



**Asia-Pacific
Economic Cooperation**

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Agenda Item: 8

APEC Host Economy Leader's Statement- Connecting People, Building the Future

Purpose: Information
Submitted by: Chile



**Concluding Senior Officials' Meeting
Singapore
7 December 2019**

APEC CHILE 2019
APEC HOST ECONOMY LEADER'S STATEMENT
"Connecting People, Building the Future"

1 In the absence of our meeting, and due to unforeseen circumstances that have required Chile's government to fully dedicate itself to addressing the social demands of the Chilean people, this statement presents my reflections on APEC 2019, which included significant initiatives, deliverables and hundreds of meetings, workshops, and events that took place throughout Chile. This statement complements the outcomes from the sectoral ministerial meetings on Trade, Food Security, SMEs, Women and the Economy, and Finance; as well as the High-Level Dialogues on Mining and Health.

2 This year we celebrated the thirtieth anniversary of APEC. We are a diverse group of economies that cooperate on a voluntary, non-binding and consensus basis. This allows us to build trust, deepen mutual understanding and incubate new ideas. APEC has taken considerable strides towards its central goal of free and open trade and investment in the Asia-Pacific, agreed in 1994 in Bogor, Indonesia. Our efforts aim to ensure that the region's growth is balanced, inclusive, sustainable, innovative and secure. Working together, we strengthen our economies and rules-based international trade.

3 We can be proud of APEC's achievements, while recognizing that the needs of our people are evolving. New prospects are emerging, including through digital technologies and the society of knowledge and information. At the same time, we must respond more effectively to global challenges as diverse as inequality, climate change, terrorism, and our ageing populations. Chile believes that multilateral and regional fora, such as APEC, can provide inclusive and sustainable solutions and create new opportunities for our people.

4 Important progress in 2019 was made across all of APEC's committees and working groups. Under the theme "Connecting people, Building the Future", APEC was determined to put people at the center of APEC's work. For this reason, in 2019 Chile's priorities were: Digital Society; Integration 4.0; Women, SMEs and Inclusive Growth; and Sustainable Growth.

5 Chile thanks all APEC economies for working to finalize the La Serena Roadmap for Women and Inclusive Growth. This acknowledges the urgent need to comprehensively prioritize and promote the role of women in the economy, as part of our broader focus on economic inclusion. We encourage APEC to implement this roadmap by actively promoting initiatives that address existing barriers; improve access to capital, markets and leadership positions; and support women's education, while putting emphasis on data collection and analysis.

6 Chile also appreciates the consensus reached on the new APEC Roadmaps for addressing Marine Debris and Combatting Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated Fishing. These are proof of our commitment to the long-term protection of our ecosystems and biodiversity, and the sustainable use of natural resources in the Asia-Pacific. The actions we take in coming years will be critical for our region's food security and the prosperity of future generations.

7 Approximately half of the world's internet users are located in the Asia-Pacific. The digital economy can promote trade, investment, connectivity, and inclusive economic growth for the benefit of all our people. We are confident that the establishment of the Digital Economy Steering Group will ensure that APEC remains a platform for collaborating on appropriate frameworks that can help the Asia-Pacific embrace these opportunities and manage the risks, ensuring the region continues to be the world's economic engine.

8 This year, APEC has continued to address structural and regulatory obstacles that limit business opportunities at and behind the border. By working together to increase

transparency, create an enabling environment for business and combat corruption, APEC supports competitive, non-discriminatory and open markets for our businesses.

9 Chile also led efforts to advance outcomes in trade facilitation and global value chains, as well as smart trade, borders and logistics. APEC's work should continue to prioritize enabling MSMEs and start-ups to globalize, take advantage of new digital technologies, and access financing.

10 International trade is important for productivity, innovation, job creation, and development. In 2019 our Ministers recognized the contributions that the WTO has made to this end and urged officials to identify practical and concrete ways that APEC can support Geneva-based work. Chile calls on APEC economies to work together and with other WTO members to pursue necessary reform of the organization, starting with the urgent issue of recommending the process of appointing Appellate Body members.

11 The Free Trade Area of the Asia-Pacific (FTAAP) continues to be an important aspirational goal and APEC should comprehensively pursue FTAAP work that supports trade in the twenty-first century. FTAAP serves as the framework for a considerable amount of APEC's capacity building work that enhances our collective ability to participate in high quality and comprehensive trade agreements.

12 APEC is richer for the feedback we receive from all sectors of society, including from ABAC. Greater efforts must be made to engage MSMEs, academia and civil society, so that our work remains purposeful and relevant for our people, especially younger generations.

13 We have made significant progress, but there is much more we can do collectively. At our meeting next year, we will commit to a new vision beyond 2020. This vision will build on the unfinished work of Bogor and maintain our high level of ambition for inclusive and sustainable regional economic cooperation. To this end, we appreciate the final report "People and Prosperity: an APEC Vision to 2040" developed by the APEC Vision Group.

14 We look forward to our meeting in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, in November 2020.
END