



**Asia-Pacific  
Economic Cooperation**

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**2016/TWG49/028**  
Agenda Item: 1

## **Welcome Speech**

Purpose: Information  
Submitted by: Papua New Guinea



**49<sup>th</sup> Tourism Working Group Meeting  
Kokopo, Papua New Guinea  
31 August – 1 September 2016**



**Asia-Pacific  
Economic Cooperation**

ASIA PACIFIC ECONOMIC CORPORATION  
49<sup>TH</sup> TOURISM WORKING GROUP MEETING  
KOKOPO, EAST NEW BRITAIN  
PAPUA NEW GUINEA



**HON. TOBIAS KULANG, MINISTER FOR TOURISM, ARTS AND CULTURE**

**SPEECH**

**OUTLINE SPEECH**

**1. WELCOME REMARKS TO:**

- a. APEC ECONOMIES
- b. TOURISM WORKING GROUP OFFICIAL GUESTS (TWG)
- c. APEC SECRETARIET
- d. HOST Province for the significance of hosting TWG Kokopo (1<sup>st</sup> Official APEC Meeting hosted outside of the Nation's Capital)

**2. We look forward to the discussions that will be held over the two day Tourism Working Group meeting which will focus on fostering economic development in the APEC region through sustainable tourism, Inclusive Growth, Developing the tourism workforce in the APEC Region, Travel facilitation, Ease of Doing Business, Trade and investment liberalization and advancing tourism numbers within the APEC region.**

**3. The Asia-Pacific region is currently the most significant contributor to the advancement and growth in tourism numbers globally this is reflective of the above average market growth with the region which registered a 9% growth rate within the first four months of 2016 (*UNWTO press release, July, 2016*).. Can be directly attributed to the work carried out by regional**



organizations such as the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation, UNWTO, WTTC, PATA and so forth. Tourism growth in the APEC region continues to generate positive performance with the UNWTO estimating 500 million tourists will travel internationally between the months of May to August, accounting for 41% of the year's total international tourist arrivals.

4. I welcome the outcomes from the 9<sup>th</sup> APEC Tourism Minister Meeting hosted by Peru in Lima on the 28<sup>th</sup> and 29<sup>th</sup> of May this year under the theme of "Connecting Asia-Pacific Tourism Through Travel Facilitation" emphasizing air connectivity and travel facilitation as key catalyst to further enhance economic development through travel and tourism in the APEC region.
5. Papua New Guinea will host APEC in 2018, in the lead up to this is hosting a number of lead up meetings. Tourism Working Group Meeting is the first APEC meeting PNG is hosting since 1993 outside the capital, Port Moresby.
6. Papua New Guinea is fully committed to working alongside APEC member economies to advance and promote better understanding and recognition of tourism as an engine for economic growth and prosperity; ensure sustainability and inclusive growth in the travel and tourism sector; promote labor, skills development and certification in order to develop the tourism workforce in the region; and promote competitiveness and regional economic integration through policy alignment and structural reform.
7. I look forward to a fruitful TWG and anticipate constructive discussions and ways forward to advance our Tourism Industry within the Asia-Pacific region through innovative initiatives and strategies.



8. Once again, I welcome each and every one of you our PNG's tourism hub, Rabaul - Kokopo in the beautiful East New Britain Province and wish you all a pleasant stay and hope to see you all again in 2018 when we host Tourism Working Group 52 and Tourism Ministers Meeting 10.

End.