

Speech by Brčko Supervisor Michael Scanlan on the occasion of the Brčko District Day



*Special session of the District Government on the occasion of
the
21st anniversary of Brčko District – Brčko, 8 March 2021*

Mr. Mayor, Deputy Mayor, Mr. Speaker, Deputy Speaker, and
leaders of Brčko District community, and citizens of the
District who are watching,

congratulations on the Brčko District Day, and to the women of
Brčko, congratulations on International Women's Day.

Today, I will not give a celebratory speech. I will save that
for next year when there should be a reason for it.

A celebratory speech applauds business investments,
infrastructure accomplishments and excellent public
administration that is serving its citizens. It is about
giving credit to those who have assured the good governance,
fiscal responsibility and capital investments that made it
possible.

There is no question Brčko has been given the resources to
achieve this outcome.

The High Representative awarded the District a special coefficient that has given it tens of millions of KM it would not otherwise have received. Donors have provided millions of Euros for projects, and recently the international partners ensured that Brčko received its share of the massive financial support packages provided by the IMF and the EU.

It was understood that Brčko would use these funds to build a vibrant life for all in the District by leveraging both the independence to make decisions under the Final Award to ensure good governance and to use its strategic economic location to attract investors. In short, Brčko was to be a model of what is possible in this country.

As I said in my public statement yesterday, you are at a crossroad to reverse a lost decade. Over the past 18 months, there have been some positive achievements – the establishment of a fiscal public register of public officials and the adoption of a new Law on the Budget and Law on Associations and Foundations, all of which bring much-needed transparency to the use of public funds in the District.

But this is not enough. Building a prosperous Brčko is not about choosing off of a buffet table – all the reforms must be done, and done correctly, transparently, and quickly if the District is to get out of the deep hole it is in following a decade of poor governance and the mismanagement of its abundant public resources.

As the leaders of the District, I have talked individually to almost everyone in this room, so there is no ambiguity on what needs to be done. Thus, it is time for each one of you to advance the public good as you have all assured me you will.

If not, the resource assistance provided cannot be continued. For if this generous assistance is not used as intended, it would be irresponsible for us to continue to provide it.

But it will not be us who will be responsible for that

outcome. It will be you, or at least those of you who chose not to serve the public.

The adoption this month of the Law on Conflict of Interest in its current EU-compliant form will be one of the indicators to us and the public if we should remain committed to supporting the District.

If so, then next year there will be reasons for me to give a celebratory Brčko District Day speech. It is possible, the talent is here, but only if you act now.

Thank you.