

High Representative Urges Presidency to Approve BiH Armed Forces Structure

The High Representative Christian Schwarz-Schilling urged the BiH Presidency to approve the proposed decision on the size, structure, and stationing of the Armed Forces of Bosnia and Herzegovina (AFBiH) by the legally required deadline.

Mr Schwarz-Schilling made his appeal after chairing a meeting of the Peace Implementation Council (PIC) Steering Board Ambassadors at which the issue was discussed.

“Reaching agreement on these issues is a matter of urgency for the Presidency in its capacity as collective commander-in-chief,” the High Representative said. “A deadline was set in the Defence Law and if it is missed, it risks delaying implementation of critical military reforms.”

The Defence Law, that came into effect on 28 December 2005, specifies a 1 July deadline for agreement by the BiH Presidency on the size, structure and stationing of the AFBiH.

The proposed decision on the size, structure, and stationing of the AFBiH has been developed by BiH Minister of Defence Nikola Radovanovic and his Transition Team with NATO advisory input.

The PIC Steering Board specifically addressed this issue at its meeting last week, expressing hope in the communiqué that “a decision will be reached before 1 July that is consistent with the law and the readiness requirements of a NATO-compatible, single military force”.