



It is time for the RS to have a Day that can be celebrated by all its citizens

The High Representative deplores the RS authorities' continued disregard for the final and binding decisions of the BiH Constitutional Court, which established that the designation of 9 January as RS Day is incompatible with the BiH Constitution.

Republika Srpska as a part of Bosnia and Herzegovina is fully entitled to determine its public holidays, including the Day of Republika Srpska. However, the Day of the Republika Srpska should not be celebrated on the 9th of January, according to past decisions of the BiH Constitutional Court.

"It would be highly constructive to link identity with respect for others. I share a commitment towards equal respect for all constituent peoples, who live in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Why should we not sit together and reflect on how to proceed?," said the High Representative.

In this spirit, the High Representative calls on the RS authorities to fully abide by the decisions of the BiH Constitutional Court and designate an RS Day that can be celebrated by all its citizens.

Public Holidays must be in accordance with the constitutional framework of Bosnia and Herzegovina, including the constitutional provisions related to non-discrimination, and respecting the rule of law. Unfortunately, some have linked recent decisions on sanctions to more than they are – sanctions are an answer to the disrespectful behaviour of individuals towards the rule of law, nothing more. It has to be stressed out that sanctions are not aimed against an entity, any particular people, just against individuals.

The High Representative recalls the position of the BiH Constitutional Court in its past decisions concerning public holidays that they should "symbolize collective, shared remembrance contributing to strengthening the collective identity as values of particular significance in a multiethnic society based on the respect for diversity as the basic values of a modern democratic society." Therefore, the designation and celebration of an RS Day on 9 January disregards the spirit of the Dayton Peace Agreement and rule of law in this country, but also for the multiethnic ethos of BiH. Collectively, these actions undermine reconciliation, the development of a rule-based society and a path to the European Union for BiH.