

Fulfilling Promises



Parliamentarians have given the impression that they believe Bosnia and Herzegovina is not facing any pressing problems and must now act to change that perception and set an example to others, the High Representative and EU Special Representative, Christian Schwarz-Schilling, wrote in a newspaper article today.

“I am pleased that the House of Representatives of Bosnia and Herzegovina is resuming its inaugural session today,” Mr Schwarz-Schilling wrote in *Euroblic*. “But I am also concerned that seven-and-a-half weeks have elapsed since the inaugural session began and no work has been done in that period. This can only diminish respect among citizens for parliament and its members.”

The inaugural session of Bosnia and Herzegovina’s House of Representatives began on 20 November following elections on 1 October. It is resuming today, 11 January.

“In any democracy, the conduct of parliamentarians is crucial, the High Representative and EU Special Representative wrote. “Democracies only flourish if members of parliament act – and are seen to act – with integrity and responsibility in the interests of all those they represent.”

Mr Schwarz-Schilling made clear that he believed that this parliament could be a historic one. “It can and should pass key laws to help improve the life of citizens and move Bosnia and Herzegovina closer to the European Union,” he wrote.

The High Representative and EU Special Representative pointed out, however, that only the country’s parliamentarians can take the steps that are necessary to achieve these goals. “I will not do their work for them, nor will it be done by others in the international community,” he wrote.

“Members of Bosnia and Herzegovina’s House of Representatives must demonstrate that they can take their country and all its citizens forward from division and despair and lead them to prosperity, security and full Euro-Atlantic integration,” Mr Schwarz-Schilling, concluded.

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