

Executive Summary

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

27 May 2014 Podgorica, Montenegro

The ninth meeting of the Subcommittee on Non-tariff Barriers to Trade and Technical Barriers to Trade was held in Podgorica, on 27 May 2014. The participants to the meeting were representatives from Albania, Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia and Kosovo^{*}, while the invited guests included Mr. Antonio Fanelli and Mr. Edo Omic from the OECD, Ms. Nina Drakic from Montenegrin Chamber of Economy and Mr. Lirak Cana from the Cactus IT Company.

In his capacity of the Chair, Mr. Goran Scepanovic, Director General in the Ministry of Economy welcomed the participants and highlighted the importance of intraregional cooperation in achieving the end goal of elimination of NTBs in trade. CEFTA can serve as an umbrella for complying with the international rules of game as the only way to make the economies competitive on international market. He praised the fruitful cooperation with the CEFTA Secretariat, as well as the OECD, GIZ and CEFTA Forum of National Chambers of Economy. These partnerships resulted in a better identification of NTBs within the project of Multilateral Monitoring Framework, enhancement of transparency in the TBT and the SPS area (Market Access Database, CEFTA Trade Portal, TBT Platform) and fulfillment of objectives of the SEE 2020 Strategy.

Mr. Scepanovic gave a short overview of the Montenegro's involvement in the regional trade. Namely, the biggest trade volumes for the period January – March 2014, as well as in previous years, was with CEFTA economies - 164 mil.Eur and with the EU countries 177 mil.Eur. The value of exports in goods was EUR 69.4 million, which is 22.1% less compared to the same period of previous year. The imports were EUR 340.6 million, which is 6.2% less compared to the same period of previous year. The main products in the structure of export between Montenegro and CEFTA Parties for the same period were: mineral fuels; lubricants and related materials; raw materials; food, beverages and tobacco; and regarding the structure of import, the main products were: food, beverages and tobacco; machinery and transport equipment and other manufactured goods.

Work Programme of the Subcommittee on TBT and NTBs

Montenegro prepared the Work Programme in December 2013, which was distributed to the Parties with other Subcommittees work programs by Macedonia in January. The Work

* 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

Programme relies on the three-year Strategic Work Programme (2013-2015) developed under the Chairmanship of Macedonia. Montenegro is committed to continue with the work of its predecessors on the activities of identification and reduction of NTBs in mutual trade among CEFTA Parties.

Multilateral Monitoring Framework on Elimination of NTBs

The Chair pointed to the previous two assessments of NTBs in selected areas (SPS, TBT and administrative barriers) conducted during 2011 and 2012, as well as to the recommendations reflected in the document *“OECD Inputs on Strategic Guidelines on NTBs Reduction in CEFTA”*. These recommendations were echoed in the Ministerial Conclusions adopted at the Joint Committee meeting held on 20 November 2013 and secured full support and commitment by all Parties.

The majority of Parties confirmed the products suggested, while some needed more time to consult internally. The Secretariat proposed that the OECD present the findings at the forthcoming Subcommittee on Agriculture and SPS in Skopje on 9 and 10 June 2014 and have a feedback on these products after the meeting. The OECD confirmed their participation in Skopje.

The Chair invited the Parties to exchange the information related to ongoing and not resolved cases.

Report of the Working group on Technical Barriers to Trade

The Chair gave floor to Mr. Dragan Vukcevic, the Chair of the Working Group on TBT to report on the meeting held on 5 March in Brussels and present the activities of the Group in the next period.

Mr. Vukcevic highlighted the problem of participating of the members of the WG to the future meetings due to budget restraints Parties have at home. He praised the good cooperation with the IPA Quality Infrastructure Project during many years, financial and technical support in participation to the meetings. The Project is due to finish on 15 June 2014 and there are expectations that it will be extended.

Transparency and Notification

The Secretariat reported on the notification status of technical regulations, conformity assessment and national standards in accordance with the Article 13.3 (b) of the Agreement.

Cooperation with the private sector on elimination of NTBs

The Chair invited Ms Nina Drakic, a representative from the Chambers to present their activities within the CEFTA forum.