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Opening Remarks

Submitted by: China



**Preparatory Meeting for the Symposium on
APEC Supporting the WTO Negotiations on
Trade Related Aspects of E-Commerce
2 February 2021**

DDG CHEN Ning's Opening Remark at VPM for the APEC Symposium on Supporting the WTO E-Commerce Negotiations.

2nd Feb, 2021

Distinguished guests,

Dear colleagues,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

It gives me great pleasure to join you at the Preparatory Meeting for the **APEC Symposium on Supporting the WTO E-Commerce Negotiations**. On behalf of the Department of International Trade and Economic Affairs, MOFCOM, China, I would like to extend my warm welcome to all the speakers and participants online and offline. My special thanks will go to colleagues of APEC Secretariat and Shanghai University of International Business and Economics, for the thoughtful arrangement.

The COVID-19 pandemic caught us all by surprise. The world economy is going through a severe recession. Despite the trillions of dollars in relief packages worldwide, global recovery remains uncertain.

APEC members, as pioneers in world economy, would step up to bring regional economy out of woods and make our contribution to the global economic recovery.

Some actions have been taken to this end. APEC Leaders adopted ***the Putrajaya Vision*** last November and committed to continue to promote free and open trade and investment for the next 20 years. As you know, the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (RCEP) has been signed last November, which will deliver a higher standard regional economic integration.

We have also seen great significance to firmly support the multilateral trading system and its ongoing negotiations. APEC has a long history of supporting multilateral trading system with WTO at its core. For years, we have played an important role as a premier regional forum in driving WTO's significant undertakings, such as Information Technology Agreement, Environmental Goods Agreement and Trade Facilitation Agreement.

The importance of rules-based, transparent, non-discriminatory, open and inclusive multilateral trading system has been further revealed in the context of COVID-19. The E-commerce has featured its advantages in promoting social stability and economic resilience. The rapid growth in digital economy calls for globe-recognized rules and regulations. WTO E-commerce Negotiations has been in the spotlight, as one of the most-involved WTO events.

In this context, China proposed to hold the APEC symposium to provide an

opportunity for members to enhance mutual understanding and deepen discussion on issues related, while without prejudging members' position in the negotiations. We hope today's preparatory meeting could enliven the atmosphere for the coming symposium and to contribute to the WTO E-commerce Negotiations.

Last but not least, I express my appreciation for your participation again and wish today's meeting a complete success.

Thank you!