

Schwarz-Schilling: Lasting Peace Depends on Justice

Governments have severely misread their moral, political and internationally binding obligations if they think they can avoid cooperating with the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY) and get away with it, the High Representative and EU Special Representative, Christian Schwarz-Schilling, wrote in his weekly newspaper column.

“The international community has consistently and systematically made it clear that consolidating the rule of law in Southeastern Europe is the bedrock of every other effort – social, political, and economic – to integrate the region in Euro-Atlantic structures,” the High Representative and EU Special Representative wrote in the article which appeared today in *Dnevni avaz*, *Nezavisne novine* and *Večernji list*.

“In this respect, I would point out that Croatia was only able to take forward its relationship with the European Union and NATO after Ante Gotovina was apprehended and transferred to the custody of the ICTY,” Schwarz-Schilling continued.

“I would also point out that I have not rehabilitated anybody removed from office in Bosnia and Herzegovina for failure to cooperate with the ICTY and believe that such individuals should remain removed as long as ICTY cooperation is unsatisfactory.”

In his address to the UN Security Council earlier in the week, the High Representative and EU Special Representative had urged the United Nations to establish a UN Day of Srebrenica to mark the tragic events of July 1995 and pay respect to the victims of genocide and their families.

He also reminded the UN Security Council that the International Court of Justice (ICJ) ruled that genocide occurred in Srebrenica and explicitly called on Serbia – which the court found had failed to prevent and punish this genocide – to cooperate fully with the ICTY. And he asked the UN Security Council to consider steps to ensure that all the Dayton signatories, including Serbia, comply with their ICTY obligations, and to consider ways of making Serbia implement the ICJ ruling.

“Serbia is not cooperating fully, and this is undermining stability in Bosnia and Herzegovina and the region,” Schwarz-Schilling warned. “Lasting peace depends on justice. Everything possible must be done to bring each and every one of those indicted for war crimes, at Srebrenica and elsewhere, to trial.”

ICTY cooperation is not a tiresome chore, Schwarz-Schilling concluded, but an obligation which must be met for the sake of victims of war crimes and for the sake of all in the region who want to live in dignity and peace.

The [full text](#) of the High Representative and EU Special Representative’s weekly column can be accessed at www.ohr.int and www.eusrbih.org.