Electorate to hold BiH Leaders accountable

The European Union is committed to “working with the people of Bosnia and Herzegovina so that they can enjoy the same security, prosperity and stability as citizens in the EU,” the High Representative and EU Special Representative, Valentin Inzko, said today, adding that “this process would move ahead much faster if BiH politicians dedicated some efforts to it.”

The HR/EUSR was speaking during a meeting with visiting Italian Foreign Minister Franco Frattini.

The HR/EUSR thanked Foreign Minister Frattini for the vigorous support, which Italy has given to Western Balkans countries in their efforts to align immigration and internal security provisions with those of the European Union so that visa requirements and other restrictions can be lifted.

Minister Frattini said that Italy, which has long-standing economic and cultural links with Bosnia and Herzegovina, has played an active role in peace implementation over the past years and will continue to offer practical and diplomatic support for BiH’s post-war economic recovery and Euro-Atlantic integration.

Briefing the Italian Foreign Minister on the current political situation, HR/EUSR noted that many reforms expected by the BiH citizens were not passed, or implemented, due to lack of commitment by local political leaders. He stressed that a large number of these reforms, needed in order to stop the

spread of unemployment and poverty in Bosnia and Herzegovina, are also part of the EU integration agenda. This, as well as the upcoming elections, should be reason for these leaders to demonstrate much a more constructive engagement.

Reaffirming recent statements by the Peace Implementation Council, the HR/EUSR and Minister Frattini agreed that BiH’s sovereignty is not open to question, Dayton provisions must be upheld, and that an effort of good will must be made by all parties to reach compromise on reforms and on other outstanding issues with a view to boosting BiH’s progress towards the EU and NATO.