

PRIORITIES DURING THE SWISS EFTA COUNCIL CHAIR

Second half 2018

1. Relations amongst EFTA countries

- Continue to adapt the EFTA Convention and its annexes to changing needs

2. Third-country relations

Horizontal issues

- Continue to review the model chapter on trade and sustainable development in EFTA free trade agreements
- Seek ways to improve the monitoring and reporting regarding trade and sustainable development provisions in EFTA free trade agreements
- Continue discussions on the possibility of adding references to gender equality considerations to EFTA free trade agreements

Ongoing FTA negotiations

- *Mercosur and Vietnam*: Continue negotiations with a view to making substantive progress
- *India*: intensify the EFTA internal work in order to identify possible steps that may contribute to the conclusions of the negotiations
- *Indonesia*: Continue negotiations with a view to concluding in 2018
- *Malaysia*: Resume negotiations

Management and development of existing FTAs

- *Mexico*: Resume negotiations on the modernisation of the existing Free Trade Agreement
- *Canada*: Continue the exploration on the possible modernisation of the existing Free Trade Agreement
- *Southern African Customs Union*: Advance negotiations on updating and improving the existing FTA
- *Chile*: Aim to start negotiations regarding the modernisation of the existing agreement.
- Continue work on the maintenance and possible further development of other existing free trade agreements.

Negotiations on hold

- *Algeria and Russia/Belarus/Kazakhstan*: monitor developments
- *Thailand*: Hold a technical meeting with a view to prepare the re-launch of negotiations when conditions permit

Potential partners and other activities

- *East African Community*: Continue the ongoing work on a Joint Declaration on Cooperation with a view to concluding in 2018
- *Pakistan*: Explore the possibility of free trade negotiations by means of a scoping paper
- *Moldova*: Follow up on the 1st meeting of the Joint Committee held in May 2018 with a view to strengthening trade relations
- *Kosovo*: Continue discussion with a view to signing a Joint Declaration on Cooperation in 2018
- *ASEAN*: sound out the readiness of ASEAN to enter into formal relations with EFTA, e.g. by signing a Joint Declaration on Cooperation
- *US*: Continue the trade policy dialogue

3. Brexit and Relations with the United Kingdom

- Continue to exchange information on work related to Brexit, consult at senior officials' level on implications for EFTA Member States and present possible options for EFTA
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