

Elections Must Address BiH's Unrealised Potential

The current election campaign offers an opportunity for voters to ask politicians to justify past actions and explain how they intend to deliver on current promises, the High Representative and EU Special Representative, Christian Schwarz-Schilling, said today.

Speaking to reporters after visiting the Reumal Medical Centre in Fojnica, Mr Schwarz-Schilling noted that the medical centre “is one of the leading orthopaedic recovery facilities in the region and an example of this country’s medical excellence. It has enormous potential. But here and elsewhere in Bosnia and Herzegovina that potential can only be developed if politicians put in place the conditions that allow medical professionals to work unhindered by bureaucratic inefficiency and corruption and assisted by sound administration and proper financing.”

The HR/EUSR added that, “too many people in this country are not receiving the medical treatment that they require and are entitled to. Too many people feel that they are in general shabbily treated by institutions that should be serving them. This election campaign should be about addressing such needs, as well as the nuts and bolts of health care and other sectors that directly affect the well-being of citizens.”

During his visit to Fojnica, part of a series of visits across BiH that the HR/EUSR will make in the coming weeks to highlight voter concerns, Mr Schwarz-Schilling had a meeting with Mayor Salkan Merdzanic and Municipal Assembly Speaker Vinko Protudjer. Following this he was shown round the medical centre by General Manager Dr. Eldin Lokmic; he then went on to visit the Library of the Franciscan Monastery “Duha svetoga”, accompanied by the superior of the monastery, Fra. Mirko Majdandzic.

Noting that Fojnica is “a historical, cultural and architectural jewel,” the HR/EUSR added that “Fojnica, like other cities and towns all across Bosnia and Herzegovina, is not experiencing the economic benefits that can come from

a well-planned and well-implemented tourism strategy. The situation is almost identical when it comes to investment and job creation. What I see in this community – like communities all across Bosnia and Herzegovina – is unrealised potential. Fojnica and other places could be more prosperous if it were better served by the political leaders who are currently on television every night making very attractive promises.”