

Big Sky, United States, 19-20 May, 2011

Statement on the WTO Doha Development Agenda Negotiations and Resisting Protectionism

1. We, the APEC Ministers responsible for Trade, gathering for our XVII meeting in Big Sky, United States, reiterate our profound confidence in the underlying institutional strength and value of the rules based multilateral trade system embodied in the WTO.
2. Mindful of this, we express our collective deep concern regarding the difficulties confronting the Doha Development Agenda (DDA).
3. Since our meeting in Yokohama, work towards a DDA end-game has not progressed in keeping with our Leaders' aspirations. Only a major substantive breakthrough in the negotiation will lead to a successful outcome in the window of opportunity provided by 2011. Despite intensive engagement by officials in Geneva, the gaps remain unbridgeable, as of now, in many key areas. We share a strong concern about this state of affairs, and we must work together to develop a clear and realistic path forward that is consistent with our continuing aspiration for the successful conclusion of the Round.
4. Our commitment to the success of the DDA compels us to explore urgently with other WTO Members the next steps we can take to sustain and advance the process of reform and liberalization of trade policies, and to ensure the global trading system continues to play its irreplaceable role in promoting growth and development, in accordance with the Doha mandate. We direct our negotiators to review urgently all options, in light of the development dimension as mandated, and to work with all WTO Members to find a path forward. In doing so we must keep in mind that we should build on the progress already achieved over the past decade in the DDA negotiations, and that we are setting the terms of global trade for decades to come. These steps are pressing and cannot be deferred.
5. We uphold the primacy of the multilateral trading system and reaffirm that this strong, rules-based system is an essential source of sustainable economic growth, development, and stability. We take considerable satisfaction in the success of the WTO, its existing framework of rules, and its consultative mechanisms in contributing to the beginnings of global economic recovery. The WTO has amply proven its worth as a bulwark against protectionism during a highly challenging period. We take note with interest that the volume of world exports surged by 14.5% in 2010, reversing the 12% decline in 2009. We reaffirm that "Aid for Trade" (AfT) is an important element in helping developing Members increase their participation in and realize the benefits of the multilateral trading system and look forward to the 3rd AfT Global Review Meeting to be held in July 2011.
6. Open markets are vital for growth and job creation, enabling strong and sustainable growth in this region. While the world economy is on its way to recovery, however, there still remains a possibility of increasing protectionist pressures in the future. We reaffirm the commitment made by our Leaders in November 2010 in Yokohama to extend their commitment on standstill to the end of 2013 to refrain from raising new barriers to investment or to trade in goods and services, imposing new export restrictions, or implementing WTO-inconsistent measures in all areas, including those that stimulate exports. We also reaffirm our undertaking to comply with WTO agreements as well as to continue to ensure transparency and predictability in implementing measures that impact on trade and investment. We remain committed to taking steps to rollback protectionist or trade distorting measures introduced during the crisis. Furthermore, we will continue to exercise maximum restraint

in implementing measures that may be considered to be consistent with WTO provisions if they have a significant protectionist effect and promptly rectify such measures where implemented.

7. Looking ahead to APEC 2012 under the leadership of the Russian Federation, we welcome the considerable progress of that economy to complete its accession to the WTO. We reaffirm our commitment to working closely with Russia, addressing the intention to finalize this process in 2011.