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Delegation**

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EU Statement on Bosnia and Herzegovina

The EU wishes to draw your attention to some positive news from the General Affairs and External Relations Council on 21 November.

On the tenth anniversary of the Dayton/Paris Peace Agreement, the Council applauded the progress that Bosnia and Herzegovina has made in the ten years since the end of the war. The Council authorised the Commission to open negotiations on a Stabilisation and Association Agreement at the earliest opportunity. The Council recalled that the speed with which Bosnia and Herzegovina moves closer to the EU will now depend on how quickly it adopts and implements the necessary reforms for it to become a fully functioning and viable State and conforms to the Copenhagen criteria and requirements of the Stabilisation and Association process. The Council encouraged all parties in Bosnia and Herzegovina to build on the dynamic provided by the opening of negotiations to pursue with commitment the shared reform agenda, and thereby realise the country's full potential to the benefit of all its citizens.

Mr Chairman, EU Ambassadors here in Vienna would like to express their pleasure at these developments.