

Statement On Police Reform By EU Ambassadors In Sarajevo

The Government of the RS faces a moment of decision on police reform. This is an important issue, not just because the police needs reforming to fight crime better, but also because this issue will unlock the door to a European future for the RS and BiH as a whole.

Our main message is that there is no threat to the RS from police reform. The Dayton constitution – one state, two entities – is in place, and will remain. We have a positive vision for the RS, as a stable, secure and prosperous part of the state of BiH that is moving closer to European integration.

If the RS Government agrees to police restructuring in a form that meets the European Commission's requirements, this country will be able to open negotiations with the European Union.

If they don't, the country will not be able to move towards the EU. Things in the RS will not get better, and very likely get worse. Pensioners will stay on the poverty line. Young people will be unable to travel freely. The RS police will continue to get paid half what the police in the Federation get. And the RS will be more isolated in the world than ever.

Do the people of the RS really want that? We do not believe that they do. We believe that they want to have more jobs and better jobs; to be able to travel freely again; and to see the phasing out of the OHR, so they can live in a more normal country. None of that will happen without police reform.

Now is the time to begin to turn our positive vision for the RS into reality – to close the Dayton era and open the Brussels era – with a rapid agreement on police reform.