

Budapest: Inzko Meets Hungarian Foreign Minister and Speaks at Conference on BiH



The High Representative and EU Special Representative, Valentin Inzko, met today with the Hungarian Foreign Minister, Péter Balázs, and informed him about the current political situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina, with the focus on the next steps that BiH needs to take in the Euro-Atlantic integration process.

“Bosnia and Herzegovina has a European future. I hope that politicians in this country will find the political will to take the steps that are needed for BiH to make further progress towards the EU. We are now on the right track in the visa liberalization process but the job is not done yet. BiH politicians must continue with their efforts in order to fulfill the EU conditionality that would lead to a visa-free regime next year,” the HR/EUSR said.

The HR/EUSR also addressed an international conference in Budapest today. In his speech he noted that the word “prosperity” hardly ever appears in political discussions in Bosnia and Herzegovina.. He said this was because “the energy, focus, and resources that should be devoted to making the country prosperous are being channelled elsewhere.”

The HR/EUSR stressed that “delivering prosperity to the hard-pressed citizens of BiH is absolutely not something that can wait. It’s something that we can and must address at the same time as we address political issues,” and he added that BiH “can learn from countries that have already made the transition to market democracy and EU membership”.

HR/EUSR Inzko noted that the prosperity that countries in the European Union now enjoy is still denied to the long-suffering people of BiH. Faced with this situation, Inzko said, “We cannot allow the urgent business of economic and social reform to be put on hold.”

Calling for a new focus “on the mechanics of achieving not modest improvements but a quantum leap towards sustainable prosperity,” the HR/EUSR identified the six strategic economic areas of Hydropower, Tourism, Forestry, Agriculture, the Information Highway, and Road Infrastructure, which, he said, could be “pillars of real prosperity.”

The HR/EUSR was speaking at a conference on “BiH’s Road towards Stabilization, Prosperity and European Integration”, organised by the Hungarian Institute of International Affairs.