

Using OHR State Property Inventory to Negotiate Settlement Is the Intelligent Way to Proceed



In an editorial to be published in tomorrow's edition of "Glas Srpske" under the title "The Intelligent Way to Proceed", the High Representative and EU Special Representative, Valentin Inzko, explains that, faced with BiH's five-year failure to make progress on resolving the question of state property, a key issue that affects citizens' rights and the prospects for Euro-Atlantic integration, he arranged for the state property inventory to be compiled.

"The team did its work squarely within the framework set by the Council of Ministers and collected information from all Land Registry and Cadastral Offices throughout the country," the HR/EUSR writes, emphasizing that domestic institutions provided all the information, and that criticism of the inventory expressed by the RS authorities actually represents criticism of RS institutions – all 48 Cadastral Offices.

In his editorial, HR/EUSR Inzko rebuts criticisms of the inventory, one by one.

Among other things, he states categorically that ownership of property legitimately acquired through public sale is not in any way compromised by the inventory. He also rejects the accusation that the inventory could discourage investment and job creation in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

“It is not the inventory that will discourage investment: investment is being discouraged by the refusal of BiH leaders to enact legislation to improve the business environment, and it will be further discouraged if politicians spread false rumors that the inventory is undermining property rights,” He writes.

The HR/EUSR urges the Council of Ministers, and the Entity and Brcko District governments to use the time before the elections to reach a settlement on the allocation of public property to the appropriate level of government. “This would mean that one of the major objectives laid down by the PIC Steering Board for the closure of the OHR is met and the 28 million KM currently being paid by BiH taxpayers every year to rent government premises can be spent on public services instead.”

“Using the inventory as the basis for a fairly negotiated settlement is the intelligent way to proceed,” the HR/EUSR writes, adding that, in marked contrast to this, “picking a fight with the international community” does not represent an intelligent course of action.

“Jobs, justice and the fight against corruption – these are the issues I have no doubt voters will have at the forefront of their minds when they cast their votes in October,” the HR/EUSR concludes.