

Nearly \$100 Million Will Be Lost if BiH Does Not Accelerate Reforms

The members of the Board of Principals and the Council of Europe said that nearly \$100 million in international assistance would be lost unless BiH accelerated key economic and social reforms in coming weeks. To put that in context, this assistance is the equivalent of over \$100 for every family in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

The organizations urge the BiH State and Entity authorities to speed up key economic and social reforms in order to enable better living standards for all BiH citizens, and the continuation of reconstruction and development efforts in the country.

Specifically, the Board of Principals urges the BiH State Parliament to adopt the Higher Education Law. This legislation is not simply the main condition for continued international support to this crucial sector, but more importantly its passage is needed to improve the quality of the BiH education system through more efficient use of tax payers' and students' resources, by developing common quality assessment procedures and prescribing common standards at the State level and financing at the Entity level.

The Board of Principals also urged the Entity authorities to speed up passage of appropriate war veterans' and invalids' legislation by the end of this month as part of continued social sector reform. This new legislation will provide for a better and more balanced and transparent use of public resources, where social payments would be aimed at the most needy beneficiaries.

The international organizations gathered at the Board of Principals stressed that these and other reforms are not just important because they provide for the continuation of the EU accession process, and access to new World Bank assistance worth US\$ 93 million which would otherwise be lost, but because it is only through reforms such as these that better living standards, new jobs and adequate social services for all citizens of Bosnia and Herzegovina can be secured.