



## **Letter to the Citizens of Bosnia and Herzegovina From High Representative and EU Special Representative Valentin Inzko**

### **A Different Focus**

The general election on 3 October holds the key to a better future for this country. What happens next is not up to a handful of politicians: it is up to the people, it is up to you!

During the last four years the political focus has been on division, not on creating jobs, reducing poverty or fighting corruption.

This is not good enough! No one wants four more years like that.

Your time has come! If every voter votes, your future and the future of your children can be different – and infinitely better – than previous years.

This is why you, citizens of Bosnia and Herzegovina, must make your politicians take a different approach.

Some people argue that making real progress in Bosnia and Herzegovina is not possible. Well, more than half a billion citizens in the European Union experience progress on a daily basis, progress derived from policies that strengthen local economies, create jobs and successfully fight the scourge of corruption. If Romanians, Slovenians, Bulgarians, Slovaks and Lithuanians – to name just a few – can have those benefits, you, citizens of Bosnia and Herzegovina can have them, too. Do not believe those who argue otherwise!

Real progress is possible in Bosnia and Herzegovina if voters make it happen.

And that doesn't just mean voting on 3 October. It means *asking* politicians to explain themselves *before* 3 October. It means asking them about their European orientation.

They must explain how they propose to break with the past and solve real problems.

Those who run for office *must* give an account of *what* they have done and *why* they have done it, as well as explaining what they propose to do and *how* they propose to do it differently in the future.

In a country where more than half a million people are unemployed, politicians need to explain what they have done to create jobs and what they will do in the next four years to get people back to work.

In a country where the political climate has deteriorated to such an extent that it is discouraging foreign investors from creating new jobs in Bosnia and Herzegovina and leaving the majority of young in a situation where they want to emigrate, candidates must explain what they will do to get Bosnia and Herzegovina back on the road to prosperity.

Last not least, there is the question of who you will entrust to spend public revenues on your behalf. Those who are campaigning for office are asking voters to give them control of these funds. This is legitimate – with a democratic mandate the politicians who are elected in October will have the right to spend billions of KM raised from BiH taxpayers and from the International Community. If you want these funds to be spent for the things you care about, you better ask the candidates who stand for office in advance how they concretely plan to use this money.

An election campaign that focuses on practical and urgent solutions to the most pressing problems that citizens face – unemployment, poverty, crime and corruption is the best way to get the country back on track.

So in the weeks and months to come, oblige candidates to talk about concrete solutions –don't allow them to substitute rhetoric for rational argument. Demand decency, demand clear answers from candidates – if you don't get any, I am sure you will draw your own conclusions. Do have a very thorough look into the entire list of candidates in advance of the election day and mark the candidate of your choice.

Clearly there is a great deal at stake, your future is at stake. On 3 October you have a choice to make about your future.

I urge you to demand progress and vote on 3 October! Everybody, young and old, everybody. The country is yours, the choice is yours!