



**Asia-Pacific
Economic Cooperation**

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**Statement on Services to Support the Movement of
Essential Goods - Ministers Responsible for Trade
Meeting 2021**



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

APEC MRT Statement on Services to Support the Movement of Essential Goods

In 2020, in response to COVID-19, APEC Ministers Responsible for Trade committed to work to facilitate the movement of essential goods across borders and minimise disruptions to the global supply chains.

Recognising the importance of ensuring that trade continues to flow during the COVID-19 pandemic;

Recognising the vital role that services play in supporting the movement of essential goods as well as in the distribution of vaccines;

Committed to working together to facilitate the supply of services to support the movement of essential goods at this critical time;

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

Reiterating our commitment to respond effectively and transparently to the economic consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic and to ensure that essential goods reach the destinations where they are needed during the pandemic, we APEC Ministers Responsible for Trade, hereby declare:

Barriers to Trade in Services

APEC economies should prioritise identifying unnecessary barriers to trade in any relevant services that may hinder expediting and facilitating the movement of essential goods, and should ensure consistency of any such barriers with their World Trade Organization (WTO) and preferential trade agreement obligations and commitments.

These efforts should be supported by a strong international set of disciplines. In this context, we note the progress made in the WTO under the Joint Statement Initiative on Domestic Regulation in Services. APEC member participants in this Initiative encourage conclusion of these negotiations as soon as possible.

Trade Facilitation

APEC economies will work to ensure the smooth and continued operation of the logistics networks that serve as the backbone of global supply chains. Building on the APEC Declaration on Facilitating the Movement of Essential Goods, we commit to enhancing coordination, efficiency and transparency around transport and logistical services, including those required for the border clearance of essential goods.

Each APEC economy is encouraged to facilitate services that support the expediting and release of essential goods upon arrival. This includes allowing services suppliers to digitally submit import documentation and other required information, such as manifests, in order to begin processing prior to the arrival of goods.

Review Mechanism

APEC economies will update the progress of these initiatives as part of the review of the Declaration on Facilitating the Movement of Essential Goods. The first such review will be conducted in 2022.