

Inzko: BiH leaders must rise above party politics



High Representative Valentin Inzko met with Serbian Prime Minister and Minister of the Interior Ivica Dačić and Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign and Internal Trade and Telecommunications Rasim Ljajić in Belgrade today to inform them on the current situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina in light of his recent report to the United Nations Security Council and last week's session of the Steering Board of the Peace Implementation Council in Sarajevo.

"Your readiness to rise above day-to-day politics to tackle the real issues facing Serbia and by extension the wider region will in the years to come be recognised as a historic turning point", Inzko told Serbian officials. "In Bosnia and Herzegovina, two thirds of the population want their country to join the European Union, but political leaders from both entities continue to put personal and party interests before the country and its citizens."

The High Representative welcomed the expressed willingness of Serbian officials to further develop cooperation within the region, and in particular to hold joint sessions between the Council of Ministers of Bosnia and Herzegovina and the Government of Serbia.

"Serbia and BiH face many similar challenges, such as the fight against organized crime and corruption, in which cross-border cooperation is crucial. We have witnessed in recent

months how serious Serbian authorities are in this fight, and I commend them for that", the High Representative said. "Politicians in Bosnia and Herzegovina must understand that the time has come to rise above party politics and agree on a courageous and visionary policy that will ensure that their country keeps apace with its neighbours."