

Given the diversity of the economies in APEC and the continuing hesitancy of several key members to engage in substantive negotiations leading to binding commitments that go much beyond the Uruguay Round results, the challenges that must be overcome to meet this pledge are considerable. Forward movement to date has been modest. By the time of the 1997 APEC Leaders' Summit that Canada will host, a significant down payment of specific actions and agreement on a negotiating agenda will be necessary if this pledge is to retain credibility. For the time being, however, APEC members have at least agreed on a relatively ambitious "mission statement" and have thrown down a gauntlet of sorts, helping thereby to sustain the momentum of the international liberalization message during the period of immediate post Uruguay Round fatigue.

The gauntlet was next taken up just four weeks later in the western hemisphere. In December 1994, the 34 democratically elected Heads of Government of the Americas met in Miami in their first Summit in 30 years. The Leaders declared "a partnership for development and prosperity" and focused on three broad principles - democracy, free trade and sustainable development - as the underpinnings of the emerging hemispheric community.

With regard to the trade and economic integration component, the Leaders of the western hemisphere trumped their Asian colleagues by declaring:

We, therefore, resolve to begin immediately to construct the "Free Trade Area of the Americas" (FTAA), in which barriers to trade and investment will be progressively eliminated. We further resolve to conclude the negotiation [of the FTAA] no later than 2005 and agree that concrete progress toward the attainment of this objective will be made by the end of this century.¹⁸

Not only is the formal end-point for completing the process considerably more immediate than that contained in the Bogor Declaration, but the rest of the language also reflects a greater sense of commitment to get on with the job soon and a greater sense of self-confidence among the developing countries in the hemisphere, as evidenced by their acceptance of the common end-date (2005 versus the 2010/2020 split in Bogor).

Moreover, the Leaders approved a more detailed plan of action that unabashedly outlined a comprehensive negotiating agenda and a shorter term preparatory phase aimed at developing the information base required to negotiate. Ministers responsible for trade were instructed to meet in Denver in June 1995 to review the work in

¹⁸ See Summit of the Americas, "Declaration of Principles", Miami, December 9-11, 1994. Emphasis added.