

CEFTA Week 2010
Belgrade, Serbia
Summary and Highlights



CEFTA

Central European Free Trade Agreement
Chairmanship of the Republic of Serbia 2010



Foreword



Promoting the advantages of economic cooperation under the framework of the CEFTA Agreement to a wide audience both within the CEFTA Parties and internationally was one of the aims of the Serbian Chairmanship in 2010. A number of workshops, seminars and debates that comprised CEFTA WEEK addressed different aspects of the implementation of this ambitious Agreement and catered to different interests including government officials, the business community, international organisations, the diplomatic community, the academic world and journalists. These events provided an excellent opportunity to examine progress achieved to date under this Agreement and to debate potential future developments with the aim of contributing to smart, sustainable and inclusive growth of all CEFTA Parties. CEFTA Week focused in particular on the priorities of the Serbian Chairmanship for 2010 which include:

- exploring the possibilities for the liberalization of trade in services which will have positive benefits for all in the long-term;
- opening up the governments' procurement market respecting the MFN and national treatment principles, following the deadline already set in the Agreement;

- establishing a pro competitive regulatory framework and setting up appropriate regulatory institutions;
- creating favourable, stable and predictable rules for investors by establishing the CEFTA region as a single investment area with an improved investment climate.

It can be said that significant progress has been made in these areas during the Serbian Chairmanship thus ensuring proper and efficient implementation of the Agreement and contributing to the process of the integration of the region into the European Union.

On the occasion of CEFTA Week 2010 in Belgrade, the eight signatories to the CEFTA Agreement launched the CEFTA Trade Portal supported by GTZ on behalf of the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ). The Portal is expected to increase the transparency of trade regulations and formalities within the region. Its purpose is, thus, to facilitate regional trade through the elimination of non-tariff barriers and to further strengthen fair competition and promote foreign investment as well as cooperation in the region.

I would like to highlight in particular the necessity for deeper cooperation among CEFTA Parties with the aim of stimulating export oriented regional production networks. It is also very important to put efforts into further liberalisation of trade in agriculture and in expanding liberalisation beyond goods and to transform the region into a zone of free trade.

I do hope that this CEFTA WEEK Report fully reflects the opportunity for key stakeholders to voice their comments and make suggestions on the future development of CEFTA. Conclusions and recommendations from the various sessions will be taken into account by the various CEFTA structures.


Mladen Dinkić
Deputy Prime Minister and
Minister of Economy and Regional Development
of the Republic of Serbia

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1.1 Purpose and Content of this Report

This report is intended to provide readers with a summary of the main highlights of the presentations and discussions that took place among the many stakeholders in CEFTA in the run-up to the 2010 CEFTA Joint Committee Meeting held in Belgrade on 12 November, 2010. These discussions were part of a series of workshops, seminars and discussions known collectively as 'CEFTA Week' and organised under the auspices of the Serbian Chairmanship of CEFTA.

Following a brief review of the CEFTA 2006 Agreement and the structures that have been established to oversee and support its implementation, the report comments on each session event, highlighting the key elements of the discussions, the main topics covered and some of the questions raised.

Further information on CEFTA (including the full text of the Agreement) and on CEFTA Week 2010 can be found on the CEFTA website www.cefta.int

1.2 Brief Review of CEFTA 2006

In June 2005, ministers responsible for trade in the South Eastern European countries mandated their officials and the international experts in the Stability Pact's Working Group on Trade Liberalisation and Facilitation to prepare options for the conclusion of a single free trade agreement (FTA) to replace the 32 bilateral FTAs that had been in place since 2001. While these bilateral FTAs had been successful in terms of increasing trade among the signatories, the costs for governments to administer them and the costs for traders and foreign investors to understand the complex network were judged to be constraining trade and investment.

In March 2006, the members of the Stability Pact's Working Group on Trade Liberalisation and Facilitation recommended that the Parties conclude a single FTA based on the simultaneous enlargement and amendment of the Central European Free Trade Agreement – CEFTA, which had originated in the early 1990s among those Central European countries preparing for EU accession, most of whom at this point were

EU Member States. Negotiations were formally launched in April 2006 with the support of the European Commission and the Stability Pact for South Eastern Europe. On 19 December, 2006, the amended Agreement – so-called CEFTA 2006 - was signed by Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Macedonia, Moldova, Montenegro, Serbia and the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) on behalf of Kosovo in accordance with United Nations Security Council Resolution 1244.

Following the necessary ratification processes, CEFTA 2006 entered into force on 26 July 2007 for five signatories (Albania, Macedonia, Moldova, Montenegro and UNMIK/Kosovo), for Croatia on 22 August 2007, for Serbia on 24 October 2007 and for Bosnia and Herzegovina on 22 November 2007.

This comprehensive Agreement's main objectives are, inter alia, to expand trade in goods and services and foster investment by means of fair, stable and predictable rules, to eliminate barri-



ers to trade between the Parties, to provide appropriate protection of intellectual property rights in accordance with international standards and to harmonize provisions on modern trade policy issues such as competition rules and state aid. It also includes clear and effective procedures for dispute settlement and facilitates the gradual establishment of the EU-Western Balkan countries' zone of diagonal cumulation of origin, as

envisaged in the European Commission's Communication of 27 January 2006.

The Agreement fully conforms to the WTO rules and procedures and EU regulations. Effectively implemented, the Agreement provides an excellent framework for the Parties to prepare for EU accession.

1.3 Summary of CEFTA Structures and Processes

CEFTA Joint Committee

The governing body of CEFTA is a Joint Committee (Article 40 of the Agreement). It is composed of representatives of each party to the Agreement (Ministers responsible for foreign economic relations and authorised representatives) and its main function is to supervise and administer the implementation of the Agreement. The Joint Committee meets regularly, at least once a year, and makes decisions by consensus. The Joint Committee is chaired by one of the parties and this function revolves on an annual basis. The Chair in Office for 2010 is Serbia, which will be followed by UNMIK/Kosovo in 2011. The 4th Joint Committee meeting took place in Belgrade on 12 November, 2010.

CEFTA Sub-Committees

In accordance with Article 41.5 of the Agreement, the Joint Committee can establish sub-committees and other bodies to support the implementation of the agreement. To date, three sub-committees have been established:

- Sub-committee on Agriculture including Sanitary and Phytosanitary Issues (facilitate trade in agricultural products within the region and ensure that protection of plant

health, animal health and food safety and other measures applied in agricultural trade do not unjustifiably restrict trade);

- Sub-committee on Customs and Rules of Origin (simplify and facilitate customs procedures, stimulate rapid implementation of the common rules of origin in all the Parties in line with Article 14 of the Agreement);
- Sub-committee on Technical Barriers to Trade and Non-Tariff Barriers (identify, review and propose measures for elimination of technical barriers to trade and non-tariff barriers among the Parties).

These sub-committees are scheduled to meet at least once per year and are chaired on a rotating basis by the different Parties in compliance with Decision No. 2/2007 of the CEFTA Joint Committee.

Apart from the three sub-committees, two working groups were also established in the course of 2010:

- Working Group on Trade in Services – with the main purpose of exploring the possibilities for gradual liberalisation in trade in services among CEFTA Parties.
- Working Group on Technical Barriers to Trade – established under the framework of the Sub-committee on NTBs and TBT. This

group serves as a forum for discussion on issues such as: harmonisation of technical regulations, standards and mandatory conformity assessment procedures with the aim of eliminating technical barriers to trade.

CEFTA Secretariat

In accordance with Article 40.2 of CEFTA 2006, the Joint Committee is supported by a perma-

nent secretariat located in Brussels. The overall role of the Secretariat is to provide technical and administrative support to the Joint Committee, to any sub-committee, expert group or other body established by the Joint Committee. The Secretariat is currently financed jointly by the CEFTA Parties and a number of donors, including the European Commission.

1.4 Key Stakeholders

CEFTA 2006 is viewed as a highly ambitious and important agreement for the region from both an economic and a political perspective. Hence a number of different actors participate in its implementation and support its development. The principal actors are the governments of the CEFTA Parties themselves and the business community – both in the region and foreign investors - who actively use the Agreement in their day-to-day transactions.

A number of bilateral and multilateral donors and organisations are also active in supporting the

Agreement. The European Commission is the most prominent supporter of the Agreement. It provides technical assistance on different aspects of the Agreement and financial support for the Secretariat. Other donors include Austria, Germany, Ireland, Norway, Slovenia, Sweden and Switzerland. International organisations active in the field of regional trade policy include the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), the World Bank, the International Finance Corporation (IFC), the RCC, the BAC and the UN/ECE.

1.5 Rationale/Objectives of CEFTA Week

The overall objective of CEFTA Week was to promote the benefits of CEFTA and to facilitate better implementation of the Agreement so that it can provide the Parties with the expected benefits of implementing an open trade and investment regime.

Specific objectives included:

- to stimulate debate with a range of stakeholders - the business community, government officials, academia and the international community;
- to examine specific aspects of the Agreement with different stakeholders and disseminate results of various CEFTA-related studies and/or projects to a wide audience;
- to promote better use of CEFTA through the provision of practical information;
- to present future actions needed to facilitate better implementation of the Agreement and in particular to increase competitiveness in the region;



1.INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

- to secure technical assistance to address obstacles to implementation;
- to highlight the Parties' political commitment to implementing CEFTA.

The programme included topics related to the Chairmanship of Serbia for 2010 such as trade in services, investment and non-tariff barriers to trade with a particular emphasis on those aspects of the Agreement relevant to the business community.

2.OVERALL PROGRAMME FOR CEFTA WEEK



MINISTRY OF ECONOMY AND REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT
CONTINENTAL HOTEL
Vladimira Popovica 10, New Belgrade
10-12 November, 2010.

November 10th

09.00-09.30

Registration of Participants/Coffee/Tea (Atlantic Pacific Room)

09.30-10.00

Official Opening of CEFTA Week (Atlantic Pacific Room)

Mr Mladjan Dinkic, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Economy and Regional Development of the Republic of Serbia

Mr Vincent Degert, Head of Delegation, Delegation of the European Union to the Republic of Serbia

Mr Wolfram Josef Maas, Ambassador of the Federal Republic of Germany

Mr Milos Bugarin, President, Serbian Chamber of Commerce

10.00-12.00

Session I: CEFTA: Creating Conditions for Establishing a Regional Investment Market
(Atlantic Pacific Room)

- Key Determinants of FDI Location to Date: Presentation of Mapping of FDI Flows
- Expediting Investment Flows to the CEFTA Region I: Policy Approach: Conclusions from the CEI Ministerial Meeting
- Expediting Investment Flows to the CEFTA Region II: Strategy and Implementation – Role of the SEE Investment Committee
- EU's Investment Policy – Changes and Challenges After the Entry into Force of the Lisbon Treaty
- Recommendations by the European Regional Economic Forum

Moderated by Serbia

Presentations

OECD

Montenegro

RCC

EC

EREF

Panel Discussion

SIEPA, FIC, JTI

10.00-11.30

Session II: Liberalisation of Trade in Services under CEFTA – The Next Frontier?

(Mediterranean Adriatic Room)

- Presentation of EC Study on Potential for Trade in Services Liberalisation
- ASEAN Experience with Services Trade Agreements and Lessons Learned
- Report from Regional Conference on Insurance Services

Moderated by Serbia

Presentations and Discussion

EC Project on Trade in Services

UN ESCAP

Serbian Chamber of Commerce

BAC, World Bank

09.00–13.00

Session VI: CEFTA: Overcoming Barriers to Trade II: Market Surveillance

(Aegean Baltic Room)

- The Role of Market Surveillance in the European Trading System
- Market Surveillance Developments and Cooperation in the European Union
- Assessment of the Market Surveillance System of the Western Balkans, 2009
- Presentations on Progress in Market Surveillance in CEFTA Parties
- ICSMS – European Information and Communication System for Market Surveillance
- Ideas for Regional Cooperation in Market Surveillance

**Moderated by EU IPA Regional Quality Infrastructure Project
Presentations and Discussions**

UNECE

EMARS

PROSAFE

National Board of Trade, Sweden

CEFTA Parties

ICSMS

Hungarian Authority for Consumer Protection

Serbian Chamber of Commerce

11.30–17.00

CEFTA Experts Meeting (Le Club)

Preparation for the 4th Joint Committee Meeting

CEFTA Parties

CEFTA Secretariat

18.30–20.00

CEFTA Week 2010 Reception

Best Journalist Award

CEFTA Ministers

Invited Guests

November 12th

09.30–13.00

4th CEFTA Joint Committee Meeting

CEFTA Parties

CEFTA Secretariat



3. HIGHLIGHTS FROM CEFTA WEEK

3.1 Session I: CEFTA: Creating Conditions for Establishing a Regional Investment Market

Background and Objectives

CEFTA 2006 is an ambitious agreement that not only liberalises trade but also serves to increase the attractiveness of South Eastern Europe for investment – to both foreign and domestic companies. The creation of a free trade area of approximately 23 million consumers is the main attraction of the Agreement for investors. The CEFTA 2006 Agreement includes a series of investment-related clauses as well as references to enhancing the competitiveness of the region. The investment related clauses provide for non-discriminatory treatment of investments underpinned by the principle of national treatment, a commitment by the Parties to broadly co-ordinate investment policies, progressive opening of government procurement markets to one another and effective protection of intellectual property rights (IPRs). This provides the CEFTA Parties with the opportunity to intensify co-operation in investment-related areas and create the conditions for establishing a regional investment market.

Investment-related issues were a priority action area for the Serbian Chairmanship during 2010. Establishing a regional investment market will enable the region to attract greater and sustainable levels of investment through creating an international competitive investment area, which could also increase free movement of capital, labour, goods, services, knowledge and technology across the region.

The overall objective of this session was to identify and discuss the best institutional arrangements and methods of cooperation among the

CEFTA Parties to increase the attractiveness of South East Europe as a destination for foreign and domestic investment.

Specific objectives included:

- a review of the findings from the OECD-led 2009 study on FDI location and FDI determinants and an introduction and briefing on the objectives for recently launched OECD project on the impact of regional and European trade integration on investment location at sub-national level;
- a discussion on the conclusions from the Central European Initiative (CEI) Ministerial meeting on Investment Promotion;
- an assessment of the role of the SEE Investment Committee in improving investment flows to the CEFTA region;
- a review of the EU's investment policy after entry into force of the Lisbon Treaty;
- an examination of the recommendations by the European Regional Economic Forum (EREF).

Speakers were drawn from the CEFTA Parties, the OECD, the Regional Cooperation Council (RCC), the EU, the EREF, the Serbia Investment and Export Promotion Agency (SIEPA), the Foreign Investors Council (FIC) and Japan Tobacco International (JTI). The session was moderated by Ms Vesna Arsic, State Secretary, Ministry of Economy and Regional Development, Serbia.



stimulate FDI; (v) higher quality institutions have a considerable positive effect; (vi) reform in infrastructure, privatisation and economic restructuring lead to higher FDI inflows; (vii) FDI is attracted by markets with greater income; (viii) greater openness associated with CEFTA 2006 membership has a positive impact on FDI; and (ix) impact is even greater when these elements are associated with economic reforms aimed at improving the investment climate.

Key Discussion Points

Ms Arsic opened the session and noted the importance of FDI to the region and the need in particular to increase FDI in export oriented industry.

Key Determinants of FDI Location to Date: Presentation of Mapping of FDI Flows

Mr Antonio Fanelli of the OECD referred to two separate studies during this presentation: (i) the OECD 2009 study on FDI location and FDI determinants and (ii) a new study which commenced in July 2010 on assessing the impact of European and intra-regional integration on company location at sub-national level.

The OECD 2009 EU financed study on FDI location and FDI determinants examined two topics: (i) industry concentration at national level and (ii) FDI determinants. The main findings were: (i) industrial activity is largely dispersed; (ii) low and medium technology industries tend to disperse; (iii) high technology, high skill industries tends to concentrate; (iv) increased openness and lower trade barriers (including non-tariff barriers)

In summary, OECD analysis has shown that greater trade openness and membership of a free trade agreement combined with investment climate reforms lead to higher levels of FDI. Reforms in competition policy, telecommunications and trade and foreign exchange liberalisation in particular interact with CEFTA membership to bring higher levels of FDI. These findings imply that FDI is attracted to a combination of strong institutions and an open market. Trade policy alone will not drive FDI. It must be implemented in conjunction with an effective and efficient general business climate.

In July 2010, the OECD in cooperation with the London School of Economics, commenced a two year EU financed project to evaluate the impact of regional trade integration on investment location. The overall objective is to assess the impact of European and intra-regional integration on company location at sub-national level. Additional objectives include building a map of company location for each of the CEFTA economies; identifying and quantifying industry agglomerations and clusters at sub-national level; identifying intra-regional agglomerations and assessing the importance of hard and soft infrastructures



on company location. Work has just started on this project and the first empirical results will be available by May 2011. A report on the project should be presented at CEFTA Week 2011.

Expediting Investment Flows to the CEFTA Region I: Policy Approach: Conclusions from the Central European Initiative (CEI) Ministerial Meeting on Investment Promotion

Mr Goran Šćepanović of the Ministry of Economy in Montenegro reported on the outcome of the CEI Meeting of Ministers of Economy on Investment Promotion which was held under the Montenegrin CEI Presidency of 2010 in Podgorica on 28 October, 2010. The main conclusions of the meeting are summarised as follows: (i) attracting higher investment requires permanent reforms and continuous improvement of the business and investment climate throughout the region; (ii) particular emphasis should be placed on securing investments in renewable energy, energy efficiency and sustainable development; (iii) establishing the CEI Business Forum will enable direct communication with the business communities of CEI countries and as a consequence will create a more favourable business environment; and (iv) the goal of future activities should be to identify and eliminate inefficient processes and barriers to investment and resolve unnecessary bureaucracy.

Expediting Investment Flows to the CEFTA Region II: Strategy and Implementation – Role of the SEE Investment Committee

The SEE Investment Committee (SEE IC) was established to:

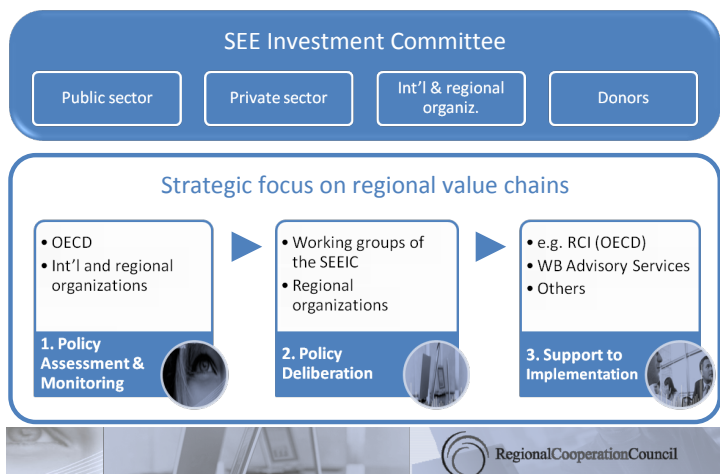
- foster regional and international co-operation in the development and implementation of investment-related policies;

- represent a forum for policy dialogue, addressing current issues among policymakers and officials and also for exchange of views with the private sector through consultation procedures, roundtables and conferences;
- conduct country-by-country and horizontal assessments of policies relating to the instruments and make recommendations to promote reform in favour of the business climate;
- prepare critical analysis of trends in investment flows and a wide range of policy issues for consideration by policymakers and, where appropriate, for publication to a wider audience;
- conduct in-country projects to build capacity of public administrations and support implementation of projects to support competitiveness, such as the major European Commission-supported Regional Competitiveness Initiative (RCI).

Mr Alan Paic of the OECD and Mr Sanjin Arifagic of the RCC presented an overview of the future strategy and evolution of the SEE Investment Committee. Designed to oversee the work of the OECD Investment Compact for South East Europe, a high-impact regional programme to support countries in the region to increase growth, investment and employment through targeted business climate reforms, active since the year 2000, the SEE IC is currently co-chaired by an OECD country (Austria), a SEE country (Serbia) and the OECD Secretariat. The current chairs will hand over management of operations to the RCC by end 2011. The OECD will continue to provide analytical support and project work in the domain of policy assessment, strategy, assistance and training for implementation. The SEE IC will be positioned as the main focal point for all investment-related reforms and deliberations. It

will develop specific support programmes to help with the implementation of policy recommendations and capacity building (e.g. Regional Competitiveness Initiative) and will leverage efforts of existing institutions, projects and structures such as CEFTA, the Regional Network for Investment Promotion Agencies, the World Bank's Investment Climate Advisory Services and others.

SEEC structure going forward



EU's Investment Policy: Changes and Challenges After the Entry into Force of the Lisbon Treaty

In her presentation, Ms Elena-Mihaela Ciudin of the European Commission, focused on the main changes in EU investment policy following the entry into force of the Lisbon Treaty. The Lisbon Treaty's extension of EU exclusive competence to cover foreign direct investment (FDI) should enable the EU to conclude comprehensive trade and investment agreements, where in the past its coverage of investment has been only very partial. This should in turn strengthen the EU's ability to shape international investment policy which combines mar-

ket access and investment protection. The greater negotiating leverage gained from negotiating comprehensive trade and investment agreements should also enable the EU to gain improved market access for EU investors in key target markets. Increased EU competence also means the EU will be able to establish uniform provisions for investors throughout

the EU, in contrast to the current position in which investors in some member states have better protection in some markets than others. The Lisbon Treaty extension of EU competence to cover investment will not however, bring about major changes in the short term. Change is likely to be progressive rather than dramatic (no big bang; evolution not revolution) with the EU progressively extending the number of EU investment agreements. In the interim, member state bi-

lateral investment treaties are likely to continue to remain in force. Therefore it is expected that there will be an increasing recourse to EU as opposed to national investment treaties particularly with large international partners. The EU urged the CEFTA Parties to consider whether CEFTA could be a platform to set up a regional investment policy.

Role of FDI in Strengthening Regional Knowledge based Competitiveness: Recommendations by the European Regional Economic Forum (EREF)

Mr Boris Cizelj of the EREF reported on 16 recommendations which were defined in the form of



3. HIGHLIGHTS FROM CEFTA WEEK

proposals to be implemented by the CEFTA Parties in order to attract FDI. These recommendations included the need for the region to:

- re-think its economic strategy by making FDI more instrumental for sustainable regional development;
- create conditions for transparent investment legislation;
- strengthen soft skills such as negotiating and communications skills in national and regional investment agencies;
- ensure proactive dialogue with investors and ensure investors are well informed of sectoral opportunities;
- create appropriate incentive programmes for foreign and local investors on top of existing favourable conditions for business investment;
- give preferential treatment to less developed and remote regions;
- formulate a FDI promotion policy which (i) focuses on improving the investment climate, economic fundamentals, infrastructure, coherent regional development strategy (ii) targets value added activities and tasks aimed at specific development goals of a country/region (iii) targets specific groups of investors (existing investment brokers, strategic partners, diasporas, neighbouring countries and promising new actors);
- develop more selective discriminatory measures on returnable incentives rather than general FDI support (i.e. focus on application of modern technology, export and R&D promotion, employment generation);
- use incentives as icing on the cake rather than a substitute for sound fundamentals as a necessary precondition for sustainable FDI;
- develop investment promotion programmes tailored to the needs of the region and the preferred investor (i.e. take account of in-

come per capita, infrastructure, competitive advantages, technological development, knowledge of foreign languages, geographical location, etc.);

- give higher priority in future to FDI in services rather than manufacturing or extractive industries (e.g. finance, tourism, medical services, education and training - off-shoring in general ought to receive greater attention);
- highlight foreign investors who have established themselves successfully in the region and have achieved positive results in promotional activities and campaigns undertaken by official national or regional institutions;
- enhance after investment service activities for existing investors rather than concentrating solely on attracting new investors;
- pay attention to new types of investors, more global in nature, such as Sovereign Wealth Funds which require a greater emphasis on economic diplomacy, intergovernmental actions sensitive to cross cultural differences as well as other non-economic factors.

The EREF emphasised that it is up to the region to address these specific issues when designing future policies and human capital strategies.

In the panel discussion that followed, the representative from the Foreign Investors Council noted with interest what was said in the presentations and emphasised that the priority should be harmonisation with EU investment policy and the elimination of barriers between countries so that investors can expand businesses in the region. The representative from Japan Tobacco International (JTI) pointed out that JTI supports cooperation between the CEFTA Parties in order to create a unique investment market which will be a more attractive destination for foreign

investors. In order to achieve this goal, JTI believes that there are three crucial issues which are causing problems for foreign investors in the region which should be addressed. Firstly, the implementation and enforcement of competition laws should be improved with the aim of the protection of equal treatment of foreign and local companies in compliance with the CEFTA Agreement. Secondly, JTI strongly advises CEFTA signatories to consider expanding or cancelling quotas in mutual trade since exports to some CEFTA Parties are strongly limited by symbolic quotas. Thirdly, companies producing excise goods, including JTI, are faced with double taxation when supplying the territory of Kosovo and Metohija. JTI sincerely hopes that a rational and

economic approach will prevail which will create favorable conditions for the full implementation of the CEFTA Agreement in the future. The representative from SIEPA commented that it is important to address trade issues and reduce barriers to trade in the region in the first instance. Only then will it be possible to develop a regional investment strategy and provide support to potential investors.

In closing Ms Arsic concluded that the goal of establishing a regional investment market was both ambitious and complex and hoped that the RCC would play a key role in the process by increased coordination through regional ownership.

3.2 Session II: Liberalisation of Trade in Services under CEFTA – The Next Frontier?

Background and Objectives

All CEFTA Parties share a common feature: a significant and rising share of services in their economies. Indeed, global trade in services has been increasing faster than trade in goods in the last few decades. Although trade in services in the region has been expanding rapidly, the intra-regional trade in services among the CEFTA Parties has not proceeded apace and it could be much higher. The CEFTA Working Group on Services was established in November 2010 with a mandate to gradually develop and broaden cooperation between CEFTA Parties with the aim of achieving a progressive liberalisation and mutual opening of their services market, in the context of European integration, taking into account the relevant provisions of the GATS.

The objective of this session was to discuss the significance of the services sector and the current state of liberalisation with the aim to identify the potential, methods and joint activities towards improving cooperation among CEFTA Parties, having in mind the experience of other regions in the liberalisation of trade in services.





Speakers drawn from the EU, UN ESCAP, World Bank, Serbian Chamber of Commerce and the private sector shared their views and experiences in this field. The session was moderated by Ms Jadranka Zenić Zeljković, Head of WTO Department, Ministry of Economy and Regional Development, Serbia.

Key Discussion Points

Ms Zenić Zeljković opened the session and noted the importance for the region of improving cooperation in the services sector with the aim of achieving liberalisation and mutual opening of the services market.

Presentation of EU Study on Potential for Trade in Services Liberalisation

The first version of the EU funded Study on the Potential for the Launching of the Negotiations on Services Liberalisation among the CEFTA Parties was presented by Mr Dimitrij Grčar, the Project Team Leader. The Study analysed the current situation in the services sector with the focus on the present level of liberalisation of almost all CEFTA Parties. Although considerable progress has been made, the main finding of the Study is that existing trade in services, within the region, is far below its potential. Therefore, negotiations are necessary if this situation is to be changed. Services trade regimes should be improved primarily through better regulation and the removal of administrative obstacles. The motives for regional services liberalisation, particularly in infrastructure, are closely related to economic benefits and would result in a boost in foreign direct investment, competitiveness and economic growth.

Economic analysis has shown that services, even in times of financial and economic crisis, have a far greater potential for growth than man-

ufacturing and agriculture and are a stabilising factor in terms of employment. Therefore it is up to governments to act and focus on the issues of intra-regional services trade, by increasing negotiating capacities and ensuring transparency as well as the required regulatory reform.

The successful regional cooperation initiative in the area of rail transport - the "Cargo 10" alliance of Serbian, Croatian and Slovenian railways was highlighted. This should serve as an example for similar synergies among CEFTA Parties (in particular in the area of information and communication technologies as the most dynamic sector).

The focus of the second Study, which is expected to be completed by the end of 2010, will be on specific recommendations for the preparation of negotiations and on decisions such as the form of an agreement, method of negotiation, management of the process, expected outcomes and organisational issues.

ASEAN Experience with Services Trade Agreements and Lessons Learnt

The ASEAN experience in services liberalisation was presented by Ms Mia Mikić, an expert of the UN ESCAP Trade Policy Section. The main elements of the successful ASEAN integration process were based on a definition of clear targets, timelines and pre-agreed flexibilities and a determination of schedules with key milestones and timely implementation by relevant sectoral ministerial bodies. In conclusion, the lessons for the CEFTA liberalisation process were defined as the following:

- benefits from regional liberalisation (promotion of open borders for services trade, development of improved rules and promotion

of domestic regulatory framework, fostering on-going talks and interest in services liberalisation and the provision of a 'signalling effect' of the intentions of governments, locally and internationally);

- emphasis on transparency and inclusivity (development of best practice tools to notify policy, procedural and regulatory changes, establishment of better communication with the private sector);
- need for data and analysis (collection of more services data at the subsector level, inventory of regulatory policies, evaluation of liberalisation associated with unilateral or other initiatives);
- preparation for negotiations at national level (formulation of domestic reform and structural assistance agenda for services, planning for all phases of negotiations, establishment of working groups for each sector if GATS approach (sectoral/sub-sectoral level) is used as the basis for negotiations, consideration of dispute settlement mechanism).

Report from Regional Conference on Insurance Services

Mr Slobodan Jovanović, on behalf of the Serbian Chamber of Commerce, informed delegates that the CEFTA Regional Conference on Insurance was organised by the Serbian Chamber of Commerce from 27 to 29 October 2010 at Zlatibor, Serbia. Representatives from Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Macedonia, Montenegro and Serbia attended. The conclusions of the conference were welcomed especially those relating to the establishment of the Inter Chamber Working Group for Insurance with the aim of reviewing national legislation, identifying restrictions and proposing measures for the gradual liberalisation in the area of co-insurance, actuary services and insurance mediation services.

At the Conference it was also concluded that CEFTA Parties have opened their market for the commercial presence of foreign insurance companies (with a prevailing share of foreign capital in the majority of the countries). Reinsurance is fully liberalised in the majority of CEFTA Parties. The process of harmonisation of the insurance regulations with EU regulations is underway in the region, but differences still exist in the speed of acceptance and implementation of EU standards into national regulations.

In the discussions that followed, Ms Dragana Miljković, the representative of the Serbian Chamber of Commerce, emphasised the importance of E-Trade for the economy (faster, more efficient and cost effective purchase and sale), consumers (instant access to an unlimited number of products and services in all markets) and for the CEFTA Parties (effective fight against corruption, efficient procedures for import and export). For further liberalisation of E-commerce services in the CEFTA region it is necessary to invest in systems and infrastructure, harmonise national legislation with EU regulations, adopt and implement EU standards, liberalise customs procedures, introduce an adequate tax incentive policy and start a widespread campaign of education in e-business through the regional chambers of commerce.

The representative of the World Bank advised delegates that a new World Bank study on barriers to trade in services will be launched in the first half of 2011 with the focus on transport, legal, construction, health and IT services sectors.

In concluding, Ms Zenić Zeljković summarised the discussions as follows:

- a lack of data, together with analytical and methodological problems makes it difficult



to conduct a detailed empirical assessment of trade in services and technical assistance should be provided to statisticians in the CEFTA Parties to assist in the compilation of statistics on international trade in services based on the EU methodology;

- priority sectors should be commonly identified by all CEFTA Parties with the aim of enhanced cooperation;
- cooperation in these priority sectors should be improved through a variety of different measures including:
 - improving access to information, transparency and predictability of regulatory requirements and administrative procedures as an important first step in opening the services market;
 - increasing institutional cooperation, consultations (exchange of experience, knowledge and education) between relevant stakeholders: ministries, national regulatory agencies, professional associations and the business community;
 - preparing an inventory of obstacles imposed by government or professional

associations that currently hinder intra regional trade and formulating a plan for their removal;

- ensuring regulatory cooperation in convergence and policy harmonisation to EU legislation;
- gradually deepening liberalisation in selected services sectors by recognising that regional cooperation is an intermediary step towards opening of the services markets in the process of EU and multi-lateral liberalisation;
- the EU accession process is the most powerful instrument for further liberalisation and for legal and regulatory harmonisation. The EU influence has been stronger than other liberalisation initiatives mainly due to the high political priority of EU accession but also because the harmonisation process imposes strict regulatory guidelines and deadlines and relies on regular and efficient monitoring mechanisms.

Ms Zenić Zeljković closed the session and thanked all the speakers for their valuable contributions.

3.3 Session III: CEFTA: Contributing to Smart, Sustainable and Inclusive Growth

Background and Objectives

Europe 2020 is the EU's growth strategy for the coming decade. The European Commission has identified three drivers for growth which will be supported by actions at both EU and national levels: smart growth (fostering knowledge, innovation, education and digital society); sustainable growth (making EU production greener and more resource efficient while boosting competitiveness); and inclusive growth (enhancing labour market participation, skills acquisition and the fight against poverty).

The objective of this session was to discuss and identify how CEFTA can mirror the Europe 2020 growth strategy and assist in transforming the region into a smart, sustainable and inclusive economy by improving competitiveness and generating high levels of economic growth, employment and productivity.

Speakers were drawn from the CEFTA Parties, the OECD, the EU, the SEE ICT Forum, the IFC and the Serbian Chamber of Commerce. The session was moderated by Ms Bojana Todor-

ovic, Assistant Minister, Ministry of Economy and Regional Development, Serbia.

Key Discussion Points

Ms Todorovic opened the session and noted the importance for the region of improving competitiveness and generating high levels of economic growth, employment and productivity.



Regional Clusters and Networks

During her presentation, Ms Zorica Marić from the Ministry of Economy and Regional Development in Serbia emphasised that regional cluster networks are established in various industrial, agricultural and services sectors. Clusters organise themselves spontaneously, following their own interests, benefitting from synergies and developing new business opportunities in order to strengthen the competitiveness of individual clusters and their members. Very often they are supported by international organisations or projects which add

value to local efforts. A number of examples of good practice of regional cluster networks were presented and included: SCENET FB Clusters (forestry); Ecorural Net (rural tourism); BIPOM (farm machinery); and in particular clusters on Export Promotion of Automotive Industries (see below) and ICT SEE Brand Development supported by the GTZ Open Regional Fund (ORF).

Ms Biljana Božović of the National Tourism Organisation (NTO) of Montenegro described the

activities of the organisation and how it promotes Montenegro as a tourist destination worldwide. NTO has 21 local tourism organisations and 31 information points and its activities include positioning the brand in the global media (e.g. presentations on CNN, Euronews, BBC, Travel Channel); e-marketing and sales; tourism fairs and exhibitions; business development and establishing of new tourist offices abroad. Montenegro has been among the



Regional Clusters and Networks GTZ Open Regional Fund (ORF)



“Export Promotion of Automotive Industries in SEE through Cluster Network”

Goal:

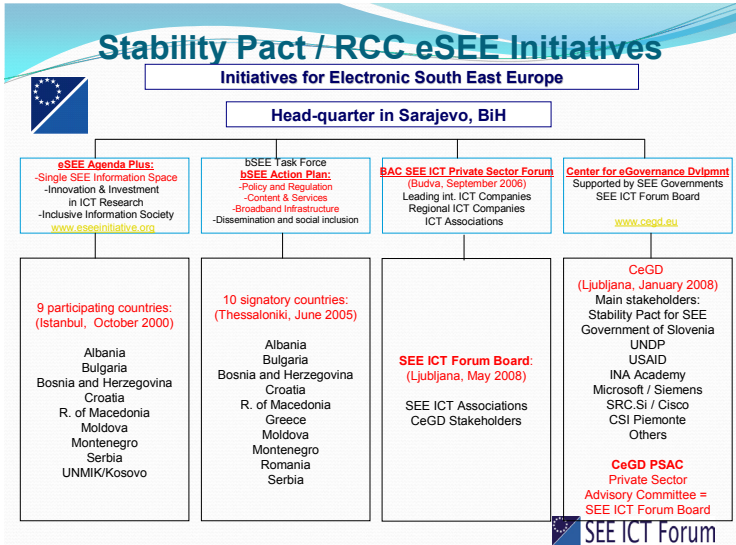
- To improve the position of automotive suppliers from the Western Balkans on the Western European and global market.

Target Group:

- SMEs which can be integrated in the supply chain of international automotive industries and thus generate added value.

Results up to date:

- Network of five Automotive Clusters from the Region
- Launching of joint web portal: www.automotive-see.eu
- Database of ca. 200 suppliers with a search option according to automotive modules, components and parts
- Cooperation Agreement with international Associations/Clusters
- Joint presentation at regional and international trade shows



sisting the CEFTA Parties to achieve much better growth rates in tourism.

Mr Toni Petreski of the SEE ICT Forum advised that the Forum was established in 2006 in recognition of the increasingly dynamic ICT sector in SEE. In 2009 SEE countries' share of global IT spending was \$562 billion out of a total spend of £1,429 billion. The SEE ICT Forum is composed of the ICT associations' representatives from 13 SEE countries/parties

fastest growing tourism destinations in the world with double digit growth.

NTO is a partner in a cross border project on "Joint Promotion and Increased level of Safety of Nautical Tourism in Dubrovnik-Neretva County and Montenegrin Coast" and two Adriatic IPA projects on integrated actions to promote sustainable tourism development. In addition, NTO is one of the pillars of regional cooperation on two regional tourism initiatives supported by GTZ on the Development of the Western European Coach Market for incoming agencies in the Western Balkans and on the Development and Stabilisation of Camping Sites in the Western Balkans. Feedback from international tour operators on these projects was positive and indicated that the region has huge potential in developing tourism (for example one of the big advantages is the geographical proximity of the region to lucrative markets in Germany, Benelux, Italy, France, etc.). Future regional tourism initiatives and cooperation will play an important role in marketing the region as a whole and as-

ties - Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Macedonia, Moldova, Montenegro, Serbia, Romania and UNMIK/Kosovo, plus Slovenia, Greece and Turkey - the countries from the South-Caucasus region – Georgia, Armenia and Azerbaijan – as well the active stakeholders of the Center for e-Governance Development. The aim of the Forum is to create an active communication channel and dialogue between the private ICT sector companies and associations and the governments of the region participating in the electronic South East Europe – eSEE, and broadband South East Europe - bSEE initiatives (<http://www.eseeinitiative.org/>) to improve the ICT related business environment – see table below. Participation in the SEE ICT Forum is open to ICT associations in the SEE region, executives from international ICT companies active in the SEE region and executives from SEE regional and local ICT companies. The SEE ICT Forum and governments are important players in shaping the potential for upgrading the SEE ICT industry and increasing the SEE countries' share of global IT spending to an even higher level.



Pilot projects

Innovation projects

1. Services for supporting technological and non-technological innovation – manufacturing extension services
2. Support establishment of inter-firm networks in specific sectors
3. Mechanisms to finance business services in support of innovation (e.g. voucher schemes)
4. Establishment of an Innovation Fund
5. Increase investment readiness / coaching of entrepreneurs
6. Mapping of existing venture capital schemes
7. Explore development of business angel networks
8. Innovation competition
9. Business plan competition
10. The establishment of a Competence Research Centre (CRC)
11. Assist governments in reviewing the overall policy framework for innovation
12. Practices and techniques for monitoring innovation and supporting needs-driven research
13. Assistance with domestic joint-venture proposals for foreign investors
14. Co-operation within the 'triple helix' of public-private-research communities

Human Capital projects

15. Assist governments with systematised usage of skills gap analysis for policy making
16. Review strategies for work-related training
17. Review best practices in internship programmes
18. Review best practices in VET and apprenticeship schemes.
19. Review best practices in life-long learning
20. Assessment of the effectiveness and design of policies to encourage reverse migration
21. Improving social networks within the region and the diaspora of highly-skilled individuals
22. Review the impact of the tax system, labour market restrictions and parental support on female employment in the Western Balkans
23. One-stop-shop for self-employed to start-up their own businesses
24. Support the drafting of a labour market information strategy
25. Map career guidance programmes in the Western Balkans

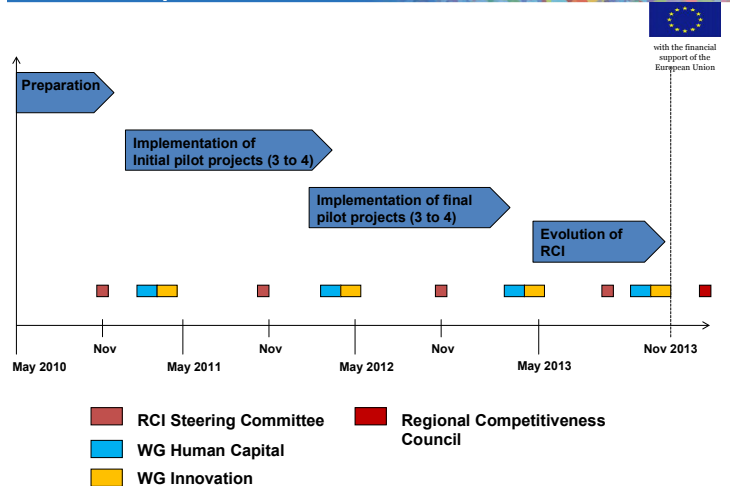


Regional Competitiveness Initiative for the Western Balkans (RCI)

ology by the private sector). The action plan for the RCI is outlined in the table below.

Mr Alan Paic of OECD presented the key elements of the RCI which is a 3 year EU funded project which is being implemented by the OECD. Its objective is to support the medium and long-term competitiveness of the region by providing capacity building support to public administrations via pilot projects. There are two main focus areas: human capital development (to address major skill gaps) and innovation (to strengthen innovative capacities and support absorption of tech-

Regional Competitiveness Initiative Action plan





3. HIGHLIGHTS FROM CEFTA WEEK

Round table meetings will be completed in the autumn of 2010. The first RCI Steering Committee meeting on 22 November will confirm the first group of pilot projects (see table on page 23 for examples of potential pilot projects) which will be launched in January 2011. The first Working Group meeting on Innovation and Human Capital Development will be held in spring 2011.

Trade Logistics in the Western Balkans

In her presentation, Ms Wendy Werner of the IFC emphasised that Trade Logistics continue to be a challenge in the Southeast Europe region. Doing Business 2011 data shows that a number of countries in the region have been successful at reforming the regulatory framework, improving access to credit and simplifying regulations for businesses. However, with a couple exceptions, indicators of Trade Logistics do not show significant improvement. Serbia fell in the rankings and most countries increase between 2009 and 2011 is very small. Only Montenegro had a huge improvement in 2010 – see table below.

The IFC is commencing a new project in 2011 on Trade Logistics in the SEE region which will focus on: simplification and harmonisation of procedures including documentation; technical support to introduce risk based management systems for border inspections and automation of trade clearance procedures/Single Window system. Hopefully this project will help to improve the situation.

In the panel discussion that followed, the representative from the EU summarised the key elements of the Europe 2020 strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth and noted that the strategy offers the enlargement countries an anchor for reform. He encouraged enlargement countries to: adapt and adopt relevant headline targets; actively participate in European Union programmes; and organise their work on Europe 2020 related issues in regional groups.

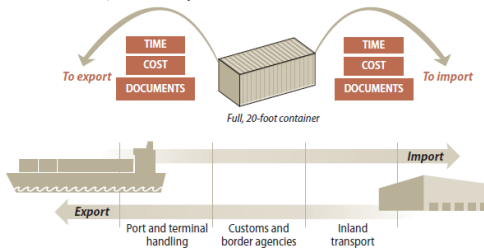
The representative from the Serbian Chamber of Commerce commented on the role of the Chamber in supporting clusters in Serbia. The Associations of clusters within the Chamber are business communities gathered together around issues of common interest. They include members from tourism, the automotive industry, textiles, crafts, metallurgy, food production, etc. The Chamber will seek to assist these clusters in the following areas: representation of interests and needs of cluster members; education and training for

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... But for Trading Across Borders, little changed

	2011 (rank)	2010 (rank)	2009 (rank)
Albania	75	66	77
BiH	71	63	55
Croatia	98	96	97
UNMIK/ Kosovo	130	132	-
Macedonia, FYR	66	62	64
Moldova	141	140	135
Montenegro	34	47	125
Serbia	74	69	62

How much time, how many documents and what cost to export and import across borders by ocean transport?



Montenegro, Top 10 Improver for Trading Across Borders

✓ Montenegro's customs administration eliminated requirement to present a terminal handling receipt for export and import.

Source: Doing Business 2011.

cluster managers and members; business internationalisation and networking; cooperation with CEFTA and EU cluster networks and initiatives; increased visibility in the European Observatory for Clusters; and participation in the Club of Cluster Managers.

In closing the session, Ms Todorovic welcomed the informative discussions on clusters and net-

works and the new RCI project which will play a key role in increasing competitiveness in the region. Trade logistics need to be further improved and she looks forward to the start of the IFC project in early 2011. She concluded by emphasising that the Europe 2020 Strategy on smart, sustainable and inclusive growth provides an excellent framework for the region to make further progress on economic reforms.

3.4 Session IV: CEFTA: Overcoming Barriers to Trade 1: Transparency and Monitoring

Background and Objectives

Since the entry into force of CEFTA 2006 the Parties have been heavily involved in discussions on how to identify, prioritise and eliminate non-tariff barriers (NTBs) to trade. During 2010 Serbia as Chair of CEFTA continued to coordinate NTB activities with the two relevant technical assistance projects financed by GTZ and the OECD.

The objective of this session was to (i) launch the CEFTA Trade Portal and to demonstrate how it functions and what it offers and (ii) to present the tools developed to identify priority sectors

and monitor progress on the reduction of non-tariff barriers in the CEFTA area.

Speakers were drawn from GTZ, the OECD, the CEFTA Parties and the business community. The session was moderated by Ms Pranvera Kastrati, Director for Trade Policy, Ministry of Economy, Trade and Energy, Albania.

Key Discussion Points

Ms Kastrati opened the proceedings and noted the importance for the region of eliminating and reducing NTBs. She said the session would focus on two main achievements to date: (i) the launch of the CEFTA Trade Portal and (ii) the Monitoring Instrument for NTBs.

Access to Information: Launch of the CEFTA Trade Portal

Ms Kastrati advised delegates that the concept for the portal was born in Budva, Montenegro following discussions on the findings of the first regional business survey prepared by GTZ which revealed that transparen-





3. HIGHLIGHTS FROM CEFTA WEEK

cy and access to information was considered to be the key concern to the business community.

Ms Britta Margraf of GTZ opened the presentation by noting that the launch of the Portal was a big day for the project team – after a year's work the idea has become a reality. This was a process of many milestones and one which will continue into the future as feedback is received and improvements are made. The CEFTA Parties now have a stable framework for the road ahead and a firm commitment by way of signed Memorandums of Understanding from each Party on operating and updating the Portal.

The CEFTA Trade Portal was created by the CEFTA signatories with the support of GTZ on behalf of the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ). The development process was headed by the Albanian Ministry for Economy, Trade and Energy who designed the model for the trade portal in cooperation with GTZ.

The new online Trade Portal contains all relevant and practical information for trading with the CEFTA Parties. Traders importing goods into and exporting goods from each CEFTA Party are subject to a number of important rules and regulations with regard to customs, licensing, SPS and veterinary control procedures, technical and other requirements. At the moment, it may take weeks to get the information they need. The aim of the Portal is to save businesses time, effort and money in gathering this information as well as increasing the transparency of trade procedures.

Designed as a single point of access to relevant information from all eight CEFTA Parties, the Portal includes an explanation of each stage of the trade procedures. It not only lists but also provides online the relevant documents that compa-

nies need to import or export goods. Language barriers – which often complicate getting trade information – are overcome by offering information in all official languages as well as in English.

The Portal increases transparency in the regulations and formalities that refer to trade with the region. Its purpose is, thus, to facilitate regional trade through the elimination of non-tariff barriers.

The Portal not only serves the private sector but also public administrations in the respective CEFTA Parties to be acquainted with all formalities, regulations and rules in trading across the region. The Portal complements the efforts of different CEFTA institutions to exchange information in this regard. With that, it is considered that the Portal will contribute to strengthened competition and the promotion of foreign investment as well as cooperation in the region.

The launching of the CEFTA Trade Portal is the first step in promoting a multilingual Portal that can make life easier for businesses and help them to do business with any other Party. The CEFTA Parties under the lead of the Albanian Ministry will continue to work closely together to progressively enrich the Portal's content and develop new functionalities. A new GTZ (Open Regional Funds for Foreign Trade Promotion in Southeast Europe) project will continue to provide targeted support to them until December 2012. The main challenges will be to update the information and keep track of changing legislation, procedures and documentation and to promote the Portal to stakeholders. Both the funding and the commitment of the Parties are in place. It is a great beginning and a new and very welcome step ahead.

Following this overview, Ms Tanja Boskovic of GTZ officially launched the Portal via an on-

line demonstration using Montenegro as a case study to show how the Portal functions and what it offers. The main categories of information presented on the Portal are customs regulations, licensing procedures, technical requirements, SPS and veterinary controls, trade regimes as well as the regulations for border controls applied in all CEFTA signatories. There are over 1,700 documents on the Portal. GTZ accessed each category for Montenegro on-line to show examples of the information and individual documents available. The Trade Portal highlights the fact that there are still many technical barriers to trade and the importance of reducing these barriers to show that CEFTA can work in practice as well as in theory.

In reply to some questions from Chambers of Commerce, GTZ noted that this was only a starting point and looked forward to further feedback and to jointly promoting the Portal to all stakeholders. Private sector businesses were encouraged to provide suggestions and comments for improving the Portal either directly or through Chambers of Commerce. A further challenge for the new GTZ project will be to create an effective feedback mechanism, perhaps with integrated IT links on the Portal website and back office resources to answer questions. Further consideration needs to be given to the design and cost of such an initiative. Finally it was pointed out that the purpose of the Portal is to provide advance information and it is not a substitute for dealing with other issues (e.g. queries on documents at border crossings).


Statements from Albania and Bosnia and Herzegovina

Albania, as Chair of the Sub-Committee on NTBs and TBT during 2010, reported that according to a matrix which has been used for the reduction

and elimination of NTBs and technical barriers to trade (TBT), some issues were solved but other barriers had been created. It is necessary to develop a more sophisticated and systematised way of monitoring these barriers to trade and the CEFTA Parties have asked the OECD to assist in designing a new unified monitoring instrument for this purpose. Albania expressed the belief that the upcoming chair would contribute to the consolidation and utilisation of the instrument to the benefit to all CEFTA Parties and the business community.

Bosnia and Herzegovina (who will take over the Chair of the Sub-Committee on NTBs and TBT from Albania) presented the main elements of the ambitious work programme for 2011. The main objectives of the Chair in 2011 will be to: continue with activities launched by the previous Chair and initiate new activities based on developments in implementation (complementing the needs of business); ensure a coordinated and streamlined approach in order to achieve the best results and avoid overlapping; increase awareness, knowledge and transparency; identify systematic solutions and action plans for the elimination of trade barriers according to a sector-targeted approach; and promote actions/results and further build the corporate image of the Agreement.

The work programme is structured into four main pillars or components and the expected results for each pillar are shown in the table below. Bosnia and Herzegovina thanked the Albanian Chair in Office for paving the road to further activities, the CEFTA Parties for their contributions in the preparation of the 2011 work programme and GTZ and OECD for their valuable technical assistance.

EXPECTED RESULTS

Structures and cooperation	Transparency and Information	Barriers to Trade	Promotion
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> × Improved cooperation and coordination among CEFTA bodies × Effective work of WG on TBT × Improved communication and coordination with CEFTA Forum of Chambers (coordinated activities where necessary) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> × Effective use of Monitoring instrument and report to JC × Regular and timely share of information × Up-dated CEFTA Trade Portal × Increased awareness and knowledge on NTBs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> × Pilot overviews of priority legislation in specific selected sectors (action plan for MRAs and JC Recommendation) × List of SPMs to be eliminated (Action plan and JC Recommendation) × List of administrative barriers to be removed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> × Communication of relevant information in a simple, efficient and timely manner × Increased visibility and corporate image

Ministry of Foreign Trade and Economic Relations of BiH

Monitoring Progress: Tracking Improvements

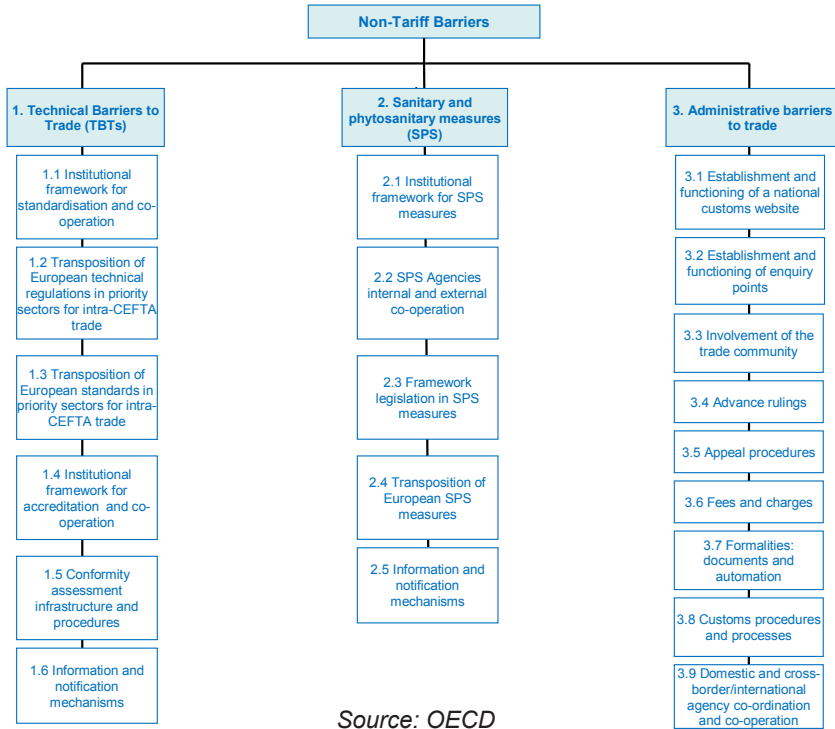
The OECD in cooperation with the CEFTA Parties has developed a project on Monitoring the Elimination of NTBs in the region. This two year project will be financed by the EU and will start in early 2011. The specific objectives of the project are to ensure the independent monitoring of the elimination of NTBs by developing a permanent and stable monitoring instrument to track progress and promote the findings to the relevant CEFTA structures and other stakeholders.

The OECD presented its methodology for this project which will be guided by an analysis of trade flows and value chains; trends in regional and European trade integration in CEFTA; the role of FDI

in the creation of intra-CEFTA and CEFTA-EU value chains; trade in intermediate goods and the identification of priority sectors (by exports and imports). Most the CEFTA Parties have opened up their economies to trade but all have experienced large current account deficits. The EU remains the dominant trade partner but the share of CEFTA intra-regional trade is increasing. The majority of intra-regional merchandise exports concentrate on low value added industrial supplies and consumer goods and a similar pattern can be observed for exports to the EU. The diagram below shows the outline framework which will be used to monitor the reduction of NTBs in CEFTA. This is similar to the framework used for the Investment Reform Index. The first assessment will be presented during CEFTA Week 2011.



Example of Output (II): Framework to monitor the reduction of NTBs in CEFTA



Source: OECD

In closing the session, Ms Kastrati said that the launch of the CEFTA Trade Portal was one of the main highlights of CEFTA Week and is a significant achievement. It was clear from the questions and answers that it is seen as a valuable tool for the business community. She is confident that the Portal will be improved further under the Chairmanship of Bosnia and Herzegovina in 2011 and thanked them for their commit-

ment and enthusiasm for continuing the process. She noted it is very important to have a unified and standardised tool to monitor NTB elimination and this will be welcome ammunition in the fight against reducing NTBs. She thanked the speakers for their contributions to the session and GTZ and the OECD for their continuing efforts in this area.



3.5 Session V: CEFTA: Part of a Wider Regional Partnership

Background and Objectives

It is important to ensure that the potential current and future benefits of CEFTA are used to the full advantage of the countries of the region. As noted by many, the effects of trade integration are dynamic. Trade creation increases productivity and GDP growth. It also leads to economies of scale and enhanced competitiveness. Therefore the CEFTA Agreement has a key role in stimulating greater regional and global integration and can provide new opportunities for businesses to expand trade and exploit new possibilities in other areas beyond the EU where the CEFTA Parties have valuable knowledge and contacts.

The objective of this session was to identify the wider regional context in which CEFTA operates as well as to consider the relationship with other economic areas with which CEFTA members have close links. It was expected to reach relevant policy recommendations which could influence better profiling of CEFTA as an attractive partner for neighbouring regions.

Speakers were drawn from the Regional Cooperation Council (RCC), the Moldovan Investment and Export Promotion Organisation (MIEPO), the EU, the CEFTA Parties and the business community. The session was moderated by Ms Jelica Minic, Deputy Secretary General, RCC.

Key Discussion Points

Ms Minic opened the proceedings and said it was a great pleasure to introduce the work of the RCC which will cooperate even more closely with CEFTA once it takes over the management of the SEE Investment Committee. She also welcomed having Moldova as a special topic on the agenda and looked forward to exploring the links between the East and West and discussing how CEFTA can best take advantage of opportunities in eastern markets.

RCC Strategy – 2011-2013

Ms Minic presented the background to and the key elements of the RCC Strategy for the period 2011-2013.



The Western Balkans faces a number of economic challenges including: the necessity for a new model of development and growth; re-positioning in European and global constellations; poor physical, institutional and social infrastructure; under utilisation of existing resources; low innovation capacity; slow reforms and better synchronising and focussing of the activities of regional cooperation networks.

A new regional cooperation framework has been emerging over the past decade which includes more than 40 various regional organisations, initiatives, task forces and other structures; numerous donor-funded regional projects in a multitude of areas spanning from rural development to scientific cooperation; and broad participation of public and private sectors.

As the main focal point for regional cooperation, the RCC has a key role in supporting economic and social development and promoting the region's European and Euro-Atlantic integration and linking the region with the donor community in areas with a regional dimension. The main task is to generate and coordinate developmental projects and create a political climate susceptible to implementing projects of a wider regional character to the benefit of each individual member. The work of the RCC focuses on six priority areas: economic and social development, energy and infrastructure, justice and home affairs, security cooperation, building human capital,

and parliamentary cooperation as an overarching theme. The organisation maintains close working relations with all actors of relevance in these areas, such as governments, international organisations, international financial institutions, regional organisations, civil society and the private sector.

The key challenge now is to increase the efficiency of the RCC by focussing on results-oriented activities identifying areas where it can provide added value and assume a more strategic role in promoting regional cooperation in South East Europe. The sectoral priorities identified for Economic and Social Development include (i) transfer and management of the SEE Investment Committee; (ii) identify ways and means of improving access to finance for the private sector; (iii) mainstream employment and the social agenda and (iv) promote information society development. The RCC taskforces and initiatives in the Economic and Social Development sector are outlined in the table below.



Taskforces and Initiatives in SEE

	Country	Albania	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Bulgaria	Croatia	Greece	Republic of Moldova	Montenegro	Romania	Serbia	The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia	Turkey	UNMK/Kosovo	Others
	Economic and Social Development	Regional Initiative												
	SEE Investment Committee (SEEC)													
	-Paris	x	x	x	x		x	x	x	x	x			
	Central European Free Trade Agreement (CEFTA)													
	-Brussels	x	x		x		x	x		x	x			x
	Business Advisory Council (BAC)													
	-Thessaloniki	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	
	Regional Network of National Investment Promotion Agencies in SEE (RNIPA)													
	-Rotating	x	x		x			x		x	x			
	SEE Regional Network of Policy Makers (IFC)													
	-Belgrade	x	x		x			x		x	x			
	Regional Rural Development Standing Working Group (SWG)													
	-Skopje	x	x	x	x			x	x	x	x			x
	SEE Employment and Social Policy Network (SEESP/N)													
	-No headquarters	x	x	x	x		x	x	x	x	x			x
	Centre for Public Employment Services of SEE Countries (CPESC)													
	-Rotating		x	x	x			x	x	x	x	x		Slovenia
	SEE Trade Union Forum (SEETUF)													
	-Zagreb/Sarajevo	x	x	x	x			x	x	x	x			x
	Adriatic Region Employers' Centre (AREC)													
	-Zagreb	x	x		x			x		x	x			
	SEE Health Network													
	-Skopje	x	x	x	x		x	x	x	x	x			
	Centre for eGovernance Development (CeGD)													
	-Ljubljana													RCC
	eSEE Initiative and bSEE Task Force													
	-No headquarters	x	x		x		x	x	x	x	x			x



Most bi-lateral donors have firm exit plans in place and there is increasing pressure on donors to have a greater impact (effectiveness) with fewer resources (efficiency). The RCC's role in donor coordination will be to provide a regional perspective in donor assistance and to ensure that donor priorities correspond to regional priorities. The RCC plans to establish a structured dialogue with all major donors in the Western Balkans to provide a platform for showcasing high-priority, high impact regional projects and to facilitate the improvement of donor coordination in regional projects. The first such session is planned for the first half of 2011.

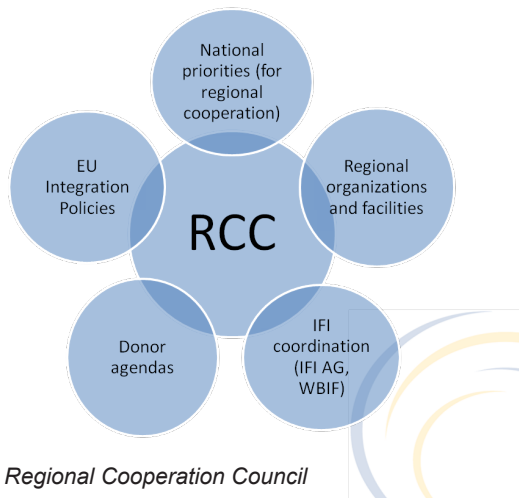
act as a bridge for the region to access eastern markets.

Moldova's main trade partners are Russia, Ukraine, Belarus, Italy and Germany. Within CEFTA, Serbia, Croatia, Macedonia and Bosnia and Herzegovina are the best partners. 80% of FDI comes from EU countries (with the Netherlands the highest at 17.5% and Italy next at 11.8%). The key challenge for Moldova is to manage the current economic crisis and to develop a new strategy for sustainable and balanced economic growth. The focus will be on European integration, economic recovery, public

governance reform, restoration of investor confidence and investment in human capital. The target sectors for investment are energy infrastructure, alternative energy resources and energy efficiency, transport and road infrastructure, logistics development, organic agribusiness and food processing, quality infrastructure

RCC as an excellent platform for donor coordination

- RCC enables a comprehensive platform for increased **consistency** (with national and EU priorities for the region), **coherence** (of joint action) and **coordination** in donor activities



Source: Regional Cooperation Council

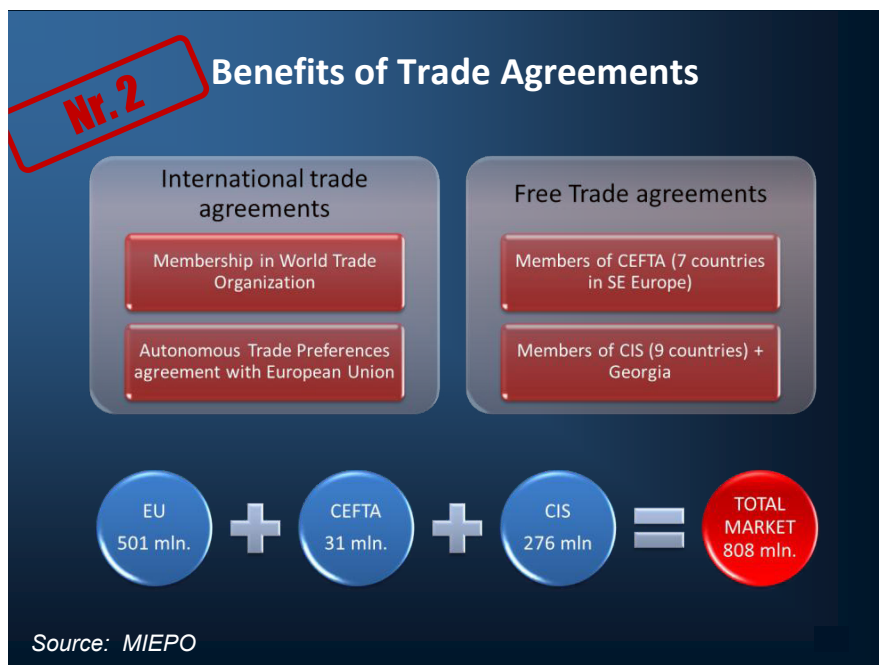
Bridge to Eastern Europe: Capitalising on Moldova's Potential

Mr Andrei Timus of MIEPO delivered a presentation on Moldova and demonstrated how it can

and industrial parks creation. There are several advantages which make Moldova unique among other countries in the region in terms of the investment climate and opportunities. These include openness to foreign investment, the bene-

fits of free trade agreements, competitive labour and operational costs, fiscal incentives, opportunities in free economic zones, PPP perspectives and opportunities offered in industrial parks.

Moldova has access to a hugely expanded market of over 808 million people through its various international trade agreements and free trade agreements. This market is broken down in the following table:



It is significant to note that Moldova has free trade agreements with 9 CIS countries + Georgia which give it access to a market of 276 million people. Moldova can help other CEFTA Parties to access this market through its excellent contacts, language skills and specific knowledge and understanding of doing business in this part of the world. Mr Timus urged the Parties to think broader than the CEFTA region and the EU and to expand their horizons

towards the east and towards this CIS market in particular.

The representative from Bosnia and Herzegovina asked if there was overlapping of RCC initiatives; whether donors are confident that stakeholders in the region are ready to take over regional initiatives; and given that Moldova's trade with CEFTA Parties is low if there is any interest by businesses in Moldova to do

business with CEFTA Parties. Ms Minic replied that the RCC initiatives stem from the needs in the region and do not overlap - overlapping is more frequent among donors rather than between initiatives. Some RCC initiatives are blossoming and others are weak and it is true

that sometimes funds are wasted. However, regional cooperation is becoming more intensive and visible on a daily basis and changes are happening fast. Donors are becoming more confident that regional stakeholders are ready to take over some of these initiatives. Mr Timus replied that Moldova's trade with CEFTA is low because they are not part of ex Yugoslavia, speak a different language and have complex and expensive visa restrictions.



The Director of the CEFTA Secretariat noted that the Western Balkans is the creation of EU accession and a political invention. She urged the region to think broader than CEFTA and act as an economic region which covers the real market from Slovenia to Turkey and even further afield as Mr Timus suggested. Only then can business opportunities be maximised.

The representative from the EU noted the importance of the RCC from the EU perspective and encouraged the organisation to continue its efforts on economic reform. He urged the RCC to track how regional groups are bringing actions together to achieve reforms and to clearly show these benefits. If this happens, cooperation with donors will continue and donor exit strategies will not be an issue.

The representative from the Serbian Chamber of Commerce noted that Serbia has a trade deficit with Moldova and issued an official invitation for Moldovan business people to meet with the Serbian Chamber. The representative from the Moldovan Chamber made the point that there is a reason why trade is very small with CEFTA. To trade and do business you must know people and have a good relationship with them. Face to face contact is necessary. For example, 40% of Serbia's trade is with CEFTA. This is because Serbia has good relations with trade partners within CEFTA, speaks the same language and has simplified visa procedures. Moldova has similar good relations and trade with CIS countries for the same reasons. The problem for Mol-

dova within CEFTA is not tariffs but visas. CEFTA week focuses more on ex Yugoslavia – the focus is much less on Albania and Moldova. It is necessary to think wider than this and make CEFTA a better trade agreement. In 2011 Moldova will organise a Business Forum for the CEFTA region to establish cooperation and ties between businesses and to show how Moldova can be a good trade partner and can do business.

A representative from a Serbian company that exports combines to Moldova said it could double its exports of machines to Moldova in the next year if the visa issue was resolved. It is urgent to tackle this issue if trade is to be increased. The Moldovan Chamber of Commerce replied that they hoped to move on resolving this impediment after elections in November. Mr Timus recommended that this matter is raised at the Joint Committee meeting later in the week as a matter of urgency and that procedures are put in place to abolish visas for businessmen in the region.

In conclusion, Ms Minic noted that these are good messages on which to end the discussions. Albania and Moldova need to be more involved in CEFTA. The Moldova Business Forum is a good idea and a good start which hopefully will result in enhanced trade between Moldova and other CEFTA Parties. In turn, Moldova can assist CEFTA Parties to expand their horizons in eastern markets.

3.6 Session VI: CEFTA: Overcoming Barriers to Trade 11: Market Surveillance

Background and Objectives

Market surveillance is highly topical in all CEFTA Parties, in particular those in the EU accession process, where Regulation (EC) No 765/2008 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 9 July 2008 sets out the requirements for accreditation and market surveillance relating to the marketing of products. The Regulation is part of the EU's New Legislative Framework for marketing of products, a broad package of measures whose objective is to remove remaining obstacles to the free movement of goods, and which is therefore expected to deliver a major boost to trade in goods between EU member states. The Regulation is directly applicable in the EU and has been in effect – but not yet fully implemented – since 1 January 2010.

The objective of the session was to gain a better understanding of market surveillance in the EU and to consider the steps to be taken in order to upgrade the market surveillance capabilities

of CEFTA parties. In some ways it followed on from Session IV: *Overcoming Barriers to Trade I: Transparency and Monitoring Progress*, which had taken place the previous afternoon.

Around 60 delegates participated in the session from the market surveillance authorities, the ministries responsible for co-ordinating free movement of goods, chambers of commerce, standards bodies and academia of the CEFTA Parties.

Speakers were drawn from the CEFTA Parties, a number of international market surveillance and standards authorities, the UNECE Advisory Group and the Serbian Chamber of Commerce. The session was organised and moderated by Mr David Norris, Team Leader of the EU and EFTA-funded project *Quality Infrastructure in the Western Balkans and Turkey*. The project had financed the participation of delegates from market surveillance authorities and the ministries responsible for co-ordinating *free movement of goods*. In addition, GTZ made a substantial contribution to the planning and concept of the session.

Key Discussion Points

After a general introduction by the moderator, the session proceeded with a number of presentations and lively debate between interested delegates and speakers.

The first presentations on the Role of Market Surveil-





3. HIGHLIGHTS FROM CEFTA WEEK

lance in the European Trading System were delivered by Ms Nadežda Machútová, General Director of the Slovak Trade Inspection (SOI), on behalf of the Chairperson of the UNECE Advisory Group on Market Surveillance (MARS Group), Ms Kvetoslava Steinlova and by Mr Ivan Hendrikk, UNECE Consultant. The main points raised were: market surveillance ensures a level playing field; co-operation between market surveillance authorities and the private sector is not to be discouraged; customs authorities are an integral part of a market surveillance system; UNECE's MARS Group has identified and promotes good practice in market surveillance; UNECE's MARS Group has prepared a common terminology database for market surveillance and strongly encourages contributions to the database by delegates; UNECE's website features a Guide to General Market Surveillance Procedure and delegates are encouraged to use and comment on the Guide; the importance of sampling in market surveillance was highlighted.

The second presentation on Market Surveillance Developments and Cooperation in the European Union was delivered by Mr Nicolaas Olie, Executive Director of the Product Safety Enforcement Forum of Europe (PROSAFE). The key points covered included: PROSAFE is an informal network and membership is open to Council of Europe member states, which includes all CEFTA Parties; to apply for membership, contact should be made in the first instance with the PROSAFE Executive Director; PROSAFE has been successful at securing EU-funding for its activities; PROSAFE has launched a number of joint actions, mainly under the GPSD; DG SANCO financially supports the participation in PROSAFE joint actions of experts from EU member states; participation by experts from CEFTA Parties is encouraged

but there is currently no financial support available; the responsibility of importers for product safety was highlighted.

The third presentation summarised the *Assessment of the Market Surveillance Systems of the Western Balkans*, conducted in 2009 by Ms Heidi Lund, now an Analyst at the Department for Trade and Technical Rules of the National Board of Trade in Sweden. The main issues highlighted were: there is a lack of market surveillance strategy in many countries; the EU facilitates co-ordination between the market surveillance authorities of member states, but there is no similar facilitator between the market surveillance authorities of the Western Balkans; other quality infrastructure sectors have benefited from greater attention in the past and market surveillance has therefore developed relatively slowly; access to EU product surveillance data is important; it is vital now to strengthen market surveillance as part of the national conformity assessment infrastructure.

A series of presentations were then given summarising *Progress in Market Surveillance in CEFTA Parties* in Macedonia by Ms Elizabeta Chingarovska of the State Market Inspectorate at the Ministry of Economy; in Serbia by Ms Vera Despotović of the Market Inspection Division at the Ministry of Trade and Services; in Croatia by Ms Vedrana Filipović-Grčić of the Department of Technical Legislation at the State Inspectorate; and in Bosnia and Herzegovina by Ms Azra Tabaković Kedić of the Market Surveillance Agency. The following points were raised:

- a new Macedonian law on market surveillance entered force in April 2010;
- the Macedonian national programme for market surveillance for 2011/12 will be published on the Ministry of Economy website;

- a MoU is under development between the Macedonian market surveillance and customs authorities;
- the Serbian national market surveillance strategy has recently been published;
- the Serbian NEPRO system, with procedures similar to the EU's RAPEX, is now live;
- an EU-funded IPA 2010 project will commence in 2011 and support the strengthening of the Serbian market surveillance system;
- central to the success of the Croatian market surveillance system is recognition of the importance of the competence of inspectors, both generalists and specialised;
- a great deal of effort is given to ensure retention of market surveillance staff in Croatia to ensure "good" inspectors stay;
- a Committee for Communication and Coordination between Croatian market surveillance bodies, including customs authorities, was set up following a 16/7/09 Governmental decision;
- during 2010, 8 joint actions have been run at Croatian national level;
- the Croatian market surveillance authority has made great efforts to support the customs authority to fulfil its market surveillance obligations;
- the 2011 Croatian market surveillance plan encourages co-operation with the market surveillance authorities of neighbouring countries;
- there is a specific budget in Croatia for sampling (410,000 HRK in 2010);
- Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH) will transpose Regulation 765 in 2011;
- the BiH market surveillance authority maintains a database of dangerous non-food consumer products;
- the BiH market surveillance authority is drafting the national market surveillance strategy with support from experts in the EU-funded IPA 2007 project;
- the BiH market surveillance authority signed a MoU with the BiH customs authority in 2008.

The next presentation on *ICSMS – European Information and Communication System for Market Surveillance* – was delivered by Dr Matthias Honnacker, Deputy Head of Basics of Product Safety Unit at the Federal Institute for Occupational Safety and Health in Germany. The key points covered included: market surveillance is a job – a profession – occasionally an obsession (!); RAPEX is a system to ensure exchange of market surveillance information with the EU and member states; ICSMS is a system to ensure exchange of information between market surveillance authorities within a country or in other countries; ICSMS enables product safety test results and comments to be shared; ICSMS enables consumers to easily find out who their market surveillance authority is; ICSMS may become the general archiving and exchange of information system referred to in article 23 of Regulation 765; market surveillance authorities in CEFTA Parties may apply to join ICSMS and will be offered a test phase – a fee is attached to full participation (but see next point); as discussions are underway between the EU and ICSMS about ICSMS being recognised officially as the article 23 system (see above), it is possible that there is some reluctance by ICSMS officials to permit new members outside the EU at the present time; RAPEX is only for high risk products - the principle is therefore established that information is entered into ICSMS and, if the risk is assessed as high, information is then entered into RAPEX.

Due to lack of time, the next presentation on *Transitional Rapid Information Exchange System on Dangerous Products (TRAPEX)* due to be delivered by Mr György Boda, Coordinator



for International Relations at the Hungarian Authority for Consumer Protection was postponed, though his presentation is posted on the CEFTA web-site for completeness.

Lastly, a presentation on Market Surveillance: the View of Industry was delivered by Ms Slavica Popović on behalf of the Serbian Chamber of Commerce.

In summarising the main conclusions and recommendations of the session Mr Norris urged the market surveillance authorities of CEFTA parties to:

- continue to develop their activities in line with EC Regulation 765;
- consider whether and how to participate in PROSAFE and in ICSMS;

- continue to improve co-ordination of their activities at national level, in particular with industry, the national conformity assessment system and with the customs authorities;
- continue to improve co-ordination of their activities at regional level, in particular with the market surveillance and customs authorities of neighbouring EU Member States and CEFTA Parties.

He concluded by emphasising that the EU-funded IPA 2008 project Quality Infrastructure in the Western Balkans and Turkey, its likely (IPA 2011) successor and various EU-funded national projects will support the market surveillance authorities of the CEFTA Parties in the Western Balkan to achieve their objectives.

3.7 Seventh Meeting of the CEFTA Forum of the Chambers of Commerce, Belgrade, 9 November, 2010

Background and Objectives

Following ratification of CEFTA by the signatories in 2007, the chambers of commerce in the region agreed to establish the CEFTA Forum of Chambers to monitor implementation of the Agreement from the perspective of the business community and to provide a channel for communication between the business community and the various governments.

The CEFTA Forum's structures reflect the CEFTA structures - it meets in plenary session and also has three working groups that mirror the CEFTA sub-committees, namely technical and non-tariff barriers to trade, customs and rules of origin of

goods and agriculture. The Serbian Chamber of Commerce organised the Seventh meeting of the CEFTA Forum at plenary level in Belgrade on 9 November as part of CEFTA Week.

The overall objective of the Forum was to provide the business community and particularly domestic companies from the different CEFTA Parties, with an opportunity to come together with CEFTA officials and the international community to review key issues arising on the implementation of the Agreement.

The specific focus of the Forum was guided by: the necessity for further cooperation between the private and public sectors and the need for

further development of economic cooperation and trade in the region; the importance for CEFTA Parties of focussing on mutual cooperation; and a recognition that full implementation of the CEFTA Agreement is a base for further expansion of trade.

The participants were representatives of the Union of Chambers and Commerce and Industry of Albania, the Foreign Trade Chamber of Commerce of Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Chamber of Commerce of Montenegro, the Croatian Chamber of Commerce, the Economic Chamber of Commerce of Macedonia, the Chamber of Commerce of Moldova and the Serbian Chamber of Commerce.

The meeting also provided an important opportunity for individual companies to report directly on the obstacles they face when conducting business under the CEFTA framework. Finally the Chambers identified priorities for further enhanced co-operation among themselves in order to better promote and utilise CEFTA to the benefit of all.

Key Discussion Points

The different working groups reported on the outcome of their various meetings and analysis.

Working Group for Technical and Non-Tariff Barriers to Trade

The Forum gave its full support to introducing a uniform methodology for the removal of all forms of trade barriers in the region. Many existing barriers have been removed but new barriers have replaced them. The Forum welcomed the launch of the CEFTA Trade Portal which would give businesses in the region full access to relevant information and trade documents. Two of the more serious obstacles for the region are the lack of accredited laboratories and expensive and complicated visa procedures.

The Working Group adopted the following conclusions and recommendations:

- goodwill exists among the CEFTA Parties to deal with barriers to trade;
- it is necessary to have full transparency between the chambers of CEFTA Parties;
- collaboration between the chambers in CEFTA Parties should ensure the same approach at the same time with governments for the elimination of non-tariff barriers;
- an initiative should be launched to introduce uniform certificates and procedures;
- the procedures for the harmonisation of quality infrastructure should be accelerated;





- there is a need to separate the concept of quality and safety – safety should come first with quality in second place;
- monitoring and tracking progress of the reduction of non-tariff barriers becomes more important as Parties get closer to the EU;
- the launching of the CEFTA Trade Portal is welcomed and will provide businesses with better information on relevant regulations and procedures;
- there is an urgent need to launch an initiative on visa liberalisation with relevant government authorities;
- Chambers will organise appropriate training for the business community on regulations and modifications;
- protocols are required on mutual recognition of the procedures for documents issued by accreditation bodies.
- it is recognised that there is a need for more proactive participation of the CEFTA Joint Committee and CEFTA Secretariat to solve concrete problems in this area;
- it is essential to find a solution to the problem of the provision of EUR1 by companies based in Transnistria in the Republic of Moldova, which directly prevents the implementation of the CEFTA Agreement and the development of free trade between Moldova and the other CEFTA Parties;
- with respect to the principle of non-discrimination under public procurement procedures (Article 35 of the CEFTA Agreement), there is a need for harmonisation in order to create an integrated public procurement market in the region;
- it is important to encourage the representatives of customs and other authorities to become directly involved with CEFTA implementation in order to ensure clarification and speedy resolution of problems;
- Governments of CEFTA Parties should intensify their activities towards faster accession of the Western Balkans to Pan-Euro-Mediterranean diagonal cumulation or origin and diagonal cumulation in the CEFTA Region – EFTA – EU.

Working Group on Customs and Rules of Origin of Goods

The importance of continuing education at all levels in rules of origin of goods was highlighted. It was also emphasised that it is necessary to: publish an information guide book about rules of origin of goods in the region and that this would be supported by DIHK; speed up the process of bilateral liberalisation of trade with countries from the EU-Mediterranean partnership; and continue the work on the promotion of unified public procurement conditions in the region.

The Working Group adopted the following conclusions and recommendations:

- it is crucial to continue the education process on rules of origin of goods and especially of diagonal cumulation as well as preparing an integral CEFTA guide on the origin of goods with the support of DIHK;

Working Group on Agriculture

It was noted that good progress has been made on the development of trade of agricultural products and particularly on harmonisation with EU legislation.

The Working Group adopted the following conclusions and recommendations:

- the further liberalisation of trade in agricultural goods through bilateral arrangements was welcomed if there is no possibility for

- the CEFTA Parties to accept simultaneously the additional Protocol and Annex for the purpose of applying new concessions starting from 1 January, 2011;
- the signing of the agreement on mutual recognition of certificates between Bosnia and Herzegovina and Serbia was commended and the other CEFTA Parties were encouraged to open similar negotiations and sign appropriate agreements in the near future;
 - the launching of the CEFTA Trade Portal was supported and it is expected that its operation will provide for the reduction of existing non-tariff barriers to trade as well as preventing the appearance of any new barriers.

Conclusions from Regional Conference on Insurance Services

In compliance with the conclusions of the Conference: “Insurance in the CEFTA Region”, organised by the Serbian Chamber of Commerce and held on Zlatibor in October 2010, the Serbian Chamber of Commerce proposes that the Forum of CEFTA Chambers of Commerce sets up an Inter-Chamber Working Group for Insurance, with the first task to consider the restrictions and possibilities for the liberalisation of co-insurance within the insurance business, actuary services and mediation services in insurance. The Serbian Chamber of Commerce will convene the first

meeting of the Working Group for Insurance and propose the plan of activities for 2011.

Role of Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) in Strengthening the Competitiveness of the CEFTA Economies

Mr Boris Cizelj and Dr Marjan Svetličič of the European Regional Economic Forum (EREF) highlighted several important recommendations which the CEFTA Parties should implement in order to attract FDI. These recommendations were also presented by Mr Cizelj during the session on CEFTA: Creating Conditions for Establishing a Regional Investment Market on 10 November and are contained in Section 3.1 above.

In conclusion, the Forum of CEFTA Chambers of Commerce stressed the need for consistent, full and efficient implementation of the CEFTA Agreement. The removal of trade barriers will result in increased production and employment, a wider range of goods, higher competitiveness and a greater inflow of investment into the region. The Chambers of Commerce in the region can make a considerable contribution to the creation of an integrated trade environment in this part of Europe and can be important partners for governments, the EU, the RCC and other entities. This was highlighted as the future strategic goal of the Chambers of Commerce of the CEFTA Parties.

3.8 CEFTA: Best Journalist Award

During the course of CEFTA WEEK on 11 November, 2010 the Central European Forum for Development (CEDEF) and the Serbian Chamber of Commerce announced the best journalist award for the article which contributed

significantly to raising the level of public awareness and familiarity with the advantages of the CEFTA Agreement. Prizes were awarded in two categories: printed and electronic media. The first prize winners will have the opportunity to



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visit one of the CEFTA Parties, while the winners of the second and third prizes were presented with plaques.

In the category of printed media, the first prize was awarded to Vesna Lapcic from the magazine "Preduzeće", the second to Anica Nikolic from the daily newspaper "Politika", and the third went to Spasenija Beba Vujovic from the magazine "Pro Money."

In the electronic media category, Slavica Subotic Braun and Marija Stokuća from RT Vojvo-

dina won the first award, the second was won by Aranka Molnar from Radio Zrenjanin, and the third by Tanja Jankovic from B92.

The jury consisted of representatives of the Serbian Chamber of Commerce, Ministry of Economy and Regional Development, Serbian Journalists Association, Association of Independent Journalists of Serbia, Customs Administration, Central European Forum for Development and the British American Tobacco company.



4. ANNEXES

4.1 Agenda CEFTA FORUM OF THE CHAMBERS OF COMMERCE



November 9th, 2010

CEFTA FORUM OF THE CHAMBERS OF COMMERCE
SERBIAN CHAMBER OF COMMERCE
Resavska 13-15, Belgrade

09.30-10.00	Registration of Participants (lobby on the ground floor) for Working Group members and representatives of CEFTA Region Chambers of Commerce and Industry	
10.00-12.00	Session I: Chambers Forum Working Group on TBT and NTB (Business Club on the ground floor) <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Report from Albanian Chair – Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Albania• Report on activities from all CCI CEFTA Parties• Conclusions from the Session I – Drafting of Report for the Plenary Session – Albania as reporter	Presentations Panel Discussion Chambers of Commerce and Industry
10.00-12.00	Session II: Chambers Forum Working Group on Customs and Rules of Origin (Conference Room 3 – ground floor) <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Report from Macedonian Chair – Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Macedonia• Report on activities from all CCI CEFTA Parties• Conclusions from the Session II – Drafting of Report for the Plenary Session – Macedonia as reporter	Presentations Panel Discussion Chambers of Commerce and Industry
10.00-12.00	Session III: Chambers Forum Working Group on Agriculture and SPS (Conference Room 4 – II floor) <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Report from Serbian Chair – Serbian Chamber of Commerce• Report on activities from all CCI CEFTA Parties• Conclusions from the Session III – Drafting of Report for the Plenary Session – Serbia as reporter	Presentations Panel Discussion Chambers of Commerce and Industry



10.00-12.30	Session IV: PKS & EREF– Role of FDIs in Strengthening the Competitiveness of the CEFTA Economy (Conference Room 2 – ground floor) <ul style="list-style-type: none">Defining the benefits and potential challenges of the role of FDIs in reducing market segmentationDefining the conditions to set up a regional investment strategy	Presentations EREF parties - Marjan Svetlicic - Boris Cizelj SBRA, SIEPA, BAC
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12.00-13.00	COCKTAIL – for participants of Sessions I–IV (Blue Conference Room – V floor)	
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CEFTA FORUM OF THE CHAMBERS OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY

12:30-13:00	Registration of participants (lobby on the ground floor)	
13:00-13:20	Official Opening (Conference Room 1)	Moderator – Mihailo Vesović, Vice President Serbian Chamber of Commerce – Miloš Bugarin, President MERR –Vesna Arsić, State Secretary of Economy and Regional Development CEFTA Secretariat - Renata Vitez
13:20-13:30	Presentation of the DIHK – CEFTA Project for support of CEFTA Parties CCI	Tobias Baumann - DIHK
13:30-13:40	Report from Session I: Chambers Working Group on TBT and NTB	Union of CCI of Albania – WG Chair
13:40-13:50	Report from Session II: Chambers Working Group on Customs and Rules of Origin	CCI of Macedonia – WG Chair
13:50-14:00	Report from Session III: Chambers Working Group on Agriculture and PSP	Serbian Chamber of Commerce – WG Chair
14:00-14:15	Recommendations from Session IV: EREF Workshop – Role of FDIs in Strengthening the Competitiveness of the CEFTA Economy	EREF – Marjan Svetličić
14:15-14:30	Presentation of SCC - CEDEF Research on CEFTA in Serbia	CEDEF – Ana Bovan
14:30-16:00	Panel Discussion	CEDEF – Ana Bovan
16:00	Meeting of Presidents of Chambers of Commerce and Industry of former Yugoslav Republics and CEFTA parties	

4.2 Individual Session Agendas for CEFTA Week Events



Continental Hotel,
Belgrade

Session I: CEFTA: Creating Conditions for Establishing a Regional Investment Market
10.00 – 12.00 hrs, 10 November, 2010 (Atlantic Pacific Room)

- Objective:** The objective of this session will be to identify and discuss the best institutional arrangements and methods of cooperation among the CEFTA Parties to increase the attractiveness of South East Europe as a destination for foreign and domestic investment.
- Moderator:** Ms Vesna Arsic, State Secretary, Ministry of Economy and Regional Development of the Republic of Serbia
- 10.00 – 10.15** **Key Determinants of FDI Location to Date: Presentation of Mapping of FDI Flows**
- Mr Antonio Fanelli, Deputy Head, Private Sector Development Division, OECD
- 10.15 – 10.25** **Expediting Investment Flows to the CEFTA Region I: Policy Approach: Conclusions from the CEI Ministerial Meeting**
- Mr Goran Šćepanović, Deputy Minister for Multilateral and Regional Trade Cooperation and International Economic Relations, Ministry of Economy, Montenegro
- 10.25 – 10.40** **Expediting Investment Flows to the CEFTA Region II: Strategy and Implementation – Role of the SEE Investment Committee**
- Mr Alan Paic, Principal Administrator, OECD
 - Mr Sanjin Arifagic, Head of Economic and Social Development Unit, Regional Cooperation Council
- 10.40 – 10.55** **EU's Investment Policy: Changes and Challenges After the Entry into Force of the Lisbon Treaty**
- Ms Elena-Mihaela Ciudin, DG Trade E.I: Bilateral Trade Relations – Europe (non EU) and Central Asia, Western Balkans Policy Co-ordinator, European Commission
- 10.55 – 11.10** **Recommendations by European Regional Economic Forum**
- Mr Boris Cizelj, Chairman, European Regional Economic Forum Network (EREF) and Director, Slovenian Business and Research Association (SBRA)
- 11.10 – 11.35** **Panel Contributions**
- Mr Božidar Laganin, Director of SIEPA
 - Mr Kent Brown, Vice President, Corporate Affairs, International Marketing and Sales, Japan Tobacco International (JTI)
- 11.35 – 11.45** **Open Discussion / Conclusions and Recommendations**
- 11.45 – 12.00** **Coffee Break**



Session II: Liberalisation of Trade in Services under CEFTA – The Next Frontier? 10.00 – 11.30 hrs, 10 November, 2010 (Mediterranean Adriatic Room)

- Objective:** The objective of this session will be to discuss the significance of the services sector and the current state of liberalization with the aim to identify the potential, methods and joint activities towards improving cooperation among CEFTA Parties, having in mind the experience of other regions in the liberalization of trade in services.
- Moderator:** Ms Jadranka Zenić Zeljković, Head of WTO Department, Department for Multilateral and Regional Economic and Trade Cooperation, Ministry of Economy and Regional Development of the Republic of Serbia
- 10.00 – 10.20** **Presentation of EC Study on Potential for Trade in Services Liberalisation**
- Mr Dimitrij Grčar, Team Leader, EC Project on Potential for the Liberalisation of Trade in Services among CEFTA 2006 Parties
- 10.20 – 10.40** **ASEAN Experience with Services Trade Agreements and Lessons Learnt**
- Ms Mia Mikic, Economic Affairs Officer, UN ESCAP
- 10.40 – 11.00** **Report from Regional Conference on Insurance Services**
- Mr Slobodan Jovanović, on behalf of the Serbian Chamber of Commerce
- 11.00 – 11.30** **Open Floor for Discussion**
- World Bank to be invited to comment (Mr Lazar Sestovic, Economist)
 - Ms Dragana Miljković, Serbian Chamber of Commerce to be invited to comment
- Conclusions and Recommendations**
- 11.30 – 11.45** **Coffee Break**
-

Session III: CEFTA: Contributing to Smart, Sustainable and Inclusive Growth 12.00 – 13.30 hrs, 10 November, 2010 (Atlantic Pacific Room)

- Objective:** The objective of this session will be to discuss and identify how CEFTA can assist in transforming the region into a smart, sustainable and inclusive economy by improving competitiveness and generating high levels of economic growth, employment and productivity.
- Moderator:** Ms Bojana Todorovic, Assistant Minister, Ministry of Economy and Regional Development, Republic of Serbia
- 12.00 – 12.30** **Regional Clusters and Networks**
- Ms Zorica Marić, Senior Advisor, Ministry of Economy and Regional Development, Serbia
 - Ms Biljana Božović, Assistant, National Tourism Organisation, Montenegro
 - Mr Toni Petreski, Chairman, SEE ICT Forum
- 12.30 – 12.45** **Regional Competitiveness Initiative for the Western Balkans**
- Mr Alan Paic, Principal Administrator, OECD

12.45 – 13.00	Trade Logistics in the Western Balkans <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ms Wendy Werner, Program Manager, Investment Climate Advisory Services, International Finance Corporation – Southern Europe
13.00 – 13.20	Panel Contributions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mr Peter Polajnar, Policy Officer, Unit A1 Enlargement Strategy, Directorate General for Enlargement, European Commission Mr Aleksandar Nikolic, PLATO Serbia-National Coordinator, Serbian Chamber of Commerce
13.20 – 13.30	Open Floor for Discussion / Conclusions and Recommendations
13.30	Lunch

Session IV: CEFTA: Overcoming Barriers to Trade I: Transparency and Monitoring Progress
15.00 – 17.00 hrs, 10 November, 2010 (Atlantic Pacific Room)

Objective:	The objective of this session will be (i) to launch the CEFTA Trade Portal and to demonstrate how it functions and what it offers and (ii) to present the tools developed to identify priority sectors and monitor progress on the reduction of non-tariff barriers in the CEFTA area.
Moderator:	Ms Pranvera Kastrati, Director for Trade Policy, Ministry of Economy, Trade and Energy, Albania
15.00 – 16.00	Access to Information: Launch of the CEFTA Trade Portal
15.00 – 15.15	Introduction and Overview <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ms Britta Margraf, Project Leader, Open Regional Fund for Foreign Trade Promotion in Southeast Europe, GTZ
15.15 – 15.45	Presenting the CEFTA Trade Portal – Case Study on Montenegro <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ms Tanja Boskovic, Project Coordinator, GTZ Open Regional Fund for Foreign Trade Promotion in Southeast Europe in Montenegro
15.45 – 16.00	Questions and Answers
16.00 – 16.30	Statements <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ms Pranvera Kastrati, Albania Ms Samira Sulejmanovic, Senior Expert, Department for International Trade Relations, Ministry of Foreign Trade and Economic Relations, Bosnia and Herzegovina
16.30 – 16.45	Monitoring Progress: Tracking Improvements <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mr Antonio Fanelli, Deputy Head, Private Sector Development Division, OECD
16.45 – 17.00	Open Floor for Discussion Conclusions and Recommendations



Session V: CEFTA: Part of a Wider Regional Partnership
09.30 – 11.00 hrs, 11 November, 2010 (Mediterranean Adriatic Room)

- Objective:** The objective of this session will be to identify the wider regional context in which CEFTA operates as well as to consider the relationship with other economic areas with which CEFTA members have close links. It is expected to reach relevant policy recommendations which could influence better profiling of CEFTA as an attractive partner for neighbouring regions.
- Moderator:** Ms Jelica Minic, Deputy Secretary General, Regional Cooperation Council (RCC), Sarajevo
- 09.30 – 10.10** **RCC Strategy – 2011-2013**
- Ms Jelica Minic, Deputy Secretary General, RCC
- 10.10 – 10.30** **Bridge to Eastern Markets: Capitalising on Moldova's Potential**
- Mr Andrei Timus, Executive Director, Moldovan Investment and Export Promotion Organization (MIEPO)
- 10.30 – 11.00** **Open Floor for Discussion**
Conclusions and Recommendations
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Session VI: CEFTA: Overcoming Barriers to Trade II: Market Surveillance
09.00 – 13.00 hrs, 11 November, 2010 (Aegean Baltic Room)

- Objective:** The objective of this session will be to gain a better understanding of market surveillance in the EU and to consider the steps to be taken in order to upgrade the market surveillance capabilities of CEFTA parties.
- Moderator:** Mr David Norris, Team Leader, Quality Infrastructure in the Western Balkans and Turkey (EU project)
- 09.00 – 09.10** **Introduction and Overview**
- Mr David Norris
- 09.10 – 09.30** **The Role of Market Surveillance in the European Trading System**
- Ms Nadežda Machútová, General Director, Slovak Trade Inspection (SOI), on behalf of the Chairperson of the UNECE Advisory Group on Market Surveillance (MARS Group), Ms Kvetoslava Steinlova
 - Mr Ivan Hendriks, UNECE Consultant
- 09.30 – 09.50** **Market Surveillance Developments and Cooperation in the European Union**
- Mr Nicolaas Olie, Executive Director, Product Safety Enforcement Forum of Europe (PROSAFE)
- 09.50 – 10.00** **Discussion**
- 10.00 – 10.20** **Assessment of the Market Surveillance Systems of the Western Balkans, 2009**
- Ms Heidi Lund, Analyst, Department for Trade and Technical Rules, National Board of Trade, Sweden

- 10.20 – 10.35** **Progress in Market Surveillance in CEFTA Parties I**
- Ms Elizabeta Chingarovska, Ministry of Economy, State Market Inspectorate, Macedonia
 - Ms Vera Despotović, Ministry of Trade & Services, Market Inspection Division, Serbia
- 10.35 – 10.55** **Coffee Break**
- 10.55 – 11.10** **Progress in Market Surveillance in CEFTA Parties II**
- Ms Vedrana Filipović-Grčić, State Inspectorate, Department of Technical Legislation, Croatia
 - Ms Azra Tabaković Kedić, Market Surveillance Agency, Bosnia and Herzegovina
- 11.10 – 11.40** **ICSMS – European Information and Communication System for Market Surveillance**
- Mr Matthias Honnacker, Deputy Head, Basics of Product Safety Unit, German Federal Institute for Occupational Safety and Health
- 11.40 – 11.50** **Discussion**
- 11.50 – 13.00** **Ideas for Regional Cooperation in Market Surveillance**
- 11.50 – 12.10** **Transitional Rapid Information Exchange System on Dangerous Products (TRAPEX)**
- Mr Boda György, Coordinator for International Relations, Hungarian Authority for Consumer Protection
- 12.10 – 12.20** **Discussion**
- 12.20 – 12.30** **Market Surveillance: the View of Industry**
- Ms Jovana Zečević, Senior Advisor, Quality Centre, Serbian Chamber of Commerce
- 12.30 – 13.00** **Final Discussion and Conclusions**



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Im Auftrag des

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