Respect of human rights is a bedrock of democracy

Respecting and promoting human rights and fundamental freedoms is an essential element of every modern democracy and prosperous society, the High Representative, Valentin Inzko, stated today on the occasion of the Human Rights Day.

“Respect for human rights and the promotion of inclusion and dialogue is a sign of social maturity and progress. This is especially important for a country such as Bosnia and Herzegovina which aspires to join the European Union as respect for human rights is a prerequisite for countries seeking to join the Union.” said the High Representative.

In this light, the High Representative uses this opportunity to welcome the framework for application of targeted restrictive measures to address serious human rights violations and abuses worldwide adopted by the Council of the European Union.

The High Representative deplores that many decisions of the European Court of Human rights related to Bosnia and Herzegovina, most notably the ruling in the case of “Sejdic-Finci vs. BiH” and related decisions like the latest one in the case of “Pudaric vs. BiH”, have not been implemented, which results in a continuous violation of the human rights of a number of BiH citizens who are being denied the right to run for certain public positions.

“If Bosnia and Herzegovina and its political elites want to be

part of the European family, founded on the full respect for human rights, certain trends such as the disregard for the rule of law, politicizing the judiciary, the denial of war crimes, and the glorification of war criminals, must stop. All these things are the opposite of what the European Union stands for," said High Representative Inzko.

The High Representative calls upon all politicians in Bosnia and Herzegovina to abandon the practice of confrontation and turn to building a future for BiH in line with EU principles of ensuring the human rights of all citizens of Bosnia and Herzegovina.