

EFTA MINISTERIAL MEETING, SCHAAN, 27 JUNE 2023

Joint Communiqué EFTA-Singapore

EFTA AND SINGAPORE MEET TO TAKE STOCK ON THE PROGRESS OF THE ONGOING DIGITAL ECONOMY AGREEMENT NEGOTIATIONS

On 27 June 2023, on the margins of the EFTA Ministerial Meeting in Schaan, Liechtenstein, high-level participants from the EFTA States and Singapore met to take stock on the progress of the ongoing negotiations for a Digital Economy Agreement (DEA).

2. Singapore's Minister-in-charge of Trade Relations S Iswaran and the Ministerial Chair of the EFTA Council and Minister for Foreign Affairs, Education and Sport of Liechtenstein, Dominique Hasler, as well as Thórdís Kolbrún Reykfjörð Gylfadóttir, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Iceland, Halvard Ingebrigtsen, State Secretary of Trade and Industry of Norway, and Guy Parmelin, Federal Councillor and Head of the Federal Department of Economic Affairs, Education and Research of Switzerland had a good discussion on the current state of negotiations.

3. The participants agreed that the DEA would build on the EFTA-Singapore Free Trade Agreement, and serve as a strategic pathfinder for Singapore and EFTA to play a leading role in setting high-standard digital trade rules. In addition, they reiterated that the DEA will complement other international processes and initiatives, including the ongoing negotiations in the context of the WTO Joint Statement Initiative on E-Commerce.

4. The participants welcomed the significant progress achieved since the formal launch of the DEA negotiations in mid-February 2023, and exchanged views on pathways forward for areas that required further negotiations. They instructed experts to maintain a high negotiation pace and work towards substantial conclusion by the end of this year.

**MINISTRY OF TRADE AND INDUSTRY, SINGAPORE
EUROPEAN FREE TRADE ASSOCIATION
27 JUNE 2023**