

Christian Schmidt concludes his mandate as High Representative for Bosnia and Herzegovina



After nearly five years as High Representative to Bosnia and Herzegovina, a mandate anchored in Annex 10 of the Dayton Peace Agreement, Christian Schmidt has taken the personal decision to conclude his service to the implementation of peace in Bosnia and Herzegovina. He has informed the Peace Implementation Council Steering Board of his decision and requested that they begin the work of finding his successor.

Reflecting on his term in office – the second-longest tenure of any High Representative – significant progress has been achieved to make Bosnia and Herzegovina's institutions more functional. More must clearly be done, if Bosnia and Herzegovina is to make its Euro-Atlantic aspirations a reality. While Christian Schmidt hoped that the conclusion of his service as High Representative would coincide with the successful completion of the "5+2 agenda" and the closure of OHR, critical reforms remain to be implemented by Bosnia and Herzegovina and so the work of OHR remains essential. He called on citizens and leaders from both entities and all levels of government to redouble their efforts and to work together with his successor to see these reforms implemented and critical progress made on the path to Euro-Atlantic integration.

His decisions have not been revoked by any court decision. Schmidt underlined that a unified international community remains indispensable to the stability of Bosnia and Herzegovina and its progress toward its Euro-Atlantic aspirations. The economic and political stability of Bosnia and Herzegovina, and the broader Western Balkan region are critical for broader European security and economic prosperity. Therefore, the role of the OHR in Bosnia and Herzegovina remains important.

Christian Schmidt expressed his sincere thanks to the citizens of Bosnia and Herzegovina, from whom he has received exceptional hospitality, warmth and support. The period of his mandate has witnessed a maturation of local judicial institutions, with courts acting resolutely to protect the constitutional and legal order of the state. Critical steps have been taken to make local institutions more functional and to ensure the integrity of elections. In the years to come, additional work must be done to implement all decisions of the European Court of Human Rights and the Constitutional Court of Bosnia and Herzegovina.