

ASIA-PACIFIC PARLIAMENTARY FORUM (APPF)

24TH ANNUAL MEETING

RESOLUTION APPF24/RES.17

ECONOMY, TRADE AND REGIONAL VALUE CHAINS

(Sponsored by the Russian Federation, New Zealand, Canada, Japan, Mexico, and Thailand)

The 24th Annual Meeting of the Asia Pacific Parliamentary Forum;

Noting the Resolution on Economy and Trade that was adopted in the 23rd Annual Meeting of the Asia-Pacific Parliamentary Forum in January 2015, the “G20 Leaders’ Communique” of the G20 Antalya Summit in November 2015, and the Leaders’ Declaration of the 23rd APEC Economic Leaders Meeting in Manilla in November 2015;

Affirming that global economic growth is uneven and continues to fall short of expectations, despite the positive outlook in some countries’ economies;

Recognising that risks and uncertainties remain in the global economy, including inadequate demand growth, financial volatility and structural problems that weigh on actual and potential growth;

Emphasising that economic growth, innovation and investment in human capital are among the most powerful tools not only to boost standards of living around the world and reduce inequality, but also to address the root causes of terrorism and radicalisation;

Recognising the importance of a stable currency system to ensure economic growth;

Recognising that national economic liberalization, the increasing importance of international trade and finance, and the internationalization of corporate structures have contributed to deepening the degree of interdependence, communication and interaction between governments and national societies;

Reconfirming that global trade and investment continue to be important engines of economic growth and development, generating employment and contributing to welfare and inclusive growth;

Acknowledging that production processes have become more globalized as tasks are increasingly separated and performed in different locations, often spread across countries as part of global value chains;

Emphasizing that the implementation of the World Trade Organization (WTO) Agreement on Trade Facilitation would improve the efficiency of value chains in the Asia-Pacific region and could help facilitate the integration of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in regional and global value chains;

Noting the successful conclusion of negotiations for the Trans-Pacific Partnership Agreement (TPP), and other positive developments in sub-regional economic integration in the Asia-Pacific region;

Underscoring that adherence to, and enforcement of, internationally recognized labour standards – such as the 1998 International Labour Organization Declaration – fosters value chains that are operated more responsibly;

Further underscoring that respecting strong environmental standards results in value chains that support sustainable development;

Reiterating the significant role of the multilateral trade system under the guidance of the World Trade Organization (WTO);

Upholding the intention of the APEC Economic Leaders to consolidate the rule-based, transparent, non-discriminatory, open and inclusive multilateral trade system;

Noting again the importance of the Bogor Goals and reaffirming the commitment to fulfill the tasks aimed at their achievement;

Noting that any regional economic integration should be open to all countries in the Asia-Pacific region;

RESOLVES TO:

1. **Confirm** that APPF Member States should exchange views on the occasion of the annual meetings of the APPF aiming at policy co-ordination in the region, and continue to oversee policy in each country in order to correct imbalances in economies and monetary and financial markets;

2. **Call upon** all APPF Member States to promote measures that can enhance the stability and resilience of financial markets, while also ensuring financial inclusion and the access of citizens to reliable financial services;
3. **Recognise** the significance of enabling the full participation of all sectors and segments of our society, especially women, youth, people with disabilities, indigenous peoples, low-income groups, and SMEs to achieving inclusive growth and the importance of empowering them with the ability to contribute to and benefit from future growth;
4. **Recommend** that APPF Member States expand cooperation with all stakeholders to support and strengthen the efforts in legislative works to make progress on related SMEs laws, and to accede to the ratification or support of international agreements related to SMEs;
5. **Call for** APPF Member States to support the 2015 APEC Leader's Declaration in strengthening the capacity building of SME entrepreneurs to push forward the economic growth and expansion of trade and investment with the use of internet and digital economy to achieve innovative, sustainable, inclusive, and secure growth;
6. **Affirm** the importance of a universal, rule-based, transparent, non-discriminatory, open and fair multilateral trade system based on the WTO principles, with the intention to improve its operation by well-coordinated joint efforts to create an inclusive and efficient world trade system;
7. **Encourage** Member States to commit themselves to complete the Doha Round negotiations, in order to facilitate economic growth through free trade and investment;
8. **Call** on APPF Member States that have not already done so to ratify the WTO Agreement on Trade Facilitation and undertake the measures necessary to implement the Agreement;
9. **Call upon** all APPF Member States to continue their efforts to provide the guarantees that bilateral, regional and multilateral trade agreements are transparent and inclusive, as well as contribute to the achievement of the goals of the multilateral system and do not contravene the WTO rules;
10. **Call upon** all the economies within APEC to continue advancing the process toward eventual realization of the Free Trade Area of the Asia-Pacific (FTAAP), as a comprehensive and high-quality free trade agreement by building on ongoing regional undertakings, including the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) which has been

concluded in October 2015, in line with the APEC Economic Leaders Declaration in November 2015 as a means not only to further promote regional economic integration in the Asia-Pacific region, but also to complement and to strengthen the multilateral trading system based on the WTO in a transparent and globally beneficial way;

11. **Affirm** that the recent joint statement issued by Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) Participating Countries to further intensify their efforts to the conclusion of the RCEP negotiations in 2016 is an important step in this direction along with other regional economic integration processes;
12. **Reaffirm** the importance of realizing a Free Trade Agreement (FTA) among Japan, China and the Republic of Korea (ROK), from the same point of view, as well as recognizing the importance of a new discussion among governments on a possible framework of a wide economic partnership in Northeast Asia, including Russia;
13. **Welcome** the establishment of the ASEAN Economic Community in 2015;
14. **Promote** the improvement of commercial standards as related to intellectual property rights and investment, as well as the implementation of best practices in commercial regulation;
15. **Encourage** the joint participation of the public and private sectors in the development of regional infrastructure, thus creating more productive jobs and increasing business productivity in the Asia-Pacific region;
16. **Foster** a democratic knowledge based economy that provides opportunities for technical and scientific capability construction within an environment that favors innovation, regional connectivity and respect towards intellectual property rights, and through the promotion of ITCs (information technologies and communications) and support for coherent regulatory convergence and cooperation for e-commerce;
17. **Ensure** that national laws and regulations related to environmental protection are fully and consistently respected, and are not weakened in an effort to increase trade and attract investment;
18. **Urge** APPF Member States to take steps to enhance the participation of developing countries in international trade and regional value chains, including through initiatives that aim to address infrastructure gaps and build institutional capacity;
19. **Advocate** the development of comprehensive and transparent data on global value chains, including the value-added by each country in the production of goods and services that are consumed worldwide;

20. **Promote** responsible value chains by using all tools at the disposal of APPF parliamentarians to ensure that domestic laws and regulations comply with internationally recognized labour standards and are enforced;

21. **Encourage** the Parliaments of the region to promote the exchange of information, practices and experiences in matters of cooperation and sustainable development, focused on strengthening the different national legislation in these fields.