Dear guests, colleagues

I would like to say a few words to pass along the greetings on behalf of the regional representation of the Chamber of Commerce and Industry of the Russian Federation on the occasion of CCBLR annual General Assembly. It was very good to hear earlier this afternoon about positive financial results and sustainable development of CCBLR in 2016 and good perspectives for 2017. This fact proves the interest and potential for business development between our countries in spite of still not easy current economic and political international climate. In this regard it should be also noted, that our representation office in Brussels next year will celebrate its 30 years anniversary, thus we have the solid and already long lasting basis for cooperation in our Chambers format, sending also an inspiring message to business society of our countries.

The main role of the Chambers of Commerce in the international dimension is seen for me as to be the conductors of business diplomacy principals based on solid and trustful partnership. We are working in a close cooperation with CCBLR for already many years in the different directions, types of activities, jointly facilitating and maintaining commercial and business links in between regions, small and medium size enterprises, looking for new opportunities, start ups etc. From both sides we are open for ideas, suggestions and signals from the business, additional synergy effect is being given while our collaboration with our local diplomatic institutions, like Trade Representations and governmental Agencies in Belgium and Russia, which are having very important role in the process of strengthening the commercial relationships between our countries.
We highly appreciate our effective cooperation with CCBLR and hope for its further successful development in the long run, let our joint efforts will keep building business friendly environment and opportunities for our members.

It is also should be noted - CCBLR become today a platform for our Panel discussion later today on hot topic of energy and ecology issues in modern business environment, and I am looking forward to hear our distinguished panellists, among whom we will see the representative of several countries and different companies. I believe, that all we can learn today from the first hands should be taken into account by both Chambers, to consider the options of further business engagement into resolving international climate targets by different means and approaches, including more active involvement of SMEs into joint projects relevant to energy efficiency and new technologies.