

Schwarz-Schilling: Police Restructuring, Constitutional Reform to Boost Euro-Atlantic Integration Prospects

Constitutional reform and police restructuring should immediately be taken forward to boost Bosnia and Herzegovina's Euro-Atlantic integration prospects, the High Representative and EU Special Representative, Christian Schwarz-Schilling, said in Brussels today.

The High Representative/EU Special Representative was speaking to reporters immediately after addressing a joint session of NATO's North Atlantic Council (NAC) and the European Union's Political and Security Committee (PSC) at NATO Headquarters.

The High Representative/EU Special Representative had participated in the joint session together with EU High Representative for Common Foreign and Security Policy Javier Solana and NATO Secretary General Jaap de Hoop Scheffer.

Mr Schwarz-Schilling noted that the job of coalition-building that is now underway is a matter for the parties that have been elected, not the International Community. However, he stressed that: "If there is a chance of getting the April package on constitutional reform adopted, then this opportunity must be grasped."

He went on to point out that: "Police reform is an area where progress can be made quickly, without waiting for Parliaments to be formed." And he said the political parties must allow the Police Restructuring Directorate to finish its report by the end of November.

In his remarks to the joint NAC- PSC session, the High Representative/EU Special Representative noted that positive momentum for reform is now possible. He said the United States has his full support in working towards the speedy adoption of the April constitutional reform package and that the European Union will work in close partnership with the United States to build on this initial reform.

"A functional state is crucial for the country's future in Europe," Mr Schwarz-Schilling told reporters after the meeting. "Bosnia and Herzegovina must move from the complex constitutional structure created by the Dayton Peace Agreement, and this step could be taken before the year is out."

He made it clear that the political agreement of October 2005 remains the basis for police restructuring, and the police directorate is the vehicle to carry this forward.

"The Police Restructuring Directorate must continue to complete its task. Javier Solana and Enlargement Commissioner Olli Rehn have made clear that they expect the Directorate to accelerate its work", the High Representative/EU Special Representative said.