



MEDIA RELEASE

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ASIA PACIFIC SERVICES COALITION STRONGLY SUPPORTS APEC SERVICES COMPETITIVENESS ROADMAP

Regional services industry stakeholders welcome release of the APEC Services Competitiveness Roadmap at the Leaders Meeting in Lima today, along with its accompanying Roadmap Implementation Plan. “This is a very big new APEC initiative on services”, said Ms Sylvia Grant of the Lima Chamber of Commerce. “With clearly identified targets to improve regional services trade performance by 2025”, said Mr Patrick Chua, Philippines Services Coalition.

Ms Louisa Su, Secretary-General of the Taiwan Coalition of Service Industries drew attention to the latest regional business perception survey results collected by ABAC and PECC which show near consensus among respondents that the services sector will generate the high value-added job growth in all member economies, justifying intensified APEC focus on the services sector.

Ms Christine Bliss, President of the Coalition of Services Industries (USA) added “There is clear convergence in business and government thinking, with e-commerce and the internet economy overwhelmingly identified as the key enablers driving economic growth.” “Its rather striking”, she observed, “that services firms of all sizes feel that restrictions on data flows are major impediments to their competitiveness, but SMEs appear to be especially concerned about this issue.”

“More than half of regional SME respondents do not, however, feel ready to compete”, noted Ms Jane Drake-Brockman from the Australian Services Roundtable, “confirming the need for APEC economies to get their regulatory houses in order and improve their knowledge economy infrastructure”.

The Business Council of PNG representative to the APSC Mr Chey Scovell said “these findings remind us of the importance of making tangible progress on trade facilitation. The APEC Services Roadmap will complement the agreement at the WTO to reduce the cost of trading across borders and reduce red-tape. Its not surprising that this need has been highlighted by MSMEs through to large multinationals”.

Mr Ho Meng Kit, CEO of the Singapore Business Federation said, “Services are an important contributor to the economic prosperity of the Asia Pacific region, accounting for a substantive part of the region’s GDP. Boosting the competitiveness of the services

sectors across the Asia Pacific, will help create more good quality jobs, improve service sector delivery, lower prices for users of services and help improve the overall prosperity of the region. We look forward to the implementation of the recommendations of the APEC Services Competitiveness Roadmap, and APEC's continued engagement of the business community as it implements this living document."

"The transfer of international best practices, skills and technologies, unimpeded trade in services will benefit stakeholders, including but not limited to consumers and businesses, in different economies," said Mr Mark Michelson, Chairman of the Hong Kong Coalition of Service Industries. "With technological advancement, tradeability of services will continue to rise and APEC economies should act to facilitate further growth of services trade," he added.

BACKGROUND

The Asia Pacific Services Coalition, formed in 2015, is composed of the following APEC economy business organizations:

- Australian Services Roundtable, Australia
- ABAC Brunei, Brunei Darussalam
- Canadian Services Coalition, Canada
- Federation of Korean Industries, Korea
- Hong Kong Coalition of Service Industries, Hong Kong, China
- Indonesia Services Dialogue, Indonesia
- Japan Services Network, Japan
- Malaysian Service Providers' Confederation, Malaysia
- Business New Zealand, New Zealand
- Business Council of Papua New Guinea, Papua New Guinea
- Lima Chamber of Commerce Services Committee, Peru
- Philippine Services Coalition, Philippines
- Singapore Business Federation, Singapore
- Sociedad de Fomento Fabril de Chile FG, Chile
- Taiwan Coalition of Service Industries, Chinese Taipei
- Coalition of Services Industries, United States

Business Observers:

- APEC Business Advisory Council (ABAC)
- ASEAN Service Providers Confederation (ASPC)
- China Trade in Services Association (CATIS)
- European Services Forum
- Latin American Services Exporters Association (ALES)
- National Business Association of Colombia
- Pacific Basin Economic Council (PBEC)

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