

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The APEC Voices of the Future was officially launched by His Excellency Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad, The Honourable Prime Minister of Malaysia in 1998 during the APEC Leaders' Meeting hosted by Malaysia.

Since its inaugural launch in Kuala Lumpur, the APEC Voices of the Future Program is held in conjunction with the APEC Leaders' Week and has grown from a humble beginning of 30 university students to more than 130 young leaders at the annual APEC Summit.

The Virtual Trade Mission Foundation International based in Washington DC played a prominent role in the annual APEC Voices Program since its inception in 1998 and the National Youth Achievement Award of Singapore helped to strengthen the program in 2009 when Singapore hosted the APEC Leaders' Week.

Today, the APEC Voices of the Future Program is recognized as an official Youth Program endorsed by the APEC Secretariat and held in conjunction with the APEC Leaders' Week, providing the opportunity and platform for young leaders and educators from the 21 APEC Economies to attend the ABAC Meetings and the APEC CEO Summit.



Dialogue with H.E. Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad, Prime Minister of Malaysia, during the APEC Voices Summit in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.



H.E. Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad, Prime Minister of Malaysia, interacting with APEC Voices Delegates in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.



H.E. Dr Mercedes Araoz Fernandez, Vice-President of the Republic of Peru gracing the Opening Ceremony of the APEC Voices at the Universidad San Ignacio De Loyola in Lima, Peru.

“One day, in the not-too-distant future, your generation will be called upon to take up the mantle of promoting a stronger regional economy among APEC member nations. I encourage you to get to know your fellow Voices of the Future delegates. Together, you will be responsible for shaping the future of our global economy.”

**H.E. Hillary Rodham Clinton
Secretary of State
United States of America, 2011**



Special dialogue session between Members of the APEC Business Advisory Council and delegates from the APEC Voices at the Fairmont Hotel in Manila, Philippines.

Through their engagement and participation in the APEC Voices process, APEC Voices young leaders are given the rare opportunity to engage in dialogues with key policymakers and business leaders on policies and issues that affect the younger generation in the Asia-Pacific Region.

The annual APEC Voices program is organized and operated in cooperation with the APEC Secretariat, APEC Host Committee, ABAC and APEC CEO Host Committee. Following the principles of consensus and flexibility, which guide APEC, each year, the APEC Voices Leadership Council works with all these offices and officials to plan the annual APEC Voices program in the way that works and enhances the APEC Host Economy and the supporting organizations, events and venues, while providing an APEC-engaged learning experience for our students and educators.



A conversation between panelists Jack Ma, Executive Chairman, Alibaba Group and Aisa Mijeno, Co-Founder and Chief Executive Officer, SALT lamp with H.E. Barack Obama, President of the United States of America, as the moderator.



APEC Voices delegates from Canada with H.E. Justin Trudeau, Prime Minister of Canada.



James Soh, Co-Chair, APEC Voices Leadership Council presenting the U.S. APEC Voices delegates to H.E. Penny Pritzker, U.S. Secretary of Commerce in Bali, Indonesia.



APEC Voices delegates from Japan with H.E. Shinzo Abe, Prime Minister of Japan.



Australian APEC Voices delegates with H.E. Malcolm Turnbull, Prime Minister of Australia.



APEC Voices delegates from Singapore with H.E. Lee Hsien Loong, Prime Minister of the Republic of Singapore, and Mrs. Lee.



APEC Voices delegates from New Zealand with H.E. Jacinda Ardern, Prime Minister of New Zealand.

In 2011, during the APEC Leaders' Week in Honolulu, Hawaii, the U.S. Under-Secretary of Commerce for International Trade, H.E. Francisco J. Sanchez officially launched the June Mayne Gould Leadership Award. At the annual APEC Voices event, an outstanding youth will be selected for the June Mayne Gould Leadership Award and be awarded a scholarship to serve in the working committee of the following year's APEC Voices Program.

After each APEC Voices conference, young leaders will present the APEC Leaders with a Youth Declaration, which explored the challenges and offer solutions for consideration. Youth representatives will return to their respective economies and conduct sharing in schools on their experiences and insights about promoting free trade and economic cooperation in support of sustainable economic growth and prosperity for the Asia-Pacific region.



H.E. Francisco J. Sanchez, U.S. Under Secretary of Commerce for International Trade, unveiling the June Mayne Gould Leadership Award during the APEC Leaders' Week. Looking on are: James Soh, Co-Chair, APEC Voices Leadership Council and Noel Gould, Chairman, Virtual Trade Mission Foundation International.



APEC Voices representatives presented the Youth Declaration to H.E. Dr Le Van Thanh, Vice-Chairman, Quang Nam Province People's Committee, Viet Nam, Pham Phuong Chi and James Soh.



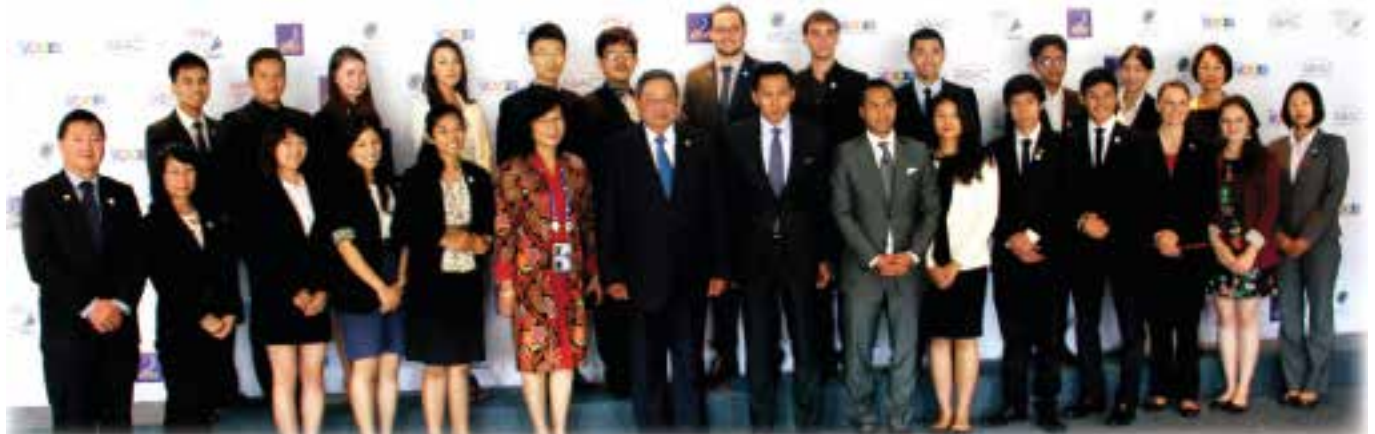
APEC Voices Representative from Russia presenting the APEC Voices Youth Declaration to H.E. Vladimir Putin, President of Russia in Vladivostok, Russia during the APEC Summit, 2012.

"You are the heirs to both the legacy and consequences of our present actions; your opinion matters as much as ours. I encourage you to tell us all of your concerns, your dreams, and the kind of global community you envision, so that together, we can shape a world that we can proudly bequeath to coming generations."

H.E. Benigno S. Aquino III
President of the Republic of the Philippines,
2015



The APEC Voices Delegates of Mexico with H.E. Enrique Pena Nieto, President of Mexico and the First Lady Angelica Rivera in Bali, Indonesia.



APEC Voices Youth Representatives of the APEC 21 Member Economies with H.E. Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono, President of the Republic of Indonesia and Wishnu Wardhana, ABAC Chair 2013 and Chair, APEC CEO Summit 2013 at the Bali Convention Centre during the APEC Summit.

Currently, more than 3,000 Members of the APEC Voices Alumni are still very much in touch with each other. Many of the members are successful young business leaders in their own right while many others are working with various APEC Member Economies government ministries and agencies. They also serve as mentors to help develop the next generation of the APEC Voices of the Future participants.

APEC Voices Leadership Council received very encouraging feedback from both government as well as the business communities as we move forward to prepare the next APEC Voices Program with the Host Economies.



APEC Voices Delegates with Jack Ma, Executive Chairman, Alibaba Group in Lima, Peru in 2008.

“The host government plays an important role in providing opportunities and platforms for the development of our next generation of leaders in all sectors, be it in finance, business or civil service.

The exposure gained by our young leaders from such high-level events will help them widen their international understanding and network for the future. Most importantly, it will lay a strong foundation for their development.”

James Soh PBM MBE
Co-Chair, APEC Voices Leadership Council



Being involved in the preparation of traditional food such as dumplings makes the visit more interesting and enriching for the delegates.



A stunning cultural performance by the youth delegates from Papua New Guinea.



Youth delegates from Asia-Pacific testing their skills in creating their own lanterns in Hoi An, Viet Nam.



The APEC Voices Delegates with Yu Ping, Vice-Chairman, China Council for the Promotion of International Trade and James Soh, Co-Chair, APEC Voices Leadership Council, at the closing of the APEC CEO Summit 2014 in Beijing, People's Republic of China.