



## **High Representative Schmidt at Antalya Diplomacy Forum: BiH must seize opportunity to open EU negotiations**

High Representative Christian Schmidt participated in the Antalya Diplomacy Forum, underscoring the vital importance of BiH authorities fulfilling the necessary conditions to seize the opportunity and commence membership negotiations with the European Union. He stressed that such negotiations are not only vital for the country's economic and social progress but also for fostering stability and prosperity in the country and the region.

Emphasizing the critical importance of Bosnia and Herzegovina's active engagement with the European Union and respecting of Dayton Peace Agreement, the High Representative spoke in Antalya, in different formats, with Türkiye President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, Prime Minister of Hungary Viktor Orbán, Presidents and Foreign Ministers of Western Balkan countries, Türkiye Deputy Foreign Minister Mehmet Kemal Bozay, Secretary General of the Council of Europe Marija Pejčinović Burić, representatives of OSCE, the Director of ODIHR Matteo Mecacci and Sir Stuart Peach, UK Special Envoy for Western Balkans.

"Engagement with the European Union presents Bosnia and Herzegovina with a transformative opportunity," stated High Representative Schmidt and remarked that "it is imperative the country capitalizes on this moment to further integrate into the European family and unlock the numerous benefits such integration entails."

The High Representative also highlighted the pressing need for election integrity reforms in Bosnia and

Herzegovina, which are vital for upholding democratic principles, ensuring transparency, and bolstering citizens' trust in the electoral process. Elections need to fully reflect the democratic will of the voters without controversy.