High Representative congratulates newly elected BiH Presidency members

High Representative Christian Schmidt congratulated newly elected members of the Presidency of Bosnia and Herzegovina – Denis Bećirović, Željka Cvijanović, and Željko Komšić – and wished them success in working together for the benefit of all BiH citizens. The High Representative underscored the importance of swift government formation and the implementation of priority reforms necessary for BiH to obtain EU candidate status in December and advance its Euro-Atlantic integration.

Please read the full text of the High Representative's letter below:

"I am taking this opportunity to extend my congratulations on your election to the Presidency of Bosnia and Herzegovina, and to wish you every success in your future joint work to the benefit of all citizens of the country.

Taking office comes with great responsibility for the future of Bosnia and Herzegovina. You, as Presidency Members, are representing the interests of all citizens of Bosnia and Herzegovina – of all its constituent peoples and others – with no distinction. You will be in a position to shape public discourse, to bring people together and to positively contribute to ensuring political stability, unity, and the

maintenance of peace. You share our responsibility to protect the territorial integrity and sovereignty of Bosnia and Herzegovina and to accelerate reform processes. All these efforts aim at ensuring that Bosnia and Herzegovina is a stable, prosperous, and desirable country in which to live, and at preventing further youth outflow – a problem that undermines the very foundation of Bosnia and Herzegovina economically, socially, and politically.

Swift government formation at all levels of authority must be the highest priority, followed by continuation of reforms that advance the Euro-Atlantic integration of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

The European future of Bosnia and Herzegovina is indisputable and represents the most important strategic foreign policy priority. By December the European Union may take the crucial decision on candidate status of Bosnia and Herzegovina. A commitment by the Presidency of Bosnia and Herzegovina to fulfill remaining important priorities necessary for Bosnia and Herzegovina to obtain candidate status in the European Union is of a paramount importance.

I encourage you, along with all those who bear political responsibility, to focus on delivering results to lay the ground for EU integration. To prepare the country for its European future is a historic task.

In my view, other upcoming challenges to be addressed are the strengthening of the unity of the State, the de-blocking of appointments in several state institutions (such as the Governing Board of the BiH Central Bank, Annex 8 Commission, etc.), combating corruption in all spheres of society, ensuring economic development and reform, and undertaking overdue Constitutional reform. The adoption and implementation of non-discriminatory legislation is a priority task of the elected bodies in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The international community is ready to support these efforts.

The Office of the High Representative and I personally stand ready to assist you on this path and will support you in your work.

Looking forward to our cooperation.

Please accept assurances of my highest appreciation.”