

Declaration on Facilitating the Movement of Essential Goods by the APEC Ministers Responsible for Trade (MRT)

We, the Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) Ministers Responsible for Trade;

Recognising the importance of ensuring that trade continues to flow during the COVID19 pandemic,

Committed to working together to facilitate the flow of essential goods at this critical time,

Recognising that it is in our mutual interest to ensure that trade lines remain open, including via air, land and sea freight,

Committed to a free, open, fair, non-discriminatory, transparent, predictable and stable trade and investment environment,

Reiterating our commitments to respond effectively to the economic consequences of the COVID19 pandemic, we hereby declare:

Export Restrictions and Prohibitions

- 1. Each APEC economy will ensure that any emergency trade measures designed to tackle COVID-19 are consistent with WTO rules.*
- 2. Each APEC economy will ensure that any trade measure introduced in response to COVID-19 is notified in accordance with relevant WTO obligations.*

Non-Tariff Barriers

- 3. APEC economies are encouraged to work together to identify and resolve any unnecessary barriers to trade in essential goods.*

Trade Facilitation

- 4. Each APEC economy, consistent with its obligations under the WTO Agreement on Trade Facilitation, should expedite and facilitate the flow and transit of essential goods.*
- 5. APEC economies remain committed to enhance coordination, efficiency and transparency of the border clearance of essential goods, and full implementation of the WTO Agreement on Trade Facilitation, to help facilitate trade.*

6. *Each APEC economy should endeavour to expedite the release of essential goods upon arrival, including adopting or maintaining procedures allowing for submission of import documentation and other required information, such as manifests, in order to begin processing prior to the arrival of goods.*

7. *Each APEC economy will endeavour to facilitate the entry, transit and departure of air cargo containing essential medical supplies.*

8. *APEC economies are expected to abide by the International Health Regulations (IHR) (2005).*

Tariffs

9. *APEC economies take note of ABAC's recommendation for economies to take tariff liberalisation measures for essential medical supplies of which some economies have done so unilaterally.*

Review Mechanism

10. *APEC economies will update the progress of this initiative annually, at the relevant APEC meeting, until such time when COVID-19 is no longer determined to be a public health emergency of international concern.*