

High Representative Valentin Inzko receives Wilhelm Bock Award 2017



The High Representative, Valentin Inzko, has been awarded this year's Wilhelm Bock Award (*"Wilhelm Bock Preis Gotha 2017"*) for social and democratic engagement in Eastern, Southern, and Central Europe. The award was presented today in the German town of Gotha.

The High Representative has been selected for this prestigious award thanks to his social and democratic engagement to a peaceful Europe. Upon receiving the award, Inzko thanked the selection committee and expressed his heartfelt belief that the European perspective is the only way forward for the Western Balkans. "As a staunch European, I firmly believe this region I spent the past eight years of my life in belongs to the wider European family. Only when the Western Balkans overcomes the remaining obstacles and becomes a fully-fledged member of this family we shall be able to declare that Europe is complete. We are not there yet, but it is my mission – and a mission of other dedicated representatives of the International Community engaged in the region – to get us there."

The Wilhelm Bock Award was established in 2008 by Gotha Mayor Knut Kreuch. It is named after German social-democrat and trade-unionist Wilhelm Bock (1846-1931), who is considered to be one of the founders of the social-democratic movement in

Germany. Other notable recipients of this award include late German politician and creator of the "*Ostpolitik*" Egon Bahr, former Serbian President and leader of the Democratic Party Boris Tadić, and former Czech Prime Minister and European Commissioner Vladimír Špidla.