Lajčák urges FBiH authorities to reduce expenditures

High Representative Miroslav Lajčák continued today in Sarajevo his talks with key representatives of the institutions of Bosnia and Herzegovina and its Entities by meeting FBiH President Borjana Krišto and her Deputy, FBiH Prime Minister Nedžad Branković and the Collegia of both Houses of the FBiH Parliament.

In all his meetings, Lajčák stressed the need for more decisive and swift measures to address the challenges to financial stability of the Federation of BiH. “It is fair to say that unrealistic planning, and undertaking commitments that cannot be financially met are the main reasons for the current financial situation in the Federation”, Lajčák said. “Reducing expenditures will not be easy, but it most be done, because the existing state of affairs is hurting not only the most vulnerable, but all citizens of the Federation of BiH.”

Speaking of the Law on Public Broadcasting of the Federation of BiH, Lajčák expressed his concern over repeated attempts to cut the Communications Regulatory Agency out of the selection and appointment process for the FTV Governing Board. “I trust that the proposed amendments to the law will eventually be withdrawn from procedure, especially in light of the negative opinion recently issued by the Federation Government”, Lajčák said. The next step should be for the authorities to initiate new amendments to ensure a *permanent* role for the CRA in these appointments, in line with European Union requirements.

The High Representative also urged the Federation President and her Deputies to respect the Constitution and the Law on the HJPC in the process of nominating Judges to the FBiH Constitutional Court. Since the relevant constitutional provisions were the result of an imposition by the High Representative, Lajčák announced that he would issue an interpretation of these amendments to clarify the respective roles of the institutions in the selection and appointment procedure of FBiH Constitutional Court Judges.

In response to repeated speculations to the contrary, the High Representative stressed that OHR-EUSR transition is in no way linked to the question of his succession, and that this issue would be addressed by the PIC only when the five objectives and two conditions have been met. “Rather than speculating on the future of OHR, I expect from the authorities in BiH to focus on reforms and commitments of relevance to BiH. For my part, I will retain the position of High Representative until a replacement is found, fully engaged and dedicated to facilitating progress in BiH. There will be no institutional vacuum”, Lajčák said.