Joint police restructuring in Canton 4

OHR and UNMIBH welcome the crucial step forward in the establishment of multi-ethnic police forces in Canton 4 over the last several days. This is in line with the OHR strategy for Canton 4 to increase the level of implementation in Zenica-Doboj Canton, in all areas concerned, and with the UN IPTF policy of minority police recruitment which the Federation partners committed to at Bonn-Petersburg some three years ago.

Following 30 Croat policemen starting to work in the interior ministry of Zenica-Doboj canton last Thursday, the 93-person multi-ethnic police was inaugurated in Zepce in the presence of Deputy High Representative JPK and C/IPTF Detlef Buwitt and the collective leadership of the Canton as well as local authorities. The new Zepce police force will encompass areas of Zavidovici and Maglaj municipalities which conform to the area previously covered by the Croat police force in Zepce until JPF administration is established there, no later than 13 July 1999. UN IPTF is posting an adviser to the Zepce police administration to assist in the establishment of a fully-functioning multi-ethnic police force.

We also welcome the establishment of multi-ethnic police administrations in Zenica and Kakanj yesterday as scheduled as part of this step-by-step approach. These are important steps forward and will increase the security in the whole canton for all residents.

OHR and UNMIBH are determined to sideline those who attempt to reverse this constructive outcome, based on the restructuring plan adopted on 26 March by the Bosniac Minister of Interior and his Croat Deputy.