

# Joint statement by the Embassy of the United States and the OHR



## **TUZLA CANTON AUTHORITIES SHOW NO RESPECT FOR POLICE INDEPENDENCE, CITIZENS WILL BEAR THE CONSEQUENCES**

In their joint November letter to Tuzla Canton authorities, U.S. Ambassador to Bosnia and Herzegovina Eric Nelson and High Representative Valentin Inzko cautioned against actions that enable direct political control of the police, as meaningful independence and objectivity are essential to the proper functioning of public safety institutions.

Unfortunately, today's dismissal of the Tuzla Canton Police Commissioner by the Tuzla Canton Government indicates that the governing authorities are not ready to respect these basic principles of good governance, an essential element of every functional state.

Officials serving set mandates in apolitical institutions like the police should not be removed simply because there is a change in the political constellation but should be evaluated against objective and professional standards.

Accountability and transparency are the building blocks of good governance and effective institutions that serve the public interest.

The repeated attacks on police independence by political

authorities in Tuzla Canton show a deficit in commitment to professionalism.

Today's decision by the Tuzla Canton Government does not seem to have been carried out in the public's interest. Procedural expedience is not the same as good governance, and public security and the safety of citizens should take precedence over political interests.