

Lajčák meets Burns: BiH leaders must abide by their obligations



“Concrete steps taken by BiH political leaders will determine whether BiH will go further into isolation or towards European integration,” the High Representative and EU Special Representative, Miroslav Lajčák, told the United States Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs Nicholas Burns in Washington today.

Following his address to the UN Security Council on Thursday, the High Representative met with senior US State Department officials to brief them on the current situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina. In his talks with US officials, the High Representative expressed his appreciation for the strong support the US administration has given to the peace process in Bosnia and Herzegovina, and welcomed the US government’s continuing commitment to the country.

“Membership in the European Union is BiH’s key strategic objective but US engagement remains crucial”, the High Representative said, noting that, with the failure to agree police reform, the initialling of Stabilisation and Association with the European Union has been delayed.

Nicholas Burns expressed the US government’s full support for the actions of the High Representative, and called on political leaders in Bosnia and Herzegovina to abide by their obligations and implement the High Representative’s decisions without delay.

Addressing the situation in the wider Balkan region, Miroslav Lajčák and Nicholas Burns rejected any linkage between the future status of Kosovo and the territorial integrity of Bosnia and Herzegovina. Such comparisons are irresponsible and the international community will stand firm in ensuring full respect for the Dayton Peace Agreement, and the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the state of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Lajčák and Burns agreed.

During his visit to the US capital, the High Representative and EU Special Representative also held talks with the Assistant Secretary of State for European and Eurasian Affairs Daniel Fried, and his deputy, Rosemary di Carlo, and the Senior Director for European Affairs at the National Security Council, Judy Ansley.