

## **PORT MORESBY JOINT STATEMENT ON THE 2015 HIGH LEVEL POLICY DIALOGUE ON HUMAN CAPACITY BUILDING**

1. We, the APEC high-level representatives responsible for human resource development and trade and industry, business leaders from ABAC and other representatives from business and academia met in Port Moresby, Papua New Guinea on May 6 and 7, 2015 for the APEC High Level Policy Dialogue on Human Capacity Building with the theme, "Investing in Human Capital, Building Inclusive Economies." We also appreciate the active participation of ILO and Asia Society.
2. We met under the theme of APEC 2015 Philippines , "Building Inclusive Economies, Building a Better World", with priorities on Enhancing the Regional Economic Integration Agenda, Fostering SMEs' Participation in Regional and Global Markets, Investing in Human Capital Development, and Building Resilient and Sustainable Communities.
3. We are guided by the 22<sup>nd</sup> APEC Economic Leaders' Declaration encouraging APEC economies to prioritize stabilizing and expanding quality employment, implementing macroeconomic policies in favor of quality job creation, strengthening capacity building for human resources development, vocational skills development and skills training for youth, strengthening skills as well as access to quality employment for persons with disabilities, and enhancing the participation of women in the economy.
4. We recognize that decent work, including respect for fundamental rights at work, is a necessary pre-condition to strong, sustainable, inclusive growth.
5. The APEC Connectivity Blueprint for 2015 to 2025 underlined the importance of people-to-people connectivity and the role of cross-border education cooperation in promoting economic development through knowledge and skills transfer.
6. We also recognize the guidance of the 5<sup>th</sup> Human Resources Development Ministerial Meeting, Beijing 2010 on the importance of developing human resources, vigorously promoting employment and realizing inclusive growth.
7. We are further guided by the 6<sup>th</sup> Human Resource Development Joint Ministerial and Action Plan 2015-2018 on promoting quality employment and strengthening people-to-people connectivity through human resource development.
8. We took into account the priorities set forth in the 6<sup>th</sup> APEC Human Resource Development Ministerial Meeting Action Plan (2015-2018) that outlines three (3) priority areas: Supporting inclusive and sustainable growth to address the social dimensions of globalization, including equality and needs of vulnerable groups; Enhancing human resource quality to meet supply chain demands; Facilitating mobility of labor and skills development.
9. We recognize and support the conduct of training programs for skills development to help workers achieve competencies required to meet industry demand.
10. We acknowledge that some vulnerable groups, including persons with disabilities, youth, and women, face particular challenges in accessing quality employment opportunities, and that their participation is essential for an inclusive workforce.
11. We recognize small and medium enterprises (SMEs) as one of the avenues for pursuing inclusive growth given that the SMEs comprise the majority of businesses among the

APEC economies, as well as employing more than half of the workforce, contributing around 60% of gross domestic product across the region.

12. We recognize that economic cooperation will enable us to develop more effectively the human resources in the region while reducing economic inequality and improving the economic and social well-being of our people as outlined in the Bogor Goals.
13. We recognize the importance of public-private dialogue in harnessing full capacities of the region's workforce.
14. We acknowledge the importance of developing the skills of teachers and trainers which will generate more human capacity building actions to include 21<sup>st</sup> century skills and enhancing the skills and productivity of SME workers.
15. We further recognize that building stronger connections between human capital development and the role of employment services and programs in job matching will help ensure optimal outcomes for employers and jobseekers.
16. Following the APEC 2015 priority on investing in human capital development, we considered the following strategic courses of action:

#### **Developing the 21st Century Workforce: Key to Inclusive and Sustainable Growth**

17. Cooperate with the APEC Business Advisory Council in each economy in defining the skills needed in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century.
18. Work towards the development of the APEC workforce to possess 21st Century Skills – in collaboration with various private industry sectors - with emphasis on personal skills, character-building skills, cognitive, critical and innovative thinking, inter-personal and intra-personal skills, global connectivity, and media and information literacy.
19. Support measures to enhance access to the workforce of vulnerable groups such as women, youth and persons with disabilities, through measures such as combating discrimination; advancing inclusive training and education opportunities - including school-to-work transitions; promoting reasonable accommodations in the workplace for persons with disabilities, including through assistive technology; promoting effective work-family policies and practices; partnerships with the private sector to develop innovative inclusive practices; and building the capacity of employment services to make their services more accessible to vulnerable groups.
20. Focus on 21st Century Skills at all levels of education and human capacity building through the pursuit of skills mapping in cooperation with industries, the labor ministries and research institutions, noting how these skills, together with the technical competencies of the workforce, will promote development of a highly skilled productive workforce able to meet the advanced technology requirements of 21st century jobs and lead to improved labor market outcomes.
21. Pursue close collaboration with ABAC to realize its valuable advice to APEC on skills mapping, developing new skills for 21st century business, and new approaches to cross-border labor flows, such as the Earn, Learn, Return framework.
22. Promote the achievement of quality education and skills training programs in recognition that industry needs must be matched with quality training delivery systems.

23. Focus on the 21st Century Skills, including Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) education, to address the advanced technology requirements of 21st century jobs in the context of knowledge based economy building and to face the changes in our markets.
24. We support the initiative in establishing a skill development capacity building alliance to identify and develop best practices for training skill-sets needed for present and future workplace through physical and digital networking.
25. Collaborate with business and industry organizations to maximize the exposure of workers to new technologies and latest industry practices in the development of 21<sup>st</sup> Century Skills to increase their productivity in recognition of the role of human resources in achieving inclusive growth.
26. Promote the development of skills necessary to implement the transition to a low carbon economy.

### **Aligning Education and Training to Industry Needs in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century: Strategic Approaches**

27. Work towards a common understanding of competency standards and/or framework to support the recognition of the development of competencies across APEC economies involving the identification of the needs of businesses and industry feedback and sharing of best practices.
28. Encourage economies to continue improving the quality of education and training, and to work in partnership with the private sector, towards ensuring alignment of training with industry needs which facilitates trade and investment and employment.
29. Enhance academic mobility for the creation of an APEC knowledge-based economy.
30. Adopt the conduct of identifying, assessing and certifying the skills and competencies in demand for the local labour markets and regional skills shortages as a key strategic approach to mitigate job-skills mismatch.
31. Institutionalize the gathering and sharing of relevant, accurate and timely labor market information, including further development of the APEC labor market portal to facilitate an improved understanding of regional labor market issues such as skills shortages and ensuring skills relevance to industry needs.
32. Build on the results of the APEC Skills Mapping Project through the pursuit of the Talent Mapping Project.
33. Ensure the alignment of education and workforce data systems that can be used to conduct analysis of education and training activities/outcomes and workforce trends as well as to provide specific information for trainees aiming to pursue education and training in high-demand occupations.
34. Encourage a career pathways approach that aligns various levels of education and training to specific various occupations within industries and includes cooperation with the private sector in incentivizing the workforce to enter into said occupations. This is aimed at addressing the diverse needs of a wide array of student population.

35. Develop the system of standardized approaches to professional skills and social competencies to harmonize skills mobility.
36. Continue to share information on the existing qualifications referencing frameworks to further explore mutually beneficial qualifications referencing arrangements for APEC economies to support increased labor mobility within the region.
37. Recognize the role of capacity building for managerial talent, and welcome the Strategic Human Resource Management for Successful Foreign Investment in APEC report and encourage economies to share and disseminate the guidelines domestically.

#### **Enhancing skills of SME workers: Critical to Competitiveness and Linking to Global Value Chain**

38. Address the human-capacity building challenges faced by the Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) that prevent them from fully benefiting from the opportunities made available by international trade, noting the need to facilitate the participation of the SMEs in the global markets either directly or through incorporation in the global value chain.
39. Pursue efforts to solve human capacity building challenges facing SMEs such as providing employment opportunities, increasing their contributions to national income, and making this employment route a decent one.
40. Keeping in mind the challenges facing the SMEs, build the capacity of SME workers to support the modernization and SME standard conformance.
41. Strive to promote the SMEs' participation in the regional and global markets. In this connection, we recognized the need for building the capacity of SME workers to be competent, competitive and productive. Further, we recognized the need for development of competencies of the SME workers, to be compliant to standards and regulations of specific sectors and industry.
42. Encourage SME owners to provide workers with a safe and healthy work place as this is critical to the well-being of their employees and the success of their businesses.

#### **Conclusion**

43. We express our deep gratitude for the hospitality and all arrangements made by the Philippines and Papua New Guinea for the success of this meeting.
44. We will promote a closer link between human capacity building, employment and the needs of business, to enhance productivity and development. We call on APEC economies to encourage and support the initiatives to develop and harness the full capacities of the region's workforce, building more inclusive economies.