

**`Govor Branka Vujovića, ministra ekonomije  
CEFTA Zajednički komitet,  
Beograd, 12.11.2010. godine**

Distinguished Minister Dinkic,  
Ladies and gentlemen,

It is my pleasure to greet you on behalf of the Government of Montenegro and personally and to express gratitude for your hospitality and excellent organization of this event, as well as for the dedication of the Republic of Serbia to the Presidency over CEFTA this year.

CEFTA Agreement offers possibilities for regional interconnections and presents a kind of a preparation for the European integrations, which is our mutual goal. Our country has made a significant progress on its European path which ensured for Montenegro to receive positive opinion of the EC regarding the candidate country status for the EU membership. We hope that in the near future the other CEFTA signatories will also receive the same status and create preconditions for the membership, which would be our joint success. As a confirmation that we are moving into the good direction is the visa liberalization approved for Bosnia and Herzegovina and the Republic of Albania and hereby I would like to congratulate them.

Montenegro is actively participating in all regional initiatives and is dedicated primarily to the idea of improving the standard of life in our

countries, but also to the commitment of joint actions in the region towards the European and Euro-Atlantic integrations.

Our experience shows that only a stable region presents a good base for development and promotion of investments. Further stability and economic development of the region is contributed by better interconnections through implementation of infrastructural projects. We believe that construction of the Bar –Belgrade highway, Adriatic- Ionian motorway, connections in the energy sector through the project on constructing the undersea transmission cable between Montenegro and Italy, present a good base. In that context, a concrete proposal was proposed at the last meeting of CEI Ministers of Economy regarding the regional connection of railway infrastructure through the project on “Complex improvement of the railway network in the Southeast Europe”.

Having established the free trade zone, we implicitly committed to the economic development through the concept of sustainable development, showing that we are capable of running the joint economic policy and undertaking the obligation and responsibility for the future of the entire region. Having the stronger connections we will contribute to the use of development potentials available to us, for the purpose of sustainable and long-term development.

Even though there are certain problems within CEFTA, we should not perceive them as obstacles but as a driving force that would lead towards stronger connections and as well as the instrument for solving them through agreements between parties and within the spirit of internationally

accepted rules. Capacities and willingness to solve the existing problems present the indicator of our maturity for further integrations into the international community, which is a new power for the development of our region.

In that sense, we should do everything in order to remove existing barriers in the region. This primarily refers to the non-tariff barriers to trade, as well as to the fulfillment of goals under the CEFTA Agreement regarding the further liberalization of the agricultural sector, which has not yet come into effect with some signatory countries.

Sustainable development relies on the principle of integrated consideration of economic and social issues, together with the principles of environment protection and management with natural resources. Concept of sustainable development merges care for the overall human ecosystem and its preservation with the need for permanent and continuous economic progress.

Montenegro has a very serious approach to the sustainable development issue and the institutional framework now includes three elements.

- The first element represents **National Council for Sustainable Development**, as the advisory body that ensures that the opinions and positions of various social structures become available to the Government for the purpose of considering the development policies, plans and strategies. Prime Minister is the chairman of this body.
- The second element is **Office for Sustainable Development**, which operates within the General Secretariat of the Government and

whose primary purpose is to coordinate the ministries and agencies within the Government in the process of creating the sustainable policies and strategies.

- The third element is **National Strategy of Sustainable Development**, a document that provides strategic guidelines for long-term sustainable development of Montenegro. The Strategy is based on the principle of integrating all three sustainable development pillars – economy, social issues and environment protection.

Main positive trends in Montenegro relate to the significant progress achieved in ratification of international conventions, particularly in the field of environmental and social issues.

However, in respect to the sustainable development, there are no universal solutions that could be applied to each country, therefore countries adopt them in accordance to their specific conditions. Nevertheless, it is still necessary to ensure for the institutions to keep their focus on the long-term sustainable development and to pursue through their actions the synergy between growth and employment on the one hand and social equality, environment and natural resources on the other hand. Directing our policies towards CEFTA, the Region has possibilities to take advantage of the potentials arising from the multilateral trade system and that way to ensure positive effect to the sustainable development.

For the purpose of achieving the sustainable development and use the benefits accompanying it, all of us have to more seriously ensure **integration of the environmental principles and standards into our**

**development policies and decision-making processes**, in order to secure not just their long-standing and sustainability, but also their place at the regional and world market.

I hope that our today's meeting will be a contribution to the concrete implementation of these changes.

Thank you for the attention.