

Transcript of the International Agencies' Joint Press Conference



OHR, Chris Bennett
ICTY, Matias Hellman
EUFOR, Achim Winkler

OHR

High Representative/EU Special Representative in Rome

The High Representative and EU Special Representative Christian Schwarz-Schilling is travelling to Rome today for talks with senior Italian Foreign Ministry officials.

This visit is part of a tour of key capitals ahead of the next meeting of the Peace Implementation Council (PIC) scheduled for 26 and 27 February.

Discussions tomorrow will focus on the current political situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina; impediments to the signing of a Stabilisation and Association Agreement with the European Union, that is police restructuring and PBS reform in particular; economic reforms and government formation.

The goal is to develop a consolidated position in advance of the February PIC, at which a final decision will be taken on the closure of the Office of the High Representative.

The High Representative and EU Special Representative will be sending his assessment and a recommendation for the OHR's future to the PIC in mid-February based on these consultations.

Mr Schwarz-Schilling has argued for a thorough assessment of conditions in Bosnia and Herzegovina and the wider region, not a rubberstamping of the PIC's June 2006 decision.

The High Representative and EU Special Representative started his consultations with PIC members in advance of the February PIC in Berlin. He has since held meetings in Paris and Brussels. These meetings have shown that PIC capitals share Mr Schwarz-Schilling's concerns about the situation with the result that maintaining Bonn Powers beyond mid-2007 is now a serious option.

Schwarz-Schilling Urges Parliaments To Adopt Imposed HR Decisions

The High Representative and EU Special Representative Christian Schwarz-Schilling has called on all legislative authorities to adopt decisions imposed by previous High Representatives. This is a part of the process of developing the concept of domestic ownership for this country's future.

Legally, all laws imposed the High Representative are in force on a temporary basis – until adopted by the relevant authorities in the same form.

To put it another way, a decision enacted by the High Representative cannot be amended, repealed or otherwise altered until the relevant legislative body adopts it.

Since the laws are already in place, there is nothing to lose by adopting them. In fact, this is the only way they can be amended.

In his letter, the High Representative encouraged the new parliaments and assemblies “to adopt these legal acts as soon as possible”.

“By doing so you will send a clear signal to both the international community and to voters that you are changing the fundamentals of how the local authorities work in Bosnia and Herzegovina,” he wrote.

You can find the list of [Decisions](#) to be adopted by each legislature in the handouts I have in front of me.

ICTY

Good morning on behalf of the ICTY. I will be brief as I don't have any particular news or announcements today.

I assume that everyone has seen our press release from last Wednesday regarding Dragan Zelenović's guilty plea. For those interested I have local language copies of the plea agreement and the attached factual statement. Dragan Zelenović personally signed both of these documents.

I've also printed out a few copies of our latest weekly update. I'd like to remind you that my office will be glad to provide journalists with documents from the list of the latest submissions.

That is all from me, if anyone has questions, I'll try to answer them.

EUFOR

No statement available.

RTQs

Journalist #1:

One question for Mr. Bennett. Is it correct that the Peace Implementation Council (PIC) has brought a decision that the High Representative's mandate will be terminated on the 30th of June and that they are not satisfied with the work he has done so far?

Chris Bennett, Office of the High Representative:

The PIC has not made any such decision as yet, however Christian Schwarz-Schilling will give a statement to the media regarding this issue later on during the day. He will give a statement concerning this issue before he leaves for Italy today.

Journalist #2:

Will he hold a press conference or just give a statement?

Chris Bennett, Office of the High Representative:

He will only be giving a statement.

Journalist #1:

If no decision has been brought yet, why and regarding what will he be giving a statement?

Chris Bennett, Office of the High Representative:

He will give a statement regarding these stories. He will clarify the situation. However, the PIC has not made a decision yet.

Journalist #1:

Has a decision been brought by someone else, if not the PIC?

Chris Bennett, Office of the High Representative:

Actually, you should ask Mr. Christian Schwarz-Schilling this question.

Journalist #2:

When exactly will the High Representative give his statement today?

Chris Bennett, Office of the High Representative:

We will be in contact with the media and will inform them at what time this will take place.