



Auswärtiges Amt

**Dr. Frank-Walter Steinmeier**  
Federal Minister for Foreign Affairs  
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**Foreign &  
Commonwealth  
Office**

**Philip Hammond**  
Secretary of State for Foreign  
and Commonwealth Affairs  
United Kingdom of Great  
Britain and Northern Ireland

Her Excellency  
High Representative of the Union for  
Foreign Policy and Security Policy/  
Vice-President of the European Commission  
Ms. Federica Mogherini

His Excellency  
Commissioner for European Neighbourhood Policy  
and Enlargement Negotiations  
Dr. Johannes Hahn

Berlin/London, November 4, 2014

Dear Federica, dear Johannes,

The countries of the Western Balkans continue to move forward on their path towards the European Union. The European perspective of the region, first spelled out in Thessaloniki in 2003, remains vital and real. We welcome the start of accession negotiations with Serbia, the progress made towards a Stabilisation and Association Agreement with Kosovo, the granting of candidate status to Albania and the progress in accession negotiations with Montenegro. In all of these countries, the EU integration process has proven to be a critical tool and a main driver for true reform and stability in the region.

Against this background the protracted standstill of the EU integration process in Bosnia and Herzegovina is all the more deplorable. Despite considerable goodwill and persistent efforts by the European Union to assist Bosnia and Herzegovina on the way forward, a local focus by political elites on narrow ethno-political and party interests has time and again impeded necessary reform. Thus, six years after it was signed, the Stabilisation and Association Agreement has yet to come into force, and a credible membership application has not been possible. The EU integration process with Bosnia and Herzegovina became stuck before it gained momentum and had the chance to develop and use its leverage for reform.

We, Germany and the United Kingdom, believe it is time for the EU to re-focus the policy agenda with Bosnia and Herzegovina on our ultimate objective: to get Bosnia and Herzegovina moving again on the reform track towards becoming a state that can be functional as a member of the EU. To avoid the impasse resulting from addressing intractable issues too early in the process, we propose to identify a broader agenda for reforms to be implemented in the next stages of Bosnia

and Herzegovina's EU integration process. This initial agenda for reform should encompass socio-economic issues as outlined by the "Compact for Growth", rule of law, good governance as well as more readily resolvable institutional questions. Like all other countries, Bosnia and Herzegovina will continue to have to meet conditions to advance step-by-step on its path towards the European Union.

The EU integration process is the key tool we have at hand. With its conditionality principle it has been a powerful motor for political, economic and societal change in many countries. If this tool is sharpened to take into account the specific situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina and given the opportunity to be employed, we believe it can bring this potential to bear in Bosnia and Herzegovina as well.

We therefore propose immediately to start with the following steps:

1) The European Union would ask Bosnian party leaders to make a long-term, irrevocable written commitment to establish - in the framework of the EU accession process - functionality at all state levels by implementing necessary reforms, with the objective of making Bosnia and Herzegovina ready for the EU. The implementation of the Sejdic-Finci decision of the European Court of Human Rights should be included in the commitment.

Furthermore, the EU would ask Bosnian party leaders to agree in the written commitment to have an initial agenda for reform worked out under leadership of the EU. This agenda would include first and foremost items from the Copenhagen Criteria (socio-economic reforms including the 'Compact for Growth', rule of law, good governance, but also selected functionality questions).

2) After all relevant Bosnian party leaders have signed up to the written commitment, the Council would then put the SAA into force.

We would then expect Bosnia and Herzegovina immediately to start working on the initial agenda for reform. After some initial progress on the implementation, the Council would invite Bosnia and Herzegovina to apply for membership.

3) The new government of Bosnia and Herzegovina should then continue to work on the implementation of the initial agenda for reform. After full implementation of the agenda the Council would request the Commission's opinion on the membership application. The state of play on the implementation of Sejdic-Finci should play an important role in the Commission's opinion.

Through this readjusted sequencing of the EU integration process, we are confident that the EU would be once again able to give the necessary impulse to restart the reform process in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

We are looking forward to discussing this matter with you and our European partners.

Yours sincerely,



Dr. Frank-Walter Steinmeier

Philip Hammond

cc: Foreign Ministers of the European Union Member States