

7 July 2014

**PRIORITIES
DURING THE SWISS EFTA COUNCIL CHAIR**

Second half 2014

The Swiss Chair bases its priorities for the second half of 2014 on the conclusions of the EFTA Council meeting at Ministerial level in the Westman Islands on 23 June 2014.

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

- Chile, Colombia, Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC), Hong Kong China, Israel, Southern Africa Customs Union (SACU) and Serbia: Hold joint committee meetings.
- Turkey: Advance in negotiations on a substantive expansion of the agreement.
- Mexico: Finalise exploratory process and start negotiations on a substantive expansion of the agreement.
- Canada: Conduct exploratory processes in view of a possible start of negotiations on a substantive expansion of the agreement.
- Continue to work on the maintenance and further development of EFTA's free trade agreements, notably with Albania, Hong Kong China, Israel, the Republic of Korea, Peru and Singapore.

Ongoing free trade negotiations

- India: Re-engage with the new Indian government with a view to concluding negotiations as soon as possible.
- Guatemala: Finalise negotiations in view of Guatemala acceding to the EFTA-Central America free trade agreement.
- Vietnam: Pursue negotiations with at least two negotiating rounds.
- Malaysia: Hold the second and third rounds of negotiations.
- Indonesia: Pursue the resumption of negotiations after the establishment of a new government.

- Customs Union of Russia, Belarus and Kazakhstan: Monitor developments.
- Thailand: Monitor developments.
- Algeria: Explore the feasibility of resuming negotiations.

New free trade agreements and potential partners

- Philippines: Prepare the ground for and start free trade negotiations.
- MERCOSUR States: Hold a meeting of the Joint Committee in view of examining possible options for developing closer trade relations.
- Georgia: Hold a meeting of the Joint Committee in view of examining possible options for developing closer trade relations.
- Pakistan: Examine possibilities for developing free trade relations.

3. Other activities

- Continue the dialogues with the EU and the US in the context of the ongoing Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership negotiations.
- Explore the possibility of establishing relations with ASEAN.
- Explore the possibility of establishing relations with the East African Community.
- Follow developments with respect to international economic and trade negotiations, notably the World Trade Organization's Doha Development Agenda and the plurilateral initiative on a Trade in Services Agreement.