

DECISION OF THE JOINT COMMITTEE OF THE CENTRAL EUROPEAN FREE TRADE AGREEMENT
Decision No. 1/2024

adopted on 9 October 2024

on the Amendment of Decision No. 1/2007 and of Decision No. 8/2007

The Joint Committee,

Having regard to the Agreement on Amendment of and Accession to the Central European Free Trade Agreement done in Bucharest on 19 December 2006 (hereinafter called "Agreement") and to Decision No. 1/2007 on the Rules of Procedure for the Joint Committee and to Decision No. 8/2007 on the Establishment of a Selection Committee for the Recruitment of Staff to the CEFTA Secretariat, as amended by Decision No. 8/2014,

Has decided as follows:

Article 1

1. The second sentence in paragraph 1 of Article 2 of Decision No. 1/2007 on "Representation" shall be deleted.
2. Paragraph 3 of Article 2 of Decision No. 1/2007 on "Representation" shall be replaced with the following text: "3. Ministers may be assisted by experts."

Article 2

1. The first paragraph of Article 3 of Decision No. 1/2007 on "Chair" shall be replaced with the following text: "The position of Chair in Office shall be held sequentially by the Parties."
2. The fourth bullet point in the second paragraph of Article 3 of Decision No. 1/2007 on "Chair" shall be replaced with the following text: "Kosovo*", accompanied by the following text in the footnote: "*This designation is without prejudice to positions on status, and is in line with UNSCR 1244/1999 and the ICJ Opinion on the Kosovo declaration of independence".

Article 3

The first sentence of the second paragraph under Point 4 of the Annex to Decision No. 8/2007, as amended by Decision No. 8/2014, on "Nomination Procedure" shall be deleted.

Article 4

1. The final provisions below Article 16 of Decision No. 1/2007 shall be replaced with the following text: Adopted in Ohrid on 28 September 2007, as amended by Decision No. 1/2024, adopted in Belgrade on 9 October 2024, in the presence of representatives of all CEFTA Parties.
2. The final provisions below paragraph 4 of Decision No. 8/2007, as amended by Decision No. 8/2014, shall be replaced with the following text: Adopted in Ohrid on 28 September 2007, as amended by Decision No. 8/2014 and by Decision No. 1/2024, in the presence of representatives of all CEFTA Parties.

Article 5

1. This Decision shall enter into force on the day of its adoption.
2. Consolidated versions of Decision No. 1/2007 and of Decision No. 8/2007, respectively, are provided in Annex 1 and Annex 2 to this Decision.

Adopted in Belgrade on 9 October 2024 in the presence of representatives of all CEFTA Parties.

Annex 1 to Decision No. 1 /2024

**Consolidated version of
DECISION OF THE JOINT COMMITTEE OF THE CENTRAL EUROPEAN FREE TRADE AGREEMENT
No. 1/2007**

**Adopted on 28 September 2007 and Amended by Decision No. 1/2024 of 9 October 2024
Rules of Procedure for the Joint Committee**

The Joint Committee,

Having regard to the Decision of the Joint Committee held in Bucharest on 11 July 2006, adopting the Rules of Procedure for the Joint Committee;

Taking into account the Agreement on Amendment of and Accession to the

Central European Free Trade Agreement done in Bucharest on 19 December 2006 (herein after called the "Agreement"),

Hereby decides, pursuant to Article 41 of Annex 1 to the Agreement, to adopt the Rules of Procedure for the Joint Committee contained in the following text:

**Article 1
Composition**

1. The Joint Committee shall consist of a representative of each Party to the Agreement.
2. Representatives of the Parties to the Agreement whose instruments of ratification, accession or acceptance are pending deposition with the Depository may attend meetings of the Joint Committee as observers.

**Article 2
Representation**

1. Representatives of the Parties in the Joint Committee meetings shall be Ministers responsible for foreign economic relations in each Party.
2. In exceptional cases when the responsible Minister is not able to attend the meeting, the Party shall be represented by an alternate authorised for that meeting.
3. Ministers may be assisted by experts.

Article 3
Chair

1. The position of Chair in Office shall be held sequentially by the Parties.
2. Regarding the present Parties to the Agreement, from 1 January 2008 the order will be the following:

The Republic of Moldova

The Republic of Montenegro

The Republic of Serbia

Kosovo*

The Republic of Albania

Bosnia and Herzegovina

The Republic of Croatia

The Republic of Macedonia

Article 4
Tenure of Office

The tenure of office for the Chair shall begin on 1st of January and end on 31st of December of the same year.

Article 5
Frequency and Costs of Meetings

1. The Joint Committee shall normally meet once a year.
2. The Chair shall convene a special meeting if it deems necessary or if it is requested in writing by a Party.
3. Each government shall cover the costs of travel and accommodation of its representatives at all meetings. The cost of hosting an annual meeting shall be covered by the Party holding the Chair in Office and that of a special meeting by the Party requesting it.

* This designation is without prejudice to positions on status, and is in line with UNSCR 1244/1999 and the ICJ Opinion on the Kosovo declaration of independence.

Article 6
Venue of Meetings

1. Meetings of the Joint Committee shall be held on the territory of the Party which holds the Chair, unless the Parties decide otherwise.
2. A special meeting shall be held on the territory of the Party, which has requested the meeting be convened.

Article 7
Convening Meetings

1. Meetings of the Joint Committee are convened in writing by the Chair.
2. The Chair shall notify the date and propose the draft agenda of the annual meeting to each Party not later than 60 calendar days before that meeting.
3. Where a special meeting is requested by a Party, it shall be held not later than 45 calendar days after the receipt of the request by the Chair.

Article 8
Preparation and Adoption of the Agenda

1. The Parties shall present any comments and requests for additions to the proposed draft agenda of an annual meeting not later than 20 calendar days before a meeting commences. The final version of the agenda is established by the Chair upon consultation with the Parties and distributed not later than 10 calendar days prior to the meeting.
2. A Party requesting the Chair to convene a special meeting shall indicate the item(s) it wishes to put on the agenda. The draft agenda shall normally be distributed to members of such a meeting at least 14 calendar days prior to the meeting.

Article 9
Meetings for Prompt Consultations

1. In cases where a specific period of time for consultation/resolution or notification of measures is foreseen by any Article of the Agreement or in cases where prompt consultations are requested by a Party/Parties, a meeting of the Joint Committee shall be convened at the appropriate level as soon as possible but no later than 30 calendar days from the date of the receipt of the notification or request in writing by the Chair.

2. When the meeting of the Joint Committee is convened pursuant to Paragraph 1 of this Article, the deadlines referred to in Article 8, Paragraphs 1 and 2, related to the distribution of the draft agenda shall not have to be observed.

Article 10
Working Procedures

1. The meetings of the Joint Committee are headed by the Chair in Office.
2. Correspondence to the Joint Committee shall be addressed to the Chair.
3. The Joint Committee shall be supported by a permanent Secretariat. The Secretariat shall act in accordance with the functions and administrative rules decided by the Joint Committee.
4. English shall be both the official and the working language of the Joint Committee.
5. The deliberations of the Joint Committee shall be governed by the obligations of professional secrecy and its meetings shall not be public except in so far as the Joint Committee decides otherwise.

Article 11
Adoption of Decisions and Recommendations

1. Decisions and recommendations of the Joint Committee shall take effect upon adoption by representatives of the Parties. If a representative of a Party in the Joint Committee has accepted a decision subject to the fulfilment of domestic legal and/or administrative requirements, the decision shall enter into force, if no later date is contained therein, on the day the lifting of the reservation is notified.
2. Decisions and recommendations taken by the Joint Committee shall be called "Decisions" or "Recommendations" respectively and registered by a serial number, the date of their adoption and a reference to their subject matter and kept in the official archive by the Depositary.

Article 12
Meetings by Written Procedure

1. In exceptional cases when a decision or a recommendation is considered urgent and it proves impossible to convene a timely meeting, the Joint Committee shall use a written procedure. The interested Party/Parties shall present proposals in this respect to the Chair and to the other Parties in the Joint Committee.
2. The Chair shall consult on the proposal with representatives of all the Parties. The decision shall be considered taken or the recommendation made when all Parties have delivered their

acceptance in writing. The Chair shall deliver the decision or recommendation to each Party in written form.

Article 13
Establishment of Appropriate Organs

The Joint Committee shall decide on the scope, terms of activity and other necessary requirements of any appropriate organs, such as working groups, task forces, sub-committees and other bodies it may set up in accordance with Article 41, Paragraph 5 of the Agreement. These organs shall report to the Joint Committee. The deliberations of any organs set up by the Joint Committee shall be governed by the obligations of professional secrecy, except in so far as the Joint Committee decides otherwise.

Article 14
Minutes of Meetings

Agreed Minutes shall be kept of each meeting of the Joint Committee. Draft minutes will normally be circulated for comments by the Chair within 10 calendar days of each meeting, following which the Chair will issue a final version.

Article 15
Annual Report of Chair

Not later than 30 calendar days after the end of its office tenure, each Chair shall deliver a report to the new Chair and to the other representatives in the Joint Committee about major activities during its office tenure including unresolved issues.

Article 16
Replacement of Current Rules of Procedure

These Rules of Procedure replace the Rules of Procedure for the Joint Committee adopted in Bucharest on 11 July 2006.

This Decision shall take effect on the date of its adoption.

Adopted in Ohrid on 28 September 2007, as amended by Decision No. 1/2024, adopted in Belgrade on 9 October 2024 in the presence of representatives of all CEFTA Parties.

Annex 2 to Decision No. 1/2024

**Consolidated version of
DECISION OF THE JOINT COMMITTEE OF THE CENTRAL EUROPEAN FREE TRADE AGREEMENT**

Decision No 8/2007

**Adopted on 28 September 2007 and amended by Decision No. 8/2014 of 21 November 2014 and
by Decision No. 1 /2024 of 9 October 2024**

**Establishment of a Selection Committee for the Recruitment of the
CEFTA Secretariat's Director**

The Joint Committee

Having regard to the Agreement on Amendment of and Accession to the Central European Free Trade Agreement done in Bucharest on 19 December 2006 (herein after called the "Agreement"),

Hereby agrees, pursuant to Article 40.2 of the Agreement and to Decision No 7/2007 on the Mandate of the CEFTA Secretariat and Decision No 1/2013 on the Amendment to the Decision No. 7/2007 to establish a Selection Committee for the Recruitment of Staff to the CEFTA Secretariat

The Selection Committee will carry out its duties in accordance with the Operational Procedures set out in the Annex to this Decision.

Each Party will forward to the Chair in Office, the name and contact details of its member and deputy member to the Selection Committee not later than two months after the Joint Committee meeting decision for the recruitment of CEFTA Secretariat's Director is adopted.

This decision shall take effect on the date of its adoption.

Adopted in Ohrid on 28 September 2007, as amended by Decision No. 8/2014 and by Decision No. 1/2024 in the presence of representatives of all CEFTA Parties.

Annex to Decision 8/2007 (as amended by Decision No. 8/2014 of 21 November 2014 and by Decision No. 1/2024 of 9 October 2024):

**Establishment of Selection Committee for the Recruitment of Staff to the CEFTA Secretariat
Operational Procedures**

1. Objective of Selection Committee

The overall objective of the Selection Committee is to develop, launch and efficiently implement the recruitment campaign for the staff for the CEFTA Secretariat. It is to do this in accordance with the criteria set out in the Joint Committee's Decision on the Mandate for the CEFTA Secretariat.

2. Tasks

The key tasks of the Selection Committee include:

- adopt the terms of reference and select the temporary independent external HR consultant to assist Selection Committee in the recruitment,
- develop job descriptions and candidate profiles for each individual Secretariat position,
- develop evaluation criteria for each position,
- oversee the public advertising for all positions and ensure open competition for positions,
- evaluate applications for each position and select a short list of candidates,
- interview short-listed candidates, issue a recommended decision on each position.

3. Membership

Membership of the Selection Committee will comprise a representative of each CEFTA Party and a representative of the main external donor to the CEFTA Secretariat.

Each member will have the necessary mandate to make the staffing decisions required.

The Selection Committee will be supported by the CEFTA Secretariat.

4. Nomination Procedure

Selection Committee members will be nominated and mandated by their respective minister at the request of the Chair in Office of CEFTA.

In the case of the main donor, the European Commission, the representative will be nominated by the Director General for European Neighbourhood Policy and Enlargement Negotiations.

Parties will immediately inform the Chair in Office if they change the nominated and mandated person.

5. Working Procedures

The Selection Committee will work via electronic written procedure to the extent possible and according to a series of deadlines.

All members may participate in interviews of short-listed candidates. Members will be responsible for their own travel and accommodation costs for interviews.

Decisions on staff appointments will be taken by consensus. In the case of objections to individual appointments by any member, a consultation period of 14 calendar days will apply. If consensus can not be obtained, the decision will be referred (in writing) to the Joint Committee.

Travel and subsistence costs of the Selection Committee members/deputy members will be covered by the CEFTA Open Fund. Additionally, costs related to job advertisements in local newspapers will be covered by the respective Parties.

Other recruitment costs will be covered by the CEFTA Open Fund.

6. Timing and Duration

The Selection Committee will commence work at latest three months after the Joint Committee meeting decision for the recruitment of CEFTA Secretariat's Director is adopted and complete its work not later than one month before JC meeting at which the decision on the appointment of the new CEFTA Secretariat's Director shall be adopted.