

Opportunities opening up for BiH – time to increase momentum and fully respect the Peace Agreement

On the 20th anniversary of the Dayton Peace Agreement, “we need to raise our expectations and once again see the kind of concrete results and the positive momentum that we saw in the first decade of the peace process,” High Representative Valentin Inzko told the United Nations Security Council today.

In his biannual address to the Council, the High Representative welcomed the adoption by the State and Entity authorities of “ambitious and coordinated reform agendas” as a major step forward. “What is necessary is to implement a programme of serious political, social and economic reforms that will improve functionality, attract investment and create jobs,” he added.

“The next few months will be critical because they will reveal whether the authorities are committed to delivering on their own reform agenda,” he said. “Some of the reforms will be difficult, but they will deliver new opportunities for the country and its people.”

In addition to focusing on concrete reforms, the High Representative also underlined that political leaders will only succeed in achieving progress if they are committed to respecting to the Dayton Peace Agreement including its fourth annex, the BiH Constitution. In this regard, he once again alerted the Security Council to the initiative taken by RS authorities to organize a referendum in violation of the Dayton Peace Agreement, urging the authorities in the RS to “step back from the brink and put the referendum aside.”

The High Representative reiterated the fact that Bosnia and Herzegovina will not be taken forwards by a constant effort to reopen the past, but by coming together to work for a common purpose. He stressed that a “sincere and genuine offer is on the table from the EU that offers the people of Bosnia and Herzegovina the chance of a secure, prosperous and dignified life.” Combined with the primacy of the Rule of Law this is what the people of BiH aspire to.

“This offer must be seized with both hands,” concluded the High Representative.

[Click here](#) for the full text of the High Representative’s speech.