

# Protecting the Rights of BiH Citizens

The Council of Europe – and the European Convention on Human Rights – continue to play a very important role in setting standards that Bosnia and Herzegovina needs to meet, High Representative Valentin Inzko said today in a speech to the Monitoring Committee of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (CoE) in Strasbourg.

Speaking on the tenth anniversary of Bosnia and Herzegovina's formal accession to the CoE, the High Representative called on the CoE's parliamentarians to help ensure that "the correct capacities are in place" and that institutions that protect the rights of BiH citizens are not undermined.

"Human rights, democracy and the rule of law are common requirements of the Dayton Agreement, the European Union and the Council of Europe," he said.

The High Representative described the Sejdic-Finci case as "a unique opportunity for Bosnia and Herzegovina to evolve in a positive direction that results in concrete improvement for citizens."

While noting that challenges to Dayton and to Bosnia and Herzegovina continue, the High Representative nonetheless highlighted recent progress on ending the political deadlock that has produced economic and social hardship.

The High Representative will also meet with the Thorbjørn Jagland, Secretary General of the Council of Europe this afternoon.