

## **High Representative meets BiH Croat parliamentarians**

The High Representative, Wolfgang Petritsch, met today with Mariofil Ljubic, Miro Grabovac-Titan, Zdenko Vukic and Marko Amidzic, HDZ deputies in the BiH House of Representatives. The meeting took place so that the parliamentarians could discuss with the High Representative issues of concern to their constituents.

During the meeting, the High Representative and the four parliamentarians discussed the best way of promoting the political interests of Croats in BiH, within the legal and constitutional framework of BiH – the only context within which BiH Croat political interests can be effectively pursued.

The High Representative acknowledged that these four parliamentarians have participated constructively in the work of the BiH House of Representatives over the last few months. “You took your responsibilities as elected representatives of Croat Constituent People seriously,” he said. He added that other HDZ members have not shown the same common sense, thereby betraying their constituents. “As long as there is leadership of your party such as it is now, the position and the protection of BiH Croat interests is weakened,” the High Representative said. “Those people, and they are only a few within the HDZ and BiH Croats as a whole, are the ones whose action may undermine the position of BiH Croats, and by extension, Bosnia and Herzegovina. They do not care for the Croat nation, its people or Bosnia and Herzegovina” said the High Representative Wolfgang Petritsch.

Among the topics discussed were the future of Bosnia and Herzegovina and BiH Croats, implementation of the Constitutional Court’s decision on the constituent status of BiH’s peoples in both Entities, and the progress achieved in the work of the Entity Constitutional Commissions.

The High Representative emphasised that BiH can further develop only with the full participation of BiH Croats. Once again the High Representative expressed his disappointment with the fact that the HDZ repeatedly refused to join the Constitutional Commissions when they were formed in the spring of this year. By contrast, BiH Croats from the Alliance for Change have been actively engaged in the work of the Commissions. This process, for the first time since Dayton, will – inter alia – lead to effective and formalised protection of the rights of BiH Croats in Republika Srpska. “I can guarantee these constitutional changes will strengthen the position of Croats in BiH” he said.