow its course. Obviously, it could be difficult for President Budimir to conduct his duties while in detention, equally though it is impossible to say with any certainty what the outcome of the investigation will be.

In the past, the respective High Representative's have called for certain office holders to submit their resignation after their indictment was confirmed when the existence of such indictment had an effect on the official's ability to conduct his/her functions and in order to enable the institutions to function.

Dnevni list: Is the OHR going to get involved? Are you planning some moves in relation to the situation in the Federation?

Valentin Inzko: OHR will not get involved in an ongoing criminal investigation. I strongly caution against anyone acting in a way that undermines the investigation. What we need to see now is full support for the Prosecutors and the Courts.

As far as the situation in the Federation is concerned, I will be discussing with domestic representatives how they intend to operate while the investigation is ongoing.

Dnevni list: Has the situation with Budimir opened the door for possible changes within the executive authorities of the Federation, or is there a possibility that the current situation will be maintained until 2014?

Valentin Inzko: I would caution against speculation at this stage.

Dnevni list: Do you believe that a crackdown on crime and corruption in the governmental institutions has started in BiH?

Valentin Inzko: During the first months of this year I visited all the key state level law enforcement institutions to reemphasise my support for their mandate and their role. I have given my full support to police, prosecutors and courts. The people of this country have for too long suffered because of corrupt practice. I expect all institutions and officials to give their support to the independence of the institutions responsible for fighting organised crime and corruption. These actions must continue. No one can be above the law.