

Deputy Trade Representative Jen-Ni Yang's intervention at 2024 APEC MRT

Session I - Trade Liberalisation: WTO

APEC serves as the primary regional mechanism for promoting open trade. What are your economy's priorities for facilitating the successful implementation of WTO's MC13 outcomes and outstanding issues? How, and in which areas, can APEC contribute to the discussions?

(15:30 – 18:00 MAY 17 2024)

- We agree with many WTO Members that MC13 produced a modest outcome. However, APEC economies can take the lead and continue to work hard to seek consensus and concrete progress on the following important issues:
- On DS reform, securing a fully functioning dispute settlement system by 2024 remains our top priority. The appointment of the new facilitator is crucial.
- On E-commerce Moratorium, its extension is critical for the global business community. We stand ready to work with other Members to make it permanent.
- On issues related to industrial policy, including subsidies and non-market practices impeding fair competition, we should initiate discussions on this issue as soon as possible so that we can begin to address those industrial policies that create unfair competition in international trade.
- On the second phase of negotiation on Fisheries Subsidies, we regret that Members could not reach consensus on the final proposed draft to conclude fishery subsidies negotiation at

MC13. For the sustainable development of fisheries resources, we need to complete the negotiations as soon as possible.

- In summary, the political will of Members is the key to successful WTO negotiations.

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Session I (continued) - Trade Liberalisation: FTAAP

More than 20 years ago, Leaders welcomed ABAC suggestion on a Free Trade Area of the Asia-Pacific (FTAAP). Now, with changes at the domestic and international levels, there is a need and the opportunity to update this endeavour and to inject a renovated dynamism to this all-important APEC initiative. What are your views on how to proceed to achieve the aforementioned goal?

(09:30 – 12:30 MAY 18 2024)

Thank you, Chair.

- On behalf of my minister, I would like to begin by expressing our appreciation to Peru for hosting this important meeting. This gathering allows us to revisit and strengthen our commitment to FTAAP.
- FTAAP is crucial to APEC's mission of fostering regional economic integration and growth. If established, it would form the world's largest trade bloc, accounting for nearly half of global trade and over 60 percent of global GDP, benefiting three billion people.
- To achieve this vision, we first must address contemporary challenges that are jeopardizing global trade. In particular, we note that non-market behaviors and opaque industrial subsidies are undermining the role of cross-border trade in promoting sustainable and inclusive economic growth.
- If FTAAP is to effectively address these challenges, it must

directly address Next Generation Trade and Investment Issues like State-Owned Enterprises, labor, and environment to foster inclusive and sustainable growth for all people of the Asia-Pacific region.

- Additionally, including commitments on these issues is necessary if FTAAP is to reflect the high standards and comprehensive approach referenced in the Putrajaya Vision 2040.
- For our part, over the years we have diligently worked to ensure we meet the high standards that such commitments imply. This has included pursuing domestic reforms to ensure we provide a fair and predictable business environment, and updating laws to reflect the transnational nature of such contemporary challenges.
- These efforts also directly align with our aspiration to join the CPTPP. That is, they not only prepare us to confront tomorrow's global challenges, but also demonstrate our ability to conform with market principles and high trade and investment standards.
- Today, we are dedicated to collaborating with all APEC economies to ensure that regional trade agreements, including a future FTAAP, are fair, inclusive, and reflective of sustainable principles.
- Thank you for your attention. I look forward to our ongoing collaboration to achieve these goals.

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Session II. Trade Facilitation and Trade and Inclusion

1. *What measures has your economy undertaken to advance digitalisation of trade, supply chain's connectivity in the Asia-Pacific Region? What additional areas should APEC prioritise to facilitate trade flow?*
2. *How is your economy promoting inclusive trade, especially to facilitate MSME's participation in global markets and value chains, and how does this contribute to formalization? In your economy, how are you fostering women's economic empowerment through trade?*

(14:30 – 17:30 MAY 18 2024)

- In today's world, we believe that inclusiveness and trade facilitation are essential elements of 21st century trade.
- We also note that the pandemic has accelerated digital transformation. This makes it more important than ever that economies cooperate in the pursuit of inclusion and digitalisation.
- Our economy's cutting-edge ICT industry provides high-quality manufacturing and application solutions to global and domestic markets in support of digital transformation. Using these strengths, we actively employ digital technologies to facilitate trade. For example:
 1. We have digitized most of our import and export procedures, such as establishing an automated customs clearance system and electronic submission of customs declarations. These measures have established a

foundation for our involvement in paperless cross-border trade.

2. In order to reduce barriers to cross-border trade and lower costs, our legislature recently passed amendments confirming the legal effectiveness of electronic signatures through bilateral recognition.
 3. Following the implementation of the WTO Trade Facilitation Agreement, we promote the signing of mutual recognition arrangements on Authorized Economic Operators (AEO) with APEC members.
- Next, we note that globalization has brought about exponential growth in global trade. Yet, the economic inequality accompanying this growth shows that underrepresented groups such as MSMEs and women enjoy less benefits brought by trade.
 - Given this challenge, it is essential that principles of inclusiveness be incorporated into trade policy, which is why we have made a concerted effort to ensure that women and MSMEs can benefit from trade.
 - We believe that digital technology can play a positive role in promoting sustainable and inclusive growth. To this end, we have developed more than 1,000 cloud-based tools to help MSMEs improve their operational efficiency.
 - Also, we have adopted numerous policies to help disadvantaged groups enter STEM fields, including, providing e-commerce skills training for Indigenous

female entrepreneurs and digital literacy programs for immigrant women.

- However, we have found that technological development has exacerbated the digital divide, creating new challenges for inclusion. To address this challenge, we invite Members to leverage our expertise in information technology, which can help to bridge emerging digital divides and promote inclusive growth.
- We look forward to continue working with APEC members towards these goals. Thank you!