



APPF29/RES/08

RESOLUTION ON ENHANCING ECONOMIC INTEGRATION AND PROMOTING TRADE IN THE REGION

Draft Resolution Sponsored by: Republic of Korea, Japan, Russian Federation and Vietnam

We, the parliamentarians of the Asia-Pacific Parliamentary Forum (APPF), participating in the 29th Annual Meeting of the APPF held in Seoul, Republic of Korea, under the theme *The Role of Parliaments in Strengthening Resilience in the Post-COVID-19 Era*:

Reaffirming prior APPF resolutions on regional economic integration and trade promotion including the Resolution on Strengthening Institutions for Trade and Growth (APPF28/RES/02) adopted in 2020 in Canberra, Australia, Resolution on the Role of Parliaments in Promoting Seamless Regional Economic Integration (APPF26/RES/04) adopted in 2018 in Hanoi, Vietnam, Resolution on Fostering and Strengthening Connectivity Towards Economic Integration and Shared Prosperity in the Asia-Pacific Region (APPF24/RES/09) adopted in 2016 in Vancouver, Canada, and Resolution on Regional Economic Integration (APPF09/RES/09) adopted in 2001 in Valparaíso, Chile,

Welcoming that the leaders of the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) adopted the Putrajaya Vision 2040 to pursue “an open, dynamic, resilient and peaceful Asia-Pacific Community by 2040, for the prosperity of all people and future generations” in the 27th APEC Economic Leaders Meeting in 2020,

Recognizing that protectionist measures in trade and investment can negatively influence the world economy when there are significant downside risks for the global economy and that the

pace of regional economic integration has been slowed and free trade practices have been affected by the pandemic,

Stressing that it is important to strengthen our economic policy responses in a cooperative manner taking into account country-specific circumstances, if we are to swiftly achieve a strong, sustainable and balanced growth pattern in the face of global challenges,

Recognizing the need for a people-centered approach to regional development cooperation to promote sustainable development and overcome such challenges as poverty, exclusion, social inequality, food security and environmental pollution because the ultimate end of economic development is the improved well-being of all people,

Confirming the role and the engagement of APPF Member Parliaments in creating favorable institutional environment to economic integration, restoring regional cooperation mechanisms and promoting trade for the realization of the ultimate long-term goal of the Free Trade Area of the Asia-Pacific (FTAAP) and free trade at the new background of recovering from the COVID-19 pandemic;

RESOLVE TO:

1. **Call on** APPF Member Countries to work constructively to create conditions and seek optimal schemes for multilateral cooperation for the realization of the FTAAP as a comprehensive and high-quality future free trade agreement by developing institutions to enhance regional economic integration and promote trade for shared prosperity in the Asia-Pacific in the post-COVID-19 era such as the RCEP (Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership), CPTPP (Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership), and APTA (Asia-Pacific Trade Agreement);
2. **Request** APPF Member Countries, which have joined such trade pacts aiming to promote free trade in the region as RCEP, CPTPP, and APTA, to encourage and support other Asia-Pacific states to meet the requirements to join the agreements, with a view to providing the foundation for the establishment of a free trade zone in the Asia-Pacific in the long term

while also keeping in mind the desire to expand trade with neighboring countries, such as member states of the EAEU;

3. **Note** that the RCEP Agreement is an unprecedented mega regional trading arrangement that comprises a diverse mix of developed, developing and least developed economies of the region, **Welcome** the full conclusion of RCEP negotiations at the 4th RCEP Summit held virtually in November 2020 and **Call on** APPF Member Parliaments to make efforts to ratify the agreement;
4. **Recommend** APPF Member Countries to make policy efforts to ensure the resumption and expansion of free movement of essential workforce and products that have been restricted by the pandemic;
5. **Encourage** APPF Member Parliaments to put trade promotion strategies on their post pandemic growth agenda and carry out an ongoing assessment of international trade instruments to the extent of their legislative powers with a view to promote equality of opportunities within and between Member Countries;
6. **Encourage** APPF Member Parliaments, with an aim to create an open and non-discriminatory market that respects the interests of all economies, to exchange views on economic and trade policy coordination in the region on the occasion of the APPF annual meetings and strengthen national legislation to facilitate exchanges of practices and experiences in cooperation and sustainable development among Member Countries;
7. **Promote** cooperation on “integration of integrations”, bridging the existing economic integration frameworks in Eurasia under the common framework of the Greater Eurasian Partnership;
8. **Acknowledge** that global trade and investment is underpinned by the multilateral trading system with the World Trade Organization (WTO) at its center, and cooperation among Member States is needed to improve its functions; **Encourage** APPF Member Countries to commit themselves to fighting all unfair trade practices and restrictive economic measures against free trade under the auspice of the WTO and taking actions to improve

WTO's functioning of dispute settlement in order to ensure our recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic and facilitate economic growth through free trade and investment; and **Emphasize** the significance of a WTO rules-based, free, open and transparent, resilient, inclusive and responsive multilateral trading system for the post COVID-19 recovery;

9. **Encourage** APPF Member Countries to come up with outreach programs to promote regional trade agreements to foster the participation of small and medium enterprises, and social and economic organizations in regional markets and encourage businesses to utilize bilateral and regional trade agreements;

10. **Emphasize** that efforts toward the realization of trade liberalization according to national regulations and economic integration ought to be made while recognizing the need to facilitate such activities as improvement of trade rules related to intellectual property rights and investment, implementation of good practices of regulation, food security and environmental protection; **Pay attention** to the promotion of agroecology, which involves applying ecological principles to agriculture in order to protect ecosystems, as encouraged in the context of the CFS Policy Recommendations on Agroecological and Other Innovative Approaches for sustainable agriculture and food systems that enhance food security and nutrition that was endorsed by the 48th Committee on World Food Security; **Also pay attention** to the promotion of agriculture that takes advantage of regional characteristics; and

11. **Bear in mind** that restrictive economic measures that are inconsistent with the existing WTO rules and the relevant UN Security Council resolutions can destabilize and undermine trade among countries.