

Wednesday 18 May 2022 – ELTI CONFERENCE  
*“The perspectives of European Tobacco and ESG”*

Speech by Tsvetan Filev,  
President of ELTI and of NAT-2010

**Dear Minister,**

**Dear Mr. Deputy Minister,**

**Dear guests, ladies and gentlemen,**

It is an honor and pleasure for me to welcome you to Bulgaria.

Thanks to the organizers of the event. I am glad that with your presence you honored today's event. As President of the National Association of Tobacco Producers 2010 (NAT-2010) and President of the European Interbranch Organization (ELTI) in the field of raw tobacco in the European Union (EU), I am particularly proud that together with you we have the opportunity to be debating the challenges facing the tobacco sector and continuing to work together to tackle them.

I would like to share the experience of good and effective work and communication with national and international institutions involved in and related to the development of the sector in Bulgaria, including the National Assembly and parliamentary committees of departments, government, ministries of agriculture, economy, finance and justice. , Bulgarian representatives in the European Parliament and the European Commission in the EU.

For more than 10 years at the national level we have achieved a lot to maintain an optimal environment for work and life of Bulgarian tobacco producers, related to regulations, financial instruments and markets.

#### **REGULATORY REGULATION**

According to the Law on Tobacco, Tobacco and Related Products (TTTSTI), there is a clear and orderly legal framework for the Tobacco Sector in Bulgaria. The Ministry of Agriculture maintains and updates annually the Register of Tobacco Producers and the Register of Processors and Entities with issued permits for trade in raw tobacco. The Ministries of Economy and Finance are directly and responsibly involved in tobacco processing and excise and taxation of tobacco products.

#### **FINANCIAL INSTRUMENTS**

In the absence of European funding for the sector, in negotiations with several successive governments and the European Commission of the EU, with decisions of the National Assembly of the Republic of Bulgaria agreed non-production financial scheme for the reference period 2007-2009, namely Transitional National Tobacco Aid , which has been operating for 13 consecutive years, including the current 2022.

In 2021, at the insistence of NAT-2010 before the Ministry of Agriculture, for the first time a national aid under the de minimis scheme was agreed in the amount of BGN 3,000,000 for tobacco growers or BGN 1,200 per hectare (600 euros per hectare) to compensate for the high costs and increased prices of gas, fuels, fertilizers and detergents.

Regarding the new programming period (2023-2027) of the future Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) of the EU, at the proposal of Bulgaria approved by the EP and the EU, the Transitional National Aid Scheme will continue to operate with a new reference framework no later than 2018 year.

## **MARKETS**

Both in the EU and in Bulgaria, the industry operates in a market economy. Before the start of each business cycle of the respective year, farmers enter into preliminary contracts for the production and sale of tobacco with commercial operators, thus providing a preliminary market for tobacco. At the level of UNITAB and ELTI we are in constant negotiations with the tobacco industry for safe and long-term markets for tobacco from the European Union, including the raw material produced by Bulgarian tobacco producers.

## **RESTRICTIONS**

In connection with the World Health Organization (WHO) Framework Convention on Tobacco Control (FCTC) before each Conference, including COP6, COP7, COP8 and COP9 respectively in Moscow 2014, New Delhi 2016, Geneva 2018 and The Hague 2021, NAT-2010 activated the Government of the Republic of Bulgaria and the Ministry of Agriculture, Bulgarian experts to represent and defend the national and European position in defense of the tobacco sector.

## **PROSPECTS**

Based on the experience and routine gained over the years, I believe that the stable development of the industry at European level requires constant and unified action by ELTI, UNITAB, FETRATAB and the branch organizations of the member states, leading to constructive dialogue and good results in communication. with national and European institutions.

Unlike chess, in life the game continues after the checkmate!

Thanks!