

High Representative Welcomes Nominations of Judges to Federation Constitutional Court

The High Representative welcomed today the important step taken by the Federation President and two Vice Presidents nominating judges for vacant positions on the Federation Constitutional Court.

"These nominations to the court were long-overdue," the High Representative said. "However, the President and Vice-Presidents clearly showed their readiness to put the interests of the citizens first. This is an important step towards ensuring a fully functioning constitutional court of the Federation which the citizens of the Federation have been denied for far too long"

The next step will be for the Federation House of Peoples to consider the nominations for final appointment. "The international community will be watching closely now the deliberations within the House of Peoples and expects a step forward. There have been too many political games, which have unnecessarily delayed these appointments and compromised the functionality of the highest court in the Federation," Inzko said.

The FBiH Constitutional Court has been without a full complement of judges and without a functioning vital national interest panel for several years now

While a fully functioning court and vital national interest panel may seem removed from the concerns of everyday citizens in the Federation, nothing could be further from the truth. The lack of a functioning panel has meant in effect that just a few delegates in the cantonal and Federation assemblies have

the ability to effectively block all decisions, including budgets. This has directly contributed to the dysfunction in several cantons and in the Federation in the last several months.

“With the general elections approaching it is absolutely vital that this problem is fixed so that the formation of post-election governments is not unnecessarily blocked and citizens’ votes are not wasted. I can only presume that no party will decide to vote in a manner that will deny the citizens of the Federation their basic rights to a functioning judicial system. If they do then they will have to take fully responsibility for this. I urge the political parties and delegates to show that they are part of the solution. I know both the International Community and the public and large will be watching closely,” the High Representative added.

Once the House of Peoples confirms one or both of the candidates put forward, the High Representative expects the relevant authorities to take the remaining steps swiftly in order for the judges to take their positions as soon as possible, and expects the Federation Parliament to appoint the remaining judge to the vital national interest panel as soon as possible and to ensure that the panel is fully functional and can decide on pending cases.