

Stability and Progress in Bosnia and Herzegovina is in the Interest of Europe

High Representative Valentin Inzko briefed the European Parliament's Committee on Foreign Affairs today on the current situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina and the international community's efforts to ensure the country's long-term stability and prosperity.

"Difficult challenges before both the EU and Bosnia and Herzegovina require strategic and committed engagement. We should not neglect the scale of the challenges and must tackle them head on," the High Representative said.

The High Representative also highlighted the positive significance of BiH's recent progress on its EU path. "I am a strong supporter of BiH's EU integration and believe that the integration process will motivate and accelerate reforms needed for improving the functionality of the country and the wellbeing of its citizens. For that reason, I am glad that BiH has now received the EU questionnaire and can start with much needed changes," he said.

During his remarks, which can be found on the OHR's web site, High Representative Inzko expressed concern about the disregard for the rule of law by some politicians who ignore or reject the rulings of courts. The disregard for the rule of law is not only a serious problem for and by itself but it also affects many citizens directly. For example, the citizens of Mostar have been denied the basic right to elect their local representatives for many years, and the two strongest parties in Mostar have shown little incentive to resolve this problem. On the other hand, key RS authorities as well as RS-based parties pursued acts and activities disrespecting the fundamentals of the Dayton Peace Agreement by violating decisions of the Constitutional Court.

In his conclusion, the High Representative said that "international community and EU need to keep the course and intensify their efforts. We need a renewed engagement that confronts serious challenges and prioritizes reforms that go deep enough to transform BiH into a modern, functional and prosperous state."