



Inzko: Right to return is guaranteed by Dayton, intimidation of returnees is unacceptable and violates Dayton

“Commemorations to innocent victims of war crimes and the genocide in Srebrenica must never be used as a platform for incitement of ethnic or religious hostility or hatred. Such behaviour goes against basic and universal human decency, is deplorable, fundamentally unacceptable and an insult to every victim or a survivor,” High Representative Valentin Inzko stated today, commenting on recent statements by the RS President Milorad Dodik given in Bratunac.

“Victims of the terrible crimes that were committed during the war, be they Serbs, Croats, Bosniaks or Others, must be respected; they deserve to be laid to rest and treated with dignity, not misused for shallow political purposes and threats to anybody, particularly those who, despite all the hardship, pain and circumstances decided to rebuild their lives as returnees,” Inzko said.

High Representative Inzko recalled that the Annex 7 of the Dayton Peace Agreement clearly states that every refugee and displaced person has a right to return freely to their pre-war homes in Bosnia and Herzegovina and that the parties to the Agreement shall ensure that refugees and displaced persons are permitted to return in safety, “without risk of harassment, intimidation, persecution, or discrimination, particularly on account of their ethnic origin, religious belief, or political opinion.” Actions or statements against these explicit and original provisions run counter to the Dayton Agreement, which was signed by all sides.

“Statements such as the one given by RS entity President Dodik have no other purpose but to create fear amongst one of the most vulnerable groups in BiH. He should be aware that no political campaign can justify this. However, ordinary people know better: they have proved, on numerous occasions that they know how to live together in peace, tolerance and dignity,” the High Representative said.