



High Representative Meets Croatian President and Foreign Minister

High Representative Valentin Inzko met today with Croatian President Ivo Josipovic, Deputy Prime Minister Neven Mimica, and Foreign Minister Vesna Pusic in Zagreb.

During his talks the High Representative outlined the political situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina after the formation of a new Council of Ministers with Vjekoslav Bevanda at its head, and the new sense of optimism he and the other Ministers have brought with their stated intention to make the EU and NATO agendas and economic issues top priority.

The High Representative also focused on the Dayton implementation agenda during the talks and in particular thanked President Josipovic for the crucial role Croatia has played in creating a new regional architecture and its contribution to the most encouraging regional atmosphere in the last 20 years.

The High Representative welcomed the agreement reached by six party leaders in Banja Luka on 9 March on the issues of state and defense property and expressed the hope that implementation would follow soon. "The political agreement now needs to be translated into concrete action in parliament. Resolving the issue of defense property will also help pave the way for BiH to participate in the NATO Membership Action Plan."

The High Representative expressed the view that Croatia can serve as a positive example for Bosnia and Herzegovina in its Euro-Atlantic integration aspirations. "I believe that the new sense of purpose resulting from the formation of the Council of Ministers, together with Croatia's example of how progress can be made on the Euro-Atlantic agenda can lead to quick progress on outstanding issues facing BiH and its leadership," Inzko said and he thanked his interlocutors for the constructive role Croatia continues to play in BiH both as a co-signatory of the

Dayton Peace Agreement and as a soon-to-be member state of the European Union

The meetings in Zagreb were also an opportunity for the High Representative to discuss certain aspects of practical cooperation between Croatia and BiH in the economic sphere in the light of Croatia's accession to the European Union next year.

Photo gallery: