Remarks by Deputy HR and Head of OHR Economic Department, Patrice Dreiski at the Inauguration of a New BiH Information Pillar

We are here today to inaugurate a BiH project that is a positive model of how companies in this country can expand successfully – and create new jobs and raise living standards.

This information pillar is a small steel computer platform with dedicated software – but it is much much more than the sum of its parts.

For one thing, it represents constructive cooperation between the International Community and BiH partners.

Ambassador Urs Breiter of Switzerland is here. The Swiss Quick Impact Fund purchased this pillar and arranged for it to make available information about businesses in BiH. The Swiss Fund invests in projects that take on a life of their own – projects that will exert a positive economic influence long after the International Community has normalised its engagement with BiH and scaled down its operations here. The Fund's disbursements are designed to start economic chain reactions – and I believe that is exactly what this pillar is going to do.

Also here is Mirza Hajric of the Foreign Investment Promotion Agency. FIPA's website is one of those which will be instantly accessible to visiting businesspeople through this pillar. The pillar is a gateway to information about BiH and FIPA is *the* preeminent gateway for investment in BiH. It is hard to overemphasise the crucial role of FIPA. In the electronic-

information age it’s also hard to overemphasise the role of its website, which is being overhauled and expanded through a separate grant from the Swiss Fund. This site is possibly the most important interface between BiH and prospective foreign investors.

Also with us is Edin Branković of Brank Multimedia, the BiH company that manufactured and installed this pillar. As the economy continues to expand, there will be a market for these pillars, in banks, post offices and hotels, in this country, and there is already a huge European market. Brank has developed its product to a point where it can export information pillars competitively – it can match international standards and it can better international prices.

So we have in this pillar the means *and* the message. This is an instrument for spreading the word that BiH is open for business; it’s an instrument that was designed and manufactured in BiH. International funds facilitated this project, but the intellectual skills that have gone into making it a success are made in BiH.

Thank you