

Executive Summary

From the 8th meeting of the WG on TBT

Ljubljana, 30 September 2013

The eighth meeting of the CEFTA Working Group on TBT was held in Ljubljana on 30 September 2013 under the Chairmanship of Macedonia. Representatives of Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia and Kosovo* participated. The guests to the meeting included Mr. David Norris from the IPA Quality Infrastructure Project.

The Chair, Ms. Biljana D. Stojanovska proposed to introduce a new item on the Agenda: discussion on the paper "Strategy Guidelines on NTBs Reduction in CEFTA" received from the OECD team before the meeting. The Parties accepted to add this item and adopted the draft Agenda.

1. Agreements amongst CEFTA Parties on Conformity Assessment Issues and on Easing Access of Industrial Products to the markets of other CEFTA Parties

Regarding the last year adopted Ministerial Recommendation on Recognition of Test Report by the CAB (November 2012, Tirana), Montenegro (Mr. Dragan Vukcevic) announced to the Parties that they were ready to join the Recommendation. As for the text of the Agreement on Conformity Assessment Issues, before proceeding to the negotiations, they have to be sure that this is not conflicting their current negotiations with the EU. Therefore, Montenegro will inform the DG Enterprise and once they get their opinion will inform other Parties about this.

The Chair fully supported the idea of having the register of designate bodies in the Platform. The CABs that will be listed in this database will be for the Region (not part of NANDO). The only matter that Parties should consider in mean time is whether this Agreement should follow the procedure of ratification because the Annexes of the Agreement probably will amend often due to further transposition of EU legislation, adoption of EU standards and designation of new CABS. The basic papers in the Annexes for its entering into force will be the first step for further development of papers and necessity of its amendments. Ratification is very long procedure and because of that there is a real possibility to obstacle the provisions of the Agreement till it will finish.

Mr. Norris said that he would address this question later when talking about transparency. He used opportunity to announce a meeting, which will be held on 8 November 2013 in Opatija amongst CAB associations of the region. The idea was to invite the members of the WG to discuss the potential regional agreements with the representatives of accreditation and CAB associations.

Chair stated that all the Parties showed the strong support towards concluding this Agreement. However many issues were raised during the discussion and some internal consultation should be conducted in each of Parties before sending their comments (deadline: end of October).

* 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

The Secretariat invited Parties to send the list of all open questions related to the agreement until end of November. This will assist the Secretariat to organize a tailor made workshop in the first quarter of 2014, with the intention to gather all stakeholders including representatives of accreditation to exchange their views with experts with experience in concluding similar MRAs. The Secretariat will also take steps to organize a small task force made of interested Parties to further advance in drafting the text.

**2. Harmonisation of Technical Legislation with that of the EU
Adoption of EU harmonised standards related to selected product categories**

The Chair invited Parties to update on harmonisation of relevant legislation from the last meeting.

3. OECD Strategic Guidelines on the NTBs Reduction in CEFTA

Since the document on Strategic Guidelines on NTBs reduction arrived to Parties couple of days before the meeting, and the members did not have sufficient time to consult internally, the Chair proposed that the comments to the paper should be sent to the Secretariat not later than 15 October in order to be included in the final version.

4. Transparency in TBT

- Notification of TBT
- Establishment of CEFTA TBT Platform

The Chair invited Parties to report on any notifications of national standards, and reminded them on the obligation to regularly report on technical regulations and conformity assessment procedures.