

High Representative meets Spanish Foreign Minister

High Representative Valentin Inzko met with Spanish Foreign Minister José Manuel García-Margallo in Madrid today for an exchange of views on the current political situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina and the severe consequences from the recent floods.

Political leaders in Bosnia and Herzegovina are still falling short of the expectations of their citizens and the international community, causing the country to slip farther behind its neighbours in regional integration, Inzko said.

Speaking of the upcoming election campaign, the High Representative stressed that what Bosnia and Herzegovina badly needs is a frank public debate on how incoming authorities plan to address high unemployment, corruption and the lack of progress on Euro-Atlantic integration.

The High Representative thanked Spain for its valuable and long-standing contribution to ALTHEA. "I would like to use this opportunity to express my strong belief that the presence of EUFOR in Bosnia and Herzegovina under their existing mandate is essential to support ongoing international community efforts and my ability to fulfil my civilian mandate," Inzko said.

Despite the strides that the country had made in the first decade after the signing of the Dayton Peace Agreement, Inzko underlined that the international community's work was not yet done and its continued engagement remains essential.

The High Representative and the Spanish Foreign Minister also signed a technical agreement on the future representation of the interests of the OHR by the Kingdom of Spain. Under the agreement, once the High Representative ceases in his functions, Spain will continue to manage the archives and

interests of the High Representative and his office's technical and professional staff. The agreement with the Kingdom of Spain in no way affects the existing mandate and role of the OHR in Bosnia and Herzegovina.