

Inzko: Party Leaders Must Bring Deadlock and Stagnation to an End



The High Representative is in Washington for talks with senior US officials including Deputy Secretary of State William Burns.

High Representative Valentin Inzko said in Washington today that political leaders must finally face up to the political, economic and social realities the country faces and start putting the interests of citizens first by respecting and implementing the Peace Agreement and delivering EU and NATO requirements. They have it in their power to achieve a breakthrough, now it is time they did so.

During his meeting with Deputy Secretary Burns, the High Representative noted that OHR's intervention in the Central Bosnia Canton had contributed to "opening the door" for talks on a new BiH coalition. He said the six party leaders "must now finally walk through this open door" when they meet in Sarajevo on Thursday.

"Agreement on a Council of Ministers is long overdue and it will be a good start to ending destructive deadlock and making it possible to start tackling the severe economic and social problems that BiH citizens face," the High Representative said. "This work simply cannot be put off indefinitely."

High Representative Inzko and Deputy Secretary Burns also discussed the ongoing challenges to Dayton institutions, and the High Representative noted that the progress that has been achieved in implementing the Peace Agreement must not be reversed. "Dayton's Annex 4 institutions play a positive and important role for the country and its citizens, and they will play an important role in the future in advancing the country towards full Euro-Atlantic integration. These institutions need to be supported," High Representative Inzko said.

They also discussed how the ongoing failure to reach agreement on a 2011 or 2012 budget could lead to harmful repercussions for key Dayton institutions and the functioning of the State.

Noting the excellent working relations with the reinforced EU Delegation in BiH, the High Representative said "EU integration and implementation of the Dayton Peace Accords are not mutually exclusive. We are working as a team and are committed to ensuring Bosnia and Herzegovina secures lasting stability and prosperity by respecting and implementing the Peace Agreement and advancing decisively towards full Euro-Atlantic integration." He thanked Deputy Secretary Burns for Washington's continued and robust support to BiH and to the OHR.