

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



HR-EUSR Meets Rehn and Solana In Brussels

The High Representative and EU Special Representative, Christian Schwarz-Schilling is in Brussels today.

This morning, he met Olli Rehn, the EC's Enlargement Commissioner. This afternoon, he will meet with the EU High Representative for the Common Foreign and Security Policy, Javier Solana.

The HR-EUSR will be briefing Commissioner Rehn and High Representative Solana on the current situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina; the pace of government formation, progress in upholding the rule of law, economic prospects, regional political developments and progress towards key pre-requirements for Bosnia and Herzegovina to be able to sign a Stabilisation and Association Agreement with the European Union – police reform and a functioning and independent public broadcasting service.

[We hope to be able to make a joint statement by the HR-EUSR and HR Solana available to you during the course of the day.]

The HR-EUSR is also participating in a conference bringing together all nine EU Special Representatives active in

different regions of the world.

EU Special Representatives support the work of the EU High Representative for the Common Foreign and Security Policy and play a central part in promoting the interests and policies of the European Union in their respective countries.

The meetings with Commissioner Rehn and High Representative Solana form part of a series of consultations in advance of the next meeting of the Peace Implementation Council (PIC) on 26 and 27 February in Brussels at which the PIC is to review its decision to close the Office of the High Representative at the end of June.

Canton 7 At Risk Of Not Participating In The FBiH HoP

The Herzegovina-Neretva Canton Assembly must today nominate its delegates to the FBiH House of Peoples or run the risk that this Canton will not participate in the key decisions the House of Peoples must take early in its mandate.

As you know last week the parties elected to the Herzegovina-Neretva Canton Assembly agreed to hold a session today at which they would nominate the Canton's delegates to the FBiH House of Peoples (HoP). The Herzegovina-Neretva Canton is the only Canton that has not started the process of electing delegates to the FBiH House of Peoples.

The OHR at the start of the week issued a legal interpretation of the Federation's constitution that states that the FBiH House of Peoples could hold its constituent session with a simple majority of delegates appointed from the FBiH Cantons. A simple majority is achieved when over 50 per cent of the delegates have been appointed, that is 30 delegates in all.

With the election of candidates from Canton 8 (Siroki Brijeg)

yesterday the total number of delegates elected to the FBiH House of Peoples now stands at 40.

The FBiH House of Peoples must be convened as soon as possible so that it can adopt a decision on temporary financing, thereby heading off serious fiscal crisis in the FBiH. It must also forward nominations to the BiH House of Peoples so that the State level Parliament can be formed.

Under the FBiH Constitution, the HoP is bound to meet within 20 days of the announcement of the election results. The OHR expects the House of Peoples to convene as soon as possible now that there are a sufficient number of delegates to constitute a quorum.

If the Canton 7 Assembly fails to confirm its nominations today the OHR will have no choice but to call for the inaugural session of the FBiH House of Peoples to take place without representatives from the Herzegovina-Neretva Canton in line with the FBiH Constitution.