

# HR Inzko: Discrimination is Unacceptable



“Since 2009, every 22<sup>nd</sup> of December is a sad day for Bosnia and Herzegovina and its citizens. This date marks another year in which a significant segment of the BiH population remains deprived of a fundamental right – the right to be a candidate for election and be adequately represented in the BiH Presidency and the BiH House of Peoples. The country marks yet another anniversary of non-implementation of European Court of Human Rights’ ruling in the *Sejci-Finci v. BiH* case. Continuing this policy of discrimination for yet another year is a stain on the interwoven traditional fabric of Bosnia and Herzegovina”, the High Representative Valentin Inzko stated today.

This ruling reminds BiH of its obligation to make sure that every citizen enjoys the same rights when it comes to participation in public and political life, without any form of discrimination. Anything else is unacceptable.

“Once again I need to remind the authorities of Bosnia and Herzegovina of their obligation to bring the country’s Constitution and its electoral arrangements in line with the ECtHR ruling and the European Convention on Human Rights and its Protocols. The same message was once more sent from the latest meeting of the Peace Implementation Council Steering Board,” said the High Representative.

Inzko concluded that “every citizen is entitled to equal

treatment regardless of their ethnic or religious background, political or other beliefs, gender, sexual orientation, age or education. Political leaders claim they want BiH to be a modern, inclusive and tolerant society. For this to happen, all pieces of the inclusivity puzzle need to fit nicely in their place.”

“As a member of the Council of Europe, and a country engaged in stabilization and association with the European Union, BiH has an obligation to address this issue. It will not go away. But above all, leaders need to show all citizens of BiH that they are working in their best interest. There will be enough time to do the right thing in time for the 2018 general elections and it should be used,” concluded the High Representative.