



## AMCHAM DISCUSSION ON TOPIC "ROAD TO BIH INTEGRATION WITH EU"

The American Chamber of Commerce to BiH (AmCham) organized today in Sarajevo a discussion on topic "Road to BiH Integration with European Union (EU)", with director of the Directorate for European Integration (DEI) BiH Osman Topčagić as a guest speaker.

As stated, a good result in the implementation of Stabilization and Association Agreement (SAA) and the realization of priorities of European partnership, are prerequisites for getting the candidate status of EU membership.

On this occasion, Topčagić emphasized that the SAA is a result and political recognition for all so far reforms in the process of BiH European integration, as well as that SAA and the Provisional Agreement based requirements come up for BiH to realize and carry out timely and duly.



"The SAA basic goals are to support BiH efforts in democracy and law governance, to contribute to the political, economic and institutional stability in BiH, as well as to the stability regions, to support BiH efforts in developing economic and international cooperation, including its legislation harmonization with the EU legislation, to promote harmonious economic relations, to gradually develop areas of free trade between EU and BiH", Topčagić said inter alia.



In his words, BiH institutions are working out the Action plan for meeting requirements from the provisional Agreement turning them into concrete activities and measures with deadlines for the realization set.

Simultaneously, Topčagić filled the AmCham members in on information that common task forces have to be set up for the implementation, i.e., the Provisional Board for Stabilization and Association and five provisional sub-boards, and later the authorities for the SAA implementation.

The first priority of the process of BiH European integration is attainment of the status for EU membership candidacy. In accordance with the strategic goals and programme by the BiH Council of Ministers, an ambitious and still tangible plan is that BiH is given the candidate status by end of 2010.

A precondition for the membership request is a good result in the SAA implementation, as well as the realization or the priorities of the European partnership, a positive assessment by the European Commission (EC) in the annual Report on BiH Progress in the process of European integration.

Attainment of the candidate status would enable BiH access to the rest of IPA components concerning rural development, infrastructure, structural accommodation and human resources development, which can bring about over 100 million euro of grants annually.

On the occasion, executive director of AmCham Violeta Čibukčič presented new members of the Chamber, the company "EGW", then "BBS", "MBI", "Blitz film and video", as well as an individual member, a lawyer Mirna Milanović-Lalić, pointing out how the AmCham now had total of 60 members.