

Leaders' Statement, 1998

APEC Economic Leaders' Declaration: Strengthening the Foundations for Growth Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia 18 November 1998

1. We, the Economic Leaders of APEC, meeting in Kuala Lumpur on 18 November 1998, renew our resolve toward creating a prosperous Asia-Pacific community where economic disparities among our peoples will be bridged by strengthening the foundations of our economies for growth, providing the environment necessary for the efficient flow of trade, investment and technology and by enhancing the capacities of our economies to participate and benefit fully from liberalisation.
2. Our meeting in Kuala Lumpur takes place at a critical time. We need to deal urgently with the financial crisis which has spread beyond the APEC region. It has resulted in far reaching social costs, with the affected economies experiencing rising unemployment and falling real incomes, setting back decades of progress achieved in eliminating poverty and increasing education opportunities, as well as access to basic health and infrastructure facilities. We are resolved to work together to support an early and sustained recovery in the region, to contain the risks of contagion and prevent the possibility of a global recession.
3. We reaffirm our confidence in the strong economic fundamentals and prospects for recovery for the economies of the Asia Pacific. We believe our emphasis on prudent, growth-oriented macroeconomic policies, strengthened financial institutions and markets, trade and investment liberalisation, and capacity building are cornerstones for renewed and sustainable growth. In particular, our emphasis on "Capacity Building" across the broad range of APEC activities this year is particularly relevant in addressing the challenges confronting the region during this time. APEC's emphasis on human resources development, including skills development, technological upgrading, infrastructure improvements and wider outreach to SMEs will strengthen our resilience and capability in overcoming these challenges and restoring stability and confidence to the region.