



**Asia-Pacific
Economic Cooperation**

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**Chair's Statement - 12th High Level Meeting on
Health and the Economy 2022**



**12th High Level Meeting on Health and the
Economy
Bangkok, Thailand
25-26 August 2022**

Chair's Statement of the 12th APEC High-Level Meeting on Health and Economy

“Open to Partnership. Connect with the World. Balance Health and the Economy.”

25-26 August 2022, Bangkok, Thailand

1. The 12th APEC High-Level Meeting on Health and the Economy (HLM12) convened in Bangkok under the theme “Open to Partnership. Connect with the World. Balance Health and the Economy.” to support the realisation of the Putrajaya Vision 2040 including through the implementation of the Aotearoa Plan of Action and in complementarity with the overarching concept of Thailand's host year on the Bio-Circular-Green (BCG) Economy Model.
2. HLM12 strongly supported the need for protecting health of the population while stimulating the economic recovery in the APEC economies through closer collaborations. The HLM12 had reached consensus on the followings.
3. We expressed our sincere condolences to the families of those who have lost their lives to the COVID-19 pandemic, and our concerns on the continued emergence of new variants and recurrent surges of COVID-19 and other health threats that would have a negative impact on people's health and well-being and on the region's economic recovery.
4. We shared our visions of promoting international and regional collaboration, and partnerships to improve the health and wealth of people in the Asia Pacific. We exchanged views on reopening borders for safe and seamless travel without undermining efforts to prevent the spread of COVID-19, in line with APEC economies' domestic policies and regulations. We are encouraged by APEC's ongoing efforts for voluntary sharing of technical specifications on the interoperability of vaccination certificates and the development of an information portal to share safe passage information, using innovative and digital health technologies.

Balancing Health and the Economy

5. HLM12 exchanged views and shared experiences on integrated policy responses to COVID-19, including strengthening the public health workforce and universal health coverage, access to vaccines and other important aspects of global health security, while recognising the interlinkages of these responses.

6. HLM12 recognised that public health strategies applied in our region to contain the COVID-19 pandemic have contributed to the global containment of COVID-19 and provided solid foundation for world economic recovery and economic growth of our region. HLM12 stressed the need to continue efforts to accelerate COVID-19 vaccine delivery, support equitable access to safe, effective, quality-assured and affordable COVID-19 vaccines, therapeutics, and diagnostics; support healthcare workers and address misinformation.
7. HLM12 acknowledged that the pandemic has had an impact on the physical and mental health of all our people especially people living in vulnerable situations. HLM12 also reaffirmed APEC's commitment to increasing health equity and addressing health-related barriers specific to women in the workforce, business, and entrepreneurship, such as improving workplace protections, health and safety, as well as increasing health access and awareness.
8. HLM12 reaffirmed the direction stipulated by Putrajaya Vision 2040 that "we will foster quality growth that brings palpable benefits and greater health and wellbeing to all" and APEC Economic Leaders' call for an inclusive economic recovery from COVID-19, especially the resumption of normal education, business and social activities in APEC economies.
9. HLM12 acknowledged the Ministerial Decision on the TRIPS Agreement recently agreed to at the World Trade Organization's 12th Ministerial Conference, and reaffirmed APEC Economic Leaders' call to support global COVID-19 vaccine sharing efforts to expand vaccine manufacture and supply and to encourage voluntary transfer of vaccine production technologies on mutually agreed terms.

Increasing Investment in Global Health Security

10. HLM12 recognised that the world needs to be more prepared for future pandemics and other health threats, including through enhanced investments in health security. HLM12 therefore recognised the importance of efforts as decided by the WHASS A2(5) to develop a new international instrument on pandemic prevention, preparedness and response and to strengthen the International Health Regulations (2005). HLM12 acknowledged the ongoing discussion of Financial Intermediary Fund (FIF) for Pandemic Prevention Preparedness and Response (PPR).

11. HLM12 encouraged economies, development partners and the private sector to increase their investment in accelerating the development and production of safe, effective and quality-assured vaccines, diagnostics, and therapeutics to prevent, detect and treat emerging and re-emerging infectious diseases and called for stronger global collaboration in addressing public health emergencies. HLM12 reaffirmed the importance of immunisation programs as the most cost-effective public health measures, which have direct impacts on economic benefits and growth in our region.
12. HLM12 welcomed continued efforts to create an open, fair and inclusive digital economy which fosters the application of new technologies, allows businesses and entrepreneurs to thrive, and cooperate on facilitating the flow of data that will strengthen APEC economies and our ability to address COVID-19 and future health challenges.

Looking Ahead

13. HLM12 reaffirmed that “there is no wealth without health”, and noted commitments from economies to improve health and well-being, aiming to promote trade, inclusive growth and development in the APEC region and to increase their investment in health security and health system strengthening to better prepare for future pandemics and other health threats and to achieve and maintain universal health coverage. To realise this, HLM12 is supportive of pragmatic collaboration among economies to address issues at the nexus of health and the economy.
