

**CEFTA Deputy Ministers Meeting
18 June 2013, Sarajevo**

**“How to deepen the implementation of CEFTA in the framework of
South East Europe Strategy 2020”**

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Dear colleagues,

First of all, I would like to greet you at our regular annual meeting and to thank the host, Bosnia and Herzegovina, for the nicely organized meetings and the hospitality during these two days.

In the context of our today discussions referring to the significance for CEFTA parties of the implementation of the South East Europe Strategy 2020, let me take this opportunity to inform you about the latest developments in Moldova.

Last week Moldova successfully concluded the negotiations with EU on the Association Agreement and Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Area (DCFTA), as part of the Association Agreement.

Implementation of the DCFTA will bring Moldova's economy closer to that of the EU and would improve the trade opportunities between EU and Moldova. It will also ensure an open, stable and predictable legal environment for the benefit of Moldovan businesses and consumers.

The biggest achievements of last year in Moldova-EU relations have been the implementation of the Aviation Agreement, the country's accession to the 7th EU Framework Programme on Research and Development, as well as progression to the second round of negotiations on the liberalization of the visa regime and of course implementation of the economic reforms in different sectors such as SPS, TBT, Trade facilitation, IPR, Public procurement and others.

For Moldova it is a very important step and it is as much important to the implementation of CEFTA and prospects of Moldova's participation in the PEM Convention. I would like to inform that Moldova intends to join the PEM Convention next year and an official request from the Government was already sent to the Depositary. I would like to highlight that the advantages that Moldova is going to enjoy after joining the PEM Convention in terms of diagonal cumulation of origin and subsequently enhancing the competitiveness of our producers is also due to our participation in CEFTA. Let me also mention that we have concluded negotiations of the FTA with Turkey, so in perspective we could benefit of diagonal cumulation of origin with EU, Turkey and CEFTA.

In the context of our EU integration, for Moldova, as part of CEFTA, it is very important to be actively involved in the regional economic development agenda

and we support the idea that CEFTA Structures need to play a leading role in implementing the so called Pillar 1 Integrated Growth of the South East Europe Strategy 2020 which involves trade and investment.

This paper, focusing on attracting investments, perfectly correlates with the priorities of the Moldovan Government, which strives to improve the investment climate and attract investments to Moldova. I would like to mention that we have recently drafted the so-called National Strategy for Competitiveness Enhancement, which aims at preparing our local market and producers to better face the challenges posed by the implementation of the DCFTA with the EU. Once again, the priorities of the South East Europe Strategy 2020 are matching the national interests of our country.

We hope that active participation of CEFTA Structures in the regional economic development agenda and implementation of the Pillar 1 Integrated Growth of the South East Europe Strategy 2020, will contribute to creating a smart, sustainable and inclusive economy, thus improving the competitiveness and productivity in the region. All of us should agree that regional cooperation is the key factor for EU integration of our region and hence together, with joint efforts, we will become more attractive to potential investors.

What we need today is competition and better trade opportunities, and the basic goal of the strategic paper is to improve living conditions in our countries.

We have engaged in a very ambitious program which requires active participation of all the structures, as well as external financial support. In this context, cooperation with regional and international donor institutions is crucial, and I take this opportunity to thank CEFTA Secretariat for all their efforts in identifying and securing the necessary funds.

And at the end I would like to express the believe that the fulfillment of the priorities of the Strategic Program will influence over the deepening of our cooperation within CEFTA.

Thank you.