

A New Architecture



A new architecture is emerging across Southeast Europe, High Representative and EU Special Representative Valentin Inzko said in Montenegro today, but he warned that while some political leaders “are already beginning to leverage this change into benefits for their own people, others have yet to understand what is happening around them.”

Speaking at a conference of diplomats in Kolasin, the HR/EUSR said the last four months had witnessed the construction of a “New Architecture” in Southeast Europe. He cited the Serbian Parliament’s condemnation in March of the 1995 Srebrenica Massacre, and subsequent frequent high-level meetings at which former adversaries have embraced a fresh and constructive approach to long-standing problems.

“Until now BiH citizens have been denied many of the advantages that can come from the hugely improved regional climate,” the HR/EUSR said, adding that this was because of the country’s “expensive and inefficient government system” and also because politics in Bosnia and Herzegovina “have not moved with the times.”

“The system can be *made* to work if there is *a will* to make it work,” the HR/EUSR said, “but the will that we have seen so amply demonstrated in recent months all across the region has yet to come into the ascendant in Bosnia and Herzegovina itself.”

He said this was a miscalculation, since “BiH voters do *not* want more of the same. They want positive change, they want to be part of this new architecture, the sort of change they have

seen in neighbouring countries. This demands a political about-turn, and the question is not *if* but *when* this will happen.”

“It can even happen in the course of this election campaign – it can be reflected at the 3 October polls. Or it may take longer, which would be a great pity because that means that the citizens of Bosnia and Herzegovina would have to wait longer before they can enjoy benefits already enjoyed by their neighbours.”

The HR/EUSR said Bosnia and Herzegovina, with its enormous human and natural resources, stands to benefit hugely from the “new willingness to find solutions, to *negotiate* solutions, to *create* solutions” in the region.

“The future belongs to the brave – and to the creative and the inclusive and the constructive and the innovative and the optimistic,” he said. While some may resist change, “they cannot resist indefinitely, and in the coming months the same progress can be made in Bosnia and Herzegovina that has been made right across the region since the beginning of the year.”

The full text of the HR/EUSR’s speech can be accessed at www.ohr.int and www.eusrbih.eu