

High Representative Organizes a Meeting of German and BiH Business People at CEBIT

The High Representative, Christian Schwarz-Schilling, today organized and chaired a meeting between BiH and German Information Technology companies in Hannover, on the first day of the CEBIT international technology fair, one of the world's two principal annual exhibitions of computer innovation. Purpose of the meeting was to initiate contacts between the BiH IT sector and prospective international partners. During the day High Representative will accompany the BiH delegation on a tour of some of the 6,000 technology firms represented at CEBIT.

The Information Technology market in BiH has grown rapidly in recent years, so that there are now around 300 companies operating in this sector. Many of them are exporting software solutions to EU countries. Dr Schwarz-Schilling was one of the co-founders of CEBIT, in 1986 when he was German Minister for Telecommunications.

"It is crucial that BiH does not miss the real opportunity that it now has to generate faster economic growth by securing a place on the global new-technology bandwagon," said the High Representative. "It has been shown that transition countries are better than mature economies in developing new industrial sectors – so this is an area where BiH actually has a competitive advantage. And this is a sector that favors small and medium-sized enterprises. It's a booming market, and we must make sure that BiH wins a share of that market."

Last night, the High Representative, BiH Communications Minister Branko Dokic and members of the BiH business delegation attended the formal opening of the CEBIT by German

Chancellor Angela Merkel. Mrs. Merkel called for new measures in Germany to prevent excessive bureaucracy from hindering investment and job creation in the IT sector and in the business environment as a whole.

“It is important that the entrepreneurs from BiH are seeing the exhibition at first hand,” Dr Schwarz-Schilling said, “because this will give them a realistic view of the possibilities that are out there. If you don’t know which possibilities exist, you cannot go out and take advantage of them.”