

APEC Ministerial Statement on Membership

November 1997

(Approved by the 9th APEC Ministerial Meeting held in Vancouver)

Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) is an Asia-Pacific regional forum. It is an open forum in terms of its membership and guest participation.

Since its formation in 1989 APEC has:

- expanded its original membership of 12 by 50% to 18;
- undertaken to admit a limited number of new members not later than 1999;
- approved an arrangement by which non-members can be granted guest status in APEC Working Groups;
- approved over 30 applications for guest status by non-members.

In addition, under its information policies, APEC publishes, or makes publicly available, all key documents, decisions and statements.

While APEC has not set a permanent ceiling on the number of members, it will remain limited in size both on account of its Asia-Pacific regional character and because of the need for the group to remain manageable and effective.

Within the overriding considerations of open regionalism and of remaining manageable and effective in size, APEC has adopted the following guidelines to assist in considering the admission of additional members:

- an applicant economy should be located in the Asia-Pacific region;
- an applicant economy should have substantial and broad-based economic linkages with the existing APEC members; in particular, the value of the applicant's trade with APEC members, as a percentage of its international trade, should be relatively high;
- an applicant economy should be pursuing externally oriented, market-driven economic policies;
- an applicant economy will need to accept the basic objectives and principles set out in the various APEC declarations, especially those from the Economic Leaders' meetings;
- a successful applicant will be required to produce an Individual Action Plan (IAP) for implementation and to commence participation in the Collective Action Plans across the APEC work programme from the time of its joining APEC.

Decisions on the admission of additional members to APEC require a consensus of all existing members.