

REPUBLIC OF SERBIA

NATIONAL COORDINATION BODY FOR TRADE FACILITATION



ANNUAL REPORT 2018

Belgrade, March 2019

1. INTRODUCTION

The National Coordination Body for Trade Facilitation (hereinafter: the National Coordination Body) was established by the Decision of the Government of the Republic of Serbia 05 No. 02-10409 / 2017 (Official Gazette of the Republic of Serbia No. 98/17), on 2 November 2017 in Belgrade, for the purpose of more comprehensive and effective relief of the foreign trade of the Republic of Serbia and coordination of the work of the competent authorities, organizations, business community and other participants in the foreign trade system.

Chairman of the National Coordinating Body is Stevan Nikcevic, State Secretary at the Ministry of Trade, Tourism and Telecommunications, and **Deputy Chairman** is Veselin Milosevic, Acting Assistant Director - Coordinator of the Customs Administration at the Ministry of Finance.

Professional and administrative-technical support to the National Coordination Body's work is **provided by the Ministry in charge of foreign trade in cooperation with the Customs Administration.**

The National Coordination Body submits a regular annual report on its work to the Government no later than 31 March of the current year for the previous year and, if necessary, extraordinary reports. In accordance with this obligation, the 2017 Report to the **Government, for information purposes, was submitted on 22 March 2018 under number 337-00-00061 / 2018-10 and covered the period from the establishment of the National Coordination Body, i.e. from November 2017 to March 2018.** In that report, the following activities were planned for the following year: the establishment of expert working groups, the drafting of an action plan for each expert working group, the continuation of the elimination of barriers in the framework of bilateral cooperation with individual countries and the development of a website. **It can be noted that practically all set goals were largely fulfilled, which was presented in detail in the scope of this Report, which includes activities carried out in the period from March 2018 to March 2019,** the most important of which is the establishment of an institutional mechanism for cooperation with representatives of the business community through the establishment and operation of the National Coordinating Body's expert working groups.

2. EXPERT WORKING GROUPS

In accordance with Article 4 of the Decision on Establishment, the National Coordination Body establishes expert working groups whose tasks are to consider individual issues and participate in proposing solutions in order to facilitate foreign trade, eliminate trade barriers, speed up and modernize customs procedures and enforce control of export, import and transit of goods, simplify and reduce formalities, with the active participation and presence of interested members of the business community, chambers of commerce and other associations, other holders of public authorizations, representatives of scientific and educational institutions, as well as other organizations that can influence the facilitation of foreign trade.

At the third session of the National Coordination Body for Trade Facilitation held on 11 May 2018, it was decided to establish the following NCBTF expert working groups (EWG):

- Expert Working Group on Agriculture, Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures;
- Expert Working Group on Technical Barriers and Measures with Equal Effect on Trade;
- Expert Working Group on Customs Procedures;
- Expert Working Group on Coordination of Trade Facilitation Activities in the Framework of International and Regional Trade Agreements.

2. The work of the expert working groups is chaired by:

- representative of the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Management, EWG for agriculture, sanitary and phytosanitary measures;
- representative of the Ministry of Economy, EWG for technical barriers and measures with equal effect on trade;
- representative of the Ministry of Finance – Customs Administration, EWG for customs procedures;
- representative of MTTT, EWG for coordination of trade facilitation activities in the framework of international and regional trade agreements.

In accordance with the meeting's agreement, members of all expert working groups were appointed in June 2018. In addition to the representatives of the relevant ministries and institutions, representatives of the business community – **Serbian Chamber of Commerce, American Chamber of Commerce and Foreign Investors Council** – were also appointed. Subsequently, activities on the preparation of action plans for 2018 and 2019 for each expert working group were initiated. In close co-operation with business community representatives, **Action Plans for 2018 and 2019 were drafted, and adopted at the level of individual Expert Working Groups in July 2018.**

NATIONAL COORDINATION BODY FOR TRADE FACILITATION ACTION PLAN FOR 2018 AND 2019

I – EXPERT WORKING GROUP ON AGRICULTURE, SANITARY AND PHYTOSANITARY MEASURES

Chair: Milanka Davidovic, Head of Department, Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Management

Proposed actions:

- 1) **Shorten import procedures for agricultural produce and food products, in particular perishable goods:**
 - a) Clearly define a desirable time limit for completing import procedures for perishable goods;
 - b) Develop a list of perishable goods demanding urgent clearance;
 - c) To reduce waiting times, allow random selection of authorized laboratories located in a closer radius that able to perform all required analyses of goods for clearance purposes;
 - d) Ensure effective electronic communications between laboratories and inspection services for sampling and submission of results;
 - e) Align working hours of customs bodies and inspection services at busiest border crossings for agricultural produce and food products;

- f) Recognition of examination results provided by accredited laboratories in EU member states and other countries as mandated by appropriate international treaties.
- 2) **Establish an effective risk assessment system for all inspection services** (sanitary, phytosanitary, and veterinary inspectorates) to reduce barriers and facilitate imports and exports by companies following good business practices, goods that comply with conformity requirements, and well-developed internal quality control mechanisms.
 - 3) **Clarify powers of inspection bodies** (especially those that report to the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Management) with respect to import of food products in the context of any changes to the appropriate legislation.

II – EXPERT WORKING GROUP ON TECHNICAL BARRIERS AND MEASURES WITH EQUAL EFFECT ON TRADE

Chair: Zoran Bakić, Head of Group, Ministry of Economy, Quality Infrastructure

Proposed actions:

- 1) **Establish an effective risk assessment system for all inspections services** (sanitary, phytosanitary, and veterinary inspectorates) to reduce barriers and facilitate imports and exports by companies following good business practices, goods that comply with conformity requirements, and well-developed internal quality control mechanisms;
- 2) **Harmonization of domestic regulations with the EU legislation**, especially for construction products (including the publication of the complete list of EU standards to accompany future national regulations); toys; radio equipment (new Directive should be transposed); and general products (where, for instance, national regulations setting out health standards for cosmetics and other general products are more than 30 years old, and lists of monitored substances, including microbiological, physical, and chemical parameters, are not regularly aligned with EU standards)
- 3) **Reduce delays in registration of new medicines and renewal of registration** (ranging from two to five months relative to statutory periods) and consider simplifying administrative procedures (by amending the Medicines Law). Also examine whether the effective fee increases made in 2017 for medicine-related applications (from 30 to 300 percent, depending on service) reflect the actual costs of these services.;
- 4) **Further simplify the procedure for accepting (i.e. allowing automatic acceptance) of foreign certificates of conformity**, especially those issued by Notified Bodies designated to carry out conformity assessment (EU New Approach Notified and Designated Organizations, NANDO) and signatories of the European Accreditation (EA) Multilateral Agreement (MLA) where these certify conformity with EU technical regulations transposed into Serbian law (or where Serbian technical regulations have been harmonized with EU law) for placement of goods on the Serbian market

III - EXPERT WORKING GROUP ON CUSTOMS PROCEDURES

Chair: Snežana Karanović, Assistant Minister, Ministry of Finance

Proposed actions:

- 1) **Reduction of time required for issuing binding notification** on the origin and classification of goods.
- 2) **Preparation for electronic submission of requests for issuing binding notifications** on the origin of goods and request for verification of origin knowledge, as one of the steps in gaining Approved Exporter status.
- 3) **Promotion and training of the private sector regarding the use** of simplified customs procedures and the status of an authorized economic operator (AEO), which will include:
 - a) preparation for the recognition of the AEO status within CEFTA and PR China;
 - b) Ensuring customs officials do not require duplicate information from AEOs if it has recently been submitted;
 - c) Ensuring customs officials give preference to AEOs when processing applications for official opinions, and ensuring AEOs benefit from expedited procedures for approval or amendment of approval for setting up customs warehouses.
- 4) Processing electronic customs declaration and carrying out **risk analysis before the arrival of express consignments** in order to accelerate the customs procedure (pre arrival processing).
- 5) Activities on the introduction of a **risk analysis** system in the inspection services.
- 6) When certificates of origin are issued, consider separating the time at which customs debt is assessed from the time it is incurred (Art. 253 of the Customs Law regulating the “no-drawback” rule).
- 7) Consider instituting a time limit for correcting information in a customs declaration once it has been submitted without the declarant being held responsible for a misdemeanor.

IV – EXPERT WORKING GROUP ON COORDINATION OF TRADE FACILITATION ACTIVITIES IN THE FRAMEWORK OF INTERNATIONAL AND REGIONAL TRADE AGREEMENTS

Chair: Tatjana Dinkić, Head of Group, Ministry of Trade, Tourism and Telecommunications

Proposed actions:

- 1) Coordinate presentation of notifications under the WTO Trade Facilitation Agreement reflecting the progress of Serbia’s accession to the WTO.

- 2) Coordinate development of mutual recognition programs for Authorized Economic Operators (AEOs) as envisaged by CEFTA Additional Protocol 5 (2006).
- 3) Coordinate development of mutual document recognition program as envisaged by CEFTA Additional Protocol 5 (2006).
- 4) Develop an Action Plan to implement CEFTA Additional Protocol 5 (2006) and WTO Trade Facilitation Agreement and coordinate appropriate actions with donors.
- 5) Accelerate the flow of goods across borders by means of integrated border management, alignment of working hours of border control services, and enhancement of infrastructure.

3. NATIONAL COORDINATION BODY SESSIONS

3.1. National Coordination Body Session

The third session of the National Coordination Body was held on 11 May 2018 in Belgrade, with the following agenda:

1. Establishment of expert working groups pursuant to Article 4 of the Decision on the establishment of the NCBTF, which is detailed in the scope of Title 2 of this Report.
2. Analysis of the results achieved in the elimination of the barriers with Bosnia and Herzegovina and North Macedonia;
3. Analysis of the remaining outstanding issues with respect to agreements being negotiated, as well as other trade issues that are in the process of bilateral resolution with these countries;
4. Creation of the NCBTF website;
5. Under the item miscellaneous, the Ministry of Finance representative pointed out the problem of collecting fees to exporters and importers by private owners of the customs terminals at certain border crossings, as well as the fact that this problem is stated in the EU's Annual Report under Chapter 29 (Customs Union), where it was found to be contrary to the EU acquis.

Detailed information regarding the abovementioned items on the agenda is further explained and presented in the further text of the Report.

3.2. National Coordination Body Expert Working Groups Meetings

I Expert Working Group on Agriculture, Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures

The first meeting of this working group was held on 12 June 2018, and on that occasion consultations were made with regard to the Action Plan for 2018 and 2019.

The second meeting of the Expert Working Group on Agriculture, Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures was held on 22 February 2019 in Belgrade. The topic of the meeting was further activities on the implementation of the NCBTF Action Plan for 2018 and 2019. The present members of the expert working group had discussions regarding

concrete activities that need to be undertaken in order to meet the Action Plan obligations, and above all in terms of defining the maximum deadline for the completion of import procedures in the case of perishable goods, i.e. for the goods with short shelf life. The establishment of an effective system of risk analysis by all inspection services was discussed, too, as well as the current status of software development for the said services digitalization.

II Expert Working Group on Technical Barriers and Measures with Equal Effect on Trade

The meeting of this group was held on 11 March 2019 in Belgrade. The topics of the meeting were activities related to fulfilling this Expert Working Group's obligations from the Action Plan. The meeting emphasized the need to better inform all interested parties about adopted legal acts related to trade facilitation measures through Agreements and Memoranda (Memorandum of Understanding between the Ministry of Economy of the Republic of Serbia and the Ministry of Foreign Trade and Economic Relations of Bosnia and Herzegovina on mutual cooperation and acceptance of documents issued by foreign accredited laboratories for industrial non-food products that came into force on 1 November 2018). At the same time, it was pointed out there was a need for continuous work on informing both economy and national bodies for conformity assessment about the possibility of compiling a domestic certificate of conformity (without conformity re-assessment) in the case where an agreement on mutual recognition of the technical capability of the conformity assessment bodies, i.e. the equivalence of the accreditation system (*EA MLA*, which was first signed in 2012) was signed by the national accreditation body accredited by the conformity assessment body that had issued foreign document and the Accreditation Body of Serbia.

III Expert Working Group on Customs Procedures

This group carried out its activities within the framework of the seminar and meeting for the economy that were organized, primarily with regard to the acquisition of the status of **Authorized Economic Operators (AEO)** and the improvement of the customs procedure for **express consignments**. In addition to these important activities, the implementation of the Customs Administration's project and the IFC/WB is under way, with the development of a new application for the Department for the Origin of the Goods. The new application will enable more efficient performance of the Customs Administration's Department for the Origin of the Goods, and especially faster subsequent verification of the origin of goods. The new application introduces two electronic services for the business community, namely: electronic submission of a request for a binding notification of the origin of goods (as well as supplementation and monitoring of the request's status), and electronic submission of an application for verification of the knowledge of the origin of goods in obtaining the status of an authorized exporter, which will significantly shorten and simplify all these processes.

IV Expert Working Group on Coordination of Trade Facilitation Activities in the Framework of International and Regional Trade Agreements

The meeting of this working group was held on 21 November 2018. The obligations set forth in the Action Plan of the Expert Working Group IV for 2018 and 2019 were discussed, as well as the activities envisaged for the implementation of the Additional Protocol 5 of the CEFTA and the WTO Agreement on Trade Facilitation. It was agreed that a special Action Plan for the implementation of commitments undertaken by the Additional Protocol 5 CEFTA should be developed. Also, the undertaken activities on the establishment of a common border crossing between RS and N. Macedonia were discussed.

4. ACTIVITIES TO FACILITATE TRADE AND ELIMINATE BARRIERS

4.1. Legislative activities

- On 25 September 2018, the Law on the Confirmation of Additional **Protocol 5** was adopted along with the Agreement on Amendment of and Accession to the **Central European Free Trade Agreement and the and the Central European Free Trade Agreement Joint Committee Decision**, no. 3/2015, adopted on 26 November 2015, amending the Central European Free Trade Agreement Joint Committee Decision no. 3/2013, regarding Annex 4 of the Central European Free Trade Agreement (CEFTA 2006), Protocol Concerning the Definition of the Concept of “Originating Products” and Methods of Administrative Cooperation referred to in Article 14, paragraph 1 and 3 (Official Gazette of the Republic of Serbia – International Agreements, no. 12/2018 of 27 September 2018). The Protocol entered into force on 2 December 2018.
- **Law on the Confirmation of the Decision of the Joint Committee between the EFTA States and the Republic of Serbia** no. 1/2018 amending Protocol B to the Free Trade Agreement between EFTA States and the Republic of Serbia concerning the definition of the concept of “originating products” and methods of administrative cooperation and the Decision of the Joint Committee between the EFTA States and the Republic of Serbia no. 2/2018 amending Annex IV of the Free Trade Agreement between EFTA States and the Republic of Serbia concerning Trade Facilitation (Official Gazette of the Republic of Serbia – International Agreements, no. 12/2018 of 27 September 2018), was adopted on 25 September at the session of the National Assembly of the Republic of Serbia.
- Memorandum of Understanding between the **Ministry of Economy of the Republic of Serbia and the Ministry of Foreign Trade and Economic Relations of Bosnia and Herzegovina** on mutual cooperation and acceptance of documents issued by accredited laboratories for industrial non-food products entered into force on 1 November 2018. In this way, the test reports of accredited laboratories are recognized and the time of issuing the final compliance certificate is shortened.
- Also, the Government of the Republic of Serbia passed the **Decree on Cessation of Validity of the Decree on Provisional Conditions for the Flour Trade** (Official Gazette of RS, no. 48/2018 of 22 June 2018), which came into force on 1 January 2019, and abolished stamps for flour.

4.2. Bilateral trade facilitation activities

The following activities **within the NCBTF** were carried out in the trade **between Serbia and Bosnia-Herzegovina**, in relation to the previous reporting period:

- Contact persons were appointed to implement the Protocol in the field of control of products of plant and animal origin. Bilateral departmental teams have been established to enhance cooperation.
- In relation to the export of beer from Serbia to B&H and the application of differentiated excise taxes on beer, the application of higher excise taxes on beer producers in B&H began in the previous period, so this problem was to a certain extent mitigated;

As part of the process of eliminating **barriers to trade with B&H**, the following **issues remained open**:

- The status of border **crossings Kotroman-Vardiste and Ljubovija-Bratunac will be resolved** within state border crossing commissions, but only after the conclusion of bilateral agreements, namely:
 - o Agreement between the Government of the Republic of Serbia and the Council of Ministers of B&H on the construction and establishment of a new joint border crossing point at Ljubovija-Bratunac;
 - o Agreement between the Government of the Republic of Serbia and the Council of Ministers of B&H on border crossings – text was harmonized in April 2018 and its conclusion is expected in the forthcoming period;
 - o Agreement between the Government of the Republic of Serbia and the Council of Ministers of B&H on border traffic – the beginning of the text harmonization is expected soon, and expert talks are currently being held;
 - o Agreement between the Government of the Republic of Serbia and the Council of Ministers of B&H on joint locations at the border crossings – the beginning of the text harmonization is expected soon, and expert talks are currently being held.
- Applying preferential treatment in public procurement in B&H – several letters were sent from our side explaining the violation of the CEFTA agreement, however, B&H still considers that the Decision on applying preferential treatment is in accordance with this Agreement.

In the trade between **Serbia and North Macedonia**, the following barriers have been identified and removed:

- The working hours of phytosanitary border inspection services of Serbia and North Macedonia have been aligned;
- Partial changes and amendments to the North Macedonia Flour Rulebook have been made, thanks to which the obstacles for the export of flour from Serbia to Macedonia have been removed;
- On 3 April 2018, the competent Ministry of North Macedonia submitted a binding instruction to the State Agriculture Inspectorate that a phytosanitary certificate for importing flour from Serbia to Macedonia was not necessary;
- Our competent institutions have sent the response regarding the list of products for which the Macedonian side claims there are problems in exporting to Serbia, and the Serbian border services have committed themselves to removing the obstacles

if they appear in the trade of rice, charcuterie and dairy products from North Macedonia to Serbia.

- The text of the agreement between the Food and Veterinary Agency of Macedonia and the Ministry of Health of the Republic of Serbia has been agreed
- After receiving a complaint from the Zitounija Association from Novi Sad regarding the billing of analyses for issuing phytosanitary certificates for the import of flour into North Macedonia, the competent institutions of this country were contacted with the aim to point out this problem, bearing in mind that the Agreement on Mutual Recognition of Phytosanitary and Veterinary certificates between Serbia and Macedonia is in force.

Other open issues in the process of removing barriers to trade with North Macedonia:

- The Government of the Republic of Serbia adopted the Decision on Establishing the Coordination Body for the Establishment of the Presevo – Tabanovce Joint Border Crossing, which was published in the Official Gazette of RS, no. 68/2018 of 7 September 2018 and, in cooperation with the Working Group for the introduction of joint control of the Northern Macedonia's and Serbia's competent authorities at the Tabanovce – Presevo border crossing, established by the Government of the Republic of Macedonia in November 2018, is considering modalities and taking other necessary steps and activities in order to establish joint control.
- Agreement between the Food and Veterinary Agency of the Republic of Macedonia and the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Management of the Republic of Serbia in **the field of food safety and veterinary medicine**. The agreement is still being negotiated. Our party disagrees with the proposal to submit additional monthly reports on individual cases of infectious animal diseases, in addition to the existing reports that are otherwise submitted according to international standards, as well as with the proposal to exchange sampling plans and monitoring programs for import consignments at least one month before their adoption. In addition, our side proposed to the Macedonian side that the following formulation should be entered into the food safety and veterinary medicine agreement: The procedures for carrying out official controls in the field of food safety of plant origin shall be exchanged and harmonized where appropriate.
- The draft agreement between the two states' ministries on cooperation in the **phytosanitary area** is still being harmonized.
- The Draft Agreement between the Food and Veterinary Agency of the Republic of Macedonia and the Ministry of Health of the Republic of Serbia has been harmonized and is ready for signing.
- Memorandum of Understanding on mutual cooperation and acceptance of documents issued by accredited laboratories for industrial non-food products – the text of the MoU is in the process of harmonization between the two parties.

Montenegro:

- At the request of a Serbian company regarding the problems with import of wood assortments from Montenegro, cooperation with the competent Ministry of

Agriculture and Rural Development of Montenegro has been established and an explanation has been obtained in this regard.

- The problem with the requirements for additional phytosanitary control of the export of flour from Serbia to Montenegro is under way.

Italy

- An intervention was made at the competent institutions of Italy to issue an export permit for equipment (dual-use goods) necessary for the overhaul of the NIS Refinery

4.3. Other activities within the UN system, international organizations, conferences and seminars

- NCBTF has notified the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (*UNCTAD*) that Serbia has established a trade facilitation body, and this information has been entered on the *UNCTAD* website <https://unctad.org/en/DTL/TLB/Pages/TF/Committees/detail.aspx?country=rs>
- At the 4th Meeting of the Initiative Committee for Trade Capacities and the Standards of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (*UNECE*), which was held 3 - 4 May 2018 in Geneva, a representative of the NCBTF had a presentation within the agenda item related to support for the removal of regulatory and procedural barriers in trade.
- In cooperation with representatives of the *UNECE*, activities on developing a study for strengthening national capacities for facilitation and removal of barriers in Serbia's trade have been continued. In this regard, the data and expert opinions needed for the preparation of the Traders' survey were submitted.
- the NCBTF participated in the 11th Meeting of the World Customs Organization (WCO) Working Group for the implementation of the WTO Agreement on Trade Facilitation (March 2019 in Brussels). On that occasion, the members of the World Customs Organization were informed about the implementation of the Agreement on Trade Facilitation, as well as about the responsibilities of the NCBTF in the implementation of international commitments.

Conferences:

- Regional meeting of the national trade facilitation bodies' representatives was held in Vienna from 6 to 9 November 2018, as well as a regional workshop on national trade facilitation bodies organized by the USAID and the World Bank. The NCBTF representatives had a presentation on the topic of the National Coordination Body and its functioning in the Republic of Serbia, as well as the results achieved and the most important challenges in the work.
- The annual Conference on Foreign Trade Facilitation was organized by the American Chamber of Commerce and the USAID REG project on 20 March 2019, in order to summarize the achieved results in the work of the NCBTF and define further planned activities. The Conference was attended by the chairpersons of all NCBTF expert working groups, as well as by the representatives of the private sector, which was an opportunity to once again point to all the challenges and possible solutions in order to facilitate trade. The conclusions from this Conference will be sent to the ministers responsible for areas where it has been determined that

certain improvements need to be made in accordance with the defined expert working groups Action Plans. In addition, the Conference noted that the additional fees introduced by UNMIK/Kosovo on the goods from central Serbia and B&H in November 2018 represent a major problem and practically complete blockade of trade, which greatly jeopardizes the functioning of the CEFTA agreement and inflicts damage on the entire region. As this measure is purely political in nature, progress could not be achieved at the expert level, which would lead to the abolition of these illegal and restrictive measures.

Seminars:

- A seminar for private sector regarding the acquisition of the AEO status and rights was organized by the American Chamber of Commerce and the *USAID REG* project on 13 June 2018 in Belgrade. On this occasion, the work of the NCBTF and the Expert Working Group on Customs Procedures was presented.
- Support was provided to CEFTA members in identifying and eliminating non-tariff barriers and encouraging foreign trade in two selected sectors: iron/steel and vegetables, within the framework of the project “Support for trade facilitation in CEFTA region”, which was funded by the EU and implemented by the German Organization for International Cooperation (*GIZ*) and the International Trade Centre (*ITC*),
- A workshop for the representatives of the competent departments “National Single Window” was organized by the *World Bank* from 9 to 10 July 2018 in Belgrade. The World Bank representatives presented the importance, different types, as well as the reasons for the implementation of the national single window (NSW) in order to facilitate trade and the paper-free electronic foreign trade. The Trade Information Portal was presented, too, as a mechanism for ensuring the transparency of trade information and its relationship with the NSW.
- A seminar for private sector was organized on 13 September 2018, within the framework of the *GIZ* project “Introduction of simplified customs procedures for express consignments in accordance with the WTO Agreement on Trade Facilitation”. This project should allow the exchange of experience regarding the introduction of a new procedure between the customs administrations of the Western Balkans, which among other things contributes to faster customs clearance of express shipments using electronic processing of declarations and risk analysis system.
- Members of the Expert Working Group on Customs Procedures participated in the Regional Conference entitled “Promoting Mutual Recognition of AEO in the CEFTA Context”, organized on 13 and 14 December 2018 in Belgrade. The conference was organized by *GIZ* and *ITC* in cooperation with the Customs Administration of the Republic of Serbia. The conference provided an opportunity for sharing of experiences and best practices in the implementation of the AEO program between representatives of the public and private sector from the EU and CEFTA region. A particular emphasis was placed on the challenges and benefits for the private sector involved in AEO program and the mutual recognition of this status.

5. PRESENTATION TO THE PUBLIC

The work of the National Coordination Body is public. The publicity is provided by presenting the National Coordination Body's work on the internet portal, by issuing statements and press releases, as well as by participating in conferences and other public events.

In that regard, the official website of the NCBTF has been available to the public since December 2018 at the following internet address: <http://nktot.mtt.gov.rs/>.

All information regarding the work of the NCBTF and expert working groups are available on the website, which is regularly updated with the latest information on this body's work. The development of the website was financially and organisationally supported by *USAID*.

The structure of the NCBTF website, which is bilingual (Serbian and English), includes: basic information about the NCBTF, legal framework, documents, sessions, expert working groups, proposals and initiatives, regional cooperation, events and news, useful links and contact.

6. PLANNED ACTIVITIES

In the forthcoming period, there is work to be done to fulfil the obligations set out in the Action Plans for 2018 and 2019 for each expert working group individually.

A table showing all obligations arising from the implementation of the Additional Protocol 5 to CEFTA has been created and in the forthcoming period there is work to be done to fulfil these obligations.

Further activities are planned in cooperation with donors and international organizations on the implementation of the WTO Agreement on Trade Facilitation, as well as on fulfilment of other commitments accepted under regional and bilateral agreements.

It is necessary to strengthen capacity within the NCBTF, especially in view of the fact that for all members, chairpersons of working groups, as well as the representatives of the Ministry of Trade, Tourism and Telecommunications who perform the work of the Secretariat, this represents additional activity and engagement in addition to their regular duties and tasks.