

Inzko in Brussels: Some Progress, despite Continuing divisive Rhetoric



Bosnia and Herzegovina has made some progress in meeting EU requirements, but more efforts are needed to fulfil the objectives and conditions for OHR transition, EU Special Representative and High Representative Valentin Inzko told senior EU decision-makers in Brussels today.

During his visit to the EU capital, Inzko informed the Ambassadors of the Political and Security Committee, a key EU foreign policy body, on the situation in BiH, and held talks with the European Commissioner for Enlargement, Olli Rehn.

In his address to the PSC, the HR/EUSR welcomed the adoption of a number of key laws in the BiH Parliament, especially from the visa liberalisation Road Map, as an important step forward in the country's EU integration process. At the same time, he deplored the lack of progress on meeting all five objectives and two conditions set by the Peace Implementation Council for the closure of the OHR and transition to an EU-lead presence in BiH, as well as the continuing divisive rhetoric.

"My priority remains to facilitate a domestic political dialogue and compromise aimed at creating the necessary conditions for the transition of the OHR into a strong EU-lead presence in Bosnia and Herzegovina", Inzko said. Achieving an "acceptable and sustainable" solution for the issues of defence property and apportioning ownership of state property are the most pressing tasks ahead of BiH's political leaders. Inzko reiterated the international community's full support to domestic political initiatives aimed at moving the country

forward. "The Prud process of domestic political dialogue has laid the ground for progress on a number of issues, and my office stands ready to facilitate further talks in this direction", he said.

The HR/EUSR also stressed that the joint visit by EU High Representative Javier Solana and US Vice-President Joseph Biden, had sent a clear message to domestic political leaders that "the current pace of reform is not adequate to Bosnia and Herzegovina's proclaimed interest in EU and NATO integration". This shortcoming must be addressed as a matter of urgency to prevent Bosnia and Herzegovina falling further behind its neighbours in the process of Euro-Atlantic integration, Inzko concluded.