

Citizens Have Much to Gain – Powerful Interests Have Much to Lose



The EU Special Representative/High Representative Valentin Inzko called on BiH parliamentarians, at the Parliament for Europe session held in Sarajevo today, to overcome resistance to creating a modernised BiH energy sector integrated in the European system, which would mean “security of supply, more investment and more jobs.”

Although it is more than four years since Bosnia and Herzegovina signed the Treaty establishing the Southeast European Energy Community, the Treaty has not been fully implemented in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Major treaty obligations include implementing a BiH Energy Strategy, enacting a BiH Gas Law; and ensuring that Elektroprenos BiH functions in an optimal way for the benefit of BiH citizens.

Instead of progress, “the BiH political establishment has shown itself unable or unwilling to meet its obligations to its international partners and its own citizens in the area of energy reform,” the HR/EUSR said. The Entities are implementing mutually incompatible energy strategies, the State Gas Law has not been presented to Parliament, and Elektroprenos BiH is being undermined and still does not function in accordance with its responsibilities as defined by the law.

“The fact is that you can set yourself up as a champion of the

people only if you actively promote their job opportunities and their prospects of joining the European Union, not the contrary. The EU accession process requires state level competence in the energy sector as a prerequisite for establishing cost effective energy networks.

He called on parliamentarians to support the development of an energy strategy, enact a Gas Law, and ensure that Elektroprenos BiH is run in a professional and responsible way.

The HR/EUSR was speaking at the fourth session of the Parliament for Europe, an EUSR initiative to provide a forum for BiH parliamentarians – drawn from both houses of State Parliament, of entity parliaments as well as from the Brcko District Assembly – to discuss ways of taking the BiH accession process forward with MPs from EU member states, members of the European Parliament and EU integration experts.

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