

APEC Voices of the Future Youth Declaration Thailand 2022



Open. Connect. Balance.

As Voices of the Future 2022 delegates, we look forward to sharing our perspective on the APEC 2022 goal of creating an open, connected and balanced future for all. Member economies play a quintessential role in ensuring that public policies support all members of society.

We, the youth of the 14 member economies attending Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) Voices of the Future in Bangkok, Thailand, from 12-19 November 2022, have reached a consensus on the following declaration.

Open

Promote equitable access to education and future-ready skills

Following the challenging educational environment after two years of disruptions, economies should continue to prioritize their continuous pursuit to strengthen and expand opportunities by enhancing future-ready skills as the future global workforce.

- Ensure decent and sustainable education in rural areas and for all groups of disadvantaged people while considering their conditions and needs;
- Equip students with vital skills for the 21st century such as digital literacy, media literacy, social awareness, mental health, financial literacy, through revising school curriculum and industry-academia collaboration.

Strengthen existing systems and global standards in trade

Economies should emphasize trade concerns in Data Interoperability, Sustainable Investment, Inclusive Trade, and Conscious and Ethical Technology.

- Improve alignment with global data standards and facilitate the free flow of information and data for the development of the Internet and Digital Economy, while respecting applicable domestic laws and regulations;
- Shift approach to sustainable investment from compliance to impact and value, and improve impact measurement and the use of data-driven evidence under global investment frameworks such as Environmental, Social, Governance;
- Promote inclusive trade and investment by lowering the barriers for SMEs and enterprises led by women, indigenous people to enter global trade;

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- Create a flexible cybersecurity pilot framework and promote open-source technology, ensuring no barrier to entry while gradually institutionalizing cybersecurity, misinformation, media literacy, privacy, and data standards.

Connect

Strengthen supply chains and connect economies

The supply chain disruption in the past two years hindered economic activities and has generated a rise in prices. Economies should strengthen resilience and skills to keep up with the expanding technological frontiers.

- Promote international trade to foster international peace;
- Connect trading economies to make shipping more efficient;
- Facilitate the exchange of intangible products such as software as a service;
- Increase transparency regarding labour practices, including through emerging technology in AI and blockchain.

Facilitate social connection across the Asia-Pacific

Young people have been restricted in social connection over the past two years. Economies should reconnect young people to promote a more inclusive future.

- Increase access to visas for members of APEC so that young people may better engage in international business, politics and education;
- Provide grants for international education in the Asia-Pacific, similar to Erasmus in the European Union, including for indigenous people, and other groups who have been historically underrepresented in the area.
- Increase access to universal high-school education curriculums, such as International Baccalaureate, to make it easier to study and work abroad;
- Create youth advisory committees for continuous consultation in the Asia-Pacific.

Balance

Support Bio-Circular-Green Economy (BCG) industries for sustainable and resilient economic growth

There is no more urgent time in history to emphasise the importance of balancing the economy and environment. Young people, women, indigenous people, and marginalised communities in the Asia-Pacific are disproportionately vulnerable to natural disasters and climate change. To ensure inclusive economic development without the absence of environmental protection, we call on APEC leaders to:

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- Support an adoption of a green and circular economy such that it minimises production wastes and carbon emissions as well as pushing forward Asia-Pacific economies toward the net-zero;
- Aside from the environmental aspect, governments should take into account social aspects to strengthen human capital;
- Lower the Barrier to entry and minimise socio-economic disparities;
- Empower youth to create localised social impact with a global outlook;
- Promote connections between industry and academia;
- Promote financial inclusion by utilising technology through access to credit markets, regulate financial services and digital solutions.

Minimise gender inequality in all fields of the working environment and all aspects of society

Women and girls have been disproportionately affected by the COVID-19 pandemic and other global challenges such as climate change. At the same time, empowering women and girls to access education and join the workforce has proven in many economies to be effective in advancing economic growth and creating progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals.

- Implement regulation reforms to ensure women are provided to the financial budgeting options;
- Promote women in non-stereotypical roles e.g., women in government, STEM, entrepreneurs/business, etc;
- Uplift female business leaders in ABAC community by providing more support, such as parental leave for men and women;
- Provide capacity-building mechanisms with a focus on digitalization, securing funds, and marketing skills for indigenous women who wish to start their own businesses.

Build a more diversified and resilient environment

Protecting the environment is of the utmost importance for the future economies' success.

- Aim to ensure that the Asia-Pacific region is resilient to shocks, crises, pandemics and other emergencies by tackling climate change through renewable energies, collaborating on nature conservation, reducing energy consumption, promoting trade in environmental goods and helping communities adapt to changing weather patterns;
- Take into account societal and environmental impact and enforce sustainability reporting from business entities to ensure implementation.

Food equity, sovereignty, and security

Food security will ensure healthy populations within our economies.

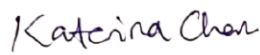
- Government cooperation and support of innovative, sustainable food practises;
- Provide capacity-building and incentives for sustainable farming to prevent irreversible pollution while sustaining the resilience of the food supply;

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- Reduce the impact of climate change on food systems, especially in rural areas, by investing in disaster-monitor systems and integrating relevant ideas into formal and non-formal education with academia and NGOs;
- Ensure fair and equitable distribution of nutritious and culturally appropriate food.

Government should distribute the benefits of sustainable development reasonably across the span of stakeholders under a lawful framework.

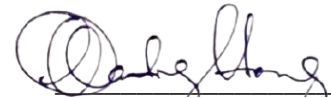
The above declaration was a collective effort of the Voices of Future Delegates at APEC 2022 in Bangkok, Thailand. We respectfully submit this declaration for your consideration.



Australia



Canada



People's Republic of China



Hong Kong, China



Indonesia



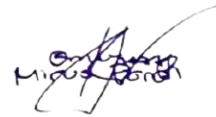
Japan



Mexico



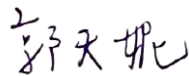
New Zealand



Philippines




Singapore



Chinese Taipei



Thailand



United States of America



Vietnam