

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

7th Meeting of CEFTA Subcommittee on Customs and Rules of Origin

7 November 2013, Skopje

The Subcommittee on Customs and Rules of Origin meeting was held in Skopje. The participants to the meeting were representatives from Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, Macedonia, Serbia and Kosovo*. Representatives of the Austrian Customs Authority, the IFC Trade Logistics Project, OECD, and SEETO attended the meeting as observers.

The meeting was opened by the remarks of Mr Vanco Kargov, Director of the Macedonian Customs Administration, he empathised that the Macedonian Chairmanship organised a number of technical meetings in cooperation with TAIEX which helped the CEFTA Parties to discuss the technical issues with experts of the EU member states and DG TAXUD. These meetings have also served as training sessions for experts of the customs authorities in CEFTA. Under the chairmanship of Macedonia, three TAIEX meetings were organised (one on AEO and two on the PEM and Rules of Origin). There would be two more, which was to be organised in cooperation with the IFC, and the other on customs valuation.

Mr Kargov mentioned that the Macedonian Chairmanship prepared a questionnaire to present the current state of play in the CEFTA Parties. The questionnaire was circulated and the Chair collected the responses from the Parties.

In this regard, the Chair instructed the CEFTA Secretariat to give a presentation on the responses of the CEFTA Parties in relation to the questionnaire. In its presentation, the CEFTA Secretariat reported the responses received to the questionnaires from all CEFTA Parties except Albania.

Mr Kargov stated that the Macedonian chairmanship attached utmost importance to the activities related to trade facilitation. This is one of the multiannual priorities which have been taken over from the previous Chairmanships. The Chair reiterated his confidence that the Subcommittee would continue working on creating an AEO programme in CEFTA.

During the meeting there were discussed also an update of draft CEFTA Joint Committee Decision to link the CEFTA Origin Protocol with PEM and the results of Multilateral Monitoring Framework - Administrative Barriers by OECD were Ms Zorica Kucic and Ms Katarina Djermanovic Largenton made a presentation on behalf of the OECD. Also as a part of agenda were presentation of the current state of play of the IFC Western Balkans Trade Logistics Project and Presentation of transport sector related priorities in the Sustainable Growth Pillar of the SEE 2020.

* This designation is without prejudice to positions on status, and is in line with UNSC 1244 and the ICJ opinion on the Kosovo declaration of independence.