

**PRIORITIES  
DURING THE NORWEGIAN EFTA COUNCIL CHAIR**

**First half 2013**

The Norwegian Chair bases its priorities for the first half of 2013 on the conclusions of the EFTA Council meeting at Ministerial level in Geneva 12 November 2012.

**1. Internal EFTA affairs**

- Continue to adapt the Vaduz Convention (EFTA Convention) and its annexes to changing needs
- Further develop Member States' common basis for future free trade agreements

**2. Third-country relations**

*Existing free trade agreements*

- Albania, Peru, Singapore, Ukraine: Hold Joint Committee meetings
- Canada: Continue the preparation for and, if possible, start negotiations on an expansion of the free trade agreement
- Continue to work on the maintenance and development of EFTA's free trade agreements, notably with Chile, Israel, Jordan, Korea, Peru and SACU
- Colombia and the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC): Work towards the entry into force of the respective free trade agreements for all parties

*Ongoing free trade negotiations*

- Central American States: Conclude the negotiations and sign the free trade agreement
- Bosnia and Herzegovina: Finalise the negotiations and sign the free trade agreement
- India: Achieve further progress with a view to finalising the negotiations
- Customs union of Russia, Belarus and Kazakhstan: Move forward substantially in the negotiation process
- Indonesia: Make substantive progress in the negotiations
- Vietnam: Continue negotiations with the aim of making significant headway
- Malaysia: Hold a first round of negotiations

- Thailand: Work towards the resumption of negotiations at the first suitable opportunity
- Algeria: Continue to monitor development and, if possible and appropriate, resume negotiations

*New free trade agreements and potential partners*

- Sub-Saharan Africa: Continue assessing the possibilities for closer trade relations with potential partners. Prepare and sign a joint declaration on cooperation with Nigeria
- Philippines: Pursue contact in view of examining the feasibility of a free trade agreement
- Mercosur: Further examine the possibilities of developing closer trade relations

**3. Other activities**

- Continue exchanging views on ongoing bilateral free trade negotiations by individual EFTA Member States
- Follow closely developments with regard to EFTA Member States' bilateral relations with the European Union, including the application by Iceland to join the EU
- Follow developments with respect to international economic and trade negotiations