



**COUNCIL OF
THE EUROPEAN UNION**



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PRESSE 236

EU to negotiate free trade agreement with Vietnam

The Council today¹ adopted a decision authorising the Commission to start negotiations with Vietnam on a free trade agreement.

Vietnam will be the third ASEAN country to negotiate a free trade agreement with the EU; talks are expected to start shortly. Negotiations are already underway with Singapore and Malaysia.

In 2007, the Council agreed to launch negotiations on a region-to-region free trade agreement with the ASEAN countries, but these were put on hold in 2009. In December 2009, the Council decided to pursue free trade negotiations with the ASEAN countries in a bilateral format, whilst preserving the strategic objective of a region-to-region free trade agreement.

¹ The decision was taken without discussion at a meeting of the Foreign Affairs Council (Trade).

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