

# 100 Days to Make History

The High Representative, Christian Schwarz-Schilling, on Wednesday identified laws that BiH parliamentarians should enact in the 100 days before the October elections in order to demonstrate to voters and to the International Community that they are serious about improving the lives of citizens and taking BiH further along the path of Euro-Atlantic integration.

Speaking to the BiH Parliamentary Assembly, his first major speech to a BiH institution since taking office at the beginning of February, the High Representative called on delegates to “seize with both hands” the opportunities to enact reforms in the remaining days of this parliament. He urged them to act “with courage, and with a clear vision of a brighter future – not looking back over your shoulder, fearful of the past. This must not be an *inat kuca*, a house of spite, but a place of constructive work and positive results.”

Noting that “every year without education reform is a lost year for a generation of pupils,” the High Representative called for speedy enactment of the long delayed Higher Education Law, which will harmonise standards for courses and exams across all the universities in BiH and give students from this country real possibilities of completing part of their studies at universities in other parts of Europe. He added that the European Partnership also requires laws to be adopted by the BiH Parliament on pre-school education, vocational training and an agency for primary and secondary schools.

The High Representative called on the parliamentarians to build on the welcome news that Bosnia and Herzegovina 's international credit rating has dramatically improved, by enacting the Law on Obligations, the Salary Law, the Law on

National Fiscal Council and the Pharmaceuticals Law and by facilitating the creation of a Central Banking Supervision system.

He also drew attention to key changes to the Criminal Procedure Code that need to be passed in order to strengthen the judiciary and ensure that the successful transfer of cases from the ICTY continues, and he reiterated the core importance of police reform and broadcasting reform. "Be under no illusions – rejecting broadcasting reform or police reform will stop progress towards Europe," he said. "Elections or no elections, this is not a good time to go slowly on reforms or to test the EU's patience."

The High Representative reminded parliamentarians that "I made it clear on day one when I addressed the citizens of Bosnia and Herzegovina that I have come to assist, advise and advocate. I have kept that promise. I will not take decisions for those who do not have the courage to take them – this is a democracy, and Parliament must make up its own mind. I will not intervene every time the authorities fail to take up their responsibilities. I will not do the jobs that the institutions and elected leaders of this country must do. Transition and ownership means the transfer of full responsibilities to the institutions of this country. This will enable Bosnia and Herzegovina to become a 'normal' European country."

He added that "nothing I have seen or heard will deter me from maintaining a hands-off approach." However, he also made it clear that he will not stand by and watch the "darker side" of BiH politics overshadow what is good and positive. "I will tell you where important obligations are not being fulfilled; I will point out where there are higher standards to be met; and I will expose those who have failed to take on their responsibilities or acted without integrity. If there is any serious threat to peace and stability, or any evidence of non-cooperation with the ICTY, I will act using my full powers. I will not allow progress achieved so far to be undermined."

The High Representative assured Parliament that he is willing to play an active role in helping BiH politicians to achieve constitutional reform. "Whatever the limitations of the package of constitutional reforms, it would have helped this country to move forward on the important journey towards Europe . This journey now requires careful planning. Your responsibility does not end with the 'No' vote – that is just the beginning. Democracy does not stop when something is rejected. Mature, responsible politics is about taking small steps when you can, and always finding new ways to move forward when things don't work first time," he said

In October, the High Representative concluded, voters will want to know which of their representatives has acted to promote reforms that improve the lives of citizens and which has acted to obstruct these reforms. "If you step up to the task over the next 100 days, major reform progress will be rewarded by the voters and by the completion of SAA negotiations by the end of the year. This will pave the way for a better standard of living for the people of BiH, and ease the path towards European integration and a smooth transition from OHR to EUSR during 2007," he said.

The full text of the High Representative's speech can be found on the OHR website.