

OHR's Statement at the International Agencies' Joint Press Conference in Banja Luka

HR/EUSR Comments on HoR Failure to Adopt Constitutional Amendments

The High Representative/EU Special Representative Christian Schwarz-Schilling today expressed his profound disappointment that the proposed constitutional amendments were not adopted by the BiH House of Representatives on Wednesday.

"I am deeply disappointed by the outcome. BiH has missed a hard-gained opportunity to initiate the important process of modifying the constitution in time for it to be applied in the October elections. The outcome of last night's vote sends a negative signal to Europe, to the US and to the International Community in general," said the High Representative/EU Special Representative. "But most of all, this is a loss for BiH".

"I and other members of the International Community have been personally involved in this process. We have sought to impress on members of parliament the importance of the proposed amendments. The political parties, public opinion and members of parliament were all perfectly clear that the International Community was united in standing behind this project. The proposed amendments were and remain necessary in order to start the vital process of strengthening governance in this country. Those who brought this package to failure must reflect on the consequences of their actions," he said.

The High Representative also pointed out that a large majority

of Members of the House of Representative's voted in favor of the package. Among the population, more people have expressed themselves in favor of the package than against.

The High Representative paid tribute to the party leaders who worked so hard to reach consensus. He also commended the US Government for its facilitation effort.

"BiH now needs time to reflect on last night's outcome and then agree on how to move forward. The need to modify the BiH Constitution will not go away. It is an issue that will have to be re-visited – in order to better equip BiH for EU integration, and better equip government to serve its citizens."