

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

CEFTA Deputy Ministers Meeting 21 June 2012, Tirana

The CEFTA Deputy Ministers Meeting was held in Tirana, Albania on 21 June 2012.

In his welcoming speech, Mr. Enno Bozdo, Deputy Minister of Economy and the Chair-in-Office briefly highlighted the achievements of Albania in the trade policy field in particular, the release of the first trade policy review in the WTO, the permanent increase of the trade volumes within the CEFTA, importance of productivity and human capital in attracting the FDI. The most important milestones for the implementation of the Chairmanship programme are: (i) elimination of the NTBs by implementing the ex-ante instrument; (ii) trade in services liberalisation with a view to launch negotiations; (iii) trade facilitation and (iv) capacity building and governance. In conclusion, he emphasised that the key for successful implementation of CEFTA lies in firm commitment of Parties to the undertaken obligations.

IMPLEMENTATION OF CEFTA I, the Chair-in-Office invited the Chairs of the three Subcommittees and the Working Group on Trade in Services to report on the activities in the last six months.

IMPLEMENTATION OF CEFTA II, Regarding the Chairmanship priorities, the Chair briefly took stock of the developments in the area of State Aid, Investment and the Capacity Building.

In the area of State Aid, the Chair invited Parties to prepare their reports by 8 October 2012 in line with the adopted format and deadlines to be submitted to the Joint Committee. Based on that reports, the Secretariat will prepare statistical and descriptive analysis for the CEFTA Region.

CROATIA'S WITHDRAWAL FROM CEFTA, The Secretariat prepared a memo regarding the issues of depository and budget adjustments following the withdrawal of Croatia from CEFTA due to its accession to the EU. The memo provides a number of options, which were discussed by the Parties during the strategic meeting held in February in Brussels as well as at the experts meeting held previous day.

PRIORITIES OF THE CEFTA CHAIR IN OFFICE FOR 2013, Bosnia and Herzegovina presented the proposal of the priorities for CEFTA Chairmanship in 2013, highlighting the most important such as: investment, enhancing further trade in agriculture, tackling the SPS measures, gradual liberalization of trade in services, elimination of NTBs and reducing the unnecessary TBT, transparency, implementation of multiannual Programme of the Subcommittee on Customs and Rules of Origin, facilitation of the regional trade, etc

CEFTA WEEK 2012 Ms. Pranvera Kastrati presented in brief the concept of the CEFTA Week 2012 event to be held in Tirana alongside the Joint Committee meeting. Since Albania is double chairing the emphasis will be on trade and investment issues such as: trade in service, investment vs. industrial policies, NTBs elimination, trade facilitation, etc. The different stakeholders including government officials, business community, international partners (Foreign Investor Councils) and academia will be invited to contribute to the debate.