

The Right to Return

When the right of return is fully respected, all citizens in Bosnia and Herzegovina will be beneficiaries, the High Representative, Valentin Inzko, stated in an article published today in *Oslobodjenje* newspaper.

The article appeared on the occasion of an international donors conference organised in Sarajevo by the governments of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Montenegro and Serbia, with the support of the UNHCR, the European Commission, the OSCE and the US.

He noted that the conference, which aims to secure funding for a regional multi-year housing programme for refugees and internally displaced persons, "reflects a new and improved political and social reality in the Western Balkans, where countries are now working sensibly and cooperatively to find solutions to the challenges their citizens face."

The High Representative acknowledged that some in Bosnia and Herzegovina have not yet grasped that the times have changed and he cited a recent case in Bijeljina where a returnee was evicted from his pre-war home, which had been sold at auction to settle a court judgment for compensation made by the temporary occupant.

He reiterated that in Bosnia and Herzegovina the right of temporary occupants to receive compensation for necessary expenses cannot undermine or prevail over the right of return under Annex Seven.

"Annex Seven implementation is not an aspiration. It is a legal obligation. The International Community is working with the authorities in Bosnia and Herzegovina to ensure that this obligation is met," he wrote.

The full text of the article can be accessed [here](#).