



## **Statement by the High Representative and EU Special Representative Miroslav Lajčák about Anti-European Move by the RS Government**

Good afternoon, thank you for coming at such short notice.

I said at the beginning of my mandate that I would not take part in political games but rather that my role was to ensure adherence to the rules.

On 11 September the Government of Republika Srpska adopted a conclusion for the RS institutions to withhold information from SIPA and the BiH Prosecutor's Office.

The RS Government's Conclusion states that the Republika Srpska Tax Administration and other RS institutions are not obliged to provide SIPA or the BiH Prosecutor with copies of tax returns and balance sheets of Integral inženjering from Laktaši and Integral inženjering from Banja Luka, the RS Government and a number of Ministries. They are all named in the RS Government decision.

On the basis of this Conclusion, a letter by the RS Government Secretariat was sent to the BiH Prosecutor's Office to inform the Prosecutor of the decision.

Non-compliance with a request from the BiH Prosecutor or SIPA is illegal.

An instruction from a legislative or executive body that prevents the judiciary from doing their job is clear political interference in judicial matters.

Such an act represents the undermining of the rule of law on which every modern democracy is built.

The rule of law is one of the fundamental principles of the European Union and every European democracy. Political interference in legislation destroys the European aspirations of Bosnia and Herzegovina and all its citizens.

That is why today I have sent a written request to the RS Government to rectify the situation by bringing this decision into accord with the laws of BiH and ensuring that RS institutions cooperate fully with all law enforcement and judicial institutions of BiH.

I expect them to react seriously, because this is a serious situation.

This is about the rule of law and the European future. This is something that is in the interest of all citizens, including the citizens of Republika Srpska.

I have also notified the ambassadors of the Peace Implementation Council member countries about this and we will consider the reaction by the RS Government on Friday morning.