

PRIORITIES
DURING THE SWISS EFTA COUNCIL CHAIR
in the second half of 2010

The EFTA Council at Ministerial level met on 24 June 2010 in Reykjavik, Iceland. The following priorities of the Swiss Chair for the second half of 2010 are mainly based on the conclusions of that meeting.

I. Third-Country Relations

Ongoing Free Trade Negotiations:

- **India:** Hold two rounds of negotiations with a view to preparing finalisation of the negotiations in 2011.
- **Hong Kong, China:** Hold two rounds and intersessional meetings as required in order to conclude the negotiations on a Free Trade Agreement.
- **Algeria, Thailand:** Follow developments with a view to resuming free trade negotiations.

Prospective Free Trade Negotiations and Other Potential Partners:

- **Russia:** Finalise preparatory work, taking account of the establishment of the Customs Union between Russia, Belarus and Kazakhstan, and open free trade negotiations.
- **Indonesia:** Launch negotiations on a Free Trade Agreement and hold one round of negotiations.
- **Malaysia:** Sign a Joint Declaration on Cooperation and hold a Joint Committee meeting to explore the feasibility of a Free Trade Agreement.
- **Vietnam:** Hold two meetings of the Joint Study Group to explore the feasibility of a Free Trade Agreement.
- **Mercosur:** Explore the possibility of holding a meeting of the Joint Committee under the Joint Declaration on Cooperation to take stock of recent developments and assess future possibilities.
- **Bosnia-Herzegovina, Montenegro:** Initiate preparatory work towards the opening of negotiations on a Free Trade Agreement.
- **Central American States (Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua, Panama):** Sign a Joint Declaration on Cooperation with Panama and

pursue contacts with Central American States to jointly examine the possibilities to establish free trade relations.

- **Syria:** Reactivate contacts to start preparatory work towards the negotiation of a Free Trade Agreement, possibly by signing a Joint Declaration on Cooperation.
- **Mongolia:** Hold a meeting of the Joint Committee under the Joint Declaration on Cooperation.
- **Other potential partners:** Continue to monitor developments.

Existing Free Trade Agreements:

- **Albania, Colombia, Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC), Peru, Serbia, Ukraine:** Work towards the entry into force of the respective Free Trade Agreements.
- **Canada, Morocco, PLO/PA, Singapore:** Hold Joint Committee meetings and update and further develop the Free Trade Agreements in different areas as appropriate; ensure the good functioning of the agreements with Israel and PLO/PA.
- **Chile, Egypt, Korea, Mexico, SACU, Turkey:** Continue to work aiming at updating and further developing the Free Trade Agreements in different areas as appropriate.

Horizontal Issues:

- Further develop Member States' common basis for future free trade negotiations.
- Implement the results of the Joint Report of the EFTA Working Groups on Trade and Environment and on Trade and Labour Standards in EFTA Free Trade Agreements.
- Sign and implement the Convention on Pan-Euromed Rules of Origin.

II. EFTA Internal Relations

- Continue to adapt the EFTA Convention and its annexes to changing needs.
- Work towards improvements of preferential treatment in basic agricultural products among the EFTA member States.
- Promote activities in relation to EFTA's 50 years anniversary.

III. Other Activities

- Support EFTA technical cooperation activities in different fields towards existing, upcoming and potential free trade partners.
- Continue exchanging views on ongoing bilateral free trade negotiations by individual EFTA Member States.

- Follow closely developments regarding Iceland's application/negotiations for membership to the European Union and possible implications for EFTA.
- Continue exchanges of views among EFTA States on the ongoing negotiations in the WTO.
- Participate in the transparency mechanism under the WTO's Committee on Regional Trade Agreements (CRTA) with respect to EFTA's Free Trade Agreements, notably the examination of the EFTA-Canada agreement.