

## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

### **CEFTA Deputy Ministers Meeting**

**18 June 2013, Sarajevo**

The CEFTA Deputy Ministers meeting was held on 18 June 2013 in Sarajevo. The representatives from Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Macedonia, Moldova, Montenegro, Serbia and Kosovo\* attended the meeting.

In his capacity of the Chair in Office, Mr. Hamdo Tinjak, State Secretary in the Ministry of Foreign Trade and Economic Relations opened the meeting. He welcomed the participants and stressed the importance of the successful implementation of CEFTA for the economic development in the Region. Success in liberalisation of trade and its further facilitation are main positive triggers for attracting foreign direct investments, intensifying bilateral and multilateral cooperation, and therefore fostering economic growth. In addition, the SEE 2020 Strategy encompassing both trade and investment comes as a timely strategic response of the Region to the challenges of growth.

Ms. Zada Muminovic from Bosnia and Herzegovina reported on the activities of the Chairmanship which have been directly undertaken by the Chair in Office.

Priorities of the CEFTA Chair-in-Office for 2014, Ms. Biljana Dodevska gave an insight into the major objectives and priorities of the Macedonian Chairmanship. The four priorities are: (i) further liberalization of trade in agricultural goods and trade in services; (ii) deepening the implementation of CEFTA for further facilitating trade; (iii) promoting the regional cooperation in competition policy, IPR and Public Procurement; and (iv) sustaining synergy between implementation of CEFTA and the South East Strategy 2020. Macedonia will continue to maintain close contacts with all current partners who support the implementation of the CEFTA Agreement, including the OECD, EU, World Bank IFC, etc.

The Chair in Office explained the rationale for the Decision on amending Annex 4 of CEFTA and informed that this draft was prepared and later endorsed by the members of the CEFTA Subcommittee on Customs and Rules of Origin. At the expert meeting held in the morning session, the text of the Decision was once again confirmed without any changes. The Parties agreed to submit it in this version to the Joint Committee for adoption.

The Chair in Office gave a short recapitulation of the SEE 2020 Strategy, its objectives, headline targets, the process of preparation of the first draft and the timeline of activities in the next period. Functioning of CEFTA Secretariat beyond 2014, The Chair in Office stressed the importance of well-functioning structures, which are prerequisite to successful implementation of both CEFTA and the SEE 2020 Strategy. In this process, the Secretariat has proved to be instrumental in supporting the CEFTA structures in the implementation of the Agreement as well as in programming of the Strategy.

The Chair informed that all relevant issues related to the further functioning of the Secretariat were addressed in a thorough discussion at the experts meeting in the morning session. The discussion was based on timely submitted set of documents, which allowed all delegations to discuss the matter with the necessary mandate.

The Chair in Office invited all Parties to be active in promoting the role of the CEFTA Structures in the SEE 2020 Strategy in order to achieve what has been agreed.

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\* This designation is without prejudice to positions on status, and is in line with UNSC 1244 and the ICJ Opinion on the Kosovo declaration of independence