

BiH Dayton Project



Press remarks by High Representative Josep Borrell ahead of the EU-Western Balkans Summit

December 14, 2023

The European External Action Service posted EU High Representative Josep Borrell's [remarks](#) to the press ahead of the EU-Western Balkans Summit. The text of the remarks is below.

Western Balkans: Press remarks by High Representative Josep Borrell ahead of the EU-Western Balkans Summit

13.12.2023 Brussels [EEAS Press Team](#)

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I am happy to have the opportunity to wrap up at this [\[EU-Western Balkans\] Summit](#) all the work we have been doing – I have been doing – during this year with the Western Balkans.

We live in a difficult, challenging and dangerous environment and this affects the European Union, and this affects our neighbourhood and this affects the Western Balkans. That is why I think we have to work in two directions.

First, obviously, the [EU] Enlargement – it has to speed up. At the end, it is our most important security guarantee and our most important way of becoming partners.

And secondly, from the point of view of foreign policy, to support the ones who are more aligned with our [Common] Foreign and Security Policy. I am saying Foreign and Security Policy because the more aligned they are with our foreign policy, the greater security challenges they are facing, like cyber-attacks. And that is why we have to increase their resilience.

One of the deliverables of this Summit will be the announcement that we will provide an additional [almost] €2 million in order to strengthen the resilience of North Macedonia, Albania and Montenegro, as we have done in the past.

During this year, I have travelled a lot in the region. We held the [Association Council](#) in Albania [and North Macedonia]. And we have to continue engaging more with them, in particular, on increasing resilience to cyber-attacks and the new forms of warfare.

So, enlargement on one side, alignment with our foreign policy, support to the resilience and capacity to support [them against] attacks.

In particular, there is the Dialogue [between] Serbia [and] Kosovo in which we have invested a lot of time and energy. It has gone through ups and downs, a lot of crises, also solutions: licence plates, identity cards, energy – the last [good agreement](#) – a breakthrough with the [Ohrid Agreement](#), and the implementation [Annex](#).

In the last days, there have been good news. Both parts are moving – slowly, but they are moving. And we have to push them to continue on this path because it is the only one for them to have a clear European perspective.

Q&A

Q. Why do you think it is still a good idea to enlarge the EU when the EU is now blocked by one member?

Enlargement is our most important foreign policy, and being in charge of the foreign policy, for me enlargement is a precious, a fundamental issue. We have [had] commitments with many people for too long, and we have to speed up and deliver. Afterwards, we will have a work in order to adapt our institutional working, in order to work better with more than 27 [Member States] – but it is our problem. What we have to do is to deliver on our promises, and avoid frustration and fulfil the expectations that have been created.

Q. Mr High Representative, this week Georgia is waiting for candidate status. What is your main message before tomorrow' Summit, to Georgia?

Well, Georgia is doing well. Georgia has succeeded. Georgia has to continue working. They are on the good track.

Q. Is Montenegro doing well?

Montenegro is doing well.

Q. [inaudible]

Well, I think everybody is doing well. Thank you.

Q. On cyber, how are you going to increase their resilience?

Supporting them. Providing technological support, providing financing. As I said, today we are going to announce [almost] €2 million more for that, for cyber.

Q. Are you planning a meeting at the highest level in the Dialogue between Belgrade and Pristina?

We are in a continued dialogue. The Dialogue is a continuous process.

Q. Okay, so nothing soon is expected at the highest level regarding the Dialogue?

The [EU] Special Representative [Miroslav Lajčák] is travelling from one side to the other. When the moment will come, we will do as many high-level meetings as needed.

Link to the video: <https://audiovisual.ec.europa.eu/en/video/I-250837>

Read more [here](#).

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