

Dnevni avaz: Interview with HR Valentin Inzko



Dnevni avaz: What is the goal of your consultations with party leaders, is there any hope?

Valentin Inzko: As the institutions return to work following the summer break, these meetings are an opportunity to discuss issues which need to be addressed from the reform agenda. I am calling on political leaders and institutions to intensify their efforts to secure progress for BiH, particularly on the path to the EU and NATO. In the Federation, I am also reminding parties of their obligations to implement the ruling of the BiH Constitutional Court on the electoral system for Mostar, a Dayton requirement. I want to encourage Federation parties to engage constructively in the ongoing domestic process to propose reforms to the Federation in an effort to make the entity more functional, cost-effective and responsive to the needs of citizens.

Dnevni avaz: Is your engagement designed to revive a clinically dead OHR?

Valentin Inzko: Over the last few years, my predecessors and I have intentionally pursued a less interventionist approach in Bosnia and Herzegovina, one that has been focused on promoting local ownership and responsibility, in order to see the country firmly on the road to Euro-Atlantic structures. This has been the policy of the PIC and the broader International Community and it continues to be so.

At the same time, while the OHR's role in the country has changed significantly over the years in line with the policy of the PIC Steering Board, I do maintain an important mandate and I would not be taking my job seriously if I did not have regular contacts with political and institutional leaders in the country.

I rather wish the media would focus such questions on the leaders of this country. What steps do they plan to take to revive their own relevance vis-à-vis the needs of the citizens, not least with regards to resolving the outstanding conditions for EU and NATO integration?

Dnevni avaz: Is it your intention to propose concrete solutions to the party leaders?

Valentin Inzko: We are in 2013, which means that it has been 18 years since the end of the war and the signing of the Dayton Peace Agreement. The international community is no longer willing to make proposals on behalf of local politicians, as it used to do, unless they show at least some degree of flexibility and willingness to compromise. In spite of extraordinary efforts on the part of the international community, there has been no agreement on Mostar or the Sejdić-Finci verdict. The OHR, the EU and the other international actors can assist in finding a solution, but we cannot force politicians to do their job.

Dnevni avaz: What if there is no agreement among party leaders?

Valentin Inzko: Agreements among parties are the only way forward, there is no alternative, because continued stagnation will have a negative impact on perceptions of the country here at home and abroad, which in turn discourages investments that would bring much needed new jobs.

I ask myself: if political leaders are serious about attracting foreign investments to create new jobs why would

they act in a way that leads investors to conclude there is insufficient stability for them to invest? Politicians from all parts of the country need to start working together and contributing to achieve what all citizens want: a better standard of living, more jobs and progress in the Euro-Atlantic integration process.

Dnevni avaz: What is your view on the increasing numbers of attacks against Bosniak returnees?

Valentin Inzko: I have been following these developments very closely. I was particularly appalled by the recent attacks on returnees in Zvornik. It is good that the mayor promptly condemned the attacks. I expect the competent authorities to fully investigate what happened in a fair and unbiased manner.

Dnevni avaz: Is the Russian threat of boycott undermining the functioning of PIC Steering Board?

Valentin Inzko: Russia is a valuable member of the international community and takes part in all sessions of the PIC Steering Board. They have not announced or threatened any kind of boycott.