

High Representative lifts remaining bans on individuals

High Representative Valentin Inzko today lifted the remaining bans on individuals from holding public functions. This represents the final step in a process that was initiated nine years ago by High Representative Paddy Ashdown to review and lift the bans on removed officials.

Following the lifting of these bans there is currently no person under High Representative ban.

The High Representative has always made it clear that the removal of officials from public office is an extraordinary measure and a direct intervention in the political process in Bosnia and Herzegovina. As such, the High Representative has kept these bans – which were always regarded as being temporary – under constant review, with the aim of lifting them when appropriate.

Following consultations with the International Community, the High Representative has concluded that the reasons for which these removals were made no longer exist.

Today's announcement in no way changes the authority of the High Representative to remove individuals in future should they violate or challenge the Peace Agreement and the peace it has brought to the citizens of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Today's Decisions have been issued in light of the principles of equity, proper governance and judicious exercise of the High Representative's international mandate, all of which take into account the balance between the protection of stability and the rights of the individual. They do not call into question the validity of the original removals, nor do they entitle the individuals concerned to restoration to the office from which they were removed.

The Decisions take immediate effect and in no way affect any current or future legal proceedings against the individuals in question. The lifting of bans also in no way represents an endorsement of any of the individuals concerned to return to the political arena, nor does it create any obligation for their former employers.