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**PRESS RELEASE**

## **EBRD and Banca Intesa Beograd boost financing to businesses in Serbia**

*€30 million credit line for on-lending to small and medium companies*

The EBRD is increasing further the availability of financing to the real economy in Serbia, with a €30 million credit line to Banca Intesa Beograd for on-lending to small and medium enterprises (SMEs). The credit line is part of the €100 million financing package provided by the EBRD to three of Intesa Sanpaolo Group's subsidiaries in eastern Europe.

Majority-owned by the Intesa Sanpaolo Group, Banca Intesa Beograd is the largest commercial bank in Serbia, with a nationwide network, servicing over 1.4 million corporate and retail customers.

The proceeds of the EBRD loan will be used to finance the investments and working capital needs of private businesses operating in Serbia with short, medium and longer term loans of up to €2.5 million.

"We are pleased to continue our cooperation with Banca Intesa Beograd with the aim of boosting support for the growth of the real economy in Serbia in the current environment, when businesses face limited access to financing needed for their development. The credit line will enable Banca Intesa Beograd to enhance its role in financing private SMEs and to increase the competition in this sector," said Hildegard Gacek, the EBRD's Director for Serbia.

„It is a great pleasure to see EBRD has selected our bank this year, again, as a partner in projects aiming to support the development of small and medium enterprises. In the period of ongoing economic downturn, this project complies with our strategic determination to expand our offer to SMEs in the spirit of support to entire economy. I am sure that this credit line will be implemented

successfully, achieve good results, as well as live up to expectations of all project participants”, says Draginja Đurić, president of the Executive Board of Banca Intesa.

In 2009 the EBRD provided to Banca Intesa Beograd a €10 million credit line for financing energy efficiency investments undertaken by Serbian companies, which is being successfully implemented.

The EBRD facility offered to Intesa Sanpaolo Group also includes a €20 million credit line to Intesa Sanpaolo Bank in Bosnia and Herzegovina and a €50 million to CIB Bank in Hungary. The investment is part of a joint pledge by the EBRD, the World Bank Group and the European Investment Bank (EIB) to provide over €25 billion in support of the banking sectors in the region and to fund lending to businesses hit by the global crisis.

Since the beginning of its operations in Serbia, the EBRD has committed close to €1.8 billion in the Serbian economy, mobilising additional investments worth more than another €1.7 billion.

*The EBRD, owned by 61 countries and two intergovernmental institutions, aims to foster the transition from centrally planned to market economies from central Europe to central Asia. Visit the EBRD's website: [www.ebrd.com](http://www.ebrd.com)*