Albania: Integration into the EU is not a favour, but is in Europe's interest, says Mogherini

Not only the integration process of Albania into the European Union, but the integration process of the entire Western Balkans into the European Union is not a favour we make, it is a matter of self-interest for the European Union itself. This was a message of High Representative Federica Mogherini this afternoon at a special event hosted by the European Parliament. President Antonio Tajani, Albanian Prime Minister Edi Rama and Foreign Minister Ditmir Bushati also attended the discussion that focused on Albania’s progress in implementing key reforms and its challenges towards EU integration.
"This is the first chance we have, as a generation, to have an integration process... It is the first wave of integration in the European Union that goes back to the DNA of the history of the Union - peace and reconciliation. It is not just about economy, it is not just about security, it is not about spheres of influence, it is about bringing and consolidating peace and reconciliation in a region," the EU High Representative, Federica Mogherini emphasised.

She welcomed the progress made by Albania in the fields of foreign policy, security policy and justice reform. Albania, a NATO member, is one hundred percent aligned to the EU foreign and security policy and is contributing to two EU military missions, in Mali and Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Mogherini stressed Albania's energy and dedication in implementing reforms and in the aspiration to be part of the European identity. "We need that kind of energy, this pro-European energy inside the Union exactly to remind ourselves what it is about."

Federica Mogherini highlighted the momentum that 2018 brings to the relations between the EU and the Western Balkans, including Albania. The upcoming months will see the publication of the Enlargement package, the EU – Western Balkans Summit in Sofia, and the Western Balkans Summit in London.

Albania is a candidate country since June 2014. The granting of candidate status was the result of Albania's reform efforts and acknowledgement by the EU of the efforts made and the progress achieved on the accession path. The country has made further progress towards meeting the political criteria for membership and, overall, steady progress continued in the five key priorities (reforming the judiciary and the public administration, fighting corruption and organised crime, and protecting human rights).

See also

Link to the video
Speech by the High Representative/Vice – President Federica Mogherini at the event "Albania: Committed to the Reform"
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