

**Speech of Mr Octavian CALMÎC,
Deputy Minister of Economy at the
Fourth regular CEFTA Joint Committee Meeting
(Belgrade, November 12, 2010)**

Dear Ministers,

Esteemed audience,

First of all let me express my sincere gratitude to Serbia for hospitality, as well as for the good organization of the Fourth Joint Committee Meeting, CEFTA Week and persistent promotion of CEFTA values over the period of its Presidency.

I would like to take this opportunity to emphasize once again the exceptional importance of enforcement of CEFTA Agreement and decision taken to consolidate of our efforts of regional economic integration.

Let me note that one of the objectives of our today meeting is to evaluate and to conclude on the implied efforts and obtained results during the last year. And indeed this is most likely to be successful with your support and our joint efficient cooperation.

Additionally, I would like to emphasize the significant progress which we have made during this year under the Chairmanship of the Republic of Serbia, and specifically in the area of agricultural trade liberalization, investments and foreign trade regulation and procedures, services, public procurement and competition. The CEFTA Subcommittees on Agriculture and Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures, on Non-Trade Barriers and Technical Barriers to Trade, and on Government Procurement and Competition have successfully held their annual meetings and further advanced their respective agendas. The Working Group on Technical Barriers to Trade under the framework of the Subcommittee on NTB and TBT, as well as the Working Group on

Trade in Services have been newly established and started their work with the aim of increasing the fulfilment of commitments undertaken by the parties under the CEFTA agreement.

Important work has been done to prepare the CEFTA Trade Portal which, after the launching, will serve as a valuable resource for potential investors in our region, as well as for our local businesses striving to invest in the regional markets, thus becoming more competitive on the highly demanding global market.

Let me also stress the importance and express my gratitude for the ongoing support that we, CEFTA countries, continue to receive from our international partners – and namely, the European Commission, UNDP, OECD, Worldbank, EBRD, and others.

I believe that all the initiatives of trade liberalization, which we have ambitiously launched in 2006, will be promoted by us during the ongoing year. Indeed, there is still a long way to go. Yet, the work undertaken by us in the framework of CEFTA Agreement continues to provide us with opportunities to develop additional policies in order to further increase trade and investment opportunities in our region.

Taking into account the busy agenda of the reunion, allow me to wish all of you success and flexibility, practical and pragmatic approach in addressing and solving the remaining issues.

I really hope that our meeting will be based on fruitful discussions which will result in mutual benefits for our countries and our region.

Thank you very much for your attention!