Speech by the Supervisor of Brcko, Robert W. Farrand at the Inaugural session of the interim Assembly of the Brcko District

President Djapo, Vice President Pajic, Mayor Kisic, Members of the Government, Chief and Deputy Chiefs of Police, Councilors:

This is an important day for Brcko. Today, with the opening of the Interim Assembly, two of the main pillars of government of the Brcko District of Bosnia and Herzegovina, the executive and legislative branches, are established. Soon the judiciary will join these two branches to form the complete Interim Government.

Let me be clear about one aspect of this process. The appointments which I have made to the various government branches are interim appointments only. They will be put to a test in the Brcko District elections to be held in the future. Until elections are held, we will give you, members of the Interim Assembly and Government, all the support, training, and assistance you need to perform your duties and meet your responsibilities to the residents of the Brcko District.

As most of you know, a team of experts in modern city management and public administration is already hard at work with the Mayor and the Heads of Department to assist and guide them in their difficult tasks. I view this interim period as crucial in establishing a new, transparent, and accountable way of conducting the affairs of this District.

We all must work together as a team to achieve this worthy

goal. The people of this community who have seen so much destruction, who have suffered so much loss, and who have endured so much pain, deserve a better life for themselves and their children.

The role of the Interim Assembly in improving the lives of District residents is crucial, current laws need to be revised and harmonized. New laws need to be drafted and implemented. As you may know, the Brcko Law Review Commission, under Paragraph 5 of the Annex to the Brcko Final Award, has already begun its work. The Commission, in coming weeks and months, will assist you in creating the basic legal framework which District institutions will. In a very few days, the Commission will present to you drafts of the laws on administration, police, rules of procedure for this Assembly, and the Official Gazette.

Yesterday, I visited the offices of several international organizations and potential donors to seek additional funding and technical expertise to assist in the continuing development of Brcko's infrastructure and economy. We hope very soon to civilianize the now demilitarized VRS garrison for the direct benefit of all of the District's citizens, to repair of the damaged Brcko bridge, and to evaluate rapidly the reopening of the Brcko Port, and to expedite the official privatization program in Brcko in order to attract serious investors to the new District.

Investment will mean jobs, and jobs will mean steady income for the heads of families who have for so long been without work. So we are at last about to embark upon the road, the right road, to economic revitalization.

Nothing will happen overnight, of course. Just as we have come a long way to find ourselves together in this room this morning, we must continue to look ahead, without for a moment forgetting the past, in seeking ways to create better lives and a brighter future for all residents of the new Brcko

District. If you will do your job to the best of your ability, even though many of you are new to government and have many things to learn, I pledge to you my full support. I think it is fair to say that because Brcko stands unique among the communities of Bosnia and Herzegovina, the eyes of the Nation, of the Balkan region, and, indeed, all of Europe and the world will be on you as you take up your new duties. This is a serious and important moment for us all. I trust we will all rise to the challenge.

Thank you.