

**Speech of Mr. Octavian CALMIC,  
Deputy Minister of Economy of the Republic of Moldova  
at the Fifth regular CEFTA Joint Committee Meeting  
(Paris, November 23, 2011)**

**Dear Ministers and representatives of CEFTA parties,**

**Esteemed audience,**

Let me to express my sincere gratitude to UNMIK/Kosovo for efforts to promote CEFTA values over the period of its Presidency. I wish also to express my appreciation to the CEFTA Secretariat for its substantial ongoing technical and administrative support offered to CEFTA parties, as well as to the Chair in preparing the “CEFTA Week” – a very important event for the promotion of CEFTA achievements and exploring the potential for future cooperation in the region.

I would like to take this opportunity to stress again the exceptional importance of the CEFTA Agreement in our efforts of regional economic integration, this being one of the pre-conditions for EU integration and one of the founding principles of CEFTA 2006.

In this context let me briefly inform you on the progress Moldova has made in negotiating the Association Agreement with the EU. During the previous 8 rounds of negotiations we have managed to provisionally finalize the negotiations on all subjects related to Political Dialogue and Reforms, and Cooperation in the area of Security and Foreign Policy. The chapter on Justice, Freedom and Security is also provisionally closed. Furthermore, we have registered good progress across all sectors related to economic and sectorial cooperation, at this stage managing to finalize negotiations on 22 out of 25 chapters. Moreover, on the 26<sup>th</sup> of October, in Chisinau, we completed the essential negotiations of the Agreement on Common Aviation Area with the EU and its Member-States, which is expected to become in force in 1<sup>st</sup> quarter of 2012.

In 2011 the Republic of Moldova submitted 3 progress reports on the implementation of EC recommendations in the context of launching the negotiations on the DCFTA with EU. Taking into account the decisions of the Eastern Partnership Summit from Warszawa in September 2011, as well as the fact that the majority of EC key recommendations have been accomplished, Moldova hopes to start the negotiations on the DCFTA with EU by the end of this year.

Distinguished participants, I would like to highlight the progress which we have made during this year under the Chairmanship of the UNMIK/Kosovo, and specifically the entering into force of the Additional Protocol and Annex 10 to the Agreement on further agricultural trade liberalization, as well as our steps forward in broadening the cooperation for gradual liberalisation in trade in services, reducing the existing technical barriers to trade and non-tariff barriers to trade. The CEFTA Deputy Ministers meeting, the Subcommittees and the Working Groups on different issues have successfully held their annual meetings

and further advanced their respective agendas with the aim of increasing the fulfillment of commitments undertaken by the parties under the CEFTA Agreement. Unfortunately, the Moldovan delegations did not attend almost of CEFTA meetings due to financial reasons.

Tremendous work has been done to launch the CEFTA Trade Portal which serves 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.

We also appreciate the importance and express gratitude for the ongoing support that CEFTA parties continue to receive from international partners, whose scope of activities is corresponding with the CEFTA goals – and namely, the European Commission, OECD, Worldbank, IFC, GIZ, IPA among others. Given the more extensive activities involving additional human and financial resources for implementation of the ambitious CEFTA agenda, the donors' support is becoming even more vital in the years to come.

Thus, I want to point out that, regrettably, Moldova has been omitted from several important CEFTA projects and studies, such as for example the Project on the barriers in trade of services, on regional quality infrastructure, on regional trade logistics in SEE. This fact hinders the fulfilment of our commitments in the framework of CEFTA Agreement, thus we hope for an equal and unbiased treatment in the future of all CEFTA parties.

Distinguished participants, I believe that all the initiatives of trade liberalization, which we have ambitiously launched in 2006, have been pursued by us during the ongoing year. Indeed, there are still some steps to be made. 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.

In this context, let me highlight the importance and invite you to the CEFTA Economic Forum which will be organized with a support of German authorities next May in Chisinau. The objective of this event is to deepen our trade relations and regional economic cooperation, as well as to establish new business contacts with potential investors in our region. We are going to extend our invitation to business people and policy makers from other countries, such as Germany, Italy, Austria, Russia, Ukraine and other CIS countries, which we hope will enhance the dialogue and attract foreign investments to the CEFTA region.

Finally, allow me to wish all of us fruitful discussions and a flexible approach in addressing the remaining issues, which will result in mutual benefits for our countries in particular and our region as a whole.

Thank you very much for your attention!