

The United States and APEC: Achieving Growth and Prosperity in the 21st Century



“We have reached one of those rare inflection points in history where we have the opportunity to take a different path – to pursue a new strategy for jobs and growth...And I believe the economies of this region have a leading role to play in getting us there.”

– President Barack Obama

The Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) forum is the premier economic organization in the Asia-Pacific region. Established in 1989 by 12 economies, including the United States, APEC fosters growth and prosperity by facilitating economic cooperation and expanding trade and investment throughout the region.

APEC’s 21 members today account for 55 percent of global GDP, purchase 58 percent of U.S. goods exports, and comprise a market of 2.7 billion consumers. Seven of America’s top 15 trade partners are in APEC. Besides the United States, APEC members include: Australia, Brunei Darussalam, Canada, Chile, China, Hong Kong, Indonesia, Japan, South Korea, Malaysia, Mexico, New Zealand, Papua New Guinea, Peru, the Philippines, Russia, Singapore, Chinese Taipei, Thailand, and Vietnam.

An Agenda for Growth and Job Creation

Through APEC, the United States works to create jobs and growth by tackling a wide range of economic issues critical to long-term prosperity.

To achieve its goals, APEC combines bottom-up efforts by technical officials and experts with meetings of senior officials, ministers, and leaders to ensure that high-level commitments are translated into tangible progress. APEC works closely with the private sector and other stakeholders to ensure that activities reflect the region’s economic needs.

Expanding Trade and Investment. The United States works within APEC to open markets in the Asia-Pacific region and connect them to American exporters. This

includes eliminating barriers to trade and investment, creating better business environments, and building a level economic playing field in the region that will help Americans compete and succeed. APEC initiatives also lay the foundation for high-standard, comprehensive trade agreements – including

the Trans-Pacific Partnership – that will help the United States strengthen economic ties with the region.

High Quality Growth. The United States is working with others in the region to make growth more balanced between and within APEC

economies. This includes increasing domestic demand in economies with trade surpluses, while increasing exports and private savings in economies with trade deficits like the United States. The United States also works within APEC to protect the environment and ensure that long-term growth is more sustainable, even as we promote economic systems and rules that foster innovation and provide widespread benefits to society. APEC’s agenda includes energy efficiency and low-carbon emissions, trade and investment in green technologies, and development of emerging economic sectors. APEC also seeks to empower citizens with the skills and opportunities to prosper in the global economy by fostering investment in education and worker retraining, small business development, economic opportunities for women, and improvement in social safety nets.

APEC USA 2011

The United States will host APEC in 2011 for the first time since 1993. Meetings will take place in Washington, DC; Big Sky, Montana; and San Francisco, California, culminating in the APEC Leaders’ Meeting in Honolulu, Hawaii in November 2011.

APEC by the Numbers
55 percent of Global GDP
58 percent of U.S. Goods Exports
43 percent of World Trade