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Thank you

Dear ministers,

It is my special honor and pleasure, on behalf of the Republic of Moldova, to be here today at the CEFTA Joint Committee Meeting in Podgorica. I express my gratitude to the Montenegro authorities for their efforts in promoting CEFTA values and conducting in a wonderful way Chairmanship in 2009.

I take this opportunity to emphasize the exceptional importance of CEFTA in the efforts for regional economic integration. One of the key objectives of the present Agreement is to bring involved Parties to work together, share information and experience, create formal and informal networks that can be used in various circumstances and multiply the effects on the operational level.

Therefore, implementation of the CEFTA and other agreed measures represents a step in achieving the common goals of each Party and in consolidating the prosperity of the region through active cooperation in both political and economic areas and to finalize the EU integration process. This will certainly lead to the encouragement in trade, strengthening of the relationships between businesses across countries and increase in competitiveness resulting from regionalization.

During this year, Republic of Moldova was trying to do the best in order to involve all its experience, institutional and professional capacities to coordinate and achieve the development of objectives planned for 2009.

An important remark, concerning trade and economic integration process, is that considerable progress has been achieved in the cooperation of the regional business

community. CEFTA week and cooperation between chambers of commerce of CEFTA Parties are good experiences in this sense. From economic aspect this is significant for the whole region and favorable for the small markets such as the Republic of Moldova.

CEFTA Agreement creates conditions for all signatories facilitating preferential access to the larger regional market. Liberalization of the trade in services, protection of intellectual property and public procurement, are especially significant in the process of foreign investment attraction. Therefore, all these areas should be taken into consideration and included in the CEFTA agenda for next year.

For the Republic of Moldova CEFTA have more political and economical benefits and importance. Trade with CEFTA Parties in the last months didn't registered very impressive results, due to the geographical situation, world crises and standard requirements applied by EU on transit.

In 8 months of 2009, the foreign trade of the Republic of Moldova accounted for 1,73 billion EURO: including exports –530 mln EURO and imports – 1,4 billion EURO. Thus, import has been reduced by 40% and export by 25% compare with same period of 2008.

The main trade partners are UE countries with a share of 54% and CIS members holding a 36%. Unfortunately, trade flows with CEFTA parties represents less then 1% of Moldova's external trade and was decreased in 2009 by almost 40% in particular on industrial products. Full information is presented in different preparatory papers and I will not go in details.

[Thus, the imports from CEFTA countries represents 0.61 mln EURO or 8,1% of total imports from CEFTA which is less by 7% then in 2008. Import of

industrial products from CEFTA Parties represents 3,3 mln Euro and was decreased by 56% then in the same period of 2008.

In 8 months of 2009 total export of agricultural products to the CEFTA parties represents 3,1 mln EURO and was increased by 42% compare with 2008.

Export of industrial products to the CEFTA parties are very modest closed to 0,8 mln Euro which is less by 80% compare with 2008.]

The future of regional co-operation in South Eastern Europe is what we have to consider here, today. Flexibility, adaptability and perseverance have to be prominent features of CEFTA's approach and success. I therefore encourage you to persevere and be firm in your efforts to continue on the path of co-operation and implementation of taken commitments. The future of regional co-operation is in our hands and the responsibility will be ours. I am confident that we will rise to this challenge and will fulfill our targets.

I really hope that our important meeting today will be based on fruitful discussions which will bring benefits to our countries and our region at all.

Thank you very much for your attention!