



Gregorian Highlights Human-Rights Violations in BiH Constitution

Acting High Representative Raffi Gregorian met today in Sarajevo with OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities Knut Vollebaek. The meeting focused on the current political situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina, with special emphasis on the implementation of the PIC agenda and on the status of national minorities in BiH.

"More than a decade after the war, Bosnia and Herzegovina is still divided along ethnic lines. Divisions are created and maintained by politicians who instigate fear and mistrust in order to win votes within 'their' ethnic group. Creating tension and an atmosphere of suspicion undermines the achievements of the Dayton Peace Agreement and the stability of BiH," Gregorian said.

The Acting High Representative called on BiH politicians to focus seriously on the country's future in the EU and NATO.

"They have to start creating an atmosphere of dialogue and compromise," he said. "Euro-Atlantic integration is the best way of resolving conflicts of the past and ensuring that all citizens feel at home in this country."

As the Venice Commission of the Council of Europe has pointed out, BiH citizens who do not identify themselves as belonging to one of the constituent peoples do not enjoy full electoral rights. This is particularly clear when it comes to the election of the Presidency and the House of Peoples. In addition the law on national minorities is not fully respected.

"The BiH legislative framework protects the interests of constituent peoples, whereas minority groups are broadly

disregarded. Minority communities in BiH are disadvantaged and are not on an equal footing with constituent peoples," Gregorian concluded.