# Opening Remarks by High Representative and EU Special Representative Valentin Inzko Broadcast to Parliamentary and Government Energy Experts From Saarland and Bosnia and Herzegovina

## Bosnia and Herzegovina Needs Sensible and Transparent Energy Policy

Ladies and Gentlemen,

It's with the greatest pleasure that I send you greetings today.

The study visits organised under the EU's Technical Assistance and Information Exchange Instrument – commonly shortened as TAIEX – offer practical expertise in implementing EU legislation – a key element for success in Bosnia and Herzegovina's integration effort with the European Union.

In this context, the Office of the EU Special Representative and the *Landtag* and Government of Saarland have worked together with TAIEX to provide BiH parliamentarians and ministry representatives in this forum with useful information on energy issues.

Saarland has had to address the challenges of radically changing industrial and post-industrial patterns of energy demand and energy production. The overhaul of an aging energy

infrastructure is just one of the challenges facing Bosnia and Herzegovina, where energy efficiency remains well below EU levels.

A few days ago, Chancellor Merkel expressed her intention to promote Germany as a world leader in renewable energy.

Scope for expanding the hydro, biomass and wind energy sector in Bosnia and Herzegovina is enormous, and the German government is already an active partner in this sector, having funded the BiH Wind Atlas and invested, through the German government development bank, in the Mesihovina Wind Power Plant, to name just two projects.

As the only net energy exporter in the Western Balkans, Bosnia and Herzegovina has the potential to turn this massive natural resource into an instrument of economic transformation.

The renewable energy sector is ripe for international investment and BiH citizens will benefit from this – but only if development of energy policy is sensible, transparent and rapidly deployed.

The current suspension of investment in Bosnia and Herzegovina's electricity transmission infrastructure – exclusively because of political disagreement – has turned a potential economic dynamo into an economic liability.

This is a serious and unnecessary setback.

I hope that your discussions in Saarland will highlight the advantages of a pragmatic and creative energy strategy.

You are meeting just two weeks after a Citizens' for Europe session in Sarajevo produced concrete recommendations from civil society stakeholders on the BiH energy sector. The watchword from that meeting was *coordination*. There needs to be *more and better coordination* among all levels of authority and there needs to be coordination between the authorities and

civil society. This call for enhanced coordination and for the speedy establishment of a Designated National Authority to facilitate investment in “clean” energy has won broad support and I hope it will be reflected in your conclusions today.

Bosnia and Herzegovina should be busy turning its massive renewable energy potential into more jobs, more income and more economic opportunities for companies and individual consumers.

I hope that this study visit will make it possible for lessons that have been learned by Saarland on its path to energy efficiency in the European Union to be applied in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Thank you

The speech can be downloaded here