

## THE DECLARATION ON EU ENLARGEMENT PERSPECTIVES TO THE WESTERN BALKANS

We, the participants of the conference „EU Enlargement on Hold – Between Containment and Reform“, organised by the Institute for Development and International Relations and the Hanns Seidel Foundation, have met in Zagreb on 13th and 14th February 2020 with the aim to reflect upon the reasons for the slowing down of the EU enlargement process and to give the accession process our firm support.

In the times of an ever-growing uncertainty and unpredictability in the global arena, the EU stands for long-lasting peace, social dialogue and democracy. Moreover, its enlargement policy is one of the most successful tools for promoting the European idea, its values and norms. Based on the commitment of the WB countries and consistency of EU enlargement agenda, we wish this to be extended to all WB6 countries and we are strongly committed to enhancing the European idea and the European values in our societies. We call on the EU to use the new enlargement methodology and other instruments to emphasize the importance of subscribing to European values in substance and not only in form. The new enlargement methodology should be translated into specific instruments without delay.

We strongly believe in the transformative power of the accession process. Thus, no Western Balkan country should be left in Europe's backyard. The EU and its member states should continue to provide concrete benefits to citizens of WB contraries in the framework of Berlin Process. We strongly recommend the commencement of the accession negotiations with North Macedonia and Albania within 2020, the candidate status for Bosnia and Herzegovina, visa liberalization for Kosovo, to have roadmaps for Serbia and Montenegro EU accession by the end of 2020. The negotiation process should be palpable, credible and realistic with a clear commitment on all sides involved that should lead to full-fledged EU membership once all criteria are met.

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