

**STATEMENT BY H.E. MR. TUDOR ULIANOVSKI
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CHAIR OF THE UNECE STEERING COMMITTEE FOR TRADE CAPACITY AND
STANDARDS**

*REGIONAL FORUM FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IN THE UNECE REGION
HIGH-LEVEL SEGMENT
1 March, 11:00 – 12:30*

Excellencies, distinguished delegates,

In my capacity as Minister of Foreign Affairs and European Integration of the Republic of Moldova, but also as Chair of the UNECE Steering Committee for Trade Capacity and Standards, I am honored to be here today and bring my country's contribution and vision on the implementation of the 2030 Agenda.

The main idea I would like to convey concerns the role of trade in delivering the 2030 Agenda and the challenge of how best to use trade as a mean for supporting economy wide development and structural transformation towards products with high added value.

In our view, the UNECE has a lot to contribute to this debate. The studies on regulatory and procedural barriers provide a solid starting point as they are evidence based and involve the Ministries and State Agencies. The next step would be to further expand the scope of the analysis to highlight the interdependence between trade and other policies and how they unfold themselves throughout the economy. For example, how governments could insure synergies and coherence between trade and transport, environment and housing policies, all these areas being covered by UNECE. Also, how the best to marshal private and public partnerships in order to support the implementation of trade related reform measures and infrastructure development policies. Our view is that UNECE could help in this regard, since it is the home to numerous standards, conventions, best practice guidelines and recommendations in the areas of trade, environment, transport, housing and land management, forestry, energy and statistics.

In this sense, I urge to economical reforms aim to encourage wasteful consumption, development of bio-organic food, renewable energy, effectively addressing fossil fuel subsidies, which can deliver trade, economic, social and environmental benefits in order to achieve the SDGs.

The Republic of Moldova has a pragmatic, holistic and multifaceted approach to trade development, anchored in the multilateral trading system and its cooperation arrangements with regional partners. Classified as a developing country, the Republic of Moldova has undertaken extensive commitments similar to those of developed countries over the course of its 16 years membership in the WTO family and has duly implemented all its obligations, including those undertaken under the Bali and Nairobi Ministerial Declarations.

Allow me to briefly share with you Moldova's experience starting with our most recent achievements. I am very pleased to announce that the Republic of Moldova achieved considerable progress in the last year in reducing trade barriers and its facilitation through the implementation of the Trade Facilitation Agreement and Government Procurement Agreement.

In order to ensure the successful implementation of its commitments under the WTO Agreement on Trade Facilitation, the Republic of Moldova has integrated the recommendations enclosed in the UNECE study on regulatory and procedural barriers to trade into its National Action Plan for Trade Facilitation that was adopted in December 2017 pursuant to Government Decision No. 1065.

This Plan comprises 91 actions, divided into 35 thematic chapters, with an estimated budget of over 137.1 million EUR and will be implemented by 14 State agencies in collaboration with the private sector and the support of the National Trade Facilitation Committee. UNECE is working closely with the Republic of Moldova to create the required partnerships for ensuring the successful implementation of the strategy.

These broad based approaches meant to ensure policy coherence. Rather than focusing on individual commitments under the agreement, the plan integrates the concept of a whole government approach. Individual commitments are addressed on their own right and in terms of their implication for other policy tools and, as such, the Plan goes beyond customs operations with the aim to tackle capacity shortfalls of agencies involved in supporting trade and enterprise development as per the UNECE recommendations.

For example, facilitating cross border trade should not be seen as a customs domain only. With this purpose the plan stipulates strengthening for instance, the capacities of the National Food Safety Agency (ANSA) with an integrated management information system and product testing facilities and expanding the capacities of the National Accreditation Center of the Republic of Moldova (MOLDAC) in new areas of accreditation, so that it could join the European Cooperation for Accreditation (EA) Multilateral Recognition Arrangement (MLA) and International Laboratory Accreditation Cooperation (ILAC) mutual recognition agreement (MRA).

The plan also features a special focus on improving the productive capacity of enterprises engaged in leading activities and in sectors that constitute the main source of livelihood for the population in particular the agricultural sector. The plan also establishes the links with our efforts to harmonize our national legislation with the European Union *acquis communautaire* and as such, address a number of environmental concerns and objectives including sustainable production and consumption.

This brings me back to the main point I have mentioned at the beginning of my statement, namely the role of trade in delivering the 2030 Agenda. By stressing trade as a mean of implementation, the 2030 agenda has effectively bolstered the importance of this policy tool. Trade is seen as a cross cutting instrument to be deployed for the purpose of supporting the economy development. It is furthermore assuring to witness this important shift in the debate on trade and economic development since trade is an important tool at the disposal of policy makers. The challenge is how best to use trade as a mean for supporting economy wide development and structural transformation towards products with high added value.

UNECE could also support a better understanding of the interplay between national, regional and global dynamics influencing trade and development in the ECE region. It could also contribute to a better understanding of common and context specific regional challenges.

Thank you.