

Women Leaders' Network Meeting 2001
Beijing, China
August 22-24, 2001

Statement and Recommendations

We, the Women Leaders' Network, from APEC economies came together for the sixth time in Beijing, China on August 22-24, 2001, to reaffirm our commitment and our efforts to contribute to the economic development, cooperation and prosperity of the APEC region, and to strategize to meet challenges in the new century.

The theme of this meeting is "Challenges and Opportunities for APEC Women in the Process of Economic Globalization". Under the theme, we discussed the following topics:

1. Women entrepreneurs and world markets
2. Partnerships with women-managed small and medium enterprises
3. Women's role in science, technology and sustainable development
4. Gender mainstreaming into APEC processes and activities

We re-emphasize the significant contributions of women to their respective economies. Sustainable economic development in the region has been vigorously promoted through the unprecedented courage of women in meeting the challenges of globalization. This has been accomplished through their efforts in seeking opportunities for employment, credit, technical training, commercial and trade cooperation, their use of science, improved and new technologies and, in particular, women's major role in small and medium enterprises.

We recognize the impact of economic globalization on women. Economic globalization creates opportunities for women to have increased access to the information, technology, knowledge and opportunities that expand channels for women's employment, promotes broader and more substantial participation in economic development, enables women to earn higher incomes, and improves the quality of life.

However, economic globalization also results in a significant number of women accepting poorly paid, unstable jobs and harsh working conditions, and increases their vulnerability to economic and sexual exploitation. Furthermore, it widens the digital divide and leads to women becoming more marginalized, thereby increasing the risk of poverty, particularly in rural areas.

We commend APEC leaders and Ministers for their consistent and continuing efforts in implementing the Framework for the Integration of Women in APEC as reflected in their policies and measures, including clear directives to SOM and working groups.

In addition, we commend the SOM Ad Hoc Advisory Group on Gender Integration (AGGI) on its significant contribution to women's increased involvement in the work of APEC. We applaud SOM and all APEC fora for their substantial support and efforts, and

consider it vitally important that APEC Leaders and Ministers continue to support this work until effective gender integration processes are firmly established.

We re-affirm our commitment to work closely with APEC in their endeavors to achieve sustainable economic growth with equity, particularly through the implementation of the recommendations of WLN.

In this regard, we offer our expertise and research, particularly in gender issues, to all APEC fora.

We recommend that APEC Leaders and Ministers:

With regard to women entrepreneurs and world markets

1. Measure the contribution of the economic activity of women both at the economy and APEC levels as a basis for sound policy-making.
2. Implement a regulatory framework that enhances women's access to credit and widens market opportunities.
3. Ensure that economic and labor policies promote work and family balance and do not have a negative impact on women.

With regards to the establishment of partnerships with women-managed small and medium enterprises (SMEs)

1. Formulate policies that promote the continued growth of women-managed SMEs and their involvement in the economic development of the region.
2. Establish and strengthen partnerships between governments and the wider business community with women-managed SMEs in order to help them grow faster by providing access to information, networks, market, trade and intellectual property information.
3. Promote investments in women-managed SMEs, improve the channels of funding and remove any gender-related barriers that limit access to funds.

With regards to women's role in science, technology and sustainable development

1. Support the continuation and expansion of the work of the Industrial Science and Technology (IST) Working Group to include:
 - a) The documentation of women's role in sustainable development and the fields of science and technology, including indigenous technology, to ensure women receive their appropriate recognition, fair benefits and protection.
 - b) The promotion of continued and systematic updating of sex-disaggregated data concerning women in science and technology to be used as a basis in formulating science and technology policies and programs.

2. Encourage the use of Information and Communications Technology (ICT) in schools, at home and in the workplace.
3. Direct IST and Human Resource Development (HRD) Working Groups to work closely in promoting the participation of girls and women through the formal and informal educational system in science and technology.

With regard to gender mainstreaming into APEC processes and activities

1. Support the continued work of AGGI in fully implementing the Framework for the Integration of Women in APEC and their important preparatory work for the Second Ministerial Meeting on Women to be held in Mexico in 2002.
2. Ensure the appointment of a gender focal point for all APEC fora and support their work at economy and APEC levels.
3. Direct appropriate APEC fora to conduct substantive studies on globalization, the new economy and women for further policy considerations.

We applaud APEC Leaders and Ministers for their recognition of WLN's unique role and contribution.

We thank the All-China Women's Federation, its co-sponsoring organizations and individuals for the success of this annual meeting.

We support the Republic of Mexico as Chair of the APEC WLN Meeting 2002 and as host of the Second Ministerial Meeting on Women 2002.