

# **It is not up to local politicians to define the mandate of the High Representative**

The authorities of the High Representative, including his role as the final interpreter of the civilian aspects of the Dayton Peace Agreement, are a legal fact, originating in the text of the Dayton Agreement, and the text of subsequent UN Security Council resolutions adopted under a Chapter VII mandate.

Article V of Annex 10 to the Dayton Agreement makes it clear that the High Representative is the final authority in theatre regarding the interpretation of the Agreement on civilian implementation of the peace settlement and gives the High Representative the task to facilitate, as he judges necessary, the resolution of any difficulties arising in connection with civilian implementation. The Constitution as included in Annex 4 of the Peace Agreement is one of the cornerstones of the civilian aspects of the Peace Agreement and the High Representative has had to interpret the Constitution on many occasions in the past to overcome difficulties in its implementation.

In addition, the UN Security Council adopted resolutions under Chapter VII of the UN Charter on an annual basis since 1995 by which it re-affirms that the High Representative is the final authority in theatre regarding interpretation of the civilian implementation of the Peace Agreement and that in case of disputes he may, among others, give his interpretation and make binding decisions as he judges necessary on issues as elaborated by the Peace Implementation Council.

Recent attempts by some officials in the Republika Srpska to

deny the letter of these international legal documents cannot change reality. Instead they appear designed to garner public support for the RS authorities' policy of rejecting those parts of the Peace Agreement that do not serve their political goals.

This policy – of denying the authorities of the High Representative in order to justify breaches of the Peace Agreement – risks further isolation for the entity and is not in the interests of citizens living in the RS.

Regardless of this, the mandate of the High Representative remains unchanged as do his authorities.