

High representative at GLOBSEC Forum in Prague: Faster pace of reforms urgently needed in BiH



High Representative Christian Schmidt participated in the GLOBSEC Forum in Prague, where the path for European security and future was further discussed with a focus on the Western Balkans. He underscored that the international community's top priority in Bosnia and Herzegovina and the Western Balkans region is to help bolster the stability and peaceful environment needed for successful reforms and EU integration. Advancing on the path of Euro-Atlantic integration requires a proactive commitment by political leaders and the civil society in BiH.

Emphasizing the critical importance of Bosnia and Herzegovina's display of genuine effort and enhanced level of engagement on the accession path, while fully respecting the Dayton Peace Agreement, the High Representative spoke in Prague with the President of Finland, Alexander Stubb, Serbian President Aleksandar Vučić; Czech Prime Minister Petr Fiala, Danish Prime Minister, Mette Fredriksen, Czech Minister of European Affairs, Martin Dvořák, US Deputy Assistant Secretary for the Western Balkans, Alexander Kasanof, EU Special Representative for the Belgrade-Priština Dialogue, Miroslav Lajčák, BiH Ambassador to the Czech Republic, Martina Mlinarević, GLOBSEC President Róbert Vass, and Chair of the

GLOBSEC Board of Directors, Wilhelm Molterer.

The High Representative took the floor in the panel discussion "Ready or Not: The Truth of EU Enlargement Readiness," together with Miroslav Lajčák and the State Secretary of the Federal Foreign Office, Thomas Bagger. He talked about the current political landscape in Bosnia and Herzegovina and insisted that political stakeholders in BiH must immediately shift their gears, end the political deadlock, and make the most of the EU integration opportunities for the sake of all BiH citizens.

Reflecting on how the EU can adapt its integration models to better facilitate enlargement, the High Representative highlighted the need for a cohesive approach that aligns with both existing and prospective member states' needs and expectations. "However, none of this is going to produce the desired results within a reasonable timeframe if the BiH authorities do not pick up the pace and start delivering on their commitments made to the citizens and international partners," concluded the High Representative.

Upon invitation by the BiH Ambassador to the Czech Republic Mlinarević, the High Representative met with a BiH diaspora group to exchange views on the situation in the country. While in Prague, he also paid a visit to a group of SOS Village children and their mothers from the Western Balkan countries who spending holidays in the Czech Republic.