

High Time to Form Governments



The functioning of the state parliament cannot be held hostage to the formation of a state government – it should be reconvened without delay, the High Representative and EU Special Representative, Christian Schwarz-Schilling, wrote in his weekly newspaper column. He added that the formation of the state government cannot be held hostage to the formation of the Federation House of Peoples.

“At the elections on 1 October, the voters of this country expressed their democratic will – yet more than two months later the political parties have still not formed a state-level government. The parliament has met just once and immediately suspended its proceedings until such time as party leaders can agree on the allocation of positions,” Mr Schwarz-Schilling wrote in his column, which appeared in *Večernji list*, *Nezavisne novine* and *Dnevni avaz*.

“Forming coalitions can be a difficult and time-consuming business in all democracies. No one is disputing that,” he added. “The problem is that none of the party leaders is giving the impression that he considers the business of translating the people’s will into a functioning administration to be a matter of urgency.”

Mr Schwarz-Schilling noted that he had invited leaders of all parties represented in the state-level parliament to attend last week’s meeting of the Peace Implementation Council in Brussels, partly “so that they would see at first hand that the important issues facing Bosnia and Herzegovina are not

static and that external circumstances will not wait until the political parties in this country get round to addressing them”.

Party leaders are behaving as though there are no pressing problems, the High Representative/EU Special Representative wrote. “As though poverty is not so bad that solutions cannot wait, as though crime and corruption are simply irritants that can be solved once every ministerial post has been allocated to the satisfaction of those for whom this issue is the pinnacle of political life.”

He said the message from the Peace Implementation Council was clear. “The citizens of Bosnia and Herzegovina must not be made to wait a day longer than necessary for work to begin on solving the many problems that affect this country. A state-level government must be formed without delay. This must be the priority of every political leader, particularly those who have a constitutional role in nominating the new Chair of the Council of Ministers.”

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