

**H.E. Vele Trpevski, Ambassador of the Republic of Macedonia in Republic of Albania**

**Challenges for implementation of CEFTA**

*Honorary Host Dep. (deputy) Ministers*

Respected Colleagues,

I would like to express my gratitude to our host for today's meeting and the efforts in organizing of this regular annual meeting that I consider will contribute significantly for the implementation of concrete activities that would help the implementation of CEFTA.

The agreement this year also imposes challenges and obligations on us that result from the accession of some members and the pre-accession negotiations that the other members lead with EU. At the same time, significant is the diversification of the activities per different obligations and the deadlines that we need to respect for their realization. The level of interaction and complementarily is significantly increased among the priorities, the work of the sub-comities and the realization of the projects in relation to CEFTA.

In relation to the achieved results during the first quarter of 2012, the export to the CEFTA countries presents 292.759.751 USD or 23, 89% of the total export of the country and with CEFTA is realized import of 223.461.760 USD or 10, 72% of the total import of the country.

Following the interaction among the priorities of CEFTA and the Policy of the Government of Republic of Macedonia, it might be concluded that the Republic of Macedonia with the economic measures of the Government last year made significant efforts to improve the business climate in the country. In the assessment of the World Bank-Doing Business for 2012, Republic of Macedonia ranked among the 10 economies that realized fastest jump in the creation of the regulatory environment most favorable for leading business during the last 6 years. It moved in the global ranking from 81 places in Doing Business Report fro 2006 to 22 place in this year's report. It is also among the economies that made biggest jump over the gap among the borders, that is, creation of friendly ambience for leading business.

In the part of the investments, it is planned by the end of 2015 the same to reach level of about 30% of GDP. The increased trust of the foreign investors and the benefits that Republic of Macedonia offers in the technological and industrial development zones contributes significantly for growth of the foreign direct investments. The growth planned of FDI until 2015 needs to present 550-650 million Euros.

As result of the started and the future infrastructure projects is expected growth in separate branches from 5 to 8 %.

The problems of the business community in relation to the trade with CEFTA countries is obligatory subject of review and the competent organs with conclusion and deadline are obliged to solve the problem. During the next period the implementation of CEFTA will

focus on concretization of the elements and instruments for monitoring of the non-tariff barriers with purpose to reduce and eliminate the unnecessary activities and documents that obstruct the regional trade.

I would like to emphasize also the significance of the transparency and information as one of the elements for cooperation and agreement among the CEFTA countries for elimination of these barriers. In that direction I would like to emphasize the importance of the Trade web site of the CEFTA countries, as well as of the database of barriers aimed mainly for the business community of the CEFTA countries where regularly we note the problems and work on their solving on bilateral level.

Having into consideration the business climate and the competition, I consider that I need to emphasize the need for fair and transport conditions for awarding state aid in every country. Certainly we need a suitable instrument where all of the problems in the area of state aid, will be noted.

I would like to express gratitude for all of the other regional projects that have influence on the achievement of the CEFTA priorities. This especially towards the advancement of the trade and elimination of the trade barriers and hope that the countries of SEE will achieve significant benefit from the agreement stimulated by the support of the IPA Multi-Beneficiary Program in 2012.

At the end, I would like to thank to the Presider of CEFTA 2006, the Republic of Albania and all of the participants that from the start of this year made constructive efforts with purpose of realization of the priorities in the annual program of work in the framework of realization of the Agreement.

Thank you,