

REPORT

Committee of Contact Points

December 2016

The purpose of this report is to provide a summary of the activities undertaken by the CEFTA Committee of Contact Points under the Chairmanship of Montenegro during the period of 1st of January to 8 December 2016

I. BACKGROUND

Establishment of the Committee

CEFTA Ministers responsible for trade, during the Joint Committee Meeting on November 26, 2015 in Chisinau, have endorsed CEFTA Ministerial Decision No 1/2015 on the establishment of CEFTA bodies. In accordance with this Decision the Committee of Contact Points has been established.

Function of the Committee

The main tasks of the Committee are to:

- i. support the smooth functioning of the Agreement and the fulfilment of the decisions of the Joint Committee, according to Article 44 of the CEFTA Agreement; particularly:
 - To report to the CEFTA Joint Committee the implementation of CEFTA Ministerial Decisions, Conclusions and Recommendations;
 - To coordinate / liaise the implementation of CEFTA in each CEFTA Party through other officially appointed CEFTA Contact points established by the CEFTA Structures (e.g. Customs, Ministry of Agriculture);
 - To steer capacity building in trade policy formulation, implementation and coordination in CEFTA at the regional scale;
 - To outreach the private sector in relation to CEFTA;
 - To be responsible in promoting the visibility of CEFTA in the overall policy making in each CEFTA Party;
 - To report the CEFTA Joint Committee the implementation of SEE 2020 Integrated Growth in each CEFTA Party;
 - To coordinate the implementation of the National Secondment Programme.
- ii. The Contact Point who is member of CEFTA Committee of Contact Points undertakes the necessary technical, coordination, communication and administrative tasks required to ensure the smooth and timely implementation of the CEFTA work programme and the decisions of the Joint Committee;
- iii. In performing the tasks above mentioned each Contact Point will perform the following specific tasks at the national level in each CEFTA Party:

- a) Preparation and Follow-up of Official Meetings of CEFTA Structures at the National Level in Each CEFTA Party;
- b) Central Coordination of Official CEFTA Information Flows;
- c) Monitoring of Implementation of CEFTA Ministerial Conclusions and Decisions;
- d) Liaison with CEFTA Secretariat;
- e) Development of Trade Related Capacity Across Administration;
- f) Promotion of CEFTA among Key Stakeholders;
- g) Contact Points can deploy a range of communication tools to promote CEFTA and other trade related issues to a wider audience including seminars, workshops, press releases, social media which are to be administrated by the CEFTA Secretariat and an up-to-date CEFTA page on the ministry responsible for trade website with relevant information and links to the main CEFTA website and other trade related sites;
- h) The CEFTA Contact Point report to the Director General / Deputy Minister of the ministry responsible for trade and has an ad hoc reporting relationship with the Minister as required.

Members of the Committee are the lead CEFTA Contact Points or their deputies as established under Article 44, Paragraph 2 of the Agreement. The CEFTA Contact Points shall perform the functions as defined in 1.1., which provides tasks of each Contact Point to be carried out at the national level in each CEFTA Party.

II. OBJECTIVES OF THE CHAIRMANSHIP

Montenegro has identified the objectives of its Chairmanship of CEFTA Committee of Contact Points as follows:

1. To contribute to the smooth implementation of CEFTA through better coordination among national institutions and between CEFTA Structures;
2. To raise the public awareness on CEFTA, including both public and private sectors, in the implementation of the Agreement.

III. Activities

In line with its mandate, the CEFTA Secretariat provided necessary technical and administrative support to the Chair for the implementation of the Work Programme for 2016 and assisted the CEFTA Parties in the organisation of meetings.

ACTION	CURRENT STATE OF PLAY	REMARKS/RESULTS	RISK
<p>Activity 1: To coordinate the implementation of CEFTA in each CEFTA Party through other officially appointed CEFTA Contact Points established by the CEFTA Structures</p>	<p>In progress</p>	<p>a) During the reporting period all national CEFTA Contact Points within the respective Ministries in charge of trade, have had regularly communication with other institutions directly in charge of CEFTA implementation i.e. distributing all follow-ups and official papers of the CEFTA meetings to the respective institutions, coordinating the preparation process of the formal national positions and formal requests for technical assistance.</p> <p>b) Workshop on Dispute Settlements held on 20 September 2016 in Podgorica. During this workshop the proposals submitted to the Special Joint Committee in June 2016 have been discussed with the relevant international organisations with an aim to develop and propose the rules on CEFTA Dispute Settlement for the adoption of the Joint Committee.</p>	<p>Low</p>
<p>Activity 2: Committee to be a central coordination point of the CEFTA implementation</p>	<p>In progress</p>	<p>a) The Contact Point act as the central coordinator of all official CEFTA information flows including correspondence, meeting and information requests, reports and proposals relating to CEFTA coming from official CEFTA Structures, other CEFTA Parties, line ministries, government agencies, Parties' diplomatic missions to the EU, European Commission, development partners (e.g. IFIs), the business community and civil society. The position of the national of the national Contact Points has been strengthen considerably for the all information flow from the respective CEFTA Party to the CEFTA Secretariat and vice versa.</p> <p>b) On 11 May 2016 a Planning Workshop on future GIZ ORF – CEFTA Cooperation was held in Belgrade with the objective to discuss and reach an agreement between CEFTA Parties and ORF Foreign Trade Promotion on main cooperation areas for the timeframe 2017-2019. During the Planning Workshop were presented the main findings and recommendations from the project evaluation mission, which took place early February 2016 and in which most of contact points were involved through interviews. The evaluation has rated the CEFTA-ORF cooperation 2013-2016 as successful. The mission thus recommended continuing the work of the ORF Foreign Trade Promotion 2017-19, supporting the regional trade facilitation and promotion agenda. During the workshop the future cooperation was discussed with a focus on the following areas: i) Addressing Market Access Barriers in selected sectors , ii) Strengthening implementation capacities for the CEFTA Trade , iii) Facilitation Agenda: Trade Promotion: Implementation of full cumulation and duty drawback and iv) Strengthen capacities of private sector to make better use of selected trade facilitating/ promoting instruments.</p>	<p>Low</p>

Activity 3: To provide regular information flow toward CEFTA Joint Committee on the Activities implemented on national level in the framework of the CEFTA implementation	In progress	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) 1st meeting Committee of Contact Points, 22/01 , Brussels introduced result based reporting by the CEFTA structures to the CEFTA Joint Committee on the basis of international standards and methodologies. b) 2nd meeting Committee of Contact Points , 22/06 HerzegNovi acted as a preparatory for the Deputy Ministers and Special Joint meetings held on 23/06 in HerzegNovi c) 3rd meeting Committee of Contact Points , 19/09 Podgorica monitored the CEFTA implementation and the technical assistance d) 4th meeting Committee of Contact Points, 8/12 Podgorica acted as preparatory for the Joint Committee meeting on 9/12 	Low
Activity 4: To strengthen the daily communication with staff of the CEFTA Secretariat	In progress	During 2016, in accordance with the Ministerial Decision 1/2015, Contact Points became the main national contact centre for the CEFTA Secretariat being closely involved in the organisation of all CEFTA structures' meetings in the respective Party and the overall coordination of delivery of CEFTA funded technical assistances and capacity building programmes.	Low
Activity 5: To promote visibility of CEFTA	In progress	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Results achieved reported to the Deputy Ministers i.e. CEFTA Website redesigned// b) Outreach events held in Skopje, Sarajevo and Podgorica c) Brochure "CEFTA through Numbers" and "Myth and Facts" finalised d) LSEE Competition for the Best Paper finalised 	Low
Activity 6: To ensure greater knowledge of CEFTA and its potentials	Pending	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Montenegro undertook necessary steps to institutionalise public-private sector dialogue in the implementation of CEFTA. For this purpose a Conference " Ten years of signing CEFTA 2006-results and perspectives " among the private sector has been organised on 23 March in Podgorica, Montenegro -Private Sector Conference was held on 21 June in HerzegNovi to explore the way forward for collaboration. - Initiative to establish cooperation with CIF in progress 	Medium

IV. CALENDAR OF EVENTS

The calendar for the year 2016 is as follows:

MEETING/EVENT	DATE	PLACE
1 st Meeting of the Committee of Contact Points	January 22, 2016	Brussels
Planning Workshop on future GIZ ORF – CEFTA Cooperation	May 11, 2016	Belgrade
2 nd Meeting of the Committee of Contact Points	June 22, 2016	Herceg Novi
Workshop on Trade Disputes	September 20,2016	Podgorica
3 rd Meeting of the Committee of Contact Points	September 19,2016	Podgorica
4 th Meeting of the Committee of Contact Points	December 8, 2016	Podgorica