

“You can only get to Europe if you work together”

The High Representative today met the leaders of BiH's parliamentary political parties to urge them to work together in the interests of all the citizens of BiH, to prepare the country for European integration negotiations next year.

The High Representative told the political leaders: “You, as the leaders of BiH's parliamentary political parties have a decisive role to play in preparing this country for European integration. Together, you have the power to put BiH in a position to begin negotiations with the European Commission in the second half of next year. How and whether you decide to do that is up to you. But you will only succeed if you can find new ways of working together in the country's interests, perhaps by forming a 'Compact For Europe', as political parties in the Czech Republic, Hungary and elsewhere did. They knew that they either succeeded together or failed together.”

The High Representative told them that as of today there are 222 days between now and 30 June. He said that BiH will need to use every one if it is to stand a chance of making real inroads into this very substantial work programme demanded by the European Commission in the Feasibility Study report announced last Tuesday. If the 16 conditions in this report are not met, Europe will say no. He made clear that the reforms necessary to meet these conditions cannot come from the OHR – they have to come from the politicians of BiH.

He concluded by saying: “For every citizen in this country, who have put up with such pain and suffering, it would be catastrophic if BiH's political class failed to do what was necessary to make the dream of Europe a reality. It is not for me to tell you how and whether to cooperate. That is of course your decision, as political parties. But I can tell you this:

if you work together, you will succeed, and it will be your collective success. If you fail to work together, you will fail, and it will be your collective failure”.

Barisa Colak (HDZ), Dragan Kalinic (SDS), Husein Vojnikovic (Stranka Penzionera), Kresimir Zubak (NHI), Milenko Todorevic (SRS), Mirjana Djordjevic (BOSS), Nebojsa Radmanovic (SNSD), Refik Numic (Republikanska Stranka), Rifet Dolic (DNZ), Safet Halilovic, (SBiH), Seada Palavric (SDA), Tihomir Gligoric (SPRS), Vinko Radovanovic (PDP) and Zlatko Lagumdzija (SDP) attended the meeting.