

Conclusions of the Brdo-Brijuni Process Leaders' Meeting Brdo, Slovenia, June 3, 2017



We, the Leaders of the Brdo-Brijuni Process, acknowledge that the key commitment from this Brdo-Brijuni Meeting is to strengthen our responsibility for political stability and reconciliation in South East Europe which is facing challenges created by the deceleration of the EU enlargement process and rising negative global trends. In order to obtain stability, rule of law needs to become the prevailing principle in all aspects and throughout the wider neighbourhood. Equally so, open dialogue should be strengthened and nationalistic and inflammatory rhetoric avoided.

The freedom to choose political and security alignments should remain a sovereign and independent choice of every country. We reiterate the need to refrain from any interferences in matters regarding those decision making processes which are essentially within the domestic jurisdiction.

The Leaders acknowledge that assistance has been provided by the EU and Member States in recent years to all members of the Brdo-Brijuni Process. We agree, however, that it is not enough to only promise the distant prospect of EU membership to maintain confidence in the accession process in South East Europe. Tangible political actions are needed. The members of the Brdo-Brijuni Process expect a new impetus to such an engagement from EU Member States. This has to be clear to all of us and should be deliberated by the European Council, as the Leaders of the Brdo-Brijuni Process have continuously stressed. Integration of the Brdo-Brijuni members will complete and fully consolidate the European Union.

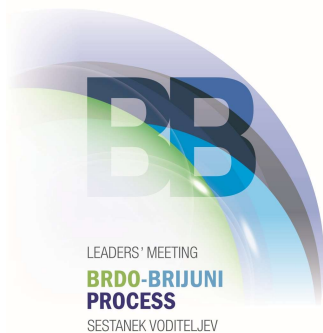
An evaluation to the existing EU accession framework, providing a clear perspective of EU membership within a reasonable timeframe, should be encouraged, with the aim of working towards an accelerated dynamic for those candidates who can progress along the reform path faster; especially if substantiated by progress in the areas of rule of law, judiciary, national minorities and good governance. Here, outstanding open issues and structural problems of the political systems need to be properly addressed. Such an approach would be beneficial not only for South East Europe, but for the stability and security of the European Union as well.

We recognize that a candid engagement in the reconciliation processes and in solving all outstanding issues in a peaceful manner and through political dialogue, in accordance with international law and good neighbourly relations, is a prerequisite to achieve fair and just solutions. This is necessary for building more trust among the Leaders from South East Europe and keeping our neighbourhood stable and secure. The European Union and its institutions are invited to engage more actively in this regard, where necessary.

Moreover, deepening the cooperation in different areas of mutual interest, including cooperation in the area of security, among the members of the Brdo-Brijuni Process will also contribute to the stability of the wider neighbourhood.

Enhanced economic cooperation shall complement the comprehensive commitment to stability and prosperity. We must therefore explore options to make South East Europe more attractive for

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investments in advanced transport, energy and digital infrastructure which will connect South East Europe better to wider European networks.

Croatia and Slovenia therefore very strongly advocate a more dynamic European integration process as well as Euro-Atlantic integration for NATO aspirants and offer a helping hand to the Brdo-Brijuni Process members who choose to follow the demanding path of implementing challenging and transformational reforms.

We agreed that the Republic of Macedonia will host the Brdo-Brijuni Process Leaders' Meeting in 2018.