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## EFTA and Central America advance in free trade negotiations

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A third round of negotiations on a comprehensive free trade agreement between the EFTA States and Costa Rica, Guatemala, Honduras and Panama was held on 20-24 August 2012 in San José, Costa Rica.

Constructive discussions covered all fields foreseen to be included in the free trade agreement between the two sides, allowing for substantial overall progress. Delegations concurred to convene again at the end of October 2012 for a next full round, with the aim of finalising the negotiating process soon thereafter.

The EFTA team during the round was headed by Ambassador Didier Chambovey from Switzerland, while on the Central American side Mr Ricardo Zuñiga, for Costa Rica, Ms Sonia Lainfiesta, for Guatemala, Mr César Díaz, for Honduras, and Mr Luis H. Garrido, for Panama, acted as chief negotiators.

Bilateral merchandise trade between EFTA and the Central American countries stood at almost USD 1 billion in 2011.



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