

## **A Society Where Talent Is No Longer Sidelined or Suppressed**

Bosnia and Herzegovina has a pool of talent that can help resolve the political and economic crisis, High Representative and EU Special Representative Valentin Inzko said yesterday in Tuzla.

Speaking at the annual People Awards organised by Tuzlanski list, the HR/EUSR said that the qualities and character traits recognised in the awards “are the very qualities that can help bring the country out of its present distress.”

He cited the recognition of actor Enes Beslagic and singer Halid Beslic in the newspaper’s awards as just two examples of BiH citizens who have excelled internationally.

“And this excellence goes beyond the arts to encompass business, sport and a host of other fields. Our task in the political sphere is to create a society that *rewards* and encourages talent. We do not have such society in Bosnia and Herzegovina. All too often talent in this country is wasted or sidelined. It is even suppressed.”

The HR/EUSR said the International Community “is working with those in the BiH leadership who want to cooperate with us, to change this unsatisfactory state of affairs – so that the great wellspring of talent that exists in Bosnia and Herzegovina can be unlocked and placed in the service of the country’s citizens.”

He said Bosnia and Herzegovina needs “creative talent, entrepreneurial vigour and more constructive and effective political leadership” and that these things can be brought to the fore “despite the painful setback of the last three years, during which politics has come to a standstill and the economy has gone into a tailspin”.

Talent can only be suppressed for so long, the HR/EUSR said. “The natural talent that abounds in this country will surely prevail over the artificial constraints that have been placed in its way.” He added that the International Community “will do everything it can to ensure that this happens sooner rather than later.”

The HR/EUSR paid tribute to Croatian Prime Minister Jadranka Kosor, also recognised this year by Tuzlanski list.

“The experience of the last decade shows that when the countries of the region coordinate their efforts, when they lend a hand to one another and move forward together, they make infinitely greater progress,” he said. “Prime Minister Kosor has been an effective champion of regional cooperation and for this we thank her.”

*The full text of the HR/EUSR’s speech can be accessed at [www.ohr.int](http://www.ohr.int) and [www.eusrbih.eu](http://www.eusrbih.eu)*