

Minister of Industry,
Science and Technology and
Minister for International Trade



Ministre de l'Industrie, des
Sciences et de la Technologie et
ministre du Commerce extérieur

Statement

Déclaration

92/42

CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY

**NOTES FOR AN ADDRESS BY
THE HONOURABLE MICHAEL WILSON,
MINISTER OF INDUSTRY, SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY AND
MINISTER FOR INTERNATIONAL TRADE,
TO THE
FOURTH APEC MINISTERIAL MEETING**

**BANGKOK, Thailand
September 11, 1992**

Thank you, Mr. Chairman, for this opportunity to speak on APEC's multifaceted work program. By exploring avenues for practical economic co-operation among our economies in areas of mutual interest, APEC's work program has the potential to play a substantial role in facilitating economic exchange and increasing prosperity throughout our region.

I would like to express Canada's appreciation to Thailand for producing the consolidated report on the work program. While significant progress has been made, it is equally clear that this progress has been uneven. I understand that most groups have, to some extent, experienced shortcomings in the areas of organization and co-ordination. I am hopeful, however, that our agreement to create a secretariat for APEC will make an enormous difference in this respect.

Canada believes that there may be areas where we can sharpen the focus and direction of the work program by rationalizing some of the projects that have been initiated. We therefore place a high priority on the discussions that are currently under way to explore opportunities for streamlining the work program. I would hope that we will receive practical and specific recommendations in this regard at our next meeting in the United States.

Canada also believes, Mr. Chairman, that to enhance the credibility and relevance of our work program, we must take steps to encourage greater involvement of our respective private sectors. We therefore urge all working group "shepherds" to explore and maximize opportunities for integrating private sector participation in their workplans. Sometime down the road, when the individual work projects are more advanced, we may wish to consider more formal, institutional mechanisms for private sector participation in APEC activities.

Mr. Chairman, as you know, Canada shepherds the Working Group on Marine Resource Conservation and is one of a number of co-shepherds of the Human Resources Development Working Group. Although there are numerous noteworthy activities and developments under way in each of the ten working groups, in the interests of time I will focus my remarks on just these two.

Canada's particularly active interest in marine resource conservation stems from the priority that we attach to developing sound environmental policies including sustainable development.

Canada appreciates the active participation of all members who have participated in the work of this group and, in particular, Indonesia, which hosted the most recent meeting of the working group. I understand that some very useful recommendations were developed to help participants address the red tide problem.

Mr. Chairman, there is no doubt that, as our populations and industries grow, pollution in the marine environment becomes a matter of very serious concern for all our coastal states,

particularly in view of our dependence on the sea as a source of food and economic activity.

Throughout the APEC region, we share a number of common problems related to coastal pollution. These include the marine transportation of dangerous goods, the potential for catastrophic spills of oil in marine waters, marine debris that fouls our beaches and destroys wildlife and tourism potential, and the consequences of pollution on marine life and human health.

A striking feature of the discussions in this working group to date is that, despite widely different climates, geography and resource-base considerations among the APEC nations, we all share a common vision of the most pressing problems, and we desire to do something about them.

We now face the challenge of translating the recommendations of the working group into concrete actions. As a step in this direction, I would urge that we bring the work of this group and its recommendations to the attention of our ministerial colleagues with responsibilities for these areas.

Mr. Chairman, Canada is most enthusiastic about the activities of this working group and encourages the active participation of all APEC members. It is essential that we co-operate on matters of pollution and marine resource conservation, in view of the manifest social and economic costs to all of our societies from failing to protect our collective marine resources.

Of course, Mr. Chairman, pollution is not the only threat to our marine resources. Indeed, one of Canada's highest priorities is the question of overfishing on the high seas, which has become a matter of critical importance to Canada.

Working in close co-operation with a large number of our international partners, including many South Pacific countries, Canada is seeking the adoption of rules and measures that would ensure the conservation and effective management, on the high seas, of straddling stocks and highly migratory species.

Turning to the Working Group on Human Resources Development, or HRD, Mr. Chairman, Canada has been a leading supporter of this APEC initiative from the beginning, and is pleased to co-operate actively with our colleagues in defining the working group's priorities and workplans.

Canadians are becoming increasingly aware of the importance of human resource development for Canada's continued social and economic prosperity. One of the principal aims of the Prosperity Initiative, launched by my Government last October, is to highlight the importance of education in meeting the competitive challenges facing Canada. Both government and the private sector

in Canada are increasingly attempting to align human resource demand and supply with the needs of the economy.

Canada's particular interest within the HRD Working Group is the establishment of specialized networks to facilitate the exchange of information and expertise among the leading human resource institutions within our region. We urge all members to participate as actively as possible in these networks to maximize their effectiveness.

Mr. Chairman, HRD is a crucial element in the economic development and integration of the Asia-Pacific region, as reflected in the broad support that this group has received from all APEC members. It is also a key component of Canada's co-operative activities since human resources development is one of the key preconditions for sustainable development.

In closing, Mr. Chairman, Canada wishes to congratulate the United States for its highly successful meeting of APEC Education Ministers in Washington in early August. We understand that this meeting generated a very useful exchange of views on educational standards and the importance of education in economic development. We hope that the "Education Forum" proposed at this meeting is soon created, under the auspices of the HRD Group, to pursue follow-up work. The effectiveness of this Forum, and the activities of the HRD Group as a whole, would be enhanced by the full engagement of all members.

Thank you.