

**JOINT DECLARATION ON
COOPERATION
BETWEEN
GEORGIA
AND THE EFTA STATES**

JOINT DECLARATION ON COOPERATION

Georgia, on the one hand,

and

Iceland, the Principality of Liechtenstein, the Kingdom of Norway and the Swiss Confederation (hereinafter referred to as “the EFTA States”), on the other:

DESIRING to enhance the bonds of friendship and economic cooperation between Georgia and the EFTA States;

ADHERING to the principles of human rights and the common objective of fostering human and economic contacts across borders;

BUILDING on their mutual commitment to the World Trade Organization (WTO);

EXPRESSING their intention to establish a framework supporting the expansion and diversification of trade and investment flows between Georgia and the EFTA States, as a step towards free trade negotiations;

WILLING to explore opportunities to strengthen cooperation in other trade-related areas and activities, such as labour standards, environmental policies, and corporate social responsibility;

HEREBY DECLARE the following:

I OBJECTIVES

1. Georgia and the EFTA States will seek to:
 - (a) enhance economic relations between them, in particular concerning trade in goods and services as well as investment;
 - (b) strengthen their cooperation with a view to promoting further liberalisation of trade and investment among them, including through a free trade agreement;
 - (c) facilitate the increased involvement of the private sector, in particular of small and medium-sized enterprises, in trade and commercial cooperation between them;
 - (d) ensure that labour and environmental standards are reflected in their trade relationship; and
 - (e) examine, in light of any relevant factors, the possibility of further developing their economic and trade relationship.

II TRADE

2. Georgia and the EFTA States shall seek concrete ways and means of expanding their trade relations, taking into account their international obligations, in particular the provisions of the WTO agreements, *inter alia*, by:

- (a) removing technical barriers to trade;
- (b) developing customs cooperation;
- (c) exchanging information on trade in goods and services; and
- (d) examining available trade policy instruments with a view to realising the objectives of this Declaration.

3. Georgia and the EFTA States shall seek to broaden cooperation in areas of particular importance to expanding their trade relations, *inter alia*, by exchanging views and encouraging cooperation on:

- (a) free and undistorted competition;
- (b) their public procurement markets;
- (c) intellectual property rights;
- (d) trade and sustainable development; and

(e) other trade-related issues and policies.

4. Georgia and the EFTA States shall, when conditions permit, jointly examine actions to be taken in view of establishing a free trade area between them, taking into account the provisions of the WTO.

III PRIVATE SECTOR COOPERATION AND INVESTMENT

5. Georgia and the EFTA States shall seek to promote private sector trade and investment cooperation projects, *inter alia*, by creating favourable conditions conducive to capital flows and investment in economic sectors of mutual interest.

6. Georgia and the EFTA States shall encourage and stimulate business contacts, notably between enterprises and organisations concerned with foreign trade and investment, with the aim of developing economic activities between Georgia and the EFTA States.

IV JOINT COMMITTEE

7. Georgia and the EFTA States hereby establish a Joint Committee.

8. The Joint Committee shall be composed of representatives of the Parties.

9. The Joint Committee shall review the cooperation in areas referred to in the present Declaration and discuss any other issue of mutual interest. It may formulate recommendations on any relevant subject by consensus.

10. The Joint Committee shall meet as and when necessary upon agreement between the Parties.

11. The secretariat services for the Joint Committee shall be provided jointly by the Ministry of Economy and Sustainable Development of Georgia and the EFTA Secretariat.

DONE at Gstaad this 28th day of June 2012, in two original copies in the English language.

For Georgia

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For Iceland

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For the Principality of Liechtenstein

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For the Kingdom of Norway

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For the Swiss Confederation

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