

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

2nd Meeting of the CEFTA Negotiating Group on Trade in Services

6 November 2014, Skopje

The second meeting of the Negotiating group was held on 6 November 2014 in Skopje. Representatives from Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Macedonia, Moldova, Montenegro, Serbia and Kosovo* attended the meeting. Mr. Ramesh Chaitoo, a consultant who has been recruited to provide technical assistance to the Negotiating Group.

The Chair, Mr. Ilir Shabani, Head of Department in the Ministry of Economy of Macedonia welcomed all the participants stating that the objective of this meeting is to resolve any ambiguities that were left from the last meeting with regard to the modalities as well as the Annex 1 of the Draft Protocol on Trade in Services

The Secretariat explained the rationale behind the idea of establishing the Subcommittee on Trade in Services. Namely, given the increased number of commitments related to trade in services that stem out from the SEE2020 Pillar on Integrated Growth as well as the CEFTA Agreement, it was suggested to establish the higher level body i.e. Subcommittee, which would oversee and coordinate the work of three subordinate bodies that deal with negotiations, statistics and recognition of professional qualifications. This will not only facilitate addressing of these commitments in a more efficient way, but will also make easier the reporting on progress to the relevant CEFTA Structures.

As for the proposed concept of the Subcommittee, all Parties except Montenegro supported it. Montenegro expressed their concern over establishing Joint Working Group on Recognition of Professional Qualifications together with the RCC. Due to the nature of the second negotiating group meeting, which was predominantly reserved for negotiations, there was not enough time to go through all comments on the spot. It was decided to leave out at this stage the establishment of the Joint Working Group on Recognition of Professional Qualifications from the Decision until the draft ToR and other relevant information are received from the RCC.

Consideration of proposed changes to the Draft Protocol on Trade in Services: Comments and review of draft text and Treatment of investment in services versus manufacturing in the overall CEFTA regime

The members discussed the nature of the Annex 1 of the draft Protocol, its function in relation to the horizontal commitments and in particular definitions of categories of natural persons in the context of Mode 4. The most sensitive categories were categories of independent professionals and graduate trainees. Parties also considered the possibility to include into the Ministerial Conclusions the treatment of investment for both goods and services, but there was no consensus on this topic due to divided responsibilities over trade and investment in their internal governmental structures. It was agreed that the consultant prepares a short background note on investment so this could be presented before the responsible ministries in order to seek approval for any further action in this field.

* 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