

## **Joint Statement by the EFTA States and Singapore on the Launch of Negotiations on a Digital Economy Agreement**

Today marks the launch of negotiations between the EFTA States and Singapore on a Digital Economy Agreement.

The EFTA States and Singapore share robust and longstanding economic relations. Our trade and investment linkages have been growing strongly, underpinned by the EFTA-Singapore Free Trade Agreement that entered into force in 2003.

The Digital Economy Agreement will further strengthen this partnership and create new opportunities for companies and individuals of the five countries. As digitally progressive and like-minded economic partners, the EFTA States and Singapore are committed to open and connected digital economies. We recognise the potential of coherent rules on digital trade to provide a clear and secure framework that fosters trade in goods and services. Through the digital trade provisions that we aim to put in place, EFTA and Singapore will build on and complement other international processes and initiatives including the ongoing negotiations in the context of the WTO Joint Statement Initiative on E-Commerce.

Together, the EFTA States and Singapore can play a leading role in setting high-standard digital trade rules between our regions and raising the ambition of digital standards globally.

Dominique Hasler, Minister for Foreign Affairs, Education and Sport, Liechtenstein & Chair of the EFTA Council

S Iswaran, Minister-in-charge of Trade Relations, Singapore

Guy Parmelin, Federal Councillor, Head of the Federal Department of Economic Affairs, Education and Research, Switzerland

Martin Eyjólfsson, Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Iceland

Petter Ølberg, Ambassador, Permanent Representative, Permanent Mission of Norway, Geneva