



EUROPEAN FREE TRADE ASSOCIATION

EFTA-CHILE THIRD ROUND OF NEGOTIATIONS

Videoconference

8-12 March 2021

REPORT

The third round of negotiations between EFTA and Chile took place through video conference from 8 to 12 March 2021. Mr Erik Andreas Underland, Specialist Director in the Norwegian Ministry of Trade, Industry and Fisheries, acted as the EFTA spokesperson, while Mr Felipe Lopeandia, General Director of Bilateral Economic Affairs at the Undersecretariat for International Economic Affairs headed the Chilean delegation.

This round included discussions on all remaining issues under review in the modernisation process, i.e. trade in goods, services including financial services, rules of origin, trade facilitation, trade and sustainable development, intellectual property rights, government procurement, trade remedies and legal and horizontal issues.

Heads of delegations met at three occasions during the week to take stock of the discussions and confirm their commitment to engage in compromises where necessary to achieve an ambitious revised agreement.

Regarding trade in goods, experts aimed at advancing discussions on the revision of the text but also took stock of the last offers on market access for merchandise trade. While these discussions could not be completed during this round, lot of progress was made, which will allow both sides to enter final negotiations soon.

Concerning rules of origin, experts could agree on many product-specific rules outstanding as well as important elements in the rules of origin annex. Substantial progress was especially made in bridging the gap on proof of origin requirements.

In the area of trade facilitation, experts made a lot of progress, agreeing on several articles in the annex, which confirms and builds on commitments undertaken in the framework of the World Trade Organization (WTO) Trade Facilitation Agreement.

A revised article on technical barriers to trade was agreed upon as well as provisions for the inclusion of certain sectors in the future.

Regarding financial services, experts advanced their discussions leaving few issues open for future discussions. This allowed them to agree to increase reciprocal market access in services in general via an exchange of offers in the next weeks.

Experts discussed government procurement and could almost agree on all aspects, with Switzerland committing to update its engagement following its ratification of the WTO government procurement agreement.

Few legal and horizontal issues remain open after this round. These relate to the text of the preamble to the agreement. Delegations also advanced discussions on the Global Safeguard article in the area of trade remedies.

The chapter on trade and sustainable development was discussed intensively. Several elements are still open after this round as this is a new chapter to the agreement and two different approaches are being reconciled. Experts, nevertheless, advanced on numerous articles and sections. Provisions on labour, environment, gender, and cooperation were discussed in depth and will continue to be on the agenda of the next meeting together with other outstanding articles.

Experts on Intellectual property rights discussed all areas outstanding and, building on work from earlier meetings, exchanged information on relevant regulatory regimes and practices, continuing to aid their drafting efforts. Some textual progress was made, such as within the area of Copyrights and Related Rights and Enforcement of IPR. Where issues outstanding still exist, experts agreed on intersessional actions aimed at furthering the work ahead of their next meeting.