

17 May, 2021

BRDO DECLARATION, 2021

We, the leaders of the Brdo–Brijuni Process met in Brdo on May 17, 2021, for an extraordinary summit celebrating the 10th anniversary of the launch of the initiative.

Importance of the Brdo–Brijuni Process

On the occasion of its 10th Anniversary, we reconfirmed our commitment to the Brdo–Brijuni Process.

Since its inception, the Brdo–Brijuni Process has contributed significantly to the strengthening of good-neighbourly relations and the enhancement of regional cooperation. Furthermore, it has become a platform for sincere and open talks between leaders.

The Brdo-Brijuni Process has also increased the awareness of European Union Member States and institutions about the significance of the faster enlargement to the Western Balkans.

COVID-19, economic recovery and the EU investment plan

As regards the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic and its economic and social ramifications we stressed the need to use the recovery as an opportunity for a green and digital transition that will lead to more sustainable development, offering opportunities to younger generations.

We welcome the adoption of the EU Economic and Investment Plan for the Western Balkans of October 2020, and the fact that it is accompanied by significant financial resources.

As an integral part of Europe, the Western Balkans have the right and responsibility to keep up with the development of EU Member States as much as possible, thus facilitating their EU membership.

Europe, whole, free, united and at peace

We, the leaders of the Brdo–Brijuni Process are advocating for a common strategic vision of Europe, whole, free and at peace. We underline our commitment to peace and stability, including good neighbourly relations.

The Western Balkans are a part of Europe and Europe's unification is not complete without Western Balkans.

With the European Union membership, the borders between Member States become less significant, which provides broader space for coexistence of a plurality of national identities.

We once again acknowledge the necessity to account for those who went missing during the conflicts on the territory of former Yugoslavia and reiterate the necessity to investigate the circumstances of their disappearances and bring perpetrators to justice, with the aim to contribute to lasting reconciliation, peace and stability.

Enlargement as a geostrategic priority

Enlarging EU with the entire Western Balkans region is in the EU's political, security and economic interest, a geopolitical necessity and a paramount political precondition for the stable, prosperous and sustainable future of Europe.

Through a more ambitious and purposeful enlargement process, the EU should more actively engage with all Western Balkans to encourage them to meet the well-established necessary conditions for EU membership as soon as possible.

With the offer of EU membership and removal of Visa regime for the entire Western Balkans, the EU has at its disposal the most powerful transformational political tool. Each partner is aware that it has to adopt and implement necessary reforms, including in the field of rule of law, democratisation and economy, and is committed to do it faster and more efficiently.

The absorption capacity of the EU is sufficient enough to accept Western Balkans as new members.

We call on the European Union to – and really soon – accelerate the accession process and include in the EU the entire Western Balkans, having in mind the progress achieved by each of them.

We strongly advocate for the opening of membership talks with Albania and North Macedonia, as a matter of urgency, without further delay.

We welcome Slovenia's intention to hold an EU–Western Balkans Summit during its presidency of the Council of the European Union, and its intention to involve the Western Balkans in the Conference on the Future of Europe that has started on May 9, 2021.

We agree that will be the next host of the Brdo – Brijuni Process Leaders' Meeting.