

Schwarz-Schilling Welcomes UN Security Council Solution for Decertified Police



The High Representative and EU Special Representative, Christian Schwarz-Schilling, today welcomed the letter from the UN Security Council President concerning the long-standing issue of police officials in Bosnia and Herzegovina who were denied certification by the UN International Police Task Force in 2002.

“This is the best solution possible” the High Representative and EU Special Representative said.

The letter from the UN Security Council President means that former officers are no longer prohibited from applying for jobs as police officers, provided they meet the conditions laid out in the UN Security Council letter, including specific recruitment grounds and procedures contained in the current Law on Police Officials of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Since becoming High Representative and EU Special Representative, Mr Schwarz-Schilling has made it a priority to find a solution to this issue. The HR-EUSR worked with BiH authorities and brought this matter to the United Nations’ attention repeatedly, underlining that the United Nations must take action. In addition to visits by the High Representative and EU Special Representative, OHR-EUSR teams visited New York three times in 2006/07 to help achieve a solution.

The High Representative and EU Special Representative thanked

the United Kingdom for its constructive engagement to bring this issue to a resolution under its Presidency of the UN Security Council. And he highlighted the constructive role played by the BiH authorities.

“The United Nations has now recognised that the authorities of Bosnia and Herzegovina are ready to take over the task of ensuring that police in this country meet the highest professional standards,” said the High Representative and EU Special Representative. “This question can now be resolved in a way that is not in conflict with Bosnia and Herzegovina’s obligations under international law.”

The High Representative and EU Special Representative also noted that the Council of Europe’s Commissioner for Human Rights has expressed support for the solution. He welcomed the assistance provided by the Council of Europe since December and thanked Commissioner Hammarberg for his valuable efforts to reach a solution.

Finally, the High Representative and EU Special Representative praised the work and determination shown by the non-certified police officers. “You have helped move both the government of this country and the United Nations,” he said.

The High Representative and EUSR called upon the respective BiH authorities to take the issue forward urgently and in line with the directions provided by the UN Security Council. It is the OHR’s understanding that Republika Srpska, Brcko District, and the Posavina, Herzegovina-Neretva, West Herzegovina and Livno Cantons must adopt legislation to comply with the conditions set out by the UN Security Council. The BiH level, FBiH and the other six Cantons have Laws on Police Officials in force that meet the recruitment grounds and procedures required by the UN Security Council, but which require some adjustments to allow for recruitment of police officers into vacant positions.