



**REPUBLIC OF ALBANIA  
MINISTRY OF ECONOMY, TRADE AND ENERGY**

**CEFTA Deputy Minister's Meeting**

**Belgrade, 10 June 2010**

**Distinguished participants,**

**Ladies and Gentleman,**

It is a pleasure to be here and represent the Government of Republic of Albania in the Deputy Ministers' Meeting.

Every year we progress and it is legitimate to be proud of. The maturity of CEFTA countries in maintaining the progress is key in implementing our common agenda toward European Integration. New challenges are ahead and strong commitments, good will and good understanding among CEFTA countries is needed.

We are all trying to recover after the economic crises, although we were not hit as other countries in Europe.

Allow me to portray the Albanian recent trade data development.

Albanian trade volume for the first quarter of 2010 increased compared to the same period of 2009, by 25%. Trade figures of Albania with CEFTA countries for the first quarter are promising. Albanian exports to CEFTA countries increased more than imports, respectively by 17 % and 8%.

Export of agriculture products increased by 50% and non-agriculture by 123%. While for imports the non-agriculture products decreased and the import of agriculture products increased by 39%. Our main trading partners remain the same Kosovo, Macedonia and Serbia.

In addition to this positive figure after the crises, I'm pleased to share with you the latest results of the trade policy review of Albania under WTO. The current trade policy regime and trade practices in Albania are very much praised by all WTO members. Among other things, Albania was commended for its efforts in the regional cooperation. This shows our solid efforts toward CEFTA we do believe all CEFTA countries played their role in this regard.

This year Albania has the chair of the SC on NTBs and TBTs. We have always stated that the removal of NTBs is a priority for Albania. Therefore we invested a lot of efforts this year in preparing the outline strategic work program for 2010-2012, and we are very committed to implement all our priorities in this area. We are full of trust that CEFTA Trade Portal will be the major result for all CEFTA countries during 2010. I would like on behalf of the Government of Albania to thank GTZ in supporting us in this initiative and all CEFTA countries for their destination. In addition other important activities are in progress and concrete and tangible results in area of NTBs and TBTs will be much appreciated by all economic operators in our region.

CEFTA implementation is facing problems, difficulties and delays. Albania regrets that after a very strong and rapid negotiation process for the liberalization of trade in agriculture, our business cannot benefit yet.

We are very pleased to note a constructive spirit in the region and do hope that a pragmatic solution will be found to ensure the signing of the additional protocol. This is crucial for the CEFTA credibility and beneficiary as well as economic profitability of the entire region.

Dear CEFTA members,

Our agenda is very ambitious in the months to come. Following the ongoing activities and engaging in new ones like trade in services is very much demanding. We are confident that through constructive debate, constant regional consultation and cooperation all is achievable. I would like to reiterate the commitment of Albania continuing to exercise a pragmatic and constructive approach in every CEFTA issues.

I would like to thank all CEFTA countries for their continuous efforts, CEFTA Secretariat for the support. By concluding I would like to thank our Serbian colleagues for the excellent organization and warm hospitality and their efforts in implementing new challenges under CEFTA.