

Solana and Lajčák meet Špirić: BiH must focus on EU priorities



EU High Representative for the Common Foreign and Security Policy Javier Solana and High Representative and EU Special Representative Miroslav Lajčák met with the Chairman of the BiH Council of Ministers, Nikola Špirić, in Brussels today.

Nikola Špirić provided an overview of the situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina, and expressed his hope for a positive assessment of progress achieved by BiH in 2008.

The Chairman of the BiH Council of Ministers raised the need to move forward on constitutional reform and conduct a full population census in 2011. He added that BiH would need to resolve the issues of State property and the future status of Brcko to facilitate the transition from OHR to EUSR.

Javier Solana stressed that 2008 was a good year for Bosnia and Herzegovina, with the signing of the Stabilisation and Association Agreement marking the most important qualitative change in BiH's relationship with EU. The key priority for the country now is to make progress on SAA implementation and overcome the current paralysis of the institutions.

Solana conveyed the message that BiH needs to focus on its European priorities and not be distracted by other issues. He counts on the Chair of the Council of Ministers to help focus the debate on the EU, which would also be in the best interest of the country and all its citizens.

Miroslav Lajčák recalled the European Union's repeated commitment to extend EU membership to Bosnia and Herzegovina, noting that it was now up to BiH's politicians to meet EU requirements through concrete actions. "These are not difficult tasks and their fulfillment will further the development of the entire country, to the benefit of all. Over 80% of citizens of all nationalities support BiH's European future – a project that needs to be a joint effort of all sectors of society", Lajčák said.