

Schwarz-Schilling: Speaking With One Voice



The PIC Steering Board – Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, Russia, Turkey, the United Kingdom, the United States, and the European Commission – came out of Monday and Tuesday’s meeting in Sarajevo “speaking clearly and with one voice”, the High Representative and EU Special Representative, Christian Schwarz-Schilling, wrote today in his weekly newspaper column.

He stressed, however, that while the Steering Board reached “a clear and unanimous view of what must now be done to move Bosnia and Herzegovina out of political deadlock and back on the road to Europe,” the three members of Bosnia and Herzegovina’s Presidency had failed to present a similarly united front at the meeting.

In his article, which appeared in *Dnevni avaz*, *Nezavisne novine* and *Večernji list*, Mr Schwarz-Schilling noted that the members of the Presidency made “not one contribution, but three separate and contradictory contributions” to the discussion; he noted that they had come to the Steering Board meeting “in disarray” and had presented “positions that were totally incompatible with one another”.

That the three members of the Presidency did this in front of the entire international community, which had gathered to review ways to help this country more effectively, “provided the best possible illustration of the wisdom of the earlier PIC decision to keep the Office of the High Representative open and the need to retain Bonn Powers,” Mr Schwarz-Schilling wrote.

He pointed out that if bickering mayors and municipal

officials are able to resolve their differences then Zeljko Komsic, Haris Silajdzic and Nebojsa Radmanovic should be able to do the same.

“These are experienced politicians who exercise real authority. This should make it easier, not more difficult, for them to serve the people who made them the foremost representatives of the country. The Presidency has a responsibility to articulate common cause and collective solutions – this is not its prerogative, it is its obligation.”

Mr Schwarz-Schilling wrote that his objective during the past six months has been to identify the causes of Bosnia and Herzegovina’s current crisis and work to forge a consensus in the international community on how to respond to it effectively. This consensus has now been built.

“The Declaration issued by the Steering Board represents a much-needed reality check. The reality is this: more than a year has been squandered as a handful of politicians have reverted to name-calling political fantasy, in the process abandoning constructive debate and effective policy-making,” he wrote “This has meant that Bosnia and Herzegovina has slipped behind its neighbours in terms of Euro-Atlantic integration, which is the overriding aspiration of the population. The international community understands what has happened and will not abandon the people of Bosnia and Herzegovina to the whims of a small number of politicians.”

The full text of the High Representative/EU Special Representative [weekly column](#) can be found at www.ohr.int and www.eusrbih.org.