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PRESS RELEASE

MUNICIPALITIES OF NOVI PAZAR, TUTIN AND SJENICA JOIN BUSINESSES AND CIVIL SOCIETY GROUPS IN USAID PROJECT TO BOOST THE REGION'S ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

NOVI PAZAR (July 21) – The mayors of Novi Pazar, Tutin and Sjenica, together with business and civil society leaders, today agreed to jointly plan, implement and monitor economic development projects in their communities.

Today's signing of the Inter-Municipal Cooperation Agreement and Memorandum of Understanding creates a partnership of communities, businesses and civil society organizations to pool the municipalities' expertise and resources to create a stronger environment for investment and growth.

The agreement is part of the five-year, \$22 million Sustainable Local Development Project (SLDP) created and supported by the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID). Through this project, 12 inter-municipal partnerships will be formed throughout Serbia, each comprised of at least three municipalities, plus local business and civil society organizations.

"Municipalities need to work together to compete for investment and jobs in today's global marketplace. For these partnerships to be effective and sustainable, they also need to involve civil society groups and the private sector," USAID Mission Director Susan K. Fritz told participants at Novi Pazar's Cultural Center where the signing event took place.

Representatives from Novi Pazar, Tutin and Sjenica have jointly identified several inter-municipal initiatives for cooperation that will impact the lives and livelihoods of their communities. These include development of an agribusiness center, cooperation in water supply and wastewater treatment, development of tourist attractions, solid waste management, as well as development of renewable energy sources.

The partnership established today in Novi Pazar is the fourth of its kind formed through the USAID project. The remaining eight will be launched over the next 18 months.

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