

High Representative awarded European Charlemagne Prize of Sudeten German Homeland Association

High Representative Valentin Inzko was awarded the European Charlemagne Prize of the Sudeten German Homeland Association in Augsburg today, in recognition of his contribution to the understanding and cooperation of the peoples and countries of Central Europe.

In his acceptance speech, the High Representative focused on efforts at achieving reconciliation and entrenching the rule of law in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

“What we need to aim for in the medium to long term is for all sides to confront their responsibilities. Pointing your finger only at the wrongdoings of the other side will not lead to a lasting reconciliation, nor will it make the injustices committed in one’s own name disappear”, Inzko said.

Speaking of the rule of law, the High Representative expressed his firm conviction “that peaceful coexistence and a functional state can only be achieved on sound legal foundations.”

Inzko also highlighted the immense challenges faced by citizens in Bosnia and Herzegovina today: “People know that they are all in the same boat and have to struggle with the same problems, such as unemployment, day-to-day corruption and the lack of opportunities for future generations.” He regretted that, instead of tackling these problems, some politicians persist in engaging in nationalist policies and rhetoric.

The High Representative called on the wider international community to pay more attention to Southeastern Europe, while praising the EU strategy in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Previous laureates include individuals who have led the way in the European integration process, such as the former Presidents of the Paneuropean Union, Count Richard Nikolaus von Coudenhove-Kalergi and Otto von Habsburg, as well as the former Finance Minister of Germany Theo Waigel.

Valentin Inzko received today’s award in the presence of the Lord Mayor of Augsburg Dr Kurt Gribl, the Bavarian Minister of State for Labour and Social Affairs, Family and Integration Emilia Müller and many other guests.