

BiH Can Not Afford to Miss the Train in 2009



The High Representative and the EU Special Representative Miroslav Lajčák today met with Osman Topcagic who is currently the Director of the Directorate for European Integration and the appointed BiH Ambassador to the EU to discuss priorities and challenges that Bosnia and Herzegovina will face in the context of European integration process. Both partners agreed that the year 2009 is a crucial one in terms of meeting outstanding obligations if the country wants to move quicker towards the EU and have visa regime lifted for its citizens. Otherwise Bosnia and Herzegovina will be left out of the group of the countries of the region which are treating EU integration issues as their real and serious priority.

With regard to the fact that after Mr Topcagic's appointment as new BiH Ambassador to the EU last June, the Council of Ministers has not even launched the procedure for his replacement as the Director for the Directorate for European Integration, HR/EUSR Lajčák said that such situation is not tolerable and must be remedied immediately. "It is even more unacceptable that a country which has, rightly, made closer relations with the EU its strategic goal, is not able to appoint the Director for European Integration and have its Ambassador to the EU. At my first meeting with Chairman Spiric I will insist that he immediately resolves this issue in line with the Civil Service Law in order for this gap to be closed."

HR/EUSR Lajčák congratulated Mr Topcagic on his effective leadership of the Directorate for European Integration and in his capacity as the EUSR looks forward to close cooperation with him during his mission in Brussels.