

Leave the Blind Alley

BiH leaders must leave the blind alley they have marched into and begin instead telling the European Union more persuasively why Bosnia and Herzegovina should become a member, High Representative and EU Special Representative Valentin Inzko told an international conference in Herzegovina today.

The HR/EUSR said in the last four years almost none of Bosnia and Herzegovina's European integration agenda has been implemented because the country's leaders "have – by accident or by design – marched down a blind alley."

He said leaders have to "decide whether or not they want to respect the wishes of more than 80 percent of the electorate and return to the European path and begin adopting and implementing the necessary measures."

The HR/EUSR added that next Sunday "the people of Bosnia and Herzegovina will have an opportunity to express their view on this. If citizens turn up at the polls in large numbers and vote for candidates who have explicitly laid out how they plan to get the country into the European Union, they will provide an incentive that has been missing for the last four years."

He argued that this would allow "political representatives of this country to begin telling the European Union – loud and clear – that there are sound reasons to admit Bosnia and Herzegovina to membership."

The HR/EUSR was speaking in Medjugorje at a conference on Bosnia and Herzegovina's Path to EU Membership, organised by the BiH PanEuropean Union.

The full text of the HR/EUSR's speech can be accessed at www.ohr.int and www.eusrbih.eu