

APEC Strategy to Ensure Trusted, Secure and Sustainable Online Environment

(Inter-sessionally Endorsed of the Senior Officials in November 2005)

Recognizing the full potential of the rapid advances in information and communications technology (ICT), in 2000 in Brunei Darussalam, APEC Economic Leaders committed to enabling the people of urban, provincial and rural communities in every economy to have individual or community-based access to information and services via the Internet by 2010. In 2001 in Shanghai, China, Leaders endorsed the e-APEC Strategy that identifies the necessary policy environment and specifies appropriate goals and actions to meet the Brunei Goals.

Increasingly, however, achieving the Brunei Goals and fulfilling the e-APEC Strategy depends on the integrity and security of the e-commerce environment. As a result of increasing interconnectivity, the online environment is exposed to a growing number and a wider variety of threats and vulnerabilities that extend from technical and natural disaster causes to misuse, malicious use and criminal use. There is a growing awareness that confidence and security in the use of the online environment cannot be addressed solely as a technology matter, but require that all governments, businesses, organizations, and individual users be aware of the security risks and preventive measures, assume responsibility and take steps to strengthen security and reliability of information and the networks. Indeed, we recognize that there is a need for leadership at the economy level, for cooperation among elements of government, between government and the private sector, for outreach to users, and for cooperation across borders.

In Los Cabos, Mexico, in 2002, APEC Leaders made specific commitments to establish legal and regulatory frameworks that provide the essential underpinning for trade, investment growth and consumer confidence. These included the enactment of domestic cybersecurity laws, the development of domestic computer security incident response teams ("CSIRTs") and the promotion of international cooperation to strengthen cybersecurity and combat cybercrime. That same year, Ministers endorsed the "APEC Cybersecurity Strategy," a document developed by the Telecommunications and Information Working Group ("TEL"). Moreover, APEC has adopted the APEC Privacy Framework (2004). Implementation of these initiatives will contribute to the development of a trusted, secure and sustainable online environment.

Today, with the advance of information and communication technologies, our societies are evolving into global information societies and this ubiquitous computing environment has made cyber attacks much more sophisticated and threatening than ever before. In addition, with the spread of e-commerce, e-government and e-learning, most traditional economic and social activities in many APEC Member Economies have become dependent on the online environment.

In addition, misuse of the online environment through spam, identity theft, fake websites and other means threaten to undermine the potential economic and social benefits of the online environment by eroding the trust and confidence in the safety and security of the online environment. These developments have made a safe and reliable online environment an important factor for competitiveness - now and in the future.

Other international organizations are addressing issues that enhance the value of the online environment. In particular, the OECD's "Guidelines for the Security of Information Systems and Networks: Towards a Culture of Security," as noted by the U.N. in its General Assembly Resolution 57/239 (Creation of a global culture of cybersecurity), provide an important contribution to the development of a trusted, secure and sustainable online environment.

This comprehensive Strategy for a Trusted, Secure and Sustainable Online Environment expands APEC's work on promoting information and network security, harmonizing frameworks for securing transactions and communications, and combating cybercrime. Work has already been undertaken in a variety of areas, and increasingly this includes close collaboration with the private sector and with other international organizations. APEC needs to continue and expand these efforts in a comprehensive and forward-looking manner. This Strategy supplements and builds upon APEC's earlier work, and clearly identifies the areas that require increased attention and stronger cooperation.

This APEC Strategy to Ensure a Trusted, Secure and Sustainable Online Environment is aimed at promoting close cooperation among the individuals, companies and governments of APEC member economies and among member economies to promote an online environment that will secure the advantages of the Information Society for all users.

To this end, APEC Member Economies are encouraged to take action in the following areas:

1. Develop cohesive domestic strategies to ensure a trusted, secure and sustainable online environment.
2. Address the threat posed by the misuse, malicious use and criminal use of the online environment by ensuring that legal and policy frameworks address substantive, procedural and mutual legal assistance arrangements.
3. Develop watch, warning and incident response and recovery capabilities to help prevent cyber attacks and minimize damage and recovery time from incidents, and the cooperative arrangements to support these efforts.
4. Develop partnerships among government, industry, academics and others that recognize the important roles each plays in ensuring a trusted, secure and sustainable online environment, including through the development, implementation and review of guidelines and best practices.
5. Reach out to users to raise their awareness of the issues of online security, and assist them to understand and fulfill their role and responsibility in contributing to a trusted, secure and sustainable online environment.
6. Encourage research and development efforts to improve the security of the online environment, and promote the design, development and implementation of appropriate and usable security measures in existing and new technologies.
7. Support cooperative efforts among economies to promote the development and implementation of a trusted, secure and sustainable online environment.