

**Minutes of the CEFTA Subcommittee on Agriculture and SPS
Meeting, 24 and 25 April 2008
Chisinau, Republic of Moldova**

Executive Summary

The CEFTA Subcommittee on Agriculture and SPS met on 24 and 25 April 2008 in Chisinau, Moldova.

It focused on a review of individual agricultural trade policies. The Parties outlined the general increase in trade among them, highlighted that no export subsidies for agricultural products are applied and noted the need for the further increase and diversification of trade.

After the exchange of information on the implementation of agricultural concessions, the Parties recognised the partial use of quotas and agreed to set up a timetable for discussions on further liberalization.

The CEFTA Parties' experience concerning the harmonisation of sanitary, veterinary and phytosanitary legislation with EU requirements has shown that they cause significant differences and impediments in agricultural trade. Parties agreed that it is of the utmost importance to involve relevant institutions to find bilaterally appropriate mechanisms and tools in order to achieve faster harmonisation of sanitary and phytosanitary legislation, provide for better market access, and improve the safety and quality of agro-food products.

Under the item regarding identification of ways to conclude mutual recognition agreements in sanitary and phytosanitary matters among CEFTA Parties it was agreed to provide the chair with an overview of the legislation covering veterinary, phytosanitary and food safety areas .

Parties agreed, where appropriate, to initiate consultations among sanitary and phytosanitary services in order to identify feasible solutions for concluding mutual recognition agreement and to report on the outcome to the Chair in Office.

A previously prepared matrix with activities/measures affecting trade among CEFTA Parties was discussed and additional issues raised during the meeting required further explanations on specific topics. It was agreed that Parties would intensify talks on bilateral levels in order to overcome the outstanding issues.

A draft Action Plan was proposed for discussion during the meeting. Parties agreed to consult additionally internally and inform the Chair by the agreed deadline.