

Doorstep by High Representative/Vice-President Federica Mogherini at the Paris Balkans Summit 2016

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We had a very important summit with all the leaders of Western Balkans countries, hosted by President Hollande. It comes at a special time when it is very important for the European Union to reaffirm the willingness to proceed on the European integration of the Western Balkan countries, all of them.

We are working on a daily basis with each and every one, to make steps towards the European integration of the Western Balkans. This is extremely important for peace and stability, but also for the security of the European citizens. We often focus on the interest in the region to proceed towards the European integration, but it is also very important for our own security.

The migration crisis has shown us the risks of radicalisation in the region and is also telling us that we need to work closely together. It is particularly important today, after the results of the UK referendum, because inside the European Union sometimes we have problems in identifying the added value of the European project, while in the Western Balkans it is self-evident that the integration process of the European Union is bringing positive things for the citizens. We have euro-enthusiasm in the region that we need to nourish and we need to look at it as a source of inspiration inside our borders. So it was very important to have this meeting today and, obviously, we will continue to work on a daily basis to make this process a reality for each and every of the six countries involved.

Q. Is Brexit the end of the enlargement to the Balkan countries?

A. No, it is not. My message today was very clear: our determination to proceed with the enlargement process is there and it is very important to reaffirm it now. It is very important for the European institutions, starting from the Council but also the European Commission, to be credible on the process and it is important for us to support the reform agenda of the countries involved. They are working very hard, they are working very well - I would say all of them - and we have an interest in this reform agenda to succeed and in the enlargement process to go on. So the message is loud and clear: we are going to continue. Thank you