Lasting Peace Through The Pursuit of Justice

The High Representative and EU Special Representative Valentin Inzko said today during a meeting in Sarajevo with ICTY Chief Prosecutor Serge Brammertz that there is a new willingness in the Western Balkans to deal with outstanding issues arising from crimes committed during the conflict of the 1990s and that this can help the region move forward

Briefing the Chief Prosecutor on political developments in Bosnia and Herzegovina, the HR/EUSR said recent statements by the parliament of Serbia and the Serbian and Croatian Presidents had created space in which the pursuit of justice can be advanced.

He added that, "in this climate it is all the more offensive that a minority of politicians are seeking to turn back the clock by re-opening old wounds." Noting that "historical fact is simply that: historical fact," the HR/EUSR said lasting peace will come through the pursuit of justice.

"The more support we give to the legal prosecution of those accused of war crimes, the more support we give to those investigating war crimes, and the more support we give to the victims of war crimes, the sooner we will be able to assuage the pain of all those who suffered and move forward," the HR/EUSR said.

Noting that the PIC Steering Board has consistently called on the authorities to maintain full cooperation with the ICTY, arrest all ICTY indictees – in particular Ratko Mladic – and dismantle their support networks, the HR/EUSR

pledged his continuing support to ensuring full cooperation with the ICTY.

The OHR and other international and domestic partners in BiH will continue to support efforts to dismantle the networks that allow Ratko Mladic to remain at large as well as partner efforts of others in the region to ensure that justice is served.

"What is required is a proactive and cooperative commitment to justice, to the courts, to the pursuit of truth," the HR/EUSR said. "I think the vast majority of citizens in the Western Balkans completely understand that."