

## **SPECIAL JOINT COMMITTEE MEETING**

### **Ministerial Conclusions**

2 July 2021

We, the authorized representatives of the CEFTA Parties, present in the Special Joint Committee Meeting, welcome the adoption of the Decision 1/2021 amending Annex 4 of the Central European Free Trade Agreement (CEFTA 2006), setting out the Protocol Concerning the Definition of the Concept of “Originating Products” and Methods of Administrative Cooperation referred to in Article 14, paragraph 1 and 3, and repealing and replacing Decision No. 3/2013 and Decision 3/2015 of the Joint Committee of the Central European Free Trade Agreement and we urge the Parties to finalize their internal procedures with the view of starting the application of the transitional rules of origin as soon as possible.

We fully support the expansion of the Green Lanes initiative to all BCP/CCPs within CEFTA, including rail, and with neighboring EU Member States. We further support the piloting of Blue Lanes with Italy.

We acknowledge the implementation of the SEED+ and support inclusion of Moldova into the SEED+. We commit to secure all the necessary preconditions for smooth implementation of the SEED+.

We recognize the importance of implementing the CEFTA Customs Risk Management Strategy and commend the agreement on piloting three Joint Customs Actions on empty trucks, illegal trade of tobacco and intellectual property rights.

We reaffirm the importance of harmonizing the working hours of the agencies at the crossing points involved in the process of clearance of goods and commend the progress achieved so far.

We welcome the entry into force of the Additional Protocol 6 on Trade in Services in January 2021 and completion of the internal procedures in four Parties. We continue to urge the

remaining Parties to accelerate necessary activities to complete internal procedures. We also express full commitment to remove all incompliances.

We welcome the finalization of the text of the Decision on facilitation of electronic commerce and urge Parties to complete the internal procedures for its adoption. We also stress importance of the work in other areas identified as priorities in the CEFTA E-commerce Roadmap, 2021 Chairmanship of North Macedonia and Common Regional Action Plan.

We commend significant progress made in work on the Decision on the removal of the requirement of work permits for professional activities under the Additional Protocol 6. In light of importance of this initiative for all services sectors, we urge Parties to step up their efforts to complete the work thereof and we express readiness to complete the process and adopt this decision as soon as possible.

We welcome the progress of experts' work on Decision on facilitating trade in services provided by travel agencies and tour operators and we express readiness to complete the process and adopt these decisions as soon as possible.

We commend the progress achieved in the negotiations on the CEFTA Dispute Settlement Mechanism, so far referred as the Additional Protocol 7 on CEFTA Dispute Settlement, seeking to improve the system for settling the disputes in CEFTA and we urge the Parties to continue with the constructive approach in the negotiations with a view of closing the remaining open issues and completing the process not later than 4<sup>th</sup> quarter of 2021.

We welcome the adoption of the Decision on the provision of data by the CEFTA Parties to the CEFTA Secretariat and Recommendation on CEFTA Model Agreement Provisions.

We welcome the beginning of the cooperation between CEFTA and Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) and instruct the Secretariat to undertake the activities to draft the Memorandum of Understanding.

Adopted in Skopje, on 2 July 2021, in the presence of all CEFTA Parties.