

Schwarz-Schilling: Bosnia's Road to Ownership



The transition to local ownership will have to take longer than anticipated a year ago as a result of the stalled reform process in Bosnia and Herzegovina and developments in the wider region, the High Representative and EU Special Representative, Christian Schwarz-Schilling, wrote in the an article published in the Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung.

As a result, the High Representative and EU Special Representative would be recommending to the meeting of the Peace Implementation Council on Monday and Tuesday in Brussels a one-year extension of the mandate of the Office of the High Representative.

Mr Schwarz-Schilling explained that he, nevertheless, remained committed to the principle of local ownership and that there would be no return to interventionism.

"It is a dangerous illusion to think that it is possible to build a functional state, revive the economy and foster reconciliation by imposition," he wrote. "Institutions and democratic processes will only function, if the country's citizens and politicians buy in to them."

The High Representative and EU Special Representative drew special attention to the importance of constitutional reform for the remainder of his mandate.

"The agreement, which was settled in Dayton, was negotiated to end the war and does not suffice to build up democratic and

efficient state structures,” he wrote. “A new constitution has to correspond to European standards and values, to pave Bosnia and Herzegovina’s way to Europe.”

The text of the High Representative/EU Special Representative’s article can be accessed at www.ohr.int and www.eusrbih.org.