

2006 Is a Crucial Year for Bosnia and Herzegovina

“2006 is a crucial year for Bosnia and Herzegovina – the country has three key priorities: elections, completing the first phase of constitutional reform, and the SAA negotiations,” the High Representative, Christian Schwarz-Schilling, said today.

The High Representative emphasized that in the election campaign citizens groups and intellectuals and others in society must make sure that the political parties are transparent about what they have done and what the plan to do in the future.

On constitutional reform he said “the political agreement is a first step but an important start to the process of making BiH a stronger state and giving it a stronger government necessary to become a partner in Europe. Parliamentarians have a high responsibility for the whole country as they assess this first step of constitutional improvement. The politicians have to do what’s possible today, even if it is not everything they may have wanted.”

The High Representative noted that the SAA negotiations had started well but that they will depend on continuing progress on key reforms, including police reform.

He said that the transition from OHR to EUSR, and BiH’s resumption of full sovereignty, will depend less on what the International Community does, but more on what the BiH authorities achieve. The High Representative was speaking at a meeting of writers and intellectuals in Sarajevo.