

# BiH Must Not Be Left Behind



It is crucial for the region as a whole that Bosnia and Herzegovina is not left behind in the European integration process, High Representative and EU Special Representative Valentin Inzko said during a two-day working visit to Croatia.

The HR/EUSR was in Zagreb on Thursday and Friday, where he held talks with President Ivo Josipovic and Ministers Gordan Jandrokovic and Djuro Popijac. On Friday the HR/EUSR also spoke at a conference on Southeast Europe's EU perspective.

During his meetings with Croatian officials the HR/EUSR said BiH citizens should not be penalised because of the political parties' failure to find a compromise on a coalition government. "Bosnia and Herzegovina needs a principled and effective government now," the HR/EUSR said. "Any coalition must have a vision on basic issues that will take Bosnia and Herzegovina forward towards the EU and NATO." Finally, he argued that a resolution of the present stalemate in Bosnia and Herzegovina is also in the interest of neighbouring countries.

Addressing the conference on Southeast Europe's EU perspective the HR/EUSR said the reconfiguration of EU resources in Bosnia and Herzegovina will reflect the aspirations of the Lisbon Treaty and will result in a more effective EU presence. He stressed that the new EU office in BiH will have the tools that will allow it to make a decisive contribution to speeding up Bosnia and Herzegovina's progress along the path of European integration. Bosnia and Herzegovina must not be left behind while other countries in the region move forward towards membership in the European Union. This is not only a

clear message by the International Community but also the expectation of the citizens of Bosnia and Herzegovina.