

Schwarz-Schilling: UNSC Offer Best Possible Solution for Decertified Police



The UN Security Council's offer to Bosnia and Herzegovina in regard to police officers denied certification by the UN International Police Task Force represents the best possible solution and goes beyond what many of us in Sarajevo had expected, the High Representative and EU Special Representative, Christian Schwarz-Schilling, wrote today in his weekly newspaper column.

The High Representative and EU Special Representative pointed out, however, that the solution was not that for which he had lobbied, in the article that appeared in *Dnevni avaz*, *Nezavisne novine* and *Večernji list*.

"I had called for a solution based on the opinion of the Venice Commission, that is a UN-led review process," Mr Schwarz-Schilling continued. "As we all know, the United Nations did not accept this approach."

In the article, he went on to explain that his position in regard to police officials had always been clear, namely that the United Nations needed to listen to their demands, and he made this issue one of his priorities as High Representative and EU Special Representative.

"I raised this issue in key international forums, including to the UN Security Council, and despatched key staff to the United Nations three times during the past ten months to help search for a solution," Mr Schwarz-Schilling wrote, highlighting cooperation between his Office and the government of Bosnia and Herzegovina on this matter.

"The solution offered depends on strict conditions being applied, as made clear in the letter by the President of the UN Security Council. Specifically, the letter refers to the current recruitment grounds and

procedures as contained in the current Law on Police Officials of Bosnia and Herzegovina,” the High Representative and EU Special Representative continued.

As the OHR understands this matter, these recruitment grounds and procedures must be applied. Existing legislation must be amended – as in the case of the State Law on Police Officials – to allow persons who were denied certification to be eligible to apply for vacant positions. Where there is no such legislation in place – as in Republika Srpska, Brcko and four Cantons – appropriate laws must be adopted.

“Once the UN Security Council conditions have been met, individuals denied certification by the IPTF will be eligible to apply for vacant positions in law-enforcement agencies,” Mr Schwarz-Schilling continued. “The recruitment process must be conducted by the relevant police body as required by applicable legislation.”

The High Representative and EU Special Representative wrote that although some individuals would inevitably feel disappointed with the limitations of the solution, it was actually a vote of confidence in Bosnia and Herzegovina, since the United Nations had recognised that the country’s authorities had made sufficient progress to take over the task of ensuring that police meet the highest professional standards.

“Bosnia and Herzegovina’s institutions must now create the conditions to implement the UN Security Council’s offer and the Council of Ministers should clarify the details of the solution as soon as possible,” he concluded.

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