

Lajčák: “There is no alternative to achieving progress in BiH”

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“The political elite of Bosnia and Herzegovina all say they want European integration, but there is an obvious lack of commitment to promote the European agenda and to search for common ground”, the High Representative and EU Special Representative Miroslav Lajčák told the Political and Security Committee, one of the EU’s key foreign policy bodies, in Brussels today.

Despite wide support for EU integration among the population, political leaders are still unable to cooperate to achieve progress on the road to Brussels. “Diametrically opposed and incompatible views of the main leaders are crowding out moderate positions, which makes it difficult to reach agreement on the key issues”, Lajčák said, citing police reform as the obvious example of the current stalemate.

“Police reform is important in its own right, but it is also vital as the door opener for the initialling and signing of the SAA”, the HR/EUSR stressed. “The good news is that the process is going on and that we have everyone on board. What is not clear is whether domestic leaders are committed to achieve a result.”

The HR/EUSR reiterated his commitment to reaching an agreement on police reform by the end of September, which would represent “a key confidence-building measure” and “reverse the current negative trend that has prevailed since April 2006”. It would also create the conditions in which constitutional reform could be discussed in a meaningful way.

At the same time, Miroslav Lajčák emphasized that “there is no alternative to achieving progress. Not for BiH, and not for the EU. We cannot afford to look on as a key country in the Western Balkans goes backward. Stability in this region is crucial to our own security.”