

Brčko continues positive processes, but progress must be faster



*Speech by the Principal Deputy High Representative/Brčko
Supervisor Jonathan Mennuti*

*at the ceremony marking the 23rd anniversary of the Brčko
District*

Dear officials, guests, and citizens of Brčko. First of all, I want to congratulate you all on Brčko District Day, as well as on International Women's Day.

March 8 gives us an opportunity to draw a line and evaluate the progress made in the past year. I am pleased to say that the District has continued positive processes.

In February, the monument to civilian victims was completed, the last part of the agreement on monuments from as far back as 2009. It was not easy to reach that agreement, just as it was not easy to get out of the decade-long stagnation of reforms in Brčko.

But Brčko succeeded. This monument is a constant reminder that there is no alternative to agreement and joint work for a common future.

In that spirit, yesterday we marked the beginning of work on the new business zone. New business energy and well-paid jobs in the private sector are the best way of offering better

conditions to young people. This will free the citizens from the burden of political patronage and reduce the public administration to a reasonable size.

The District has overcome external pressures, such as rising energy prices caused by Russia's brutal aggression against Ukraine. The modernization of the Port has continued.

Demining of the remaining areas also continues, as well as the capacity development of bodies fighting corruption and conflict of interest. Laws on public administration reform and development of the energy sector are currently being drafted.

Some of these things may already sound familiar to you because you have been hearing about them for a long time. And while some delays are caused by external factors, others are the fault of the local authorities.

Brčko must solve problems and complete projects faster! Goals in and of themselves are meaningless if you do not achieve them, and the process is not the same as the result.

It is time for the citizens to see real results on the ground. Actual kilometers of a new highway. Real reform of the public sector!

It is the responsibility of the District authorities to maintain focus on reforms and not allow additional delays. This is and always will be the responsibility of the District institutions.

I look forward to an even more beautiful panorama of Brčko at the next District Day celebration.

Thank you.