

EFTA and Mexico hold Joint Committee and mark EFTA's 50th anniversary 07-05-2010



The Joint Committee of the EFTA States and Mexico met in Mexico City on 7 May 2010 - the fifth time since the entry into force of the Free Trade Agreement nine years ago.

The Joint Committee had productive discussions on all areas covered by the Free Trade Agreement and agreed on a work programme to further develop the agreement for the benefit of the economic operators of both sides. The Committee was chaired by Mr Eduardo Ramos Avalos, Head of Coordination of International Negotiations, from the Mexican Ministry of Economy, while Ambassador Marie-Gabrielle Ineichen-Fleisch, Switzerland, acted as spokesperson for the EFTA delegation.

Building on the outcome of a meeting of the Sub-Committee on Customs and Origin matters held on 4 May, the Parties adopted five decisions in the area of trade in goods. These decisions will update the Agreement to the HS tariff nomenclature of 2007 and abolish a list of certain products which previously were excluded from tariff elimination. In addition, the individual EFTA States revised their bilateral agricultural agreements with Mexico in order to allow for consignments of agricultural products to be split up during transport under the supervision of customs authorities.

On 6 May, the Norwegian and Swiss Embassies in Mexico City, together with COMEXI (a grouping of Mexican political and business leaders), organised a promotional event to mark EFTA's 50th anniversary, coinciding with the 10th anniversary of the signing of the EFTA-Mexico Free Trade Agreement. The participants received a presentation on EFTA's history, current activities and future challenges, leading to interesting discussions on the potential of further expanding economic relations between Mexico and the EFTA States. Total merchandise trade between the two sides amounted to ca. USD 1,7 billion in 2009.

On the picture the heads of delegation (from right to left): Erik Andreas Underland (Norway), Marie-Gabrielle Ineichen-Fleisch (Switzerland, EFTA Spokesperson), Eduardo Javier Ramos Avalos (Mexican Spokesperson), Doris Frick (Liechtenstein), Veturlidi Thor Stefansson (Iceland) and Didier Chambovey (Deputy Secretary-General, EFTA).