

OHR's Statement at the International Agencies' Joint Press Conference



HR-EUSR meets BiH Presidency

The High Representative and EU Special Representative, Christian Schwarz-Schilling, is meeting today with the three members of Bosnia and Herzegovina's collective Presidency.

Mr Schwarz-Schilling is using this meeting to congratulate the Presidency on Bosnia and Herzegovina's accession to NATO's Partnership for Peace, to brief the Presidency on the recent meeting of the Peace Implementation Council in Brussels, and to discuss government formation.

On PfP membership, the High Representative and EU Special Representative will make clear that if Bosnia and Herzegovina wishes to take its relationship with NATO further and eventually to join the Alliance as a member, full implementation of the agreed defence reforms and further ICTY cooperation will be necessary.

On the Brussels meeting of PIC Political Directors, the High Representative and EU Special Representative will stress the importance of those reforms – in particular police restructuring – necessary for concluding a Stabilisation and Association Agreement with the European Union, as well as fiscal sustainability and the establishment of a functional state.

In terms of the OHR's transition to EUSR, Mr Schwarz-Schilling will draw attention to the fact that Political Directors had noted some areas of concern, that they would be carefully monitoring and assessing the situation and that the decision on the closure of the OHR would be reviewed and confirmed in February.

Concerning government formation, Mr Schwarz-Schilling will make clear that the fact that a government is yet to be formed at the State level is unacceptable. He will also urge the Presidency, as the only functioning State-level institution, to take the initiative to bring together the parties to build coalitions and form a government.

CEFTA Signing Places BiH at Heart of Emerging Southeast European Market

Today in Bucharest a single Free Trade Agreement for the whole of South Eastern Europe will be signed – and Bosnia and Herzegovina will be one of the signatories.

Bosnia and Herzegovina's accession to the Central European Free Trade Agreement (CEFTA), after seven months of difficult negotiations, is another major step forward in the country's recovery and integration in Europe.

The OHR would like to congratulate the BiH authorities and the chief negotiator, Deputy Foreign Minister Anton Rill, for their professional and robust approach to these negotiations, characterised by a clear and sustained focus on the desired end result, namely securing for this country a place at the heart of an emerging economic region that can deliver rapid growth and prosperity to its 55 million inhabitants.

BiH Prime Minister Adnan Terzic will be joined at the signing ceremony by the Prime Ministers of Albania, Bulgaria, Croatia, Moldova, Montenegro, Romania, Serbia and the

former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia , and the Special Representative of the UN Secretary General on behalf of Kosovo.

Today's event will also be attended by Stability Pact Special Coordinator Erhard Busek, Enlargement Commissioner Olli Rehn and a representative of the Finnish Presidency of the European Union.

HR-EUSR Calls on Council of Ministers To Agree Review Process With UN

The High Representative and EU Special Representative (HR-EUSR), Christian Schwarz-Schilling, today calls on the Government of Bosnia and Herzegovina to communicate its decision to set up a review committee for the police certification process to the United Nations in New York.

The Government of Bosnia and Herzegovina has an obligation under international law to implement the decisions of the UN-mandated International Police Task Force Mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina . The Council of Ministers must ensure that Bosnia and Herzegovina – through its actions – does not put itself outside the international legal framework created by the United Nations.

"I have worked intensively to persuade the United Nations to agree to a review process and have some sympathy for the non-certified police," said the HR-EUSR today, "However, Bosnia and Herzegovina must also be aware of its obligations under international law and behave accordingly".

Mr Schwarz-Schilling has written to inform the United Nations of the latest developments in Bosnia and Herzegovina and the increasing criticism of the lack of UN flexibility on this issue.