

## **Respect for Core Principles and Standards Opens the Way for Progress**

Welcoming the return to political dialogue that opens the way to end the turmoil at State level, High Representative Valentin Inzko reiterated that “it is essential that political parties and institutions uphold the principles of democracy, good governance and rule of law, all of which are the heart of both the Peace Agreement and Bosnia and Herzegovina’s Euro-Atlantic integration efforts. A judiciary, a merit based civil service and central bank are all examples of institutions that must be independent and absolutely free from political interference, just as there can be no doubt over the fairness and transparency of elections.”

The High Representative went on to say that “I have not yet seen the initiatives that are being discussed. As usual, I will assess this and all future issue in light of these standards as well as taking into account the longstanding policy of the PIC Steering Board that any attempt to roll back previously agreed reforms, weaken existing state level institutions, or disrespect for the fundamental principles of the Peace Agreement would be unacceptable”.

The High Representative made clear that both he and others in the international community are following developments closely and with concern and will be encouraging parties to continue their dialogue in a constructive and statesmanlike manner, not least through the competent institutions, and to ensure that all their initiatives meet the relevant standards and obligations.