



Press release

**CROATIA AS A FULL MEMBER OF THE EUROPEAN PATENT OFFICE (EPO)
HOSTED PRESIDENT OF EPO MS ALISON BRIMELOW AND IN THIS OCCASION
INAUGURATED INFORMATION CENTRE FOR INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY**

Zagreb, 22 January 2008 - State Intellectual Patent Office (SIPO) organized press conference in the occasion of accession of Republic of Croatia to the full membership of the European Patent Office (EPO) and official visit of president of EPO Ms Alison Brimelow. The guests of press conference were state secretary for entrepreneurship in Ministry of Economy, Labour and entrepreneurship Ms Tajana Kesić Šapić, representative of Delegation of the European Commission to the Republic of Croatia Mr Constantino Longares Barrio, and prominent Croatian business persons: Gordana Kovačević, CEO of Ericsson Nikola Tesla; Darko Marinac, CEO of Podravka; and Matko Bolanča, CEO of Pliva Hrvatska. At press conference was announced official completion of project „CARDS 2003 - Strengthening the Intellectual Property Implementation System”, and was inaugurated Information centre for intellectual property which will supply individuals and companies with professional information about protection of intellectual property rights.

First speaker at press conference was director of SIPO Mr Željko Topić. He reminded all guests to all activities that SIPO carried out in last few years, aimed to the improvement of national system of intellectual property protection in Croatia. All these activities were result of Strategy for intellectual property protection adopted by the Croatian Government. „Result of all these activities is our full membership in EPO“, Topić pointed out. He added that inauguration of Information centre for intellectual property shows strong dedication of SIPO to continue work on this field with focus to end users - companies and individuals whose business activities are based on development or use of new technologies, on offer of new and distinguishing products and services to the clients, or on their creativity. „It is necessary to have good management of your own intellectual

property or approved use of loan intellectual property, if you want to achieve long-term success in modern business environment” Topić said.

State secretary for entrepreneurship in Ministry of Economy, Labour and Entrepreneurship Ms Tajana Kesić Šapić congratulated to SIPO on successfully done job and reminded that her ministry works hard to ensure infrastructure, positive atmosphere and financial support for strong and efficient bonds between intellectual property and production.

As CEO of one of leading Croatian companies whose business activities are based on intellectual property, Mrs Gordana Kovačević from Ericsson Nikola Tesla emphasized that strengthening of intellectual capital of any country is significant precondition for economic and social prosperity, so innovations in everything we do is key for development of each country, including ours.

“Example of world great scientist Nikola Tesla shows that innovations and creativity are not privilege of great and powerful nations. People make difference. Exactly because of that, as we often point out, people are the highest value that any company or society could have. If we want to enjoy in results that creative and intellectual potential of each organisation brings, that potential must be recognized and strategically focused, and its development must be continuously encouraged. Our accession to the European organisations, like European patent organisation, is additional motif and incentive to generating new ideas among Croatian experts” Kovačević emphasized.

CEO of Podravka Mr Darko Marinac added that innovations and creativity are not privilege of great and powerful nations, but product protection is, energized his claim with Podravka’s experience from struggle for protection of its brand Vegeta from fake copies. Podravka easier protects Vegeta on the Russian, Serbian, or Croatian market than on the markets of some more developed countries in Western Europe. “It is important that we all understand that we are small countries and that all our companies are too small to be successful on global market in production based on quantities. Our only chance for success is production based on quality” Marinac said.

Mr Matko Bolanča, CEO of Pliva Hrvatska, congratulated to SIPO on all achievements in intellectual property protection. He pointed out importance of patent rights improvement, especially from Pliva’s perspective, because Pliva based its production on generic medicaments.

Representative of Delegation of the European Commission to the Republic of Croatia Mr Constantino Longares Barrio presented results of project „CARDS 2003 - Strengthening the Intellectual Property Implementation System” that was implemented in Croatia in last two years by EPO, in co-operation with The Office of Harmonization for the Internal Market (OHIM), and he looked back to the achievements of Republic of Croatia related to adjustment of protection of intellectual property with the European Union. „All projects financed by the European Union during last five years were conducted with total amount of 5 million euros. Some of these projects are successfully finished; some of them are still going on. It represents very significant financing resource from EU funds, what also reflects high economic importance that the European Commission gives to the field of intellectual property rights“ Longares said.

"With its membership in the European Patent Organisation Croatia gains access to one of the most effective systems for technology transfer, as patents form an important and efficient global distribution networks for new technologies", said EPO President Alison Brimelow. "Moreover, Croatia can now actively participate in the shaping of the future of the European patent system, since it has a seat and vote on the Administrative Council of the European Patent Organisation." The European Patent Office is the executive body of the European patent Organisation and is supervised by the Administrative Council. Its task is to examine European patent applications in all fields of technology. With more than 200,000 patent applications per year the EPO is one of the largest patent offices in the world.

After the press conference all guests and journalists joined the inauguration of Information centre for intellectual property (INCENTIV) in the ground floor of SIPO building in Vukovarska Street. INCENTIV will provide professional information about protection of intellectual property in Croatia and abroad, about proper usage of loan intellectual property, and about avoiding violation of loan rights.

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