



## **HR Schmidt meets NATO Secretary General: Support to Euro-Atlantic aspirations of BiH**

High Representative Christian Schmidt met with NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg today in Sarajevo to discuss security challenges in Bosnia and Herzegovina and the Western Balkans. High Representative thanked the Secretary General for continued NATO commitment to the region.

The High Representative underscored the strategic importance of Euro-Atlantic integration for BiH, emphasizing its positive impact on security, economic development, and overall stability. "Only a functioning state can complete the integration process," said the High Representative, adding that NATO represents an indispensable partner to BiH in this regard.

"Therefore, EUFOR and OHR are still needed at this point. The EUFOR-Althea mission must retain its full mandate and the capacity to deploy troops at short notice. The EU integration and Dayton implementation processes are not mutually exclusive or contradictory. On the contrary, they are complementary and mutually reinforcing, if managed in a coordinated manner."

The High Representative further highlighted the importance of addressing challenges such as political instability, slow reform processes, and corruption, adding that BiH needs to become more resilient in order to foster a secure environment for all its citizens. Achieving success requires a unified engagement of the international community and a collaborative effort from all domestic stakeholders.

"Today's discussions reflect the shared commitment to strengthening the security architecture in Bosnia and Herzegovina, as well as the overall stability of the country so it can be ready for future EU membership. We recognize the importance of continued dialogue and collaboration to address the complex challenges facing the region," concluded the High Representative Schmidt.

VIDEO: Statements by HR Schmidt and NATO SB Stoltenberg following their meeting in Sarajevo