



Asia-Pacific
Economic Cooperation

**2013 Meeting of
APEC Ministers Responsible for Trade
Surabaya, 20-21 April 2013**



**Statement on Supporting the Multilateral Trading System
and WTO 9th Ministerial Conference**

1. We, the APEC Ministers responsible for trade, gathering for our 19th meeting in Surabaya, Indonesia, on 20 – 21 April 2013, recognize the importance of international trade as the engine of growth, job creation and source of development. Thus, we reaffirm our commitment to strengthen a rules-based, transparent, non-discriminatory, open and inclusive multilateral trading system and reiterate the value and centrality of this system as embodied in the WTO.
2. We recognize the emerging opportunities and challenges in the global trading environment. International trade patterns have undergone changes and are now dominated by the rise of global value chains. This development presents an important avenue for trade, growth and diversification. However, the global economy is still in the tailwinds of the crisis, despite the modest rebound of trade growth in the first quarter of 2013. The determination to resist inward looking policies continues to faltering in some countries. This prevents effective participation in international trade and contributes to global economic challenges. To this end, the role played by the WTO is crucial.
3. We reaffirm the pledge made by our leaders in Honolulu 2011 and Vladivostok 2012 against protectionism through a standstill which we recommend that they extend through the end of 2016 and rollback of protectionist and trade-distorting measures. We remain committed to exercising maximum restraint in implementing measures that may be considered to be consistent with WTO provisions but have a significant protectionist effect and promptly rectify such measures, where implemented. We support the work of the WTO and other international organizations in monitoring protectionism and encourage them to continue and strengthen their work.
4. As noted by Ministers at MC8, the Doha Round is at an impasse. However, since that time, and in line with MC8 political guidance, APEC economies, along with other WTO members, have been fully exploring different negotiating approaches while respecting the principles of transparency and inclusiveness.
5. There is broad convergence of view that the negotiation as it stands now is not on course to lead to a successful outcome at MC9 on 3 – 6 December 2013 in Bali. We are deeply concerned about the state of play in the negotiations and we call on WTO Members to change the quality and level of engagement in order to expeditiously and effectively advance our work. We encourage all Members, particularly major players, to work hard to bridge the gap in coming months, recognizing that the continued viability of the WTO's negotiating function is at serious risk. With the APEC economies representing more than half of world's GDP and 44% of world trade, we accept our responsibility to make significant contribution to securing tangible results at MC9.
6. We share the objective that the Bali package should encompass a trade facilitation agreement and agreement on some elements of agriculture and development, including issues of interest to LDCs. We are committed to promoting progress in the negotiations on these issues. We commit ourselves to showing the political will and flexibility necessary to achieve convergence by MC9 and urge other Members to do the same.

We are committed to better facilitating the negotiation process to guide us towards a balanced and meaningful outcome of MC9 for all Members.

7. A successful outcome at MC9 would be a stepping stone to future progress on other areas covered by the DDA negotiations and so would provide new confidence in the multilateral trading system. Achieving that outcome must be the priority of Members' work this year, but it cannot be the end. We reaffirm our commitment to build on the Bali package to achieve the full conclusion of the DDA and to continue the negotiation to address the remaining DDA issues post-Bali. In doing so, we will continue to respect the Doha mandate and its development dimension.
8. We reaffirm the importance of the effective integration of developing economies into global trade. In this respect, we welcome the 4th Global review of Aid for Trade which will take place on 8-10 July 2013 focusing on the participation of developing countries and LDCs in global and regional value chains and the challenges they face. In this respect, we welcome initiatives to provide technical assistance and capacity building activities, including in the APEC region, to allow Members to reap the benefits from global and regional value chains and better integrate into the multilateral trading system.
9. Building on the progress to date, APEC Ministers Responsible for Trade call on ITA participants to swiftly conclude negotiations to expand the product coverage of the WTO ITA by the middle of the year and seek expanded membership of the ITA. A final ITA expansion outcome should be commercially significant, credible, pragmatic, balanced, and reflective of the dynamic technological developments in the information technology sector over the last 16 years. Such an outcome would support several APEC objectives, including strengthening the multilateral trading system, promoting connectivity, supporting regional economic integration, and driving economic development throughout APEC economies.

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