

**Address by Mr. Edmond Spaho
Member of Parliament**

Honourable Mrs. Chairwoman
Honourable participants,

On behalf of the Parliament of Albania and the Speaker, Mrs. Jozefina Topalli, I wish to hail the Competition Authority, its chairwoman, the commissioners and all the other staff and on this 5th anniversary of establishment of this institution so important.

The creation and consolidation of market economy in our country would not have taken right direction if it were not associated with the establishment of institutions that perform the role of the observer and monitor the implementation of the laws. rules.

One of these institutions, whose role is indispensable to the normal functioning of market economy is the institution for the protection of competition. If the market would not be regulated and monitored, the consequences of the resulting deformations would be such that would cause high financial costs to the citizens and the society as a whole.

During the last four-year period of the right-wing government, great attention was paid to the normal functioning of the market, the continuous improvement of the regulations and legislation and the positioning against monopolistic behavior and abuse of dominant position in the market.

The completion of the regulatory reform and the maximal reduction of administrative barriers, the establishment of new institutions in charge of the registration and licensing of businesses, the improvement of base for the regulation of the functioning of financial markets, the banking market, sectors of wholesale and imported goods, construction, agriculture , procurement of public funds, licensing, concessions, the reforming the tax system and its administration - all have contributed to create a more open and competitive economy. Obviously, an important role in this direction has played and will play in the future the Competition Authority. Although a young institution, established for the first time and therefore in the conditions of lacking previous experience and tradition, the Competition Authority has gradually become consolidated and has strengthen its authority.

Investigations undertaken in mobile telephony markets, construction market, processing and trade of fuel, insurance and financial markets, energy, banking system, etc., demonstrate the increasingly important role that the institution is playing as the guardian of the economy and free market. Only during the year 2008, the Competition Authority adopted over 30 decisions in favor of the protection of free competition in different sectors of the economy and contributing to its further liberalization.

The development of competition policies, the evaluation of the legislation, before its adoption, in order to avoid eventual dispositions that may lead to monopolistic and

anti-competition practices, and domination of the market, as well as the drafting of secondary legislation have been part of the work and contribution made by the Competition Authority during the last five years.

Certainly, there is more work ahead and more efforts are required in the future, especially in improving methodologies and practices of monitoring and protection of the market economy.

Increasing the capacity of the institution is a major challenge which you must face today and in the future. The complexity of the economy, the integration between its sectors, the inevitable globalization process make the economic and financial processes more complicated and the monitoring and protecting the market more difficult.

The speed of reaction, the shortening of the time for investigation and, at the same time, the increasing of its quality, constitute some of the challenges in the work of the Competition Authority.

In this framework, the cooperation at the institutional level and exchange of information has special importance. The Competition Authority could carry out its work even better in the conditions when all the other institutions would provide full cooperation and information regarding the issues being addressed. Also, supportive attitudes of the judicial system take special importance in the control and protection of the market mechanisms.

Albania is working intensively for years to become an integral part of the western world. The signing of the Stabilization and Association Agreement with the European Union and its ratification by all the member states has deepened the European perspective of Albania.

The integration process inevitably requires a greater attention to competition policies, monitoring and the protection of the market. The approximation of legislation and practices of our country with those of the European Community in the field of competition remain another challenge for the Competition Authority.

Honorable participants,

Allow me, once again, to congratulate, on behalf of the Parliament of Albania the Competition Authority on this anniversary of its creation, and to express the consideration for the work done so far, and express the belief that also in the future, this institution will fulfill its mission to preserve the pillars of the market economy in our country.

Thank you.