

Inzko Meets Turkish President Gül



The High Representative and EU Special Representative, Valentin Inzko, met in Sarajevo today with the President of the Republic of Turkey, H.E. Abdullah Gül. The High Representative and EU Special Representative emphasized the important role played by the Republic of Turkey in the region and for Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Welcoming Turkey's increased engagement, HR/EUSR Inzko commended regular visits by Turkish leaders to Sarajevo, but also to the Srebrenica commemoration. "This has had a visible effect on the BiH leadership," HR Inzko said.

Ahead of the general elections in Bosnia and Herzegovina, due to take place on October 3, the overall political and economic situation in the country remains difficult HR/EUSR Inzko said. Stagnation at the state level requires a continued common effort from the International Community and common strategy for BiH. "A more hands-on approach" will be needed HR Inzko stressed, "and Turkey's role will be important."

The High Representative and EU Special Representative outlined that there has been little progress in terms of completing the '5+2' agenda set by the Peace Implementation Council (PIC) in February 2008 as a pre-requirement for a decision to close the OHR. Resolution of the State and Defence property requirements remains difficult. "The only exception to the rule is the progress made in addressing the visa liberalization

requirements," said Inzko.

President Gül underlined the significance of maintaining the unique, multi-ethnic structure of BiH and described the upcoming elections as a window of opportunity for the advancement of the peace, stability and welfare of the country. He also emphasized Turkey's unwavering commitment to assist BiH for implementation of the much-needed reforms related with EU and NATO integration, where the common future of BiH's peoples lies.

The HR/EUSR and President Gül discussed the future international engagement in BiH. The High Representative said that the international community will continue to act to ensure BiH becomes a self-sustainable state, irreversibly in the road to European integration. "My Office will continue to advocate for the strongest possible involvement of major partners as the EU role in BiH grows; this includes Turkey, the US and Russia."