



**Asia-Pacific  
Economic Cooperation**

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## **Statement on COVID-19 Vaccine Supply Chains - Ministers Responsible for Trade Meeting 2021**



**Ministers Responsible for Trade Meeting  
4-5 June 2021**

## **APEC MRT Statement on COVID-19 Vaccine Supply Chains**

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

*Welcoming* progress implementing the 2020 APEC Declaration on Facilitating the Movement of Essential Goods, across export restrictions, non-tariff barriers, trade facilitation, and tariffs;

*Recalling* APEC Economic Leaders' determination and commitment to ensure the smooth distribution of essential goods across borders;

*Recognising* the importance of ensuring the safety, efficiency, and resilience of supply chains for COVID-19 vaccines and related goods for the region's recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic;

*Acknowledging* the work by the World Health Organization (WHO), World Customs Organization (WCO) and other international organisations in facilitating COVID-19 vaccines and related goods;

*Consistent* with World Trade Organization (WTO) rights and obligations, WCO standards and the International Health Regulations;

*Commit* to accelerating implementation of the WTO Trade Facilitation Agreement and take further action in the following areas:

- 1 We agree to use the WCO-WHO list of COVID-19 vaccines and related goods<sup>1</sup> as a reference for facilitating trade. APEC economies will expedite the flow and transit of all COVID-19 vaccines and related goods through their air, sea and land ports. We will expedite their release upon arrival, including by providing for advance electronic submission and processing of information to enable immediate release upon arrival.
- 2 We will advance the implementation of the Best Practice Guidelines for APEC Customs Administrations to Facilitate the Distribution of COVID-19 Vaccines and Related Goods. We agree to embed the trade facilitation measures implemented during the pandemic, including digitising customs procedures, expediting the flow of goods across borders, and boosting coordination between traders and border agencies.
- 3 While WTO rules permit export restrictions or prohibitions in certain circumstances, we emphasise economies who adopt such measures with respect to COVID-19 vaccines and related goods will evaluate their ongoing necessity as COVID-19 conditions change, in order to ensure they remain targeted, proportional, transparent, temporary, and do not create unnecessary barriers to trade. We call on other WTO members to exercise equal restraint.
- 4 We will consider voluntary actions to reduce the cost of these products for our people, particularly by encouraging each economy to review its own charges levied at the border on COVID-19 vaccines and related goods.
- 5 We will take appropriate measures to prevent criminal exploitation of supply chains and to prevent the entry and import of illegal, dangerous, sub-standard or counterfeit COVID-19 vaccines and related goods. This could include further implementing the APEC Roadmap to Promote Global Medical Product Quality and Supply Chain Security and related toolkit.

### Review Mechanism

The APEC Secretariat will make a summary report on the actions implemented by economies under this initiative by the APEC Ministerial Meeting in November 2021, and every twelve months thereafter until COVID-19 is no longer determined to be a public health emergency of international concern.

Drawing on the reporting from the APEC Secretariat, APEC economies will review the progress of this initiative and report to us when we meet again in November.

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<sup>1</sup> World Customs Organization and World Health Organization List of HS Classification Reference for Vaccines and Related Supplies and Equipment