



EUROPEAN FREE TRADE ASSOCIATION

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PRIORITIES DURING THE LIECHTENSTEIN EFTA COUNCIL CHAIR

Second half 2009

The Liechtenstein Chair will notably base its priorities for the second half of 2009 on the conclusions made at the EFTA Council meeting at Ministerial level in Hamar, Norway, on 22 June 2008.

1. Internal EFTA affairs

- Continue to adapt the Vaduz Convention (EFTA Convention) and its annexes to changing needs
- Carry on the work of the Working Group on Trade and Environment and the Working Group on Labour Standards in EFTA Free Trade Agreements with a view to contributing to international developments in these fields, and report to Ministers at their meeting in December 2009
- Further develop Member States' common basis for future free trade negotiations
- Continue the consultations in the Working Group on EFTA's 50 years anniversary

2. Third country relations

Existing Free Trade Agreements:

- Jordan, Lebanon, Turkey, and possibly Singapore: Hold Joint Committee meetings

Ongoing free trade negotiations:

- India: Hold one technical meeting and at least two rounds of negotiations on a Free Trade Agreement
- Ukraine: Hold two rounds of negotiations on a Free Trade Agreement
- Hong Kong: Hold an organisational meeting and one negotiating round on a Free Trade Agreement
- Peru: Resolve outstanding issues with the aim of signing the Free Trade Agreement before the end of 2009

- Serbia: Resolve outstanding issues and finalise legal review with the aim of signing the Free Trade Agreement before the end of 2009
- Albania: Finalise legal review with the aim of signing the Free Trade Agreement before the end of 2009
- Algeria: Prepare for and conduct final round of free trade negotiations
- Thailand: Monitor the possibility of resuming the free trade negotiations

Prospective free trade negotiations and future potential partners:

- Russia: Assess the feasibility of launching negotiations on a Free Trade Agreement in the second half of 2009
- Indonesia: Pursue contacts with a view to launching free trade negotiations
- Malaysia: Sign a Joint Declaration on Cooperation in view of possible future free trade negotiations
- Vietnam: Establish a Joint Study Group and start assessing the feasibility of a Free Trade Agreement
- Follow developments and assess prospects regarding other potential free trade partners

3. Other activities

- Continue exchanging views on ongoing bilateral free trade negotiations by individual EFTA Member States
- Follow closely developments with regard to the possible application by Iceland to join the European Union
- Continue exchanging views 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