



APPF27/RES/08

RESOLUTION
ON
BUILDING STRONG INSTITUTIONS TO PROMOTE TRADE AND INVESTMENT FOR
SUSTAINABLE AND INCLUSIVE GROWTH

(Sponsored by Australia, Cambodia, Canada, Chile, Indonesia, Japan, Russia, and Viet Nam)

We, the parliamentarians of the Asia-Pacific Parliamentary Forum (APPF), gathering in the historic city of Siem Reap, Kingdom of Cambodia, for the 27th Annual Meeting of APPF under the theme “Strengthening Parliamentary Partnership for Peace, Security and Sustainable Development”:

Recognising the recent progress made by members of the Asia-Pacific Parliamentary Forum to develop and promote effective policies, law enforcement and mechanisms to foster inclusive trade and growth in the Asia-Pacific region;

Recalling Resolution APPF26/RES.02 in Hanoi on Promoting Economic Growth and Free Trade, especially the provision to undertake an ongoing assessment of their respective international trade instruments as well as Resolution APPF26/RES.04 on the Role of Parliaments in Promoting Seamless Regional Economic Integration and Resolution APPF25/RES.15 in Natadola on Economic and Trade Cooperation in the Asia-Pacific region;

Recognising that today’s global trade is multifaceted and complex and the importance of working towards achieving free and open markets and the significance of international trade and investment in delivering prosperity to all people, including in particular women and youth to overcome problems such as poverty, exclusion, social inequality and for Member States to uphold food security, environmental safeguards and labour standards;

Noting Resolution E/RES/2017/22 adopted by the UN Economic and Social Council on 6 July 2017, aiming to achieve inclusive and sustainable economic development through promoting local innovation and bringing together local scientific, vocational and engineering knowledge, mobilising resources from multiple channels, improving core information and communications technology, and supporting smart infrastructure through collaboration with and among national programs;

Acknowledging that global trade and investment is underpinned by the multilateral trading system with the World Trade Organization (WTO) at its centre, and that cooperation among Member States is needed to uphold that system and work to reform the rules-based WTO, to strengthen its important role in facilitating and safeguarding trade;

Recognising that the entry into force of the Trade Facilitation Agreement in February 2017, encourages parliamentarians of the Member States to play more active roles in promoting its implementation;

Acknowledging the outcome of the 26th Summit of the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) Forum, held on 17-18 November, 2018 in Port Moresby, themed "Harnessing Inclusive Opportunities, Embracing the Digital Future";

Recognising the crucial role of strong institutions in enhancing rules-based trade and investment, long term economic performance, and inclusive growth and the crucial role of parliamentarians to adopt effective laws and policies;

Recognising the benefits of free trade and regional economic integration are not equally shared, and recalling the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, adopted by all United Nations Member States in 2015, especially Sustainable Development Goal 10: Reduce inequality within and among countries;

Reaffirming Resolution 2347 (2017) adopted by the Security Council of the United Nations at its 7907th meeting, on 24 March 2017 for Actions for the Protection of Culture and the Promotion of Cultural Pluralism as well as UNESCO conventions concerning culture, while appreciating cultural diversity in the Asia-Pacific region;

Acknowledging the conclusions adopted at the 23rd and 24th United Nations Conferences on Climate Change (COP23 and COP24 respectively) and the Paris Agreement 2015; recognising that the Asia-Pacific region contains many of the countries, cities and communities most vulnerable to climate change, notably rising sea levels and extreme weather incidents;

Considering that the recent escalation of trade frictions among major economies and the tendency to move away from the multilateral framework will affect global growth, and that growing protectionism in trade and investment could adversely affect APPF Members' economies and beyond; and

Taking into account the intensification of public debate in many parts of the world regarding trade liberalisation and the need for a people-centred approach to international development.

RESOLVE TO:

- 1. Call on** Member States to continue to build strong institutions to promote trade and investment in order to achieve sustainable and inclusive growth;
- 2. Urge** Member States to step up efforts toward economic prosperity in the region by embracing open trade and investment and facilitating the free movement of goods, services and capital, as well as establishing quality standards, rules and guidelines, including better compliance with WTO agreements and rules;
- 3. Call on** Member States to exert greater efforts in developing and promoting dialogue, partnerships and cooperation based on the principles of equality, mutual benefit and shared responsibility to promote inclusive economic growth, sustainable development and social progress in the Asia-Pacific region;
- 4. Call upon** Member States to continue reforming, harmonising and implementing their laws, policies, and regulatory frameworks, and enhance institutional capability, especially in less developed countries, in order to unlock opportunities for further regional economic integration, and sustainable and inclusive growth;
- 5. Encourage** Member States to more actively engage in trade negotiations and to continue efforts to develop effective mechanisms for sharing relevant information and best practices;

- 6. Call upon** Member States to recognize that:
- a. Leaders of the 16 East Asia Summit countries taking part in the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) have expressed determination to conclude negotiations for a modern, comprehensive, high-quality and mutually beneficial RCEP in 2019 as a partnership between the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) and the six countries with which it has free-trade agreements;
 - b. The Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement on the Trans-Pacific Partnership (CPTPP) of 11 Asia-Pacific economies entered into force at the end of 2018, and that any discussion on possible future CPTPP membership should be open for consideration for countries within the region; and
 - c. APEC Economic Leaders reaffirmed in 2016 that RCEP and TPP (now CPTPP) are both “possible pathways” to an eventual high-quality and comprehensive Free-Trade Area of the Asia Pacific (FTAAP) and that FTAAP should be realised outside APEC with pathways examined by APEC economies no later than 2020.
- 7. Encourage** opportunities for interaction among parliaments of the APPF Member States and between parliaments, governments, civil society and business communities through dialogues, conferences, seminars and other exchange channels to promote trade, investment for sustainable and inclusive growth, as well as to improve the functioning of the WTO, including its monitoring, rule-making and dispute settlement functions;
- 8. Encourage** Member States to exert greater effort in developing necessary infrastructure, especially the transport, telecommunications and digital sectors, and promoting science and technology to further enhance the knowledge-based economy; and encouraging developed member states to provide both technical and financial support for these institutional and infrastructure development efforts of the less developed member states;
- 9. Call Upon** countries to resolve trade friction by seeking solutions that benefit all affected parties, and deterring proliferation of protectionist practices that hinder global trade, investment and inclusive growth; and
- 10. Urge** Member States to pursue sustainable development while mitigating the impact of climate change and enhancing the preservation and protection of our tangible and intangible cultural heritage.