

BALKANS PROGRESS: BATTLING TO OVERCOME THE IMPACT OF CRISIS

A high-level European Policy Summit
co-organised by *Friends of Europe*, the Konrad Adenauer Stiftung and LM&CO
with the support of The Coca-Cola Company and with media partner *Europe's World*

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09.00 – 09.30 Welcome coffee and registration of participants

09.30 – 11.00 SESSION I

STRENGTHENING DEMOCRACY AND THE RULE OF LAW

The countries of the Western Balkans have made slow but steady progress, yet addressing rule of law issues remains one of the major challenges. Despite increased cooperation in the fight against organised crime, many states still need increased transparency and accountability, a truly independent judiciary and better implementation of anti-corruption legislation. The fragility of democratic institutions makes it hard to tackle the deeply-entrenched culture of corruption. As national parliaments can play a crucial role in this, their legislative and oversight powers should be enhanced. Some countries have also seen a worrying backslide on freedom of expression and freedom of the media – but how, concretely, can these issues be addressed? Will the lure of EU accession be enough to change mentalities? How can democratic norms be instilled to firmly take root?

Majlinda Bregu Minister for European Integration of Albania
Ivica Dačić Prime Minister and Minister of the Interior of the Republic of Serbia
Tanja Fajon MEP Vice Chairwoman of the European Parliament Delegation to the EU-Croatia Joint Parliamentary Committee
Gerald Knaus Chairman of the European Stability Initiative (ESI)
Meddžida Kreso President of the State Court of Bosnia and Herzegovina
Jana Mittermaier Director of Transparency International's Liaison Office to the EU
Stefano Sannino European Commission Director General for Enlargement

Co-moderated by **Giles Merritt**, Secretary General of *Friends of Europe*, and **Tim Judah**, Western Balkans Correspondent for *The Economist*

11.00 – 11.30 Coffee break



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11.30 – 13.00 SESSION II

TOUGH MEASURES FOR BOOSTING THE BUSINESS ENVIRONMENT

Until the financial crisis of 2008, the Western Balkans had begun to enjoy steady economic growth and increased foreign direct investment. Four years on, as the region starts to emerge from the downturn, it is apparent that recovering its pre-crisis economy may take a while. Doubts about the region's readiness to enter the EU marketplace continue to surface – unemployment is high and rising, deindustrialisation is accelerating, and exports are chiefly of low-added value products. As well as labour market reforms, more structural measures are needed to improve competitiveness. Corruption has affected the investment climate, and it's unclear whether greater transparency alone can restore investor confidence. Can increased privatization and deregulation boost competitiveness? Will the region's economic policies require a more important overhaul? How ready will Croatia be to compete on a European level?

- Dominique Courbin** Head of Division for the Adriatic Sea Department at the European Investment Bank (EIB)
- Miroslav Lajčák** Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign and European Affairs of Slovakia
- Doris Pack MEP** Member of the European Parliament Delegation for Relations with Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia, Montenegro and Kosovo
- Zoran Stavreski** Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance of the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia
- Ante Todorčić** Executive Vice President of Agrokor
- Boris Vujčić** Governor of the Croatian National Bank

Co-moderated by **Giles Merritt**, Secretary General of *Friends of Europe*, and **Tim Judah**, Western Balkans Correspondent for *The Economist*

13.00 – 14.00 Networking lunch

14.00 – 14.30 Address followed by Q&A with **Štefan Füle**, EU Commissioner for Enlargement and Neighbourhood Policy

14.30 – 15.30 SESSION III

ENERGY EFFICIENCIES HOLD THE KEY TO WIDER PROGRESS

The Western Balkans energy sector faces important challenges, and needs to improve its efficiency. Significant losses in energy transmission and distribution are compounded by the poor state of the energy infrastructure. Neglected during the 1990s, the Western Balkans' power sector is in dire need of renovation, not least to bring it in line with EU environmental standards. It is increasingly obvious that only stronger regional integration could secure inward investment whilst optimising the region's supply and production capabilities. Can the Western Balkans provide investors with a more open and transparent environment, and would new investment increase the focus on renewables? Would closer cooperation in the energy sector lead to the strengthening of political ties and bring the region closer to social stability, solidarity and mutual trust?

- Besim Beqaj** Minister of Economic Development of Kosovo^o
- Aleksandar Kovačević** Senior Visiting Research Fellow at the Oxford Institute for Energy Studies
- Lirim Muharemi** President of LM&CO and Kapital Invest
- Ayşe Cihan Sultanoğlu** Assistant Secretary General and Regional Director for Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) at the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)
- Goran Svilanović** Incoming Secretary General of the Regional Cooperation Council (RCC)
- Erdal Trhulj** Minister for Energy, Mining and Industry of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina

Co-moderated by **Giles Merritt**, Secretary General of *Friends of Europe*, and **Tim Judah**, Western Balkans Correspondent for *The Economist*

15.30 End of summit

^o The use of this name does not reflect the views of all EU member states or interested parties