

## **EEA EFTA Statement**

### ***Statement on the occasion of the EEA Council meeting on 24 May 2023.***

Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway – the EEA EFTA States – reiterate the importance they attach to the Agreement on the European Economic Area (EEA). The Agreement establishes a solid basis for a privileged relationship between the EEA EFTA States and the European Union. This is reflected in the good cooperation and coordination of the EEA States on key economic and geopolitical challenges. While formal EEA Council conclusions were regrettably not adopted at today's Council meeting, we underline the good functioning of the EEA Agreement, which was the subject of an in-depth assessment and confirmation at our meeting.

Underlying our cooperation with the EU in the framework of the EEA Agreement is a strong commitment to a Europe built on peace, democracy and the rule of law. These values are threatened by Russia's unlawful invasion of Ukraine. The EEA EFTA States remain the closest of partners of the EU and are aligned with the EU's sanctions against Russia. Such solidarity and mutual efforts are underpinned by the deep economic relations enabled by the EEA Agreement. They are also fundamental to our strong and robust collaboration with the EU.

The EEA Agreement brings together the EEA EFTA States and the EU as equal partners in the Internal Market. As such, it underpins the EEA EFTA States' deep integration into key European value chains by providing legal certainty and a shared regulatory environment. Any solution that is found between the EU and the US in the context of the US Inflation Reduction Act should also take into account the whole of the Internal Market. It is in our common interest that we do not risk breaking up European value chains. It is crucial, for our shared endeavour to make the European economy greener and more digital, that EEA

obligations are properly taken into account, including where relevant in trade policy. The EEA EFTA States are looking forward to continuing the close involvement with the EU to further enhance cooperation on these matters. This was also discussed in today's EEA Council meeting.

The EEA EFTA States are determined to work with the EU to further facilitate the green transition and speed up the digitalisation of industry and public services, in line with the objectives of Europe's Digital Decade. We look forward to the continued close cooperation on these and other matters of common interest.

Greater knowledge of the EEA Agreement throughout the EEA and at all levels is in the interest of all Contracting Parties and of the Internal Market's good functioning. The EEA EFTA States underline the need to further strengthen communication efforts about the EEA Agreement and its benefits for citizens and businesses. Next year's 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the EEA Agreement provides an excellent opportunity to work towards these goals. The EEA EFTA States will look forward to celebrating this milestone in cooperation with our EU partners.