



## **Op-ed by Valentin Inzko, EU Special Representative and High Representative in BiH: “They Are Stealing from You “**

I recently heard about a German investor who wanted to spend several million marks developing an agro-industrial project in Bosnia and Herzegovina that would have employed hundreds of people. When he began to take the project forward, however, he discovered that he would have to bribe a long list of intermediate officials to get necessary approval. So he gave up and took his money to Poland, to a district where the land is less fertile than here, but where the business environment is less corrupt.

This is deeply distressing.

It should make every honest citizen of Bosnia and Herzegovina angry too.

Corruption is spawning poverty in this country even as it feathers the nest of crooked officials and politicians.

Until now, many citizens may simply have assumed that corruption is an inevitable part of life. That assumption, however, has given free rein to those who are corrupt.

The result has been catastrophic.

Bosnia and Herzegovina is getting *more* corrupt.