
BOSNIAN LEADERS APPROVE EU KEY MEASURE

-

18.08.2016

17.08.2016

Balkan Insight

Bosnian leaders approved the establishment of a coordination mechanism that should improve connections between all the country's administrative levels and the EU, a key measure sought by Brussels.

Leaders from the state government and the countrys two political entities, Republika Srpska and the Federation, approved on Wednesday the establishment of a structure which should help coordinate all the different administrative levels of the country in their negotiations with the EU.

The initiative was one of the key measures required by Brussels to grant EU membership candidate status to Bosnia.

"This coordination mechanism has been finalised today and this is good news," Bosnian Prime Minister Denis Zvizdic told during a press conference after the meeting.

Zvizdic said that the agreement was "a common product of all the levels of government" and argued that it would improve the countrys European perspective.

He also said that the agreement is likely to be approved by the Council of Ministers next week.

Zeljka Cvijanovic, the prime minister of Republika Srpska, explained that the document should regulate the interaction between all the various levels of government in the country.

"The point is [creating an] interaction between all the different levels of government in accordance with the constitution, so that we might decide an unanimous position when it comes to communications with the EU," Cvijanovic said.

She added that the agreement represents an opportunity "to get a green light from the EU by the end of the year".

Bosnia submitted its application for EU membership last February, but Brussels has made it clear that it will not discuss it until two conditions are met, the update of the countrys Stabilisation and Association Agreement with the EU and the approval of the coordination mechanism.

While the update of the Stabilisation and Association Agreement was approved in July, the approval of the coordination mechanism was delayed until now by political quarrels between

Republika Srpska and the main Bosniak and Croat parties.

On August 1, Milorad Dodik, the president of Republika Srpska, and Bakir Izetbegovic, the Bosniak member of the state presidency and leader of the most prominent Bosniak party, the Party of Democratic Action, came to an agreement which was welcomed as a major breakthrough in the negotiations.

However, this deal was criticised by Dragan Covic, the Croat member of the presidency and leader of the biggest Bosnian Croat party, the Croat Democratic Union, who claimed that Croats were marginalised during the negotiations.

Covic also claimed that the agreement between Dodik and Izetbegovic excluded from the coordination mechanism representatives from the Federations ten cantons, some of which are the only administrative level at which Bosnian Croats represent the majority of the population.

Cvijanovic told Bosnian media that a solution to enable the participation of the cantons' representatives in the coordination mechanism had been found during the meeting.

Wednesday's agreement was also backed by Croat government officials, the finance minister and deputy Bosnian Prime Minister Vjekoslav Bevanda and the Federation finance minister Jelka Milicevic, both from the Croat Democratic Union party, Sarajevo-based news site Klix reported.

<http://www.balkaninsight.com/en/article/bosnian-leaders-approve-eu-key-measure-08-17-2016>

Kaynak/Source: