

APEC High Level Policy Dialogue Joint Statement on Resilient SMEs for Global Supply Chains

Taichung, Chinese Taipei
24 March 2014

We, the senior representatives of public and private sectors from 21 member economies of APEC family, met in Taichung, Chinese Taipei today for the “APEC High Level Policy Dialogue on Resilient SMEs for Better Global Supply Chains” jointly hosted by the APEC Small and Medium Enterprises Working Group (SMEWG) and the Emergency Preparedness Working Group (EPWG) to proudly announce this Joint Statement.

MYP on SME Natural Disaster Resilience

According to the result of APEC SME Monitoring survey proposed in 37th APEC SMEWG meeting. SMEs account for 97.69% of total business, 41.2% of GDP and provide 63.6% of employment in the Asia Pacific region. Thus, SMEs plays a role of driving force for regional economic growth. However, this region experienced 70% of global nature disasters, causing supply chain disruptions and severely affecting SMEs. SMEs are more vulnerable to disasters compared to large enterprises due to their concentration of business activities and less awareness and limited access to disaster risk information.

Fully aware of importance of disaster resilience at SMEs level, the APEC leaders have instructed officials to work toward a resilient Asia Pacific to help businesses growth in the region. In response to leader’s instruction and the Great East Japan Earthquake, Chinese Taipei had proposed an APEC Multi-Year project on “Improving Natural Disaster Resilience of APEC SMEs to Facilitate Trade and Investment” in 2011, with support of SMEWG and in collaboration with EPWG, aiming at raising awareness and enhancing disaster resilience at SMEs when facing challenges of nature disasters.

Starting from 2012, this three-year project has well established an expert group and fully coordinated a focal point network to work together toward the goal for enhancing SMEs’ capacity on business continuity preparation to sustain global supply chains from grassroots. Up to now, in cooperation with EPWG, the Asian Disaster Reduction Center (ADRC) and the Asian Disaster Preparedness Center (ADPC), this Multi-Year Project has published 15 issues of SME Monitor report with more than 30,000 subscribers; hosted 2 Focal Point Network and Expert Meetings with more than 600 participants to establish SMEs disaster resilient mechanism; published the Guidebook on SMEs Business Continuity Plan (BCP) and organized symposiums and Train-the-Trainer Workshop to train more than 100 seed trainers for the purpose of BCP dissemination. Above all, in the past 2 years, the 21 APEC economies with nearly 1,000 participants have joined this project. Furthermore, the Policy Framework Models (PFMs) for the best policy practice sharing will be published later in 2014.

Now, based on the achievements that has been delivered, the APEC High Level Policy Dialogue is to conclude outcomes of this Multi-Year Project and serve as a platform for sharing insights provided by high level officials from APEC economies, representatives from leading global enterprises and specialists from prominent international organizations.

HLPD Joint Statement

Today, we gather here to recognize the importance and value of BCPs to SMEs and welcome future commitments of incessant actions on strengthening resilient growth. Through our joint efforts and contributions, we are confident that APEC is taking the lead in safeguarding trade, investment and limiting disruptions to global supply and value chains. With this goal in mind and enabling the commitments made under the HFA2, APEC Trade Recovery Guidelines, and the APEC 2014 theme: "Shaping the Future through Asia-Pacific Partnership", we urge all APEC economies to take the following concrete actions:

Establish SME Business Continuity Plans to Facilitate Trade and Investment

- Intensify the adaptation of BCPs for ICT, logistics, and auto parts industries to facilitate trade and investment and limit industrial disruptions in this region;
- Develop exclusive BCPs for all other industries to build up the capacity on disaster resilience for SMEs.

Implement BCP Guidebook for Better Global Supply Chains

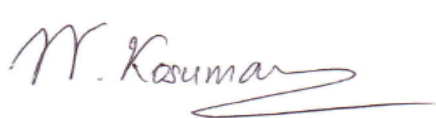
- Promote BCPs Guidebook by disseminating this publication in different languages and by organizing the local training programs to train the seed trainers to assist SMEs in establishing BCPs.
- Share the best practices from successful BCPs promoting economies by holding regular workshops and seminars for SMEs in the APEC region to disseminate knowledge and information.

Enhance the Public-Private Partnership and Cross-Fora Cooperation

- Collaborate within APEC and establish a strong bond with APEC Business Advisory Council (ABAC), and other organizations such as the United Nations International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (UNISDR), as appropriate, for more effective and mutually beneficial impacts in promoting BCPs for SMEs;
- Integrate the resources from the public and private sectors and experts to strengthen the capacity of SMEs to recover from disasters by referring to the PFMs as a guideline.

Beyond 2014

APEC economies are encouraged to take concrete actions to promote and adopt SME business continuity plans. Through disseminating the BCPs Guidebook in our own language for SMEs and referring to the Policy Framework Models that will be published this year, we will mitigate the impacts from natural disasters and shall recover in a timely manner. With all member economies' effective engagement in promoting SME BCPs, we are looking forward to seeing the continuous progress on trade, investment and a Resilient and Prosperous Asia-Pacific in the future.



Dr. Wimonkan Kosumas
APEC SMEWG Chair



Dr. Wei-Sen Li
APEC EPWG Co-Chair



Mr. Kiyoshi Natori
APEC EPWG Co-Chair