EU And NATO – The Job In BiH Is Not Finished

The High Representative and EU Special Representative (HR/EUSR) Miroslav Lajčák met with the EU High Representative for the Common Foreign and Security Policy, Javier Solana, and addressed a joint meeting of the EU and NATO decision making bodies in Brussels today.

“Bosnia and Herzegovina continues to require our attention at the highest level,” Lajčák told a joint meeting of the EU’s Political and Security Committee and NATO’s North Atlantic Council, chaired jointly by Javier Solana and NATO Secretary General, Jaap de Hoop Scheffer.

Despite the signature of the Stabilisation and Association agreement with the EU and the start of intensified membership dialogue with NATO, the political situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina can be described as “difficult”.

“Progress in BiH has required disproportionate efforts by the international community,” said Lajčák. “There are numerous challenges to the peace agreement, both against the state, its institutions and against the existence of the Republika Srpska.”

The effect of this negative political climate has been a marked decline in addressing reform where in recent months only a few new laws were adopted.

Describing the 8 November agreement between the leaders of the

SNSD, the SDA and the HDZ as an “encouraging sign,” which has “the potential to break the current political deadlock,” HR/EUSR Lajčák underlined that this agreement now needs to be put into “concrete form…and adopted by the relevant institutions in BiH”.

BiH’s has not yet met the conditions and objectives for OHR’s transition, which means that the OHR will continue with its mandate in to 2009, Lajčák said that the International Community and the EU in particular have started to prepare for the OHR’s transition to the EUSR.

Lajčák welcomed the fact that BiH has been put back on the agenda at the highest level and noted the conclusions of the recent meeting of EU Foreign Ministers, the Solana/Rehn strategy paper and the contacts with BiH officials through Bernard Kouchner, French Foreign Minister and EU Council President, the UK’s Foreign Secretary, David Miliband and NATO’s Deputy Secretary General, Claudio Bisignero have had a positive effect on the country.