

The Way Forward

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The international community remains a willing and constructive partner in helping Bosnia and Herzegovina move to the next stage of post-war recovery and European integration, but more dynamism and responsibility must come from this country itself, the High Representative and EU Special Representative, Christian Schwarz-Schilling, wrote in his weekly newspaper column.

In an article that appeared today in *Dnevni avaz*, *Nezavisne novine* and *Večernji list*, Dr Schwarz-Schilling commented on the Peace Implementation Council Steering Board's decision, announced earlier in the week, to retain the Office of the High Representative and Bonn Powers for another year.

"At our meeting in Brussels, I presented the PIC Steering Board with my assessment that progress made by the domestic authorities during the past 12 months in respect of their obligations under Dayton and the requirements of the European integration process fell short of what is necessary to proceed with closure of the OHR this year," he wrote. "In the past year, we have seen some leaders rise to this challenge – in this respect I would single out those heading the negotiating teams for a Stabilisation and Association Agreement and the Central European Free Trade Agreement. But we have seen other instances where leaders have regressed into the arid rhetoric of the 1990s. And while they have been doing this, they have failed to enact reforms and contributed little or nothing to the eradication of crime and poverty that are the twin afflictions of this country and real concerns for its citizens."

Mr Schwarz-Schilling noted that on renewing the mandate of the OHR the PIC Steering Board "reaffirmed the sovereignty and

territorial integrity of Bosnia and Herzegovina and specifically called on me to take action to ensure that the relevant authorities fulfil this country's international obligations."

The Steering Board also laid out for the authorities the key tasks that must be accomplished in the coming months. "Top of the list was agreeing a police restructuring implementation plan, in accordance with the October 2005 Political Agreement on police reform that paved the way for SAA talks. This issue, more than any other, stands between Bosnia and Herzegovina and signing an SAA with the European Union," the High Representative and EU Special representative wrote.

He said he will now concentrate on helping to secure the remaining reforms – especially those relating to police restructuring – that will clear the way for the signing of an SAA. He will also help put in place a constitutional reform process – in partnership with the United States – aimed at helping Bosnia and Herzegovina develop the kind of constitutional structure it needs to become a modern and efficient state.

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