

Executive Summary

Eighth Meeting of the CEFTA Subcommittee on Non-tariff Barriers to Trade and Technical Barriers to Trade

30 October, 2013 Sarajevo

The eighth meeting of the Subcommittee on Non-tariff Barriers to Trade and Technical Barriers to Trade was held in Sarajevo, on 30 October 2013 under the Chairmanship on Macedonia. The participants to the meeting were representatives from Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Macedonia, Moldova, Serbia and Kosovo*, while the invited guests included Mr. Antonio Fanelli, Ms. Katarina Largenton and Mr. Gabriel Boc from the OECD.

The Chair, Ms Zorica Smileva from the Ministry of Economy of Macedonia, in the name of the Chair Mr. Anche Trifunov, State Secretary in the Ministry of Economy of Republic of Macedonia, welcomed all the participants and thanked the Chair in Office for hosting the meeting which was held back to back with the Conference on Transparency in Trade Policy Measures.

1. Elimination of NTBs

- “Inputs on Strategic Guidelines on NTB Reduction”

The Chair gave a brief introduction on the Multilateral Monitoring Framework development. The *Multilateral Monitoring Framework on Elimination of NTBs* has been developed in cooperation with the OECD and it is implemented since 2010. So far, the OECD conducted two cycles of assessments: one on intermediary goods, the other on selected final products in three identified types of NTBs. The second round of assessments for all three fields SPS, TBT and administrative barriers have been completed. For the part that refers to the administrative barriers, the preliminary results will be presented before the members of the Subcommittee on Customs and Rules of Origin on 7 November in Skopje.

Following the discussion at the last meeting of the Subcommittee on NTBs and TBT on 21 May in Skopje, the OECD team prepared the document called “OECD Inputs to the Strategic Guidelines on Elimination of NTBs and TBT in CEFTA”. The document has been distributed to the Parties on 26 September 2013 to the CEFTA Contact Points and to the members of the WG on TBT for their meeting on 30 September. Since there was no sufficient time for internal consultations, the members were asked to send their comments in written to the OECD and Secretariat. The Secretariat up to now, received only the comments on TBT part from Serbia. In

* 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 meantime, the Secretariat also sent their comments to the OECD.

Mr. Fanelli highlighted the progress achieved over years in the area of elimination of NTBs. The Parties went from the ex post towards ex ante approach, setting up strategic guidelines for creating the system based on common minimum objective. For those who were not capable to reach this objective immediately, the OECD advises a certain transition period incorporated into the action plan so to allow them for necessary adjustments. Once the first set of objectives is achieved, a peer review would have been performed to facilitate the identification of further steps that should be undertaken by the Parties to reach the next level.

The Parties also discussed the proposal of the OECD to establish the joint test laboratories in the region.

In relation to the risk management strategic guidelines mentioned in the OECD document, Ms Vitez informed participants that within the WG on Risk Management under SC on Customs and RO, they already started to identify the non-risky areas, with the objective to create the so called “golden list” of AEO that would be recognized mutually by the CEFTA Parties, while strictly following relevant acquis. This is oriented towards facilitation of trade and reduction of inspection at the border.

Following the results of the discussion at the meeting, the Secretariat proposed to the OECD to improve the document “OECD Input to the Strategic Guidelines on Elimination of NTBs in CEFTA” in such a way to reflect the interconnectedness between the indicators of the level of development in crucial areas for elimination of NTBs and the strategic guidelines related to four policy areas. This linkage will allow for precise action in areas identified as with more weight on potential barriers under the ex ante approach.

Preparation for the Joint Committee

Following the outcome of the discussion, it was agreed that the main premises of the strategic guidelines mentioned in the document “OECD Input to the Strategic Guidelines on Elimination of NTBs in CEFTA” would be introduced into the JC Ministerial Conclusions for endorsement at the next meeting to be held on 20 November 2013.